

# CLASS STRUGGLE

Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

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## MASS SUPPORT FOR SINN FEIN



Gerry Adams on the campaign trail in Unity Flats.

rights, repression and violence. If you support this view, then you support Sinn Fein."

A shocked Ian Paisley said: "We have seen today the resurgence of militant Sinn Feinism."

As with the elections of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron, British propaganda that the Republican movement does not represent the people has been decisively exposed. In calling for support for the Sinn Fein candidates, Ruairi O'Bradaigh said that they could campaign internationally "like the PLO".

As the Standard commented,

"The success of the Provisional IRA's political wing Sinn Fein in the Ulster elections has enlarged the question mark over the future of Northern Ireland Secretary, James Prior. It is now clear that his plan for gradual restoration of home rule to Ulster through gradual devolution of power from Westminster has no chance of working."

Sinn Fein also stood to expose the fact that the middle class SDLP does not represent the oppressed nationalist workers, to expose the British occupiers before the world and gain international recognition for the Irish struggle, and to further build their political base amongst the people.

### REPUBLICAN STAND

The people responded to the uncompromisingly Republican stand of Sinn Fein's election Manifesto. "Sinn Fein totally opposes and rejects the British presence in the North and the new attempt to resurrect Stormont. Britain has no right to be in Ireland. Its presence in support of loyalism is the cause of sectarianism, discrimination in housing and employment, the denial of civil and national

### "DEMOCRACY": A FRAUD

There is no doubt that once again, British imperialism will ignore the democratically stated views of Irish people, as they have always done. In the 1918 general election, Sinn Fein won a majority of the Irish seats and formed the First Dail Eireann. Britain ignored this and unleashed a ruthless war on the Irish people culminating in the Treaty of 1921 that artificially partitioned the country to create a structurally undemocratic bastard state. Similarly, when Bobby Sands was elected to parliament, Thatcher refused to recognise him as a Political Prisoner, murdered him and changed the law to prevent the Irish people electing their prisoners to parliament.

So, whilst every tactic (such as elections) will be used, it is the armed struggle that is the fundamental road to the liberation of Ireland. The Republican movement fully intends to continue the armed struggle. As Gerry Adams said after his election victory: "The IRA has always made it clear that while the British Army remains ... they will continue with the fighting."

VICTORY TO THE IRISH PEOPLE!

## HEALTH SERVICE UNDER THREAT



The revelation that a Treasury plan, which would have involved the ending of public funding for the NHS, preceded the leaked 'think tank' study emphasises the long-term commitment of a section of the ruling class to the effective dismantling of the welfare state as a part of its attack on the working class. Following the public outrage at the idea of replacing the NHS with compulsory private insurance Thatcher's public pledge that "the NHS is safe with us" was a public relations manoeuvre to stifle protest. A public dismemberment of the NHS is regarded as electorally "unpopular" and so there is an alternative strategy - death by a thousand cuts - whereby imposed stringent economies and resulting cash restraint force local health authorities to perform the capitalists' desired amputation.

Already Oxford Regional Health Authority has responded as pace-makers for the 14 Health Authorities, with a study aimed at saving £12 million from its budget. Although offered as "discussion and consultation", the review, drawn up under the chairmanship of Labour member, Gordon Roberts, proposes savage cuts amounting to withdrawal of comprehensive health care. The butchered service would reduce the number of accident and emergency centres to one for each of the counties under Oxford's authority, it would concentrate services in large district general hospitals thus running down and closing the medium and small town hospitals. The service it proposes includes a residential qualification for non-urgent operations, such as hernias and varicose veins, which are to be charged to the patients. The direct cost of health care already paid for by the working class through taxes, is shifted onto the patient with standing charges on food and laundry, with payment taken from sickness benefit for the long stayers. The gruesome scenario of road accident victims being charged as private patients and then claiming the costs on their insurance is one proposal that shows the extent to which the health of the working class is threatened.

Such outrageous plans have been met with a considerable backlash of fury and anger from hospital staff and the public alike. In one of the counties under threat - Northamptonshire - these

suggestions come on top of Lettering Health Authorities plans to slash £1 million from health care with the closure of Corby community hospital, the loss of over 100 hospital beds elsewhere, shutting a maternity unit and axing 100 jobs. The formation of a union action committee and the public protest ranging from Councils to GPs finds general support in a petition campaign that saw 6,000 sign in the first week at one market town.

Such hostility to the proposals was to be expected and the "review" may be a means of extending the sphere of paybeds and the proposed subcontracting of treatment and care of patients to private hospitals as the "lesser evil". Nevertheless the threat remains real, reflecting an extensive encroachment on the democratic rights and welfare facilities of the working class and the oppressed. Throughout the NHS there are attempts to whittle away the social wage. Oxford is not the only health authority contemplating a drastic cutback. Projected economies elsewhere include:

- \* threatening new casualty, surgical and psychiatric facilities at Kilton Hospital Workshop.
- \* cancelling the development of hospitals at Prudhoe and Blyth in the North East.
- \* endangering the opening of Glenfield Hospital at Leicester.
- \* shelving plans for a major hospital in Antrim in the occupied six counties of Ireland.

Besides halting such capital projects, there exists various contingency plans involving a general rundown in standards with cuts in hospital beds, closure of wards, freeze in recruitment and growing waiting lists. Resistance to the attempts to shift the consequences of this vicious crisis of imperialism onto the already oppressed can tap the massive support that exists in the working class for the health-workers fight for a decent living wage and orientate it towards defence of a national health service. While such defensive action to safeguard reforms is necessary, the social disaster of imperialism requires the political offensive of a genuinely revolutionary working class party to end misery and repression.

The main aspect of the elections in the north of Ireland on October 20th was the "surprisingly high" votes for Sinn Fein, said the newsreader on the BBC World Service. The ruling class and its mouthpieces always at least affect to be surprised at the fact that the ungrateful oppressed do not love their oppressors!

Indeed it can be said that Sinn Fein has scored a major victory on the electoral front, in the teeth of sustained harassment, (see separate article). As 'Class Struggle' goes to press, the votes are still being counted. It is expected that of Sinn Fein's 12 candidates, 6 will be elected. Three were elected on the first count, i.e. with a clear majority so that votes did not have to be reapportioned under the proportional representation system. They were Gerry Adams in West Belfast, Martin McGuinness in Derry and Owen Carron MP in Fermanagh/South Tyrone. The reactionary and pro-British Workers' Party (formerly the 'Officials') have not won a single seat.

### "ELECTION TRIUMPH"

"Sinn Fein heads for election triumph", read the headline in 'The Guardian' on Friday October 22nd. In fact, whilst it only fielded 12 candidates out of a possible 78 (there were 184 candidates contesting 78 seats) and despite the built-in loyalist majority in the artificial northern statelet, Sinn Fein is receiving 10.1% of the total first preference vote, compared to 9.3% being scored by the Alliance Party who contested nearly every seat and who, unlike Sinn Fein, have a lot of electoral experience.

Sinn Fein stood in order to wreck Prior's reactionary plans for gradual return to Stormont. Their electoral intervention makes it impossible for the Brits to pretend that things are just, "business as usual".

## British Imperialism, Get Out of Hongkong!

by H. Stephens and Keith Anderson.

Hong Kong is a part of China illegally occupied by British imperialism. Britain's claim that its occupation of the area is legal under a series of nineteenth century 'treaties' is sheer nonsense. In her recent visit to the People's Republic of China, Thatcher brazenly upheld the 'legality' of these treaties, but was met with the unequivocal reaffirmation by the Chinese government that it never has recognised them and never will.

"The treaties in relation to the Hong Kong area," explained an authoritative commentary from China's Xinhua News Agency on September 30th, "were products of British imperialism's 'gun-boat diplomacy' and invasion of China in the 19th century. These unequal treaties, which were forced upon the Chinese people, provide an ironclad proof of British imperialism's plunder of Chinese territory. The Chinese people have always held that these treaties are illegal and therefore null and void... Whoever today tries to cling to these unequal

treaties will only awaken the memories of the British imperialist invasion of China in the minds of the people of China, in Britain and the whole world."

Thatcher, during her China visit had tried to do just that - to "cling to these unequal treaties". Evidently she thought that British imperialism's recent display of brute force in the South Atlantic placed her in a position from which she could intimidate China over Hong Kong. Well, she was wrong.

### BRITISH EXPLOITATION

British imperialism extorts fabulous superprofits from the over 5 million inhabitants of Hong Kong. Though average per capita income is higher than in socialist China, this statistic is due to the incredible level of income among the wealthy, many of them British, who rake in fat profits from the unrestrained exploitation of the working people.

British colonialism's cynical and calculated neglect of the contd. on Page 6.



# RACISM AND THE SEAMAN'S UNION

By Keith Anderson.

The Commission for Racial Equality is investigating the conditions under which Asian seamen were employed during the Malvinas War to see if a charge of racial discrimination can be brought against the General Council of British Shipping.

## LAST DAYS OF THE RAJ

The USS Uganda was used as a hospital ship during the war. In other times it is used as a luxury cruise liner. Its workers are Asian seamen, forced to work for wages and in conditions that no British seamen would accept. During the Malvinas War, only British nationals were allowed to serve on the ships hijacked by the Ministry of Defence, thus ensuring that only true Brits picked up the bonuses. But in an act of double racism it was agreed that the Uganda would be manned by Asians (to be paid a pitiful 15% of the British seamen's basic rate!) because of the foul conditions aboard. The telex messages from the General Council of British Shipping tell it all:

"The vessel is 30 years old. The accommodation is shared (4 to 10 berth cabins) and not up to present day standards of comfort or space available. Toilets and washing facilities are limited but undergoing certain modifications. The engine room is also very much out of date. Every effort has been made to provide additional berths for National Union of Seamen members (read whites). But in view of the above, it has been necessary to retain a nucleus of Asian catering

on board. The ship and the physical conditions under which you work will therefore be substantially different and inferior to what you will have accustomed."

The Uganda (owned by P&O) actually trades on the fact that it is a modern slave ship, a floating remnant of the vile British Raj in India. Its brochure tries to sign up upper class layabouts with the following words: "Cabin stewards, dining saloon waiters, bar stewards, lounge stewards, lift attendant - all behave as if the clock were turned back. Attentive but not intrusive, friendly but never presumptuous. Aboard the British ship Uganda you'll enjoy service of the old school."

## NUS BLOOD MONEY

A full partner in this modern day slavery - and a direct financial beneficiary - is the National Union of Seamen. For every non-British seaman employed as cheap labour on British ships, shipowners pay a levy to the NUS. Most of these seamen are recruited from India, and the NUS is paid £30 per head per year as its slice of the blood money. On January 1 this year a 33% increase was negotiated by NUS Assistant General Secretary - and current chairman of the Labour Party - Sam McCluskey, the man who welcomed the callous sinking of the Argentine ship, Belgrano. This year, the NUS has amassed something in the region of £200,000 by this means. What better proof could there be of how the labour aristocracy builds up its fortunes from the sweat and

blood of the oppressed?

