

CLASS STRUGGLE



Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

VOL.10 NO.5 MAY 1986

25P

U.S. BASES OUT OF BRITAIN!



In the last month, the nature of US bases in Britain became clearer - even to many who have previously preferred to close their eyes to reality.

With the connivance of the British government, US bombers left their bases in Britain, flew to Libya and bombed several places, including the capital, Tripoli, in flagrant contravention of international law.

A clear attempt to assassinate Colonel Gaddafi, by bombing his home, resulted in the murder of his adopted daughter and serious injuries to two of his sons. About one hundred Libyans, many of them civilians, died in the bombing.

A superpower attacked a small, Third World country, and the imperialists responsible strutted around lauding themselves for their bravery and daring! They now seem astonished to find that many in Britain are merely sickened.

PROTESTS

Throughout Britain, protestors took to the streets. Many thousands responded by showing their anger and nausea - from letters of protest, to pickets and mass demonstrations which

particularly targeted the US bases themselves.

'UNSINKABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIER'

In England, Scotland and Wales, there are over 100 US bases. The US Air Force bases are equipped with nuclear as well as conventional bombs. The deployment of American Cruise missiles has been publicised by continuous protests at Greenham Common and Molesworth. In addition, there are sophisticated tracking, guidance and communication stations.

Britain has been called America's unsinkable aircraft carrier. The phrase is apt.

WHAT ELSE COULD BE EXPECTED?

It should not come as a surprise that the US has used its military bases for military purposes. They are not here for decoration. Whilst welcoming the surge in opposition to the bases from local residents at some bases, those in the peace movement who have said "What do they think we have been saying all this time?" can be forgiven for their feelings.

Neither is it an entirely new development. In the 1973 war between Israel and the Arab nations, US bases in Britain were used for supply and intelligence purposes in support of Israel. The attack on Libya is part of the continuation of this struggle.

US bases are here to serve US imperialist interests. It is not enough to object only to how they are used. We have to say: Kick Them Out!

MAYDAY

A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE....P4&5

ERITREA, TIGRAY



.....Neither Washington Nor Moscow P.7

IRELAND(1916-1986)..



...Easter Rising P.8

WAPPING.....This Side Of The Wire P.3

★SOGAT★NGA★AUEW★NUJ★

WOULD YOU BUY
A 'NEWSPAPER'
FROM THIS
MAN?
GIVE
MURDOCH
THE SACK!

DON'T BUY
THE SUN, NEWS OF THE WORLD,
TIMES AND SUNDAY TIMES

PAGES 2 & 6

Editorial, Reports

FORTRESS WAPPING UNDER SIEGE

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

Wapping is not the most cheerful place at the best of times. Late on a wet and cold Saturday night, it feels like one of the more miserable. Yet whatever the weather, since the start of the printworkers' fight fourteen weeks ago, two or three thousand people have marched down there from nearby Tower Hill. Along the way, different groups of workers peel off from the main march to picket every exit route from Murdoch's scab plant, and then wait until the early hours of the morning, when lorries carrying News International's papers leave.

The pickets have a lot of local support. Many are East Enders themselves, so a few have personal links with the area around the Wapping plant. But other local people simply grasp the issues involved, and support the printers. Many pubs and shops in nearby areas display the posters and notices produced by the unions in dispute with Murdoch.

MESSAGE FOR THE POLICE

As the marchers passed rows of police at the exits to the Wapping plant, on the night of April 19th, one steward with a megaphone had a special

message for the marchers - and the police:

"There's one of the boys in blue who can't be with his colleagues any more. He's Sergeant Sawyer, and he's been convicted of killing a pensioner by stamping on his stomach."

Roars of protest went up from the marchers. As they passed a group of older workers at one point, someone shouted: "Don't get your pension book out. One of these cops might stamp on your chest."

The dislike of the police which this incident shows comes from the experiences of the printworkers at the hands of the police during their dispute. Time and time again, they've seen the police force a way through pickets to let out lorries carrying Murdoch's papers, beating and arresting workers who are trying to defend their jobs, while they collect overtime for their dirty work.