## THE LENINIST STANDPOINT

This point was very clearly appreciated by Lenin, who said, "Capitalism has now singled out a handful (less than one-tenth of the inhabitants of the globe; less than one-fifth at a most "generous" and liberal calculation) of exceptionally rich and powerful states which plunder the whole world."

"Obviously, out of such enormous superprofits (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their "own" country) it is possible to bribe the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And the capitalists of the "advanced" countries are bribing them; they bribe them in a thousand different ways, direct and indirect, overt and covert."

"This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, or the "labour aristocracy", who are quite philistine in their mode of life in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is the principal prop of the Second International, and, in our days, the principal social (not military) prop of the bourgeoisie. For they are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers, take the side of the bourgeoisie, the "Versaillese" against the "Communards."

And he considered this to be of immense practical significance for revolutionaries: "Unless the economic roots of this phenomenon are understood and its political and social significance is appreciated, not a step can be taken toward the solution of the practical problems of the communist movement and of the impending social revolution."

## "WE WISH YOU HAD NOT COME"

Indeed, the British trade union movement has been steeped in racism from its inception: its initial targets being Irish and Jewish workers. In the 1880s, Dockers' "leader", Ben Tillett, still a hero for the middle class left, told Jewish workers in a speech of "greetings": "Yes, you are our brothers and we will do our duty by you. But WE WISH YOU HAD NOT COME."

The TUC General Council passed motions calling for immigration controls in 1892, 1894 and 1895. In the 1870s and 1880s, Jewish garment workers formed their own unions in East London, Leeds and elsewhere because of the hostility of the established ones.

The Seamen's Union has always been an active practitioner of racism to divide the working class. In a 1914 article, James Connolly condemned seamen's union scabbing on Irish workers during the 1913 Dublin lockout. In the early part of this century it actively organised to prevent Chinese seamen from finding employment, describing in luridly racist terms, the "threat" they allegedly posed to the jobs of British workers.

In the 1920s and 1930s, this forced members and supporters of the Communist Party of China in Europe to organise the Chinese Seamen's Union to defend the rights of these super-exploited workers. More recently in 1972, the NUS signed an agreement with Cunard that institutionalised a racist division of labour on Cunard liners.

## VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN

The present case would probably never have come to light had it not been for a vigorous campaign waged by the Cardiff Somali Association, with support from other national minority organisations. Now the rats are fighting amongst themselves to deny their responsibility. The NUS denies that there was any discrimination.

"It was that we had negotiated better conditions for British seamen than were available on the Uganda and so the jobs were not acceptable to our members. It was the P&O Company and the Ministry of Defence who were responsible for employing Asians."

P&O have refused to comment. The Ministry of Defence say that it is a matter for the P&O. The General Council for British Shipping say that they were merely acting as agents for P&O and the NUS.

## MAIN FIRE AT THE TRAITORS

Those of us concerned to build a revolutionary working class movement direct our main fire at the traitors in our midst, the NUS. For so long as racist filth are allowed to sit on the working class movement there can be no question of a struggle for socialism in this country.

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## THE LABOUR PARTY

From: a Halifax reader.

After last month's article on the declining fortunes of the Labour Party (both electorally and in respect of membership) it is an opportune time for 'Class Struggle' to consider how to encourage that process.

One way would be to campaign for the mass contracting out of the political levy. This would have two beneficial results; firstly, the most obvious in that the less money that it gets from the trade unions, either in the form of large donations at election time or the annual affiliation fees

to local constituency parties, then the more difficulty the Labour Party will have in spreading its reformist ideology.

Secondly, it would provide an answer to some of those workers who express the view that politics should be kept out of union matters. This has usually been treated as a reactionary view, and yet many who believe it do so because by politics they objectively mean bourgeois party politics - which actually shows them to be a hell of a sight more advanced than most of the typical British so-called Left are themselves.

## The uprising 4000

From a London Reader:  
Readers of "Class Struggle" might be interested in a recent Home Office Statistical Bulletin which has reported that in the wake of the uprisings of July and August last year, more than 4,000 people, over 1,000 of them black, and the majority aged under 21 were arrested. So far over 700 people have been imprisoned by the courts. The 3,400 completed court cases have seen 2,400 convictions. 8% of those arrested were women, but the figure rose where the uprisings were fiercest, for example to 15% in Brixton and 20% in Liverpool. 8.20% of the arrested were under 21. About one half had "criminal records" rising to two thirds in areas of greatest

deprivation such as London and Liverpool where the mass criminalisation of the oppressed has reached a more advanced stage. Half of those arrested were unemployed. 29% of those convicted were sent to prison, but amongst the unemployed the figure was 46%.

For the first time this century the number of people imprisoned has exceeded 45,000 (the highest prison population per head in western Europe). This figure was reached after the kangaroo court trials of uprising defendants. Repression is also increasing inside the prisons. Last year saw the highest number of prisoners being charged with, "Offences against discipline".

## RCLB: APPEAL FOR FUNDS

The Revolutionary Communist League is an organisation dedicated to the cause of the most oppressed. We are struggling to overcome the dead weight of reactionary ideas and practices in the 'socialist' movement, to unravel the contradictions of a decaying imperialist society and to forge a vibrant anti-imperialist vanguard force.

Readers and sellers of 'Class Struggle' participate in this process by their support for our paper. We now ask you to participate in another way - by supporting our work financially.

We are a small organisation; we depend entirely on the resources of ourselves and our supporters for funds. With these resources we produce a monthly political paper and a theoretical journal - 'October'. We

support a political bookshop, we employ a small number of comrades to carry out indispensable political and organisational tasks.

In addition we place our limited resources at the service of those fighting imperialism. In the past year and a half we have made major financial contributions to the Hunger Strike Campaign and to the fight of the Bradford 12, as well as smaller contributions to many other struggles. In the past we have sent substantial amounts of money to the liberation movements in Southern Africa.

Our own resources are not enough to carry out the many tasks crying out to be done.

That is why we are asking you, our readers, to make a direct contribution to our work.

Our aim is to raise £1,000 by the end of the year. We ask for your help.

Here are some ideas of what you can do:

- \* Support League fundraising activities in your locality.
- \* Give a donation to your 'Class Struggle' seller.
- \* Send a contribution to: 'Fundraising' c/o New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Rd., London N4 3NG. Make cheques payable to New Era Books.
- \* Get your friends, neighbours, workmates, family to give donations.

Any contribution that you can make will be a major help in the vital and urgent work of building a revolutionary movement in Britain.

## NEW ERA BOOKS

New Era Books, whose retail shop is in North London, has now published its second Mail Order Catalogue. This lists all books stocked as at July 1982 and covers over 800 titles of books and pamphlets, together with some 30 periodicals.

We aim to stock a wide range of Marxist, anti-imperialist and progressive books from around the world - some of which are difficult to obtain elsewhere.

The Catalogue is divided into 14 sections starting with a full listing of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong and followed by a section on Communist Theory, including contemporary third world writers such as Samir Amin and Van Nabudere. Both these sections of the catalogue are fully annotated to help readers pinpoint the information they are looking for.

The section on Britain is divided into History and Contemporary and is followed by a full listing of books about Ireland reflecting a strong Republican standpoint.

After sections on Europe, the Soviet Union and North America, the catalogue turns to China. This, the largest section of the Catalogue, covers most of the English language books and pamphlets from the People's Republic that are in print. New Era receives sample copies of all these publications and consequently specialises in books from and about China, including distribution to the wholesale trade and as an agency for subscriptions to Chinese periodicals. Besides political and cultural books, and titles concerned with the construction of socialism in China, we also stock many books for children.

Being a shop with a strong anti-imperialist focus our books on

the Third World, including Asia - which follow the China section - are chosen with support for the national liberation struggles of the peoples of the Third World as our guiding principle.

The closing sections of the catalogue are on Women's Emancipation - from Eleanor Marx to Women in Zimbabwe - and a general section including progressive novels. These cover some of the best of the early Soviet writings, such classics as the "Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" and a growing number of novels by African writers.

The catalogue concludes with a list of Marxist-Leninist and anti-imperialist periodicals from around the world.

To obtain the catalogue, send 50p to New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 3NG. The 50p will be refunded from the cost of your first order.



## Textile workers fight

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

A dispute over union recognition at the P.S.Raindi textile factory in Smethwick has entered a new phase with an all-out strike by the workforce. On the first day of the strike, over 200 Asian women and about 30 men picketed outside the factory. The owner has expressed a willingness to allow the workers to join a union, provided that it is a union of his choice, with shop stewards of his choice! The workers are members of the T&GWU and are in official dispute with the management.

Machinists at the factory are paid on a piece work basis. A skilled, fast worker might earn £35 for a 50-hour week, whilst others earn as little as £25 per week. The workers are united in their determination to fight for the recognition of the union and for an immediate improvement in wages and conditions.

## Savage attacks on youth

Recent statistics from the Department of Employment, show a sharp rise in the number of unemployed youth and the length of their periods on the dole.

There are just over six million people between the ages of 18 and 25 in Britain. Of these, nearly 1 in 6 (926,499) are registered as unemployed. To these must be added those shoved onto slave labour schemes like the "Youth Opportunities Programme".

In July of this year 250,000 youth had been out of work for more than 1 year, 75,000 for more than 2 years, and 20,000 for more than 3 years.

Overall, long-term unemployment (that is those out of work for more than a year) passed the one million mark in July. The recently issued quarterly report of the Manpower Services Commission predicts that by 1984 the long term unemployed could account for 40% of the total jobless. In July, of the one million long term unemployed, 370,000 had been registered for over 2 years and 165,000 for over 3 years. The highest rates of long term unemployment were amongst the over-60's and the 20-24 years age group. Amongst 16 to 17 year olds unemployment reached 33% in July.

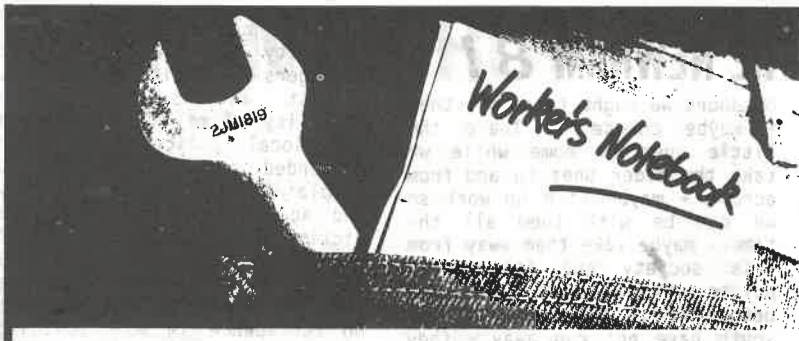
### POLICE HARASSMENT

Further it has now emerged that harassment of the youth is official police policy. A large secret volume, called the "Constables Instruction Book" found its way into the hands of the "Observer" newspaper. It said:

"Officers on duty, especially in the early morning, must carefully observe persons carrying bags, parcels, etc. Persons under 30 commit a substantial proportion of burglaries, petty thefts, and thefts of cars .... which form such a large part of crime as a whole. Police on duty in the street must bear this in mind .... youths between 17 and 20 must be specially watched."

And having been harassed by the police and railroaded through the courts, thousands more Scottish youth are to be subjected to the fascist "short, sharp shock detention centres." A grim set of pre-1930 Perthshire buildings, the "Friarton Young Offenders' Institution", which even the government says has "poor potential for development or modernisation" is to be converted into the second such centre in Scotland.

Here the youth are subjected to sustained brutality. Each day starts before 6 a.m. by which time the cell must be spotlessly tidy. Even if blankets and pyjamas are not



★ Six out of eleven Social Security offices in Birmingham are now closed. DHSS workers are striking in protest at the shortage of staff to cope with the ever-increasing demand for social security benefits. One in seven of Birmingham's work force is now officially unemployed, besides large numbers of one-parent families, and sick and handicapped and elderly people.

The utter lunacy of the capitalist system is apparent. Thousands out of work are having to resort to state hand-outs, while workers are going on strike because the state won't employ enough workers to cope with the demand. Workers in social security offices are so badly paid anyway that many of them take home no more than the claimants they serve.

★ A 63 year old widow, virtually immobilised with arthritis and Parkinson's disease, has had a weekly £15 benefit stopped by Lewisham DHSS. All because, after an empty house next door was vandalised, her neighbour, an old family friend aged 73, moved into her house. He explained that she "looked after me when I lost my wife, so I wanted to help her."

★ Going into hospital is always unpleasant. The Oxford Regional Health Authority plans to make it more so. In its new discussion document it states that patients could save the NHS money by:

1. Providing their own food
2. Arranging for their bed linen and clothes to be washed
3. Arranging their own transport.

In addition, patients needing non-emergency operations might have to establish a residential qualification to get them.

★ Hospital bosses have resorted to smashing up a peaceful sit-in with crowbars at the Oldham and District General Hospital, Lancs. They smashed down doors while police looked on, and carried out the striking health workers one at a time. How much will it cost the NHS to repair the damage?

★ London's only screening clinic for breast cancer is to close in April in a second round of cuts at the Royal Marsden Hospital. The clinic, which has been running for 14 years, screens 10,000 women a year at the cost of £100,000. Is £10 per woman too much to spend on trying to prevent a disease which kills 11,000 women each year in this country? (5% of all women will develop breast cancer during their life.) Mrs Thatcher's recent pledge that "the NHS is safe with us" is a hollow, a mournful, a sickening lie.

★ The new report by Shelter: 'Homes Wasted' estimates that there are 100,000 public authority houses which remain empty in Britain. They remain unoccupied for at least a year; much longer in some cases.

At the same time there are 60,000 families/households who are officially homeless.

★ Lord Hailsham defended the 21% pay award to judges earlier this year as vital to safeguard "the standards of society". That price? £42,500 basic for a high court judge. Standards come high if you are a pillar of the British state: a top civil servant like a permanent secretary manages on £37,750, while part time chairman

folded "correctly" the meagre amount of recreation time is taken away. Drill takes place twice a day. During a five week "breaking-in" period (i.e. the concentrated effort to break the spirit of rebel youth) a quarter of the time is spent on the parade ground, another quarter in the gym, and so on. The day is so crammed that cells are only used for sleeping in. The purpose of all these attacks on the youth is to break them and stop them from fighting back. The effect will be just the opposite. As the uprisings of last year showed, it will be from the "youth of no property" led by the black youth, that a real conscious, determined and exuberant revolutionary movement will be built in this country.

### "OCTOBER"

The second issue of "October", the theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Communist League, has just been published. It contains articles on:

- The Oppression of Women - A criticism of previous positions held by the RCL and its predecessor organisations.

- Racism, National Oppression and Free National Development.

- The Anglo - Argentinian War and Imperialism today.

- RCL Policy Statements on Ireland and China.

50p per copy + 25p p&p.  
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## ATTACK ON PUNK RIGHTS

Tory MP, Tim Eggar, has called on the Attorney General to prosecute an anti-Falklands war record under the Obscene Publications Act. The record, "How does it feel to be the mother of 1,000 dead?" by the punk rock group, "Crass" has sold 20,000 copies within four days of its release.

Referring to Thatcher's sending of the task force to the South Atlantic it says: "You never wanted peace or solution, from the start you lusted after war and destruction ... Iron Lady, with your stone heart so eager that the lesson be taught that you inflicted, you determined, you created, you ordered - it was your decision that those young boys be slaughtered."

Eggar raved: "This is the most vicious, scurrilous and obscene record that has ever been produced. It goes beyond the acceptable bounds of freedom of speech. It is an insult not only to the Prime Minister, the country, and all the armed forces....", and so on.

Stating that the question was one of political objection, not "obscenity", Andy Palmer of "Crass" correctly stated: "It was a considered attack on the government." He added: "The mentality of war is far more obscene than we could possibly be."

of the BBC George Howard makes do on £23,500. While an under-secretary at the DHSS (earning £25,000 p.a.) presides over public sector wages that sink to subsistence level with a basic weekly wage of £59.50 for a grade 1 ancillary health worker and £76.78 for state enrolled nurses. Those overseers of the state cannot begin to understand the concept of low-pay and all the struggle it entails. And they are not the only ones. A recent survey of 555 companies noted that rises in executive salaries were above the rate of inflation in the year to July: managing directors, with an average age of 49, "earned" £28,857. However the fringe benefits whereby 78% had company cars, 63% free medical insurance and 55% five weeks paid holiday or more is thought to offset any hardship. Another section of the population were not treated as well in their "increase" last month. The means-tested supplementary benefit rose by £2.50. An unemployed youth living at home now has a weekly income of £23.65 basic.

★ Perhaps the richest Tory at the Brighton Conference was the owner of that well-known supermarket chain, Timothy Sainsbury. His personal shareholding in the business is worth more than sixty million pounds. His son James Sainsbury, 21, has joined a bunch of upper class yobboes at Oxford University called the Assassins, whose general practice is to to to expensive restaurants, get extremely drunk and engage in what is called vandalism when one is talking about the working class. The night they descended on "Thatcher's Bistro" in Thame, Oxfordshire, they caused £560 worth of damage, ripped down curtains, smeared food over the walls, smashed wine bottles and vomited on carpets. Sainsbury, the heir to sixty million pounds, was fined £25 and ordered to pay £25 costs. If anybody knows the address to send donations to help Mr Sainsbury with his legal costs, please will they forward it to 'Class Struggle'!

★ The fascist mentality straight from the horse's mouth, in this case a servant of a racist imperialist state, a British Police Inspector, Basil Griffiths of Gwent. His words drew loud applause from the broily brigade thugs at October's Tory Party Conference. "There is in our inner cities a very large minority of people who are not fit for salvage ... The only way in which the police can protect society is quite simply by harassing those people and frightening them."

★ Amongst all the sickening jingoistic hypocrisy of the Tory Party Conference, John Nott said: "In the end it is not material it is men that count." Perhaps he would like to explain that statement to the father of one soldier killed in the Malvinas War who received a bill for £32 for equipment that his son had most inconsiderately damaged whilst being killed. What better proof is there of the fact that those who died were simply cannon fodder in a British imperialist war?

★ The October meeting of Birmingham Trades Council voted in favour of investigating racist practices carried out by Birmingham Night clubs. This followed the exposure of one such club: The Peppermint Place, which had refused black people entry at a birthday party held there.

★ The reduction in interest rates may make overdrafts cheaper but there are too many companies operating below existing capacity for it to generate any recovery. Likewise with the movement of the 'Financial Times' index of 30 shares. It doesn't alter a situation whereby much of industry, in a financially precarious state, threatens a resurgence of bankruptcies and speed up in industrial job losses - 240,000 in the first half of this year.

It is evident that a developing bourgeois critique of monetarism fears the repercussions of "the disciplining of society" - the social cost of trying to shift the burden of their crisis onto the oppressed. Even 'The Times' is infected. Its economic columnist, C.Gordon Tether warns: "One can adjust to inflation, but the potential consequences of a depression in the western world would be revolution."



'Class Struggle' correspondent.

On October 18, the striking Air India workers picketed the Indian High Commission in London and handed in a petition demanding the Indian government support the workers in their 16 week fight. 100 T&GWU members were sacked by Air India in June, but Air India management have refused to recognise that there is a dispute on. Workers in India have, however, given support with pickets and demonstrations in Bombay, Delhi and elsewhere in support of the London workers, and also for their own pay claim.

Drawing attention to the lack

of support from the trade unions here strike committee leader, Furuz Daruwalla said recently: "We would like Moss Evans to get onto the national media and make an appeal on our behalf. We know that if he did so it would help to persuade his own members at Heathrow, in particular the fire brigades and the fuellers, to come out in our support."

The main support in this country has come from workers for other foreign airlines, particularly the Irish Aer Lingus. The Indian Workers' Association and other community organisations have also given support.





## DEFEND THE NEWHAM 8!

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Eight Asian youths aged from 15 to 21 years were arrested on Friday 24th September in Manor Park, East London. The 8 had been at Little Ilford School to protect the younger children and defend them against a threat of attack made by a group of racist thugs. Asian kids at the school had been set upon by armed white youths on 3 occasions in that week alone. In one incident over 60 of them went rampaging through the streets of East Ham and Manor Park with iron bars and sticks looking for black victims.

The threatened attack at the school on Friday 24th did not take place but in Dersingham Avenue, on their way home from Little Ilford School, the 8 were set upon by 3 men in a car. Almost immediately 40 uniformed

police arrived on the spot. The three men were plain clothes police and the 8 were arrested on charges ranging from threatening behaviour to actual bodily harm. Four of the youths were injured, one so critically that he had to be hospitalised for several days.

Racist abuse, beatings and arrest are the police reaction to our youth, when, after having taken enough of the harassment and attacks from racist thugs and after seeing the police and courts stand idle failing to bring the criminals to justice, they organise together to prevent further acts of violence. We should be proud of their courage and the initiative they've taken. What parent can say they have not worried about their children's safety? We are made to feel that when we must let them go

outdoors we ought to escort them - maybe choose to leave the little ones at home while we take the older ones to and from school - maybe give up work so we can be with them all the time - maybe take them away from this society and its racist poison - maybe take them home before it is too late. But our youth have not run away - they say 'HERE TO STAY - HERE TO FIGHT!'

Illustrating the speed at which a community under attack can respond, a defence campaign was agreed at a public meeting on the 26th attended by over 150

The campaign has organised:

- \* A PUBLIC MEETING on Thursday 28th October, 7.30 p.m. at East Ham Town Hall, High Street South, East Ham, London E6.
- \* A PICKET OF WEST HAM MAGISTRATES COURT, West Ham Lane, Stratford, London E15 on Friday 5th Nov at 10 a.m.
- \* SCHOOLS STRIKE The campaign particularly calls upon school and college students to support the picket and turn Nov 5th into a day of action to protest against racist attacks in schools!

For further information, future activities and speakers, contact: NEWHAM 8 DEFENCE CAMPAIGN, c/o 285 Romford Rd, Forest Gate, London E7 9HJ. (01-555-3331).

people. But then, the black community in Newham are not strangers to racist harassment, fascist attacks and police brutality. Time and time again the local police force have responded indifferently to complaints made by the community and again and again it is the victims who are arrested instead of the attackers. And yet the 'authorities' feign surprise when the community says, we have no confidence in your policing methods. The ranks of the police are riddled with racists. We have no choice but to defend ourselves. We will not let the state get away with framing the Newham 8.