The workers who picket at Wapping every day and those who march every Saturday night are not flagging in their determination to carry on. Some support groups have been set up to raise money to help the fight on, and to encourage people to boycott 'The Times', 'Sunday Times', 'The Sun' and 'News of the World'.

At the end of the week in which the papers were full of reports about the US attack on Libya, several marchers expressed the wish that "Gaddafi would come here and blow up the new plant!"

* * * * *

At the annual conference of the National Union of Journalists in April, a motion to take immediate disciplinary action against 600 News International scab journalists at Wapping, was carried by 158 votes to 146. However, that decision was later overturned by the union's executive: so much for democracy!

* * * * *



Baba Bakhtaura: Appeal in May

Baba Bakhtaura's appeal against deportation is to be heard by the House of Lords on 14th and 15th of May. The court will decide whether the Punjabi folk-singer should be allowed to stay in Birmingham, where he has made his home, or be thrown out of the country. (For details, see March and April issues of 'Class Struggle'.)

The immigration laws are by their very nature racist. Their purpose is to keep down the number of black people in the UK. Both Tory and Labour parties know that the majority white voters expect these policies, and Labour and Tory governments have passed these racist laws and implemented them. In 1962, Tory; in 1968, Labour; in 1971, Tory.

Racist laws will not be smashed by fighting court cases over their implementation. But opposition to the Home Office and its racist policies must take all forms. Every time a deportation is stopped, it is a victory for the black people. And sometimes decisions can be won which extend the rights of national minorities and force the courts to recognise those rights.

**PICKET THE HOUSE OF LORDS!
DEFEND BABA BAKHTAURA!**



'Class Struggle' correspondent.

To help build unity amongst black communities struggling against racism, a public meeting was held in Handsworth, in mid-April. Speakers from the Handsworth Defence Campaign, the Brixton Defence Campaign and the Groce Family Defence Campaign spoke of the issues

were denied access to solicitors. People were held in police stations a long way away; defendants were difficult to locate. Juveniles were interrogated in the presence of social workers and teachers rather than bringing in their parents. In one case, a man had been coerced into agreeing to a 50 page statement when he could not read or write!

The need to share the experience of campaigns up and down the country was stressed. The state is monitoring black people; black people need to monitor the state. Uprisings will occur again and there is a need for the black communities to defend themselves.

PLASTIC BULLETS AND CS GAS

This latter point was raised again in the general debate at the meeting. It was stressed

"SELF-DETERMINATION WITHOUT HASSLES"

facing the ongoing campaigns set up in the aftermath of the uprisings last year.

HANDSWORTH

In Handsworth, the campaign has developed despite harassment from the racist state. A system of home-visiting has been established to give support to defendants' families. This is particularly important as the police tactics are to try and split families, turn friend against friend and destroy the community. Prisons and courts have been picketed. Where possible, help is given to pay fines. Recently, when Steel Pulse, UB40 and others organised a fund-raising concert, plain-clothes police tried to disrupt it, but could not overcome the unity and commitment of the groups.

Monitoring of arrests, court proceedings and police activity is being carried out. The campaign spokesperson explained how the courts are staggering the trials and often giving short notice of court appearances to try and counteract the campaign. Defendants have been intimidated by insisting on black solicitors. Longer sentences have been given to defendants speaking in patois (Caribbean language) in court.

Publicising the campaign is seen as very important. Campaign speakers go to anyone who will listen, including to the labour movement. Already someone has been to Europe and at the time of the meeting, a representative was in Africa.

Counteracting reports on "Handsworth's problems" is important. The eight months since the uprising have seen three official reports produced. They have said nothing new and done nothing for black people. The only funds coming into the area go to organisations the state can control, or to ones with white leaders.

As the campaign spokesperson told the meeting: "The black community is not asking for funds. It is asking for self determination without hassles."