At a meeting on October 16th,

organised by the Indian Workers Association (GB) to publicise the campaign and mobilise support for its activities, the IWA speaker called upon those present to take the message of "unite all those who can be united against the racist state" back to their organisations. He reminded us of the roots of racist ideology in British imperialism.

Another speaker from the campaign and from the Newham Monitoring Project spoke of the victory of the Bradford 12 and said that their acquittal was a victory for the whole community. SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE was the judgement from their trial.

## Youth Fight Back

The first week of October saw at least three clashes between police and black youth in South London, just as Sir Kenneth Newman, arch torturer of Castlereagh was taking over the Metropolitan Police.

Two of the clashes took place on Railton Road in Brixton. On one occasion, police pursued a youth, who ran into a house. A crowd gathered and threw milk

bottles at the squad cars that soon arrived. A major clash was avoided only by the police agreeing not to attack the house into which the youth had fled.

The third confrontation took place on Peckham High Street when the black youth threw milk bottles at police cars and vans.

These incidents are a part of the continuing guerilla war between the youth and the police, which will inevitably flare into new uprisings.

## NOT GUILTY!

The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign against fascist attacks and police harassment in Leeds, has won two significant victories. On 4 October Ronald Gregory, the Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, told the campaign in a letter that the planned march through Chapel-town on 9 October could now take place despite a previous ban by Leeds police. On Wednesday 13 October, after a trial lasting three days, 3 of the Precinct 6, Mohan Pipial, Garvey Harris and Les Haw, were found not guilty in Leeds Magistrates Court of 'threatening and abusive behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace.' Garvey Harris was also found not guilty on an additional charge of criminal damage to a police van.

The arrests took place on Saturday 21 August, when after a demonstration and rally, several supporters of the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign went into Lands Lane precinct to hand out leaflets and to sell copies of a socialist newspaper. They were merely standing around the fountain in the precinct when two policemen told them that they were causing an obstruction and should sit down or move on. They then sat down but Mohan Pipial was assaulted by a policeman and arrested. As the other youth moved off Garvey Harris, one of the campaign organisers, was intercepted and arrested. When Les Haw protested he was set upon by four policemen who forced him to the ground, causing him to have an epileptic fit.

In the court the police evidence was packed with inconsistencies and lies. PC's Gill and Hewitt who arrested Mohan Pipial claimed that Mohan Pipial had been swearing and chanting and that he had prodded him several times, yet none of the defence or prosecution witnesses had noticed this. The police who arrested Les Haw claimed that he had used obscene language and had tried to incite the youth into attacking the police. Furthermore, the police went on to deny that Les Haw had suffered an epileptic fit. PC Raaj, who arrested Garvey Harris invented a fantastic tale of how Garvey Harris had been the leader of a group of chanting youth who had lunged at him. At this point an old woman had come up to PC Raaj to complain. He then arrested Garvey Harris and in the meantime the 'lunging' youth had vanished. In fact as none of the other policemen or witnesses had seen this group of youth it must be

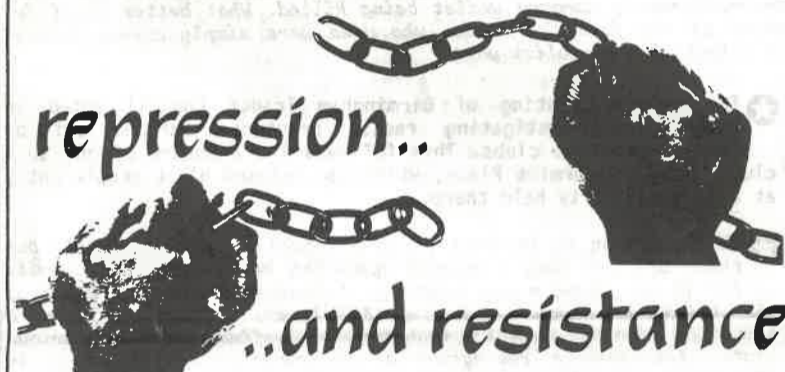
assumed that PC Raaj suffers from hallucinations. In the course of his arrest Garvey Harris suffered a perforated eardrum.

In his summing up the defence barrister, Henry Blaxland, said that it was unrealistic for PC's Gill and Hewitt to claim that they had no particular feelings for those involved in the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign. In fact they were hostile towards them, as shown by the way they had trailed some of the supporters of the campaign into a cafe and from there down to the precinct area. Furthermore it was no accident that the three who had been arrested were centrally involved in the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign. What was on trial was the right to organise political protest, including protests against police harassment.

The fight for this democratic right to organise political protest in Leeds has led to this victory in the court and the right to march through Chapel-town. Chief Constable Gregory has told the campaign that 'it is possible that some compromise can be reached which will both meet your wish to march in that area and ensure that the risk of public disorder is minimised.' The fact that the campaign only received the letter saying this less than a week before the proposed march, was nothing but sabotage by the police, preventing any chance for the organisers to properly build for the march. The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign will continue to fight for the democratic rights of all anti-racists until they have been won. The campaign still has two court cases to fight. On 29 November, 3 of the Precinct 6 appear in court on the charge of 'obstruction of the highway' and the appeal against the imprisonment of Les Haw and Mohan Pipial, who are at present out on bail, still has to be heard. The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign calls on all democrats, progressives and socialists to support the campaign. Petitions and public statements are available from the address below. The campaign also calls on everyone to rush urgently needed donations to us as the costs of fighting for our democratic rights, both in the court and politically, costs money! These rights are the rights of all the working class and must be defended.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign,  
c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge St,  
Leeds 2.



How ruthless the Home Office can be was well-illustrated on September 28th when they hijacked a Ghana Airways plane to deport 81 Ghanaians from the country. They had all arrived at Heathrow in the previous week applying for visitor's visas. The immigration authorities refused and sent them all back. A meeting was held in London on October 24th to protest this action. It was organised by the Ghana People's Solidarity Organisation with support from Peggy Yates - herself threatened with deportation - and the Ghana High Commission.

Afia Begum is a 19 year old Bangladeshi woman who has a one year old daughter. In January 1982 she was granted an entry certificate to join her husband in England. But then in March of this year, her husband was killed in a fire that devastated the slum tenement building in Brick Lane, East London, where like so many other national minority workers he was forced to live. When Afia arrived at Heathrow in June, she was told "you'll have to go, your circumstances have changed."

If Afia and her child are deported they have no means of support in Bangladesh. Most of their family are in England. But the Home Office is not interested in these arguments. After granting Afia a brief stay in Britain to sort out her husband's belongings, they now intend to deport her.

Afia is equally determined she will not go. She is now in hiding. She has the support of East London's Bangladeshi community and its various mass organisations. Already more than 5,000 local people have signed a petition. "The Home Office is ruthless in its treatment of black people. We have to be equally ruthless in their defence."

Najat Chafee has won her nine month long battle with the Home Office. Najat is delighted that she and her son Mohssin will be allowed to stay in Britain and not be deported to Morocco.

"I feel that the way the Home Office has treated me because I am a foreigner is very unfair," Najat told 'Outwrite'. "They said that I could not stay here because my husband was not allowed to stay here. We told the Home Office that I am a person too, why can't I stay with my son? I am happy that I have won, but I feel sad for the others who are not so lucky."

"I don't know how but I hope that we can change these terrible immigration rules, because they are racist and want to throw us out or want to make life very hard for us in this country."

Najat won her campaign because she had the courage to stand up and fight for her right to stay.

SARAH JABAAR, a black South African is the latest victim of the British government's support for apartheid and its own racist immigration policies. She has lived in South Wales since 1978 but was told to leave by April of this year. This was because her husband had left the country.

She said: "First, my husband walks out on me - which is distressing enough on its own. Then I am expected to uproot myself and my children and return to a country where we will be systematically discriminated against in housing, education, jobs - every aspect of our lives."

Letters of support can be sent to Sarah: c/o The Corn Street Centre, 8 Corn Street, Newport, Gwent, Wales.

The Newham Monitoring Project is planning a week of action from 28th Oct to Nov 5 to highlight "the crisis of policing in Newham", police harassment of black youths and police refusal to take firm action against racial attacks. They can be contacted at the same address.

Pow Yean Leong from Leeds has heard indirectly that she is to be allowed to stay. On 6th September the Home Office told an MP in writing and the MP passed the letter to a supporter. However they have still not informed Pow Yean herself officially.

BASIL GWATIDZO of Bradford has had his electricity supply cut off. He had failed to pay the bill because he was denied social security payments during his recent spell of unemployment.

Basil, in Britain since 1975, came like many other black Zimbabwean students as a political refugee. His children were allowed to join him in 1976.

For the next three years he worked for British Rail in Sheffield. He then took a course in social policy at university and obtained a degree this summer.

But when, like other students in search of work, he signed on at the unemployment benefit office they contacted the Home Office. He was refused any benefit as according to the Home Office, suddenly he was here only at the Home Secretary's discretion.

Consequently his children have been denied access to state schooling and some of his family have returned to Zimbabwe because of the hardship this resulted in.

Basil now lives without food, heating or lighting. He says that the government is trying 'to starve him out of the country'.

He is determined to stay in Britain. He has been accepted by Leeds University to do a post-graduate course with a grant from Bradford Education Authority. The grant has now been withdrawn. Basil still intends to study and is demanding the grant. He is supported by Leeds University Students Union and other local organisations.

(Compiled by 'Class Struggle' correspondents.)



# EYEWITNESSES IN BEIRUT



by David Evans

"The invasion came on 5th June, on a Friday afternoon, at 3.15, a day and time which I'll never forget. I was walking through Sabra, when I heard the planes overhead. I didn't pay particular attention to them, because it was usual at the beginning of summer for reconnaissance flights to come, and we were accustomed to Israeli planes coming over Sabra and Shatilla areas. The market of Sabra was going as usual - the children playing in the streets, people sitting outside their houses talking, drinking coffee, as usual. Then bombs started falling. ... People screamed, picked up their children and began running in all directions; the vegetable market was evacuated and people just disappeared in front of my eyes." That was how Jenny, an English nurse who worked in Lebanon for 7 years (5 of them with the Palestine Red Crescent Society - PRCS) described the beginning of the Israeli invasion to a meeting called by LSE Friends of Palestine on 18th October.

Earlier, other speakers who worked for relief organisations had described the medical services built up over a long time by the Palestinians themselves, through the PRCS. This organisation, though Palestinian, provided free medical care to anyone who came or was brought to it - Lebanese or Palestinian, Christian or Muslim. Its clinics and hospitals throughout Southern Lebanon have now been damaged or destroyed by Israeli bombardment and shelling, and, such is the Zionist hatred of all things Palestinian, even this medical service has been prevented from operating in the Israeli-controlled areas. Nothing is known yet of the fate of hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese doctors marched away from Sidon hospitals in the early days of the invasion. Derek Cooper, of Oxfam, described the different anti-personnel bombs used by the Israelis to inflict heavy casualties on the Palestinians and Lebanese in West Beirut: cluster bombs which were dropped in canisters and spread over a large area. The victims would be pierced by small metal splinters when they went off, and limbs often had to be amputated because they were covered in small, but deep wounds; phosphorous shells, which would throw out phosphorous onto people when they landed; this would burn and burn, slowly going through the limbs or body of those hit. (During the siege,

bombing of Beirut; to applaud the heroic fighters of the Warsaw ghetto, and yet to denounce the heroic fighters of Beirut."

Rance pointed out the fact that Lebanese Jews have good relations with the PLO, and, when contacted by Israeli agents to ask them to go to Israel, they have consistently refused. This fact gives the lie to Zionist claims that Israel is the Jewish homeland, and that the PLO is anti-semitic.

Lastly, a Palestinian student spoke. He had gone back to Lebanon from Britain to search for his family. Fortunately, all his family were safe including his 96 year old grandmother who defied the Israelis when they tried to move her from her home. Two of the three rooms of the house where she lived had been damaged, and the Zionists wanted to bulldoze the whole house. They told her to leave three times, but she said she would not become a refugee again and refused to move.

He had heard many accounts of Israeli savagery. His 12 year old brother was arrested, but escaped. His father was held for 8 days and beaten up. Mahmoud Zaydan, a member of the PLO information department in Sidon was beaten to death in front of other prisoners.

It was clear from various reports that a regime of terror exists in South Lebanon. Over 8,000 Palestinians and Lebanese are held in Ansar concentration camp in South Lebanon. The Haddad militia, who carried out the Sabra and Shatilla massacres on Israel's behalf, have free access to the Palestinian camps, and a number of Palestinians have been killed by them overnight, or simply "disappeared". The Israelis have refused to let the refugees rebuild houses, and only let them have tents, even though winter will be very hard. It is clear that the Zionists want to clear out the Palestinians, by death and expulsion - that's why they've only allowed temporary shelters. As one speaker pointed out, there is a real possibility that Sabra and Shatilla could be repeated on a far larger scale in southern Lebanon.

All this destruction and terror is carried on with US support, and mostly with US weapons, and by a state which successive British governments have created and supported. They may hold up their hands in horror at some of Israel's deeds, but they are hands which are already stained with Palestinian blood.

the bodies of phosphorous bomb victims would emit smoke for hours after they had been hit - the phosphorous was still burning; penetration bombs, which were dropped on large buildings, would go right through to the basement, and then explode, bringing the whole building down on the people within. "This happened again and again; we saw one just off Hamra street in the centre of Beirut, which destroyed a building and killed 200 people."

All these testimonies showed the savagery of the Zionist attacks, and how they were clearly and consciously directed at civilian targets.

After Jenny, Roland Rance, who went on a British Jewish delegation to West Beirut, spoke. He attacked the Zionist myth that all Jews support Israel, and that opposition to Israel equals anti-semitism. He told how Jews who denounce Zionism have been labelled "traitors" or "pathological self-haters" in order to rule out criticism of Israel. By upholding Israel as a light to the world and the representative of the Jews, the Zionists give support to anti-semitism. Rance stressed how important he therefore considered it to be for Jews like himself to take a stand against Israel. Recently, thousands of Israeli soldiers have refused to serve in Lebanon and there have been many other attacks by Jews on current Israeli policies. Rance said that although these, for the most part, did not break with Zionism they were nevertheless important in giving Jews who were anti-Zionists greater freedom to voice their position. It was against this background that "a group decided to go as the Jewish Mission of Solidarity with the Lebanese and Palestinian people suffering under Israeli attack." Rance supported the previous speakers' statements about the Israeli attacks on civilian centres, contrasting the proven ability of the Israeli air force to hit a target with absolute precision with the indiscriminate bombing of hospitals, refugee camps and civilian housing.

"I've heard people express shock and surprise that such barbarism could be carried out by Jews. I can't accept this position at all; it strikes me as racist. But what does shock and surprise me is the moral schizophrenia which can lead people to condemn the Nazi bombing of Coventry, London and other British cities, and yet support the Israeli

# PANAMA AGAINST IMPERIALISM

At the recent meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Jorge Illueca, the Vice-President of Panama firmly called for the ending of British colonialism. He said: "Beijing (Peking) is right in saying that Hong Kong is part of the territory of China. The three treaties going back to the 19th century on which Great Britain rests its case are contrary to international law because they are unequal treaties; they were never accepted by the people of China; consequently Beijing is entitled to recover Hong Kong when the conditions are ripe."

Illueca added that the treaties are like the unequal treaties imposed on Spain in 1713 regarding Gibraltar and on Panama in 1903 regarding the interoceanic waterway. "Hong Kong, the Malvinas Islands and Gibraltar are unjustifiable anachronisms which are in violation of the United Nations Charter. These enclaves must be returned to the People's Republic of China, the Argentine Republic and the Kingdom of Spain, as a sign of respect for the sovereignty of those countries and in the interests of justice, in harmony with the spirit of our time."

# POLAND: the Phoenix rises

Taking a further step in its fascist repression, the Polish military regime decided on October 8th to declare all trade unions illegal, thus 'banning' the workers' own creation, Solidarnosc.

When the measure was announced in the puppet Diet (Parliament) the dictator Jaruzelski applauded while the deputies slunk shamefacedly from the chamber. As the Yugoslav press pointed out, this measure "deprives at a single stroke the workers of the right to organise."

So far the repressive system which the Soviet ruling class imposes on its own people and on those of eastern Europe has maintained a hollow sham of 'socialism'. The introduction of open military dictatorship in Poland in December 1981 exposed this system's bankruptcy and these new measures take the exposure a step further.

The Polish junta (WRON) manoeuvred carefully to buy the Church's silence by making this a condition for authorising the projected visit of the Pope. But if they thought this would be enough to enable them to dismantle Solidarity, their pipe dreams were soon rudely shattered.

The 10 million-strong trade union reacted vigorously. Its underground leadership TKK (Provisional National Commission) issued a statement the following day calling for a four-hour general strike on November 10 (anniversary of Solidarity's registration), and repeating Lech Walesa's words to the organisation's founding conference: "Solidarity is and will be, whether it pleases or not!"

The workers of the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk immediately went into action. By October 11th they had occupied the shipyard, repeatedly chanting: "Solidarity has been, is and will be."

Besides a statement of their determination, Poles understand this slogan to be a parody of the ritual wording of Soviet-Polish communiques, which always affirm that Poland "has been, is and will be" a solid component of the Soviet bloc.

The workers thus go straight to the heart of the problem by directly pinpointing Soviet hegemonism as the root cause preventing the Polish people sorting out their own society.

Faced with this challenge, the junta upped the stakes by militarising the shipyards. Henceforward, workers there are regarded as soldiers: leaving work can be punished as desertion, insubordination can incur the death penalty, and even "propagating rumours leading to public disquiet" carries a five-year prison sentence.

But all this achieved was to shift the focus of struggle, this time to Cracow and in particular the giant steel complex of Nowa Huta. Among the enterprise's 40,000 workers, only 13 could be recruited into the junta's yellow trade unions. The demonstrators in Cracow now used armed violence. 10-12,000 people took to the streets on Wednesday October 13, led by masked standard bearers. Initially the workers used catapults, but soon they overpowered police and took possession of riot-shields, grenades and truncheons. When a young man, Bogdan Wlosik, was killed, the fighting only intensified, lasting 15 hours on the Wednesday, and continuing through into the following night.

Following the example of Ireland the spectre of armed insurrection has now arisen in another part of Europe to chill the spine of the ruling classes, this time the ruling bourgeoisie in the Soviet bloc. It is not surprising that working class insurrection in Europe should begin where national oppression is strongest, because under conditions of imperialism national struggle serves as a focus and catalyst for class struggle. Poland, like Ireland, is a country with a centuries-long history of struggling for its existence as a nation. Seemingly against all the odds, this struggle has time and again arisen, phoenix-like from the ashes, even as Solidarnosc now soars majestically while the WRON pathetically scurries about trying to pronounce it out of existence.

With pertinent humour, the Poles have dubbed the loathsome Jaruzelski "General Zomoza" (the zomos are a motorised police which the Poles regard with approximately the same degree of affection as the nationalist people of Ireland have for the RUC). This shows how they regard their struggle as one with the struggles of other subject peoples against imperialist-sponsored dictatorships the world over, Somoza being the hated former dictator of Nicaragua.

## "We will never abandon our fight"

"Class Struggle" correspondent.

On Tuesday October 12th the newly-formed Black People's Socialist League, (BPSL), organised a Palestine Solidarity meeting in Hackney, at which the main speaker was Samir Speitan for the PLO. The Rectory Road Family Centre was packed out by an enthusiastic crowd. Many of those present were from black resistance and solidarity organisations and showed that they strongly appreciated the link between anti-racist struggles in Britain and the fight against colonialism and imperialism in the world at large.

In opening the meeting a spokesperson for the BPSL explained their aims. They have adopted the ZANU slogan, "We are our own liberators", and they want to "inject a continuous line" into the separate struggles of different black groups. That line will emphasise the connection between racism and imperialism, because, "You can't fight the one properly without fighting the other."

In the main speech Samir Speitan outlined the history of Zionist Israel and drew particular attention to the support it has received from the US. In concluding, he said:

"The Palestinians have had enough. We want our own state in our own homeland, Palestine. How we can achieve this will depend on the solidarity of all oppressed peoples in the world in our common struggle, our common revolution, against our common enemies, Imperialism, Zionism, Fascism and Racism. We will never abandon our fight and none of us can be liberated until we are all liberated. We look to you and all our brothers and sisters in struggle to support us, so that our joint day of liberation will be brought a step nearer."

The general discussion which followed this speech was intense and lively. It showed what a good knowledge militants here have of the fight in the rest of the world and how well they appreciate the links between the various struggles. And

again and again the conversation turned on how to organise further solidarity actions and how to tie them to the anti-racist and anti-fascist struggles here. A spokesperson for the East London Troops Out Movement underlined the connections between these various struggles when he traced out the career of the new Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Kenneth Newman; he learned his skills in Palestine, became an expert on interrogation, torture, frame-ups etc. in the Six Counties, and has now been placed in charge of suppressing black people and others in London.

The meeting formally ended with a film about Palestine, but further discussion and planning went on into the night. All over the country meetings and groupings such as these are showing the continued rise of the new trend in resistance to British imperialism and racism - this trend is comprised of the unity of black resistance and anti-imperialist solidarity which is growing daily more strong and which is bound to play the leading role in our present stage of struggle.



by H. Stephens.

As a special train from Pyongyang, capital of socialist Korea, pulled into Beijing (Peking) station, the sound of drums and gongs shook heaven and earth. Comrade Kim Il Sung great leader of the Korean people and internationally respected veteran of world revolution, had come to visit China.

China's leaders lined the platform to welcome the visitors. Beijing was in festive mood, and a historic tour was about to begin that became a great festival of proletarian internationalism.