BRIXTON

The Brixton and Groce family campaigns faced similar issues.

Charging of the policeman after the shooting of Mrs Grove was seen as a way of heading off further protests. Pressing for a public inquiry was seen as irrelevant. Such inquiries change nothing. It should be remembered that the Black People's March in London last November, was for justice for black people, not for civil rights.

Experience of police tactics in Brixton, shows that they were much more repressive than after the uprisings in 1981. Interrogations were very long (14-15 hours at a time). People

that in response to future uprisings that the state has given notice to black people that plastic bullets and CS gas will be used to try and repress them.

The liveliest debate concerned the response of white people. It was sparked off by a few white "lefties" who had turned up to the meeting to sell their papers and then had the nerve to try and lecture black people about the need to link up with the labour movement on the basis of supposed common problems of unemployment, bad housing etc. One had the nerve to demand that the campaigns set up joint trade union/black people's councils and defence organisations.

Black speakers were quick to put such ideas in their place. White people had no idea of what it was like to face racism day in day out.

Racism was the central issue. High unemployment etc amongst black people is a by-product of racism.

The campaigns have been to trade unions and the Labour Party but nothing has been forthcoming. If white trade unionists would not march peacefully for Baba Bakhtaura, there is no chance that they will come to defend black people being shot at.

It is up to white people to fight racism amongst white people.

SUPPORT FROM MINERS

Black speakers did pay tribute to support they had received from miners' communities after the recent miners' strike. However, it is only since the experiences during the miners' strike, that the white left discovered how bad the police really are. The police have always done such things to black people. Black people have been trying to tell white people about the reality of the state forces for years. It is racism that it takes it to be done to white people for white people to notice what can really go on.

It was pointed out that black people welcomed any genuine help from white people. What was not welcome, was white people trying to speak on black people's behalf.

It was also pointed out that the black community had given strong support when the miners needed it.

It was also said there was a need to recognise that it was the colour of a black person's skin that was the basis of black unity. The lessons of history from Asia and Africa show clearly that the central need is to organise as black people.



Behind the wire at Wapping ... Murdoch's papers show their support for Britain's imperialist policies in racist abuse - showing the link between policies abroad and racism to black people here.

Sheffield: Racist Attacks on Cab drivers

At the end of April, taxi driver Mohammed Iqbal was due to come before a court for exercising his right to self defence in the face of racist attacks.

A leaflet issued by the Iqbal Defence Campaign and supported by Sheffield Asian Youth Movement, called for a picket of the court and explained the background:

"WE WILL DEFEND OUR COMMUNITIES"

Sheffield has a long and bloody history of racist attacks on Asian taxi drivers. There are countless cases of racial abuse and harassment, leading to spontaneous physical attacks. At other times, these attacks are premeditated and organised in advance, as Mohammed Akram's case shows.

ATTACKED WITH BRICKS AND BARS

This Asian taxi driver in his 40's, was attacked in the Manor Top area, where, unknown to him, a gang of racists was waiting with bricks and bars. What followed was a brutal and calculated racist attack. The taxi was surrounded and a barrage of bricks hurled through the windows. Shattered glass went into Akram's face and he lost sight in one eye, and also had to sell his taxi as he was no longer able to drive. On reflection, he says: "We do them a service and this is our reward!"

In another incident an Asian

taxi driver was attacked by his passenger. He managed to avoid serious injuries by deterring his attacker with a cricket bat, but subsequently experienced "British justice" at the hands of the racist police. His attacker, like Akram's attacker, walks free to this day. Akram lost his eye, and this taxi driver lost his license plate and was fined £500.

As a result of this attack, Iqbal was hospitalised with extensive head injuries which needed many stitches. Iqbal, like many other taxi drivers who defended themselves, faces serious charges from this racist state, criminalised for exercising a basic international human right, i.e. Self Defence!

SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE!

On the night of June 17, 1985, taxi driver Mohammed Iqbal was racially abused and brutally attacked by a white passenger.