### THIRD WORLD LEADS INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE

The word 'socialism' has taken on a new implication in our era. For our era has placed the struggle for independence of the oppressed and humiliated peoples at the head of the agenda of the international proletariat and progressive mankind generally. It has consequently been in recent decades not the long-established proletarian class forces of the industrialised countries that have accomplished the greatest achievements in moving the wheels of history forward, but the newly emerging proletarian class forces of the third world countries along with the oppressed peasantry from whom they are in many cases only recently differentiated.

It is significant that those forces in our society who are most revolutionary such as Irish

# KIM IL SUNG IN CHINA

republicanism and the youth uprisings led by black youth, are precisely those forces whose origins among oppressed nations constitute a bridge between the heart of our cities and the mighty independence struggles of the third world.

The great vanguard force of this world independent anti-imperialist movement is the Asian communist tradition, symbolised and led by such giant figures as Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung. Such is the significance to proletarian revolutionaries of all countries of the great internationalist tradition symbolised by this historic visit of Comrade Kim to China.

### UNITED AGAINST IMPERIALISM

The speeches exchanged at various points of this tour are themselves enormously significant documents of proletarian internationalism which demonstrate the political strength of these two great veteran Asian parties, the Communist Party of China and the Workers Party of Korea.

For example, Comrade Kim, in a speech in Chengdu, Sichuan Province recalled China's assistance to Korea in the war against US imperialism in the 1950's, and stated that now the "strong factor for peace and security in the Asian and Pacific region consists in the



Korean and Chinese peoples' efforts to strengthen militant friendship and solidarity and in their powerful joint struggle against the manoeuvres of the imperialists for aggression and war". He described the Chinese people as "close revolutionary comrades-in-arms" and China as Korea's "reliable rear".

Comrade Deng Xiaoping in his reply, thanked Korea for its support for China's struggle for reunification and pledged that, "as in the past, so in the future, too, the Chinese people will resolutely support the struggle of the Korean people for the independent and peaceful reunification of the country".

Such clear proletarian internationalist standpoints and militant active solidarity with Korea since the 1950's and before constitute a proud page in China's revolutionary history.

Their reaffirmation refutes the ludicrously impudent talk that still circulates among Britain's middle class left that China does not oppose imperialism!

### AGE OF INDEPENDENCE

Comrade Deng gave a high estimation of Comrade Kim's international standing: "In the international arena he has upheld independence and sovereignty, advocated justice and opposed foreign interference and further developed friendly relations among the peoples of various countries, thereby making an important contribution to strengthening the unity of the third world and safeguarding world peace and security."

Comrade Kim displayed great interest in all aspects of China's socialist construction and repeatedly congratulated the Chinese people on the successes of the Twelfth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party which had concluded less than a week before his arrival, which he described as a "new milestone in the history and development of the CPC." He welcomed the fact that "in the international arena the People's Republic of China is struggling staunchly against imperialism colonialism and racism and for world peace and actively supporting and encouraging the third world peoples in their cause of anti-imperialism and independence."

### GREAT THIRD WORLD EVENT

Wherever Comrade Kim's tour took him, scenes of welcoming crowds

of hundreds of thousands of people greeted him. In particular the youth took to their feet and turned out in force to salute the great internationalist visitors.

Revolutionaries in this country must take this same message of proletarian internationalism to the most oppressed and revolutionary forces in this country, particularly the youth led by black and Irish youth. It is among such forces amongst the most oppressed that Asian communism's message of independence will find the most enthusiastic support.

The internationalism in the relations between China and Korea is a living affirmation of the principles to which James Connolly long ago looked forward in his memorable words: "The internationalism of the future will be based upon the free federation of free peoples and cannot be realised through the subjugation of the smaller by the larger political unit."

Let us salute those two bastions of anti-imperialism and independence, socialist China and socialist Korea, and greet the success of this visit to China of Kim Il Sung, whose indomitably independent thought known as the Juche Idea is a great inspiration to the oppressed, partitioned and humiliated peoples of the world, and represents the contemporary expression of those principles for which James Connolly fought and died in the struggle against British imperialism.

## HONG KONG - China Slams Brits

contd. from Front Page.

welfare of those who have created this wealth is a towering crime against humanity. Half a million people are forced to squat in ramshackle huts let at extortionate rates by merciless racketeers. Where such settlements interfere with the schemes of property speculators, the inhabitants are herded into high-rise flats where whole families may have to share a single small room. Hong Kong has the highest rate of tuberculosis in the world, child labour is widespread and workers denied the most elementary rights of employment and working conditions. As ever, social degradation and humiliation follows the Union Jack, and this British colony has a legendary reputation for drug addiction, prostitution and gangsterism. Social services are almost absent and political rights entirely so.

The Hong Kong police force, one of the most vicious and corrupt in the world, is officered by personnel seconded from Britain. Recently two high-ranking British cops (a Chief Superintendent from Hackney and a tutor from Hendon Police College) were sent over to study the riot-control techniques which have been instituted since the uprisings in Hong Kong in 1967, when between 100 and 200 people were shot dead in cold blood. Such are the criminal preparations which Britain's police force are undertaking in fear of further uprisings in Britain led by black youth.

It is notable that hardly had the streets of Britain's cities fallen quiet after the uprisings of last summer when youth in Hong Kong were also reported to be out in protest against the intolerable conditions of life in the colony: "A mob of youths," reported the Financial Times in terms startlingly similar to those used to describe events in Brixton and elsewhere, "rampaged through Central District in the early hours of Christmas morning. Their targets were the smart shops selling European de luxe goods to rich customers." The youth were heard to shout, "Beat the foreign devils!", and other anti-imperialist slogans.

### UNEQUAL TREATIES

The three unequal treaties which the Chinese government and people so unequivocally reject were imposed by British imperialism at the point of a gun. Twice during the last century, the Qing dynasty which ruled China attempted to prevent British opium traders from sapping China's strength by the unrestrained export of this murderous drug. The British government's response was the 'Opium Wars' (1840 and 1856-60) - vindictive punitive expeditions which ransacked Chinese territory and murdered defenceless Chinese people. Thus far was Britain prepared to go to assert the right of its millionaire traders to push opium wherever they pleased.

At the conclusion of each of these wars, and again in 1898, the Chinese government was forced at gunpoint to sign the 'treaties' which Thatcher is so keen to uphold: the 1842 treaty conceded Hong Kong Island to Britain; the 1860 treaty conceded the neighbouring Kowloon peninsula; and the 1898 treaty conceded, on a '99-year lease', a large adjacent area known as the 'New Territories'.

These 'treaties' are no more legal than the infamous Treaty of 1921 through which Britain claims the right to occupy six counties of Ireland, or Britain's spurious claim to Argentina's territory of the Malvinas Islands. Paralleling the just stand of the Republican Movement in Ireland, the patriotic people of Hong Kong and of all China refuse to recognise these treaties. "It is a sacred mission of the Chinese government and the Chinese people to claim sovereignty over Hong Kong", said the Chinese commentary of September 30th, echoing the words of Liam Mellows in the Dail debates on the Partition Treaty, in January 1922: "There is no question of making a bargain over this thing, over the honour of Ireland, because I hold that the honour of Ireland is too sacred a thing to make a bargain over."

Thatcher was fully aware of this depth of feeling in China

over the question of reunification with Hong Kong, but chose to adopt her "Falklands" manner in a ludicrous attempt to intimidate China's leaders through taunts and jibes: "We believe firmly in self-determination," said the "liberator" of the Malvinas. "Britain keeps her treaties"; the treaties are "not invalid"; Britain has a "moral responsibility and duty" to the people of Hong Kong, and so forth.

Thatcher flew into a rage when she read the commentary quoted above. At a press conference in Hong Kong after her departure from China, she refused to comment on her talks with Comrades Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang. "Her voice husky and cracking at one point," reported the Guardian, Thatcher said she wanted to keep the talks confidential. In an unmistakable reference to the publication of the commentary, she said that keeping the talks confidential "will inspire more confidence than blabbing all over the place."

It is at least satisfying to note that although Thatcher seems to have highly rated her own performance in such "iron" insults to China's leaders, the more calculating sectors of British imperialism's establishment in Hong Kong were less impressed - namely the buyers and sellers of stocks and shares. At the conclusion of a meeting to which she summoned the leaders of Hong Kong's business community to hear her views, her guests were reported to have "raced to the telephone to order the massive sale of shares."

Thatcher can take her impudent and loutish behaviour back to the grubby middle-class sycophants of the suburban Tory Associations which are her spiritual home. If she insists on trying to find people to flatter her 'achievements' in international diplomacy, then that is the only place she will find them.

### CHINA'S DECISION

"Hong Kong's destiny will be decided by our patriotic countrymen there and the 700 million Chinese people as a whole, not by a handful of British imperialists." That this comment by Zhou Enlai to Zambian President Kaunda in 1967 remains the view-

point of the Chinese government today has been dramatically confirmed by China's refusal to bow the knee to Thatcher's "Falklands" bluster. An official spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry confirmed on September 30th that the whole area of the Hong Kong colony "will be recovered when conditions are ripe."

Thatcher's diplomatic fiasco revealed once more the historical fact of British imperialism's deep-seated hatred of the Chinese people and the Chinese revolution, and beyond it of the world of Asian communism generally.

Conversely, the dignified and resolute stand of the Chinese government in the face of British colonialism's current chieftain should give the lie for once and for all to the irresponsible gossip that still circulates among Trotskyites and others of the middle class left, to the effect that China's diplomatic links with the US, Britain and other imperialist countries indicate a weakening in its anti-imperialist stand, or that China and Asian communism generally are not relevant for communists in Britain. It ought surely to go without saying that the 1000 million Chinese people who have an unbroken tradition of resistance

to British and other foreign devils as historic and determined as that of the nationalist people of Belfast and Derry constitute an enormously dynamic factor in world affairs that cannot fail to be of the utmost relevance for the revolutionaries of all countries. Further revolutionary communists should not need telling twice that China's leaders constitute one of the most tempered revolutionary communist forces in existence, and their experience, skill and determination in opposing imperialism in the field of international relations is astronomically more extensive than that of any force on the British middle-class left has ever been or is ever likely to be for many, many years to come. Those who slander China's leaders under a 'left' sign-board are shamefully distorting proletarian internationalism and are merely tailing in the wake of Thatcher's anti-Asian racism.

Communists in Britain unconditionally support the right of the Chinese people, their government and Communist Party, to recover their sacred territory of Hong Kong by whatever means they consider necessary. The Chinese people have stood up and will certainly win national reunification!

## KITSON PICKET

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

The Free David Kitson non-stop 24-hour picket of South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, has now been continuing since August 25th!

It has successfully defended itself from police attacks. In the five court cases, heard to date, five acquittals have been won, an incredible victory given the usual middle class lynch mob "justice" of the magistrates court. On November 17, Norma Kitson will be in court again - prosecuting a policeman for assault!

David Kitson is a political prisoner in South Africa now in the 19th year of a 20 year sentence, and in poor health. The picket has won victories. Doctors, dentists, opticians and the Red Cross have been allowed into the prisons. Rain or shine, day and night, his family and their supporters are

now picketing South Africa House until something is done to improve his conditions. All readers of 'Class Struggle' absolutely must do their best to put in some time on this picket, where they will be made very welcome by Norma, Steve and Amanda and their friends. You can help hand out leaflets to passers-by, or collect signatures for the petition (which has so far been signed by well over 50,000 people), or join in the singing of patriotic African songs. Even if you can only stay for half an hour or less, you really must go. You can't miss Trafalgar Square. Never let it be said that you came to London at this time and failed to visit this picket - an exuberant, dignified and impressive symbol of the indomitable determination of the South African people and their supporters to overthrow apartheid and achieve national independence.



by H. Stephens.

"It is time that a genuine movement in solidarity with the Irish people's struggle was built in Britain," says a recent leaflet issued by the North London Irish Solidarity Committee announcing the forthcoming one-day national conference on November 20th on the theme "Building an Irish Solidarity Movement."

#### LESSONS OF HISTORY

This question ought to be of central concern for communists in Britain. For the lesson of history is that of all the forces for revolution that have seriously threatened capitalist class rule in Britain, the most constant and continuous has been the unbroken tradition of Irish national uprisings. Time and again this unbroken tradition has sent shockwaves over into Britain itself, offering to the oppressed in Britain the opportunity of coordinating and linking up with the Irish revolutionary tradition which has historically always taken a more advanced and insurrectionary form than the struggles of the oppressed in Britain.

British capitalist class rule has managed to survive into our day only because it has so far always succeeded in driving a wedge between Ireland and progressive forces in this country. The reverberations in Britain of the Irish national risings have thus on every occasion so far been successfully restricted by the capitalist state.

Always this has been a 'close thing'. For the cyclical movement of capitalism has always ensured that the capitalist system in Britain has gone into crisis at much the same time as British colonial rule in Ireland has faced crisis. At such times, there have always arisen forces for revolutionary internationalism in Britain who have identified with Ireland in struggle - from the Scots and other 'Corresponding Societies' of the 1790s who supported the United Irishmen, through to the 'physical force' wing of Chartism, the Red Clydeside of 1913-1922, and up to the black youth of the 1981 youth uprisings who proudly described themselves as the 'Black IRA'.

However, in spite of this recurring revolutionary opportunity which history always has and always will provide us with, there has so far been no case where the British ruling class has had to face the combined threat of an all-Ireland uprising and a revolutionary class threat at home operating in close and active coordination with each other. This is the

# IRISH INDEPENDENCE AND BRITAIN'S COMMUNISTS

only reason capitalist class rule has survived.

#### THE ASIAN COMMUNIST TRADITION AND IRELAND

Communists thus face the task of remedying this and building active and enduring solidarity with the Irish people that can ensure that any forthcoming showdown of the new revolutionary forces in Britain led by black youth can occur in step and in active and growing coordination with Irish insurrectionary forces. Only this can successfully prevent the British state from once again driving a fatal wedge between the revolutionary forces of the two countries, and thus ensure that next time round we can tip Britain's rulers over the edge.

#### NO PROBLEMS FROM IRISH SIDE

No problems arise from the Irish side on this score. The Irish Republican Movement represents a fine internationalist tradition that historically has always aligned itself with the progressive forces of mankind ever since the 1790s. The Republican Movement has always shown itself ready to collaborate with revolutionary forces in Britain and indeed with all oppressed and humiliated peoples around the world who are fighting for their independence. All failures in internationalist coordination have been fundamentally due to shortcomings from the British, not the Irish, side. Communists in Britain must therefore take on themselves the responsibility for laying the basis for a movement that can in the fullest and most genuine sense provide solidarity. Without such a movement, British capitalism will be able to continue to stave off its ultimate nightmare of simultaneous showdown with the revolutionary forces in Britain and Ireland in active coordination.

Such is the overall historical significance of Ireland solidarity work, and there is growing conviction among the most determined Ireland solidarity activists that the forthcoming November 20th Conference is going to be a significant step towards coordinating efforts in this direction. All sympathisers with the views of 'Class Struggle' absolutely must try either to get to this conference, or at any rate to make contact with one or other of the Ireland Solidarity Committees who have taken the initiative in calling it.

Readers of 'Class Struggle' will be particularly interested to hear how we who uphold the Asian communist tradition will be applying the lessons of our world view to our immediate tasks in Ireland solidarity work.

The questions raised by the Sino-Soviet split could not be more relevant to this matter. Those who followed the debates of the time will remember that the focus of contention was Kruschchev's 'peaceful coexistence' policy which affirmed that armed struggle against imperialism was hopeless as it risked the outbreak of world nuclear war. In opposition to this, the Asian communist parties argued that it was precisely through isolating imperialism amid a worldwide sea of people's war that imperialism's ability to launch world war could be restricted.

This remains the standpoint of the Asian communist parties. For example, Korea's leader Kim Il Sung declared in 1980: "Ours is an age of independence when the oppressed and humiliated people have appeared as the masters of the world and are pushing the wheels of history with vigour according to their own will and demand. The people of the world oppose all forms of domination and subordination and call for independence, and many countries are taking the road to national independence and sovereignty. This is the main trend of our times which no force can stop... World peace and security can be defended only through struggle against the imperialist policy of aggression and war... To safeguard world peace and security it is essential to dissolve all military blocs."

None save the blind need find any difficulty in telling which of these two main contenders for the title of communist - the Russian and the Asian - has the closest affinity with the Irish republican tradition! Indeed, some of James Connolly's remarks on socialism and national independence are quite startlingly prophetic of the views currently propounded by Kim Il Sung and others. For example, Connolly early on stated that "under a socialist system, every nation will be the supreme

arbiter of its own destinies, national and international, it will be forced into no alliance against its will, but will have its independence guaranteed and its freedom respected by the enlightened self-interest of the social democracy of the world." Later, he was to state that: "The internationalism of the future will be based upon the free federation of free peoples and cannot be realised through the subjugation of the smaller by the larger political unit."

#### NATIONAL MINORITY STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

It is many years since James Connolly made his biting comment that it was "Irish fighters in Great Britain whose unselfish sacrifices have gone to make a record for an 'English' labour movement". The course of working class history in the period 1913-1922 was to give further confirmation of the truth of this assessment, above all in the case of the Scots-Irish among whom John Maclean organised on the Red Clyde.

In our own day, it is still the national minorities, in particular black youth, who have once again raised the banner of proletarian class struggle in the sense Marx used the term - street fighting and the development of organised violence in confrontation with the state.

In such a situation, the Asian communist tradition is of great importance to us in charting our path to an internationalist movement in Britain that can actively coordinate with an Irish rising. The Asian communist tradition, for example, its Indian expression in the Naxalite movement which basing itself among the most oppressed, has waged revolutionary struggle since the late 1960s, provides a potential political bridge between the national minority forces in Britain (Irish, black and others) and the mighty independence movements of the third world of which the Asian communist movement is the vanguard force.

#### BRITISH COMMUNISTS AND IRISH SOLIDARITY

Even among contemporary British communists, it is those who have identified most strongly with the Asian communist tradition who have the longest record of support for Ireland's fight for independence.

For example, "Vanguard" a newspaper published in Britain in 1963-1965 by a pro-China splinter group from the CPGB, published an article signed by A. O'Neill in its July 1964 issue which rebutted the notion which has since become the core of Stickers treachery that "the conditions exist for a peaceful transition to socialism in Ireland." O'Neill describes this idea as "idiotic", and correctly describes the Irish revisionist party which propagated it as "Irish parrots of the erroneous gibberish of RP Dutt." (Dutt being a leading Kruschchevite in the CPGB). O'Neill goes on to quote the Communist Party of China's affirmation that "an awakened people will always find new ways to counteract the reactionaries' superiority in arms and win victory for themselves. This was so in past history, it is so at present, and it will remain so in the future."

To take another example, a 1974 pamphlet issued by the Association of Communist Workers (ACW, a later Maoist group), provided perhaps the first attempt to popularise the communist tradition on Ireland which had been so shamefully neglected for so long by the CPGB. The pamphlet also included a detailed critique of the current policies of the Labour Party, the CPGB and various Trotskyites for failing to support in word and deed immediate troop withdrawal and "Victory for the Irish people".

Early in 1971, the English Communist Movement, another Maoist group, held a rally in the Bullring in Birmingham in support of Ireland. Three arrests took place and savage jail sentences were served. A memorable photo of this event showed a comrade armed with an enormous red flag holding a policeman at bay. She got five years.

Such are some examples of how those inspired by the Asian communist tradition have the most continuous record of supporting Ireland's fight for independence, in strong contrast with the middle class left who always find excuses not to support the oppressed when they rise up, whether those oppressed be those of Ireland or of the world of Asian communism.

#### LOST TIME

The record of the Revolutionary Communist League and its predecessor organisations has not always been good. There was a long period of seven lean years (1974-1980) when we took a shameful stand of opposing the Irish Republican Movement. It is thus largely we who are to blame for

contd. Back Page: "Independence"

## SLISC IN COURT

The South London Irish Solidarity Committee (SLISC) has been subjected to continual police harassment aimed at politically censoring the committee and its activities. This harassment has resulted in 11 arrests since 1 May and three court cases two of which have now been heard: 3 SLISC supporters have been found guilty of obstruction and fined: 1 has been bound over and 1 has been acquitted.

The Tooting 3 - Adrian Pyke, Mark Sealey and Maxine Walker arrested on 15 May during a SLISC street meeting in Tooting - were tried in Wells Street Magistrate Court before Magistrate A. Jennings on Monday 11 October. The defence evidence showed clearly that there had been no obstruction except that caused by the police. The magistrate displayed her bias against the 3 throughout the case in her cross-examination of witnesses and particularly in the fact that she completely ignored the evidence of the only inde-

pendent witness in the case.

This man, a Protestant who does not support the views of SLISC, was shopping with his wife and child at the time of the arrests. His evidence confirmed that the street meeting was not obstructing him or any other passers-by and that he saw no reason for the arrests. Magistrate Jennings ignored this. As soon as the defence case ended she immediately ruled that the 3 were guilty and gave no reason for her decision. She fined Adrian Pyke and Mark Sealey £20 plus £20 costs each and Maxine Walker £15 plus £15 costs. The 3 were found guilty and fined for exercising their right to put forward their views on Ireland.

On Tuesday 12 October the May Day 2 - Terry O'Halloran and Chris Procter, arrested during the London May Day March for chanting slogans on Ireland and charged under section 115 of the Magistrates Act 1980, a civil offence - appeared before the same magistrate - Magistrate A. Jennings - in the same court. The two were accused of conduct likely to cause a breach of the

peace. Terry O'Halloran, having been a witness in the Tooting 3 case and therefore aware of the magistrate's bias, objected to the case being heard by her. Jennings ruled that she would hear the case of Chris Procter but that of Terry O'Halloran would be heard by a different magistrate the following day. The police fabrication of evidence in this case was shown by the fact that they denied all knowledge of Inspector Summers, who was a crucial witness in the case, and had not called him. A witness summons had to be issued by the defence to bring Inspector Summers to court.