This demonstrates yet again the racist practices of the police and courts, who allow racist attackers to walk the streets freely. When Black People defend themselves, they get heavy fines or prison sentences.

Stand firm in this their Babylon system! We Black People will not stand by. We will defend our communities by whatever means necessary and enhance our black dignity!

MAY DAY (1886-1986).... A HUNDRED YEARS OF STRUGGLE !!

May 1st, International Workers' Day, is an international day of fighting for the working class and oppressed peoples.

Its origins lie in the general strike called for a shorter working week by workers in the USA, one hundred years ago and the arrest and murder of its leaders.

1882-85 saw a recession in the USA during which militant workers bitterly fought attempts to cut wages and living standards and fight for jobs.

There were strikes by building workers in New York; miners in the Hocking Valley Coal Strike and by the Saginaw Valley lumber workers. Thousands joined trade unions. At the core of the movement were socialist and anarchist groups who gave it a political direction, including the organising of the thousands of unemployed and destitute in their work.

Clashes with police, thugs and private Pinkerton 'detectives' were frequent. Many workers were injured and died.

May 1st, 1886, was the day of a massive general strike for the 8 hour day. Half a million went on strike across the USA, with Chicago, the centre of the movement, being completely closed down.

On May 3rd, in a clash between strikers and scabs protected by armed men at the McCormick plant, in Chicago, five or six workers were killed and a large number injured.

A protest was called for May 4th, at the Haymarket Square in Chicago. About 2,000 attended this meeting which was angry but peaceful until a bomb was thrown by an agent provocateur, into the police, killing 7 and injuring others.

In a climate of hysteria, with the press calling for revenge, thousands of houses were raided and activists arrested.

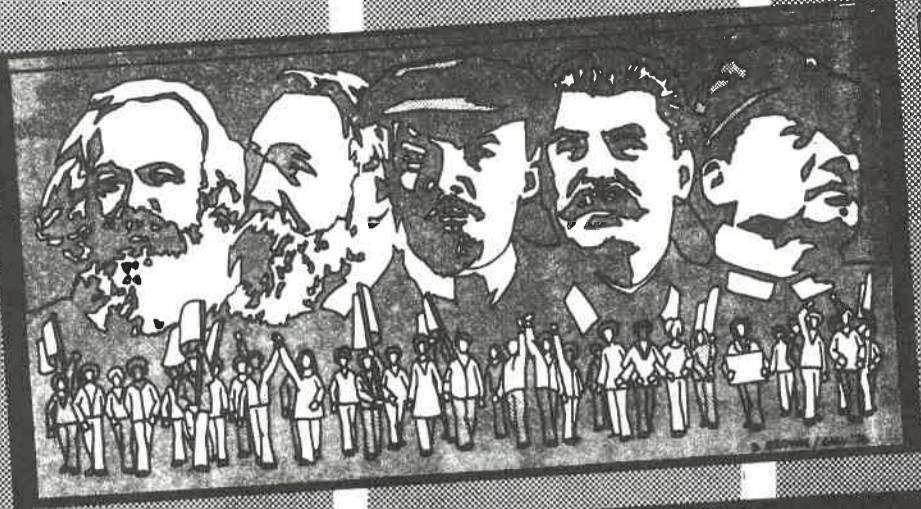
31 people were indicted for conspiracy to commit a murder, of whom 8 were brought to trial: Albert Parsons, Samuel Fielden, August Spies, Michael Schwab, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Oscar Neebe and Louis Lingg. All were known for their socialist views and only 3 had been present at the meeting. They went on trial for the politics as the state attorney summed it up for the jury:

"Law is on trial. Anarchy is on trial. These men have been selected, picked out by the grand jury and indicted because they were leaders. They are no more guilty than the thousands who follow them. Gentlemen of the jury: convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society."

In his speech in defence, August Spies replied: "If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labour movement ... the movement from which the down-trodden millions, the millions who toil in want and misery expect salvation - if this is your opinion, then hang us! Here you will tread upon a spark, but there and there, behind you - and in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out."

An international movement was built in defence of the eight. Finally five were killed: Lingg committed suicide and Spies, Parsons, Engel and Fischer were hanged. Half a million people lined the route for their funeral in Chicago.

In 1889, the Second International called for May Day to be set up as an annual event to commemorate the struggles of the American working people and the murder of the Haymarket Martyrs.



CELEBRATE THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF MAY 1st INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

"Workers of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains!" This rallying cry concludes the 'Communist Manifesto'. It is a call that still stirs. It is a call not only to stand up, but to stand up with all others who are exploited.

The 'Communist Manifesto' was written in 1846. Even in the lives of Marx and Engels, the world moved on. The spirit of the Manifesto is timeless, but its concrete detail is rooted in the situation that existed in the middle of the nineteenth century. We are now living in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The real world has changed, and the experience of the international communist movement has added many lessons.

The colonial world system has long since grown into modern imperialism. The colonial system began with slavery and plunder. It developed into a system of direct rule of the oppressed countries. Nascent industries of the oppressed

working class solidarity in commemoration of the struggles of 1886 and in memory of the Haymarket Martyrs. The Second International consisted overwhelmingly of trade unions and socialist parties from America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. The advent of the First World War led to its collapse as the bulk of the 'socialist' parties threw in their lot with their own imperialist bourgeoisie against the opposing imperialist powers. One of the few parties that refused to do so was the Russian Social Democratic Party. In 1917 it led the world's first socialist revolution.

Russia had controlled its own empire, described as a prison-house of nations. The Bolsheviks - as they were known - went on to found the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a voluntary federation of free nations.

STRUGGLE OF OPPRESSED NATIONS FOR FREEDOM

The Third International was initiated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. To a much greater degree than ever before, the Third International recognised that the struggle of the

some as a result of the success and development of the communist-led partisan forces, others mainly as a result of the defeat of the Fascist occupation by the Soviet Red Army. But the most dramatic revolution did not occur in Europe but in China, home of one quarter of the world's population. China was an under-developed country, partly occupied by colonialists who were allied to the feudal landlords. The main force of the revolution, although led by the proletariat, was the peasantry.

Comrade Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Communist Party of China, had put forward a complex class analysis, recognising for the first time the revolutionary potential of the peasantry, and the necessity for a worker-peasant alliance. He also recognised the existence of a rural proletariat of agricultural workers without land of their own. Just as importantly, Mao Zedong identified the existence of a national bourgeoisie, who could be allied with against imperialism, as opposed to the comprador section of the bourgeoisie whose interests led it to side with the imperialists. The correctness of a theory is shown by its results. The Liberation of China was achieved in 1949. It went on to establish a socialist system.

FORMAL INDEPENDENCE AND NEO-COLONIALISM

Throughout this period, another major change took place in the world imperialist system. Many countries won their political independence. This was a direct result of the successes of national struggles throughout the world. The process of decolonisation has now led to a form of independence for most of the former colonial countries but far from being an end to imperialism, it means that modern imperialism has mainly entered a new phase: neo-colonialism.

events have moved in the last hundred years.

The immediate concerns of the working class of the Third World are very different from the working class of the imperialist nations. Both need socialism to develop, but the conditions are very different.

Rural workers on plantations owned by Geest, Del Monte, Nestles and others producing fruit, vegetables and other primary products, suffer from low wages, long hours, lay offs, brutality and living conditions that are a far cry from the level of exploitation and oppression in Europe and America. They know who their allies are, and they know their enemy - imperialism. The workers and residents of Bhopal, the black miners of Azania, the textile workers of Asia, the dwellers in the urban shantytowns in southern America, do not have the same day-to-day problems as us. We all have a common enemy, but it affects us in different ways, and to a considerably different degree.

The oppression of the Third World continues to lead to resistance by sections of the Third World bourgeoisie. Some demands virtually the whole of the Third World is united against imperialism.