The arresting police officers concocted a tale of a non-existent fracas with non-existent bystanders to justify the arrests. The defence evidence showed this to be false and was confirmed in every detail by the evidence of Inspector Summers. Magistrate Jennings had throughout shown her bias by describing the slogans of SLISC as 'abrasive' and by remarking that 'freedom of speech depends on good manners'. She ignored the evidence of Ins-

pector Summers and once again immediately found Chris Procter guilty as soon as the defence case closed without giving any reason. Chris Procter was bound over for a year in the sum of £50. A clear restriction on his political activities imposed by a blatantly biased magistrate.

This was confirmed by the fact that the following day a different magistrate found Terry O'Halloran not guilty on the same charge and the same evidence. He made it clear that he rejected the arresting officers' tale about a fracas with bystanders.

The conduct of these cases makes clear the political character of the police harassment of SLISC and the arbitrary character of proceedings in the magistrates courts where biased magistrates acting on their own prejudice will simply accept whatever the police say. The fact that on 9 October SLISC held another street meeting in Tooting with police present throughout but also with Tom Cox MP acting as an observer and an NCCL observer also shows

the political character of the police attack on SLISC. Everything which had been done at previous SLISC meetings was done at this one. Yet there were no arrests. The attitude of passers-by to the meeting was shown by the fact that they donated over £26 to SLISC during the meeting.

SLISC will continue to exercise its democratic rights of public assembly and free speech. It will continue to defend those rights against police attack and biased magistrates. The convictions of the Tooting 3 and Chris Procter will be appealed. The Balham 6 - arrested on 24 July and appearing at Lavender Hill Magistrates Court on 16/17 November - will be defended as well. SLISC calls on all those who support its right to free speech and public assembly to support this defence campaign and appeals for urgently needed money to pay fines and legal costs. (Cheques/POs should be made payable to May Day 2/Tooting 3 Defence Campaign and sent to the address below.) South London Irish Solidarity Committee, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.



# FREEDOM FOR IRELAND

## IRISH PARENTS DEMAND JUSTICE



### IRELAND CONFERENCE

Support is continuing to build up for the national conference on building an Ireland Solidarity Movement that has been called for Saturday November 20th, by the North and South London Irish Solidarity Committees. Some 80 people have already registered as delegates, and sponsors so far include the Revolutionary Communist League, Revolutionary Communist Group, Wolfe Tone Cumman of Sinn Féin, South London, West London, Bristol and Merseyside branches of the Troops Out Movement, Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee, Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee, Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland, Mosquito Press, Epsom and Ewell Peace Group, Irish Prisoners of War including Gerry McLochlainn, Eddie Byrne and Vincent Donnelly, Rhona Toland the aunt of plastic bullet murder victim Stephen McConomy, Helen O'Brien sister of an Irish Prisoner of War, Michael Holden a shop steward and member of Sinn Féin-Britain, Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist) MP Dafydd Elis Thomas, and GLC Labour Councillor Charlie Rossi. In addition, 8 other Irish Prisoners of War, and 2 Scottish Republican prisoners have expressed their support.

The Conference will be an invaluable opportunity for open and democratic discussion on building an Ireland Solidarity Movement. It will be held at Caxton House, Archway, London N19. Delegates fee is £2.50, or £1 for the unwaged. Accommodation, refreshments and a creche will all be available. Further details from: NLISC, BM Box 4835 London WC1N 3XX.

As we go to press, the latest sponsors are Irish Prisoner of War Patrick Hackett, and the Bangladesh Workers' Association (London).

#### IRISH INDEPENDENCE contd. from p.7.

the fact that many of the most determined and dedicated Ireland solidarity activists who have meanwhile stepped into the breach left by our failings have as yet little conception of the significance of the Asian communist tradition.

The onus now rests on us to show in word and deed that we are prepared to undertake a genuine reorientation of our priorities and thus begin to make up for lost time. An important aspect of this is to work for the success of the November 20th Conference, and thus contribute to the task of upholding among British communists and other anti-imperialists the three great revolutionary movements that illumine our path to an internationalist future: the unbroken tradition of Irish uprisings led by the Republican Movement; the unbroken tradition of third world national independence struggles with Asian communism as the most conscious vanguard force; and the youth uprisings led by black youth which have brought genuine class struggle back to the streets of Britain.

We look forward to seeing as many as possible of our readers at the November 20th conference to stand with us in this task.



During late September and early October two members of "Silent Too Long" (an organisation comprised of the families of murdered non-combatants in the north of Ireland) visited London. They were Rhona Toland and Jimmy Barratt. Rhona (from the Bogside in Derry) is the aunt of Stephen McConomy who was murdered by a British army plastic bullet in April of this year. She stood in for Stephen's mother who was too ill to make the trip. Jimmy (from the Ardoyne area of Belfast) is the father of Danny Barratt who was killed by a British Army sniper as he sat on the wall outside his home in July 1981. They came to tell people in Britain the truth of

what is happening in Ireland, to further the campaign to bring to justice the murderers of their innocent children and to secure the banning of plastic bullets.

Whilst in Britain they spoke at public meetings (including a fringe meeting at the Labour Party Conference), attended a Press Conference, gave interviews and attended a vigil and handed in a petition to 10 Downing Street. They also visited the non-stop Free David Kitson picket of South Africa House where they were given a warm welcome amidst shouts of: "ANC, Irish People, One Struggle, One Way."

In an interview with "Class Struggle", Rhona Toland told us how the death of Stephen had changed the lives of everybody in the family: "especially his mother, she was to have made the trip, but it was too much

for her. Now, through the death of Stephen, we've all joined "Silent Too Long" and taken up



the case of all the other children who've been killed like Stephen".

Rhona said that their campaign had "great support". "Especially from parents, because they've got children too. Everybody's in favour of what we're doing and they support us."

The campaign has very simple demands: "For people to speak out like ourselves; bring soldiers to justice when they break the law; and for a ban on plastic bullets."

Rhona explained the purpose of their visit as being: "To let English people know just what is happening ... we've experienced it. They'll hear what we have to say and can decide themselves if they think it's worth supporting us." Her message to working class people in Britain is simply: "Just give us your support."

The election victories achieved by Sinn Féin were won in the teeth of considerable odds. Not least was the sustained harassment from the British Army and RUC. The following report on election harassment of Sinn Féin was telephoned in by a 'Class Struggle' correspondent in Belfast, a few hours after the close of poll.

At a Sinn Féin Press Conference, called on the afternoon of Monday 18 October 1982, to expose Brit and RUC harassment of Sinn Féin candidates and election workers, 3 candidates in Belfast (Gerry Adams, Alex Maskey and Joe Austin) and 8 election workers who had been arrested the previous Thursday, gave details of the harassment to which they had been subjected. Adams pointed out that Maskey himself had been arrested and threatened with being shot! There had been organised Brit/RUC tearing down of Sinn Féin election posters and a threat to break Gerry Adams' legs. This was merely the tip of the iceberg.

Throughout the north, harassment has been widespread. There were 6 arrests of election workers in Fermanagh/South Tyrone. In Derry, Brits invaded the election headquarters during a meeting and one of the candidates was arrested the day after the announcement of his intention to stand. In South Down (Enoch Powell's constituency) there has been continual harassment since the beginning of the campaign. The election offices in South Armagh have been raided by both Brits and RUC. In Mid-Ulster, there have been 8 arrests and other harassment including the holding of 2 candidates - Danny Morrison and Benedict McElwee (brother of murdered hunger striker Thomas McElwee) and other election workers.

Most notorious has been north Belfast where 22 Sinn Féin election workers have been arrested. Whilst canvassing in Andersonstown, on Thursday 14 October, eight election workers were arrested and only released on the Monday, i.e. after 4 days. Danny McCann suffered crushed vertebrae, a result of an RUC beating. He was hospitalised but has since discharged himself to avoid continued harassment in hospital. All 8 were beaten and at least one - Eddie Carmichael - is seeking to prosecute his



From left: Gerry Adams, Alex Maskey and Eddie Carmichael.

## SINN FEIN HARASSED

tormentors. He said: "We were canvassing in Tollymore area that morning. The RUC were under no illusions that we were in the area and also that we were in the house. They came to the house, smashed the door in, when we tried to explain that we were Sinn Féin workers they proceeded to beat us. We were then thrown to the ground and abused physically and verbally, handcuffed, trailed to the Saracen and arrested under Section 11 of the Emergency Provisions Act. At Castlereagh the majority of us made complaints to the doctor about our injuries. One of us was removed to an outside hospital with a very serious back injury while the rest of us, while we were in Castlereagh were questioned extensively about how Sinn Féin would do in the elections, etc. Obviously we refused to answer any questions which is our right under Section 11. This continued until Saturday night at 9 o'clock, when we were told that we were being charged under a very rare, unheard of law, Section 18/2 of the Northern Ireland Act, under which we had to give our names, addresses, date of birth, what we were doing in the house, and whatever. At this stage of

the game we had been in Castle-reagh 48 hours, by which time the RUC were well aware of our identities. We went to court this morning with that charge, which was justly thrown out by the magistrate because it was seen by the people there as harassment of Sinn Féin election workers."

In addition to dismissing the charges, the magistrate awarded each of them £35 costs. The whole affair was a serious contravention of the Representation of the People Act and shows that the Brits and RUC are involved in a campaign against Sinn Féin, or as Gerry Adams put it, that they are running in the elections.

On Monday 18th, three chairpersons of an election committee in North Belfast were arrested at 6 a.m., to be held until after the close of poll on Wednesday. This was a blatant attempt to disrupt the last stages of the campaign.

In all, 51 arrests had taken place by Monday afternoon. Following the Press Conference, the level of harassment fell off significantly, though it by no means disappeared. Precautions taken by Sinn Féin included keeping crucial election workers away from their own homes in order to avoid early morning raids. Despite the reduction in effective harassment, the Brits and RUC have threatened to go all out once the tenuous protection of the Representation of the People Act is removed, that is, as soon as the elections are over.

### Ireland in Brief

#### Sectarianism

A hack government body ironically called the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Agency, has published figures showing the continued sectarian nature of the occupied six counties. Whilst 30.5% of civil servants in the six counties are Catholics, in the top grade 87.3% are Protestants and in the next two highest grades the figures for Protestants are 83.2% and 82.7%.

#### Unemployment

28.7% of the male workforce (more than one in four) are now unemployed in the occupied six counties of Ireland. Around 20% (one in five) of the unemployed are under 15 years of age. The unemployment rate is almost double that of Britain, and there are now only 100,000 people employed in the manufacturing industry, and that is considerably fewer than the number of unemployed.

#### STOP PRESS

The final results of the Northern Ireland Assembly elections are now known. 5 of the 12 Sinn Féin candidates were elected. The final 2 were Danny Morrison in Mid-Ulster and Jim McAllister in Armagh. Joe Austin missed being elected in North Belfast by 183 votes. In terms of first preference votes, Sinn Féin is now the fourth largest electoral party in the north. One third of all Catholics voted for Sinn Féin despite the fact that it only stood in 12 out of 78 constituencies.

The armed struggle continues! On October 22nd, the IRA took into custody UDR soldier, Sergeant T.G. Cochrane. He is being interrogated in connection with "serious crimes against the people".