Mao Zedong summed it up well he said:

"Countries want independence. Nations want liberation. People want revolution!"

None of this replaces the need for the workers of the world to unite, but it shows that the struggle for socialism is a complex one.

In the Third World, the immediate interests of the proletariat naturally fall in with long term interests. In imperialist countries, immediate interests of the proletariat, or of some section of the proletariat, are at odds with its own long term interests. The working class of England, Scotland and

INTERNATIONAL

countries were strangled at birth by the dumping of mass-produced commodities from the colonial state. The raw materials of the Third World were extracted by colonial companies through vicious exploitation of the workforce. Resistance was met with murderous suppression.

In many regions, the colonialists allied with the most reactionary elements to consolidate their political power and prevent the independent development of those nations.

THE WORLD'S FIRST SOCIALIST STATE

It was in this situation that the First World War broke out as the imperialists contended with each other over the re-division of the world.

By this stage the First International which Marx and Engels had helped to create, had already collapsed. In 1889, the Second International had been founded. It adopted May 1st as its day of international

oppressed nations for freedom, whatever class led the struggle, weakened the whole imperialist system and contributed to the victory of the international proletariat. The Third International was open to national as well as communist parties. The slogan "Workers and Oppressed Peoples and Nations of the World, Unite!" is an expression of this recognition.

LIBERATION IN CHINA

During this period, and since, the world has, of course, moved on again. Many expected that social revolutions would first occur in those countries where the proletariat was most "developed" - i.e. in the most industrialised states. In fact, the first revolution came in the least industrialised of the imperialist nations, and was due to the fact that Russia was the weakest link in the imperialist chain. Following the Second World War, a number of the less developed European countries became socialist -

The imperialists still control most industry. What industrial development has occurred is one-sided and tied to world markets dominated by the imperialist nations. The working class of the Third World, and its allies, cannot take control of industry and build a socialist state without first kicking out the imperialists who at present own or control it. The peasantry who also desire freedom, need land reform and independence. Even if they gain power, there is a continuing struggle against the international imperialist economic system which continues to exploit and oppress them.

FOCUS OF CONTRADICTIONS: THE THIRD WORLD

But the exploitation and oppression of the Third World is fuelling a fire that will burn the imperialists. Every continent of the Third World rocks with struggle. The recognition by the international communist movement that "the focus of contradictions is in the Third World" shows how far

need to smash imperialism build socialism in order to defend existing jobs workers will back the of 'their' company and its imperialist market sources of cheap raw materials.

This is the greatest opportunity in Britain for the working class to free itself by ridding itself of racism and chauvinism of imperialism in all the oppressed nationalities in Britain, oppressed nations of

ed in the last

concerns of the Third World different from the imperialist need for socialism at the conditions ent.

on plantations, Del Monte, others producing, and other, suffer from 12 hours, lay offs, living conditions far cry from the exploitation and in Europe and they know their imperialism. The residents of Bhopal, ers of Azania, the ers of Asia, the the urban shanty thern America, do e same day-to-day us. We all have my, but it affects rent ways, and to y different degree.

ion of the Third nes to lead to y sections of the bourgeoisie. On virtually the whole d World is united rialism.

summed it up when want independence. want liberation. want revolution!"

is replaces the need rkers of the world ut it shows that the or socialism is a

rd World, the immedi- sts of the proletar- ally fall in with its interests. In the countries, the interests of the t, or of some sections letariat, are at odds s own long-term The working class d, Scotland and Wales



Lucy Parsons, a black, working class woman was a leader of the workers' and unemployed movement in Chicago, alongside her husband, Albert Parsons.

AN EIGHT HOUR DAY - STILL TO BE WON

Contributed

International Workers' Day - May 1st - is a hundred years old. Its celebration began at a time when workers internationally were campaigning for an eight hour day for all workers. In those days, the international workers' movement was essentially a white workers' movement, consisting overwhelmingly of workers' organisations in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

A lot has changed since then. In the countries where the eight hour day movement was going on in the last century, most organised workers have won that demand, and some unions in Scandinavia, West Germany, Britain and other countries, are now campaigning for a 35-hour week for all. Yet, even in these countries, there are areas of the economy where an eight hour day, 40 hour week is still to be won.

But a far bigger change has also occurred in the past century: the working class has become a truly international class, existing in every country of the world. A hundred years ago, many colonial or semi-colonial countries had no working class, or only a small one. But today, the Third World working class is a force growing rapidly in size and strength. In some countries, such as Brazil or Argentina, the employed and unemployed working class make up a majority or the largest class of the population. These younger working classes face fiercer exploitation than their brothers and sisters in the imperialist countries, and that includes longer hours of work as well as worse pay.

If we take a look at how close workers in various countries have come to turning the old dream of eight hours work, eight hours recreation and eight hours rest per working day, into a reality, the inescapable conclusion is that for the great majority of the world's people, it remains a goal still to be reached. It is clear that it will remain unattainable in a world dominated by imperialist powers and firms, which make the maximum profit at the expense of their employees. What's necessary is the revolutionary overthrow of a system which puts profit first and its replacement with a socialist order where the fulfilment of the people's needs can take priority because the people, led by the working class, have the power to make sure that it does.

SOUTH KOREA:

Korea is partitioned into two parts: the north is building socialism under the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, while the south is under the dictatorship of the American puppet, Chun Du Hwan. Apologists of the south Korean regime often talk about the south as

having a "miracle" economy, which has developed rapidly since partition.

But it is the transnational corporations and a few Korean firms, tied to international markets, which have benefitted from this "miracle", and the workers and peasants of south Korea who have paid.

According to the International Labour Organisation, the average Korean employee (in the south) works 56 hours per week, nearly ten more than workers in any other country in the world. 68% of workers earn less than the amount which the Chun Du Hwan regime itself calculates is necessary to support a single person. Hours are longer than average and pay worse in industries such as textiles, where most workers are young women, many of the teenagers. In 1983, 1,452 workers were killed in industrial accidents.

There is only one legal union federation, the 'Federation of Korean Trade Unions', and that is effectively controlled by the regime. Many attempts have been made by workers to establish independent unions, but the organisers are generally arrested and harassed by the police and company employed thugs. In 1985, however, a big upsurge in worker militancy resulted in the establishment of 200 independent unions and a succession of strikes.

One union action, at the Daewoo Apparel factory in Seoul, was for a wage rise - the mainly female workforce was paid under £4 for a 12-hour day. They staged a factory occupation last June which lasted six days before the Chun regime's 'Labour Ministry' sent in the 'Love the Company Corps' (recruited from paratroops and police) to beat up the occupiers and force them from the building. Daewoo Apparel produces anoraks and parkas for British shops such

as Burtons, British Home Stores and Miss Selfridge.

JAPAN:

Korea's neighbour to the east is Japan, one of the major imperialist countries. In Britain, Japan is held up as an example to be followed. But workers there still generally have worse conditions of employment than workers in western Europe. They work a six day week and only have 12 days holiday on average. Although wages are relatively high, so are prices, so that the purchasing power of the average Japanese wage is 32% less than the British average, and 70% less than the West German average.

Japanese unions have a corporatist outlook; they see their fortunes as being tied to those of the company within which they organise, so they don't fight for anything which they think the employers cannot afford.

THE WEST BANK, PALESTINE:

There have been great changes in labour conditions for Palestinians on the West Bank since Israel occupied it in 1967. Before that, as many as 60% of the workforce earned their living from agriculture. Because the Israeli authorities have seized half of the land on the West Bank for settlements by Zionist colonists, and various other factors related to the occupation (loss of traditional markets, restrictions on the production of goods which might compete with Israeli produce, loss of water resources to Israeli settlements), that percentage is down to 25%, including landless labourers.

Those who have been unable to find work with West Bank employers have generally been forced to cross into the area of Palestine which was declared to be 'Israel' in 1948 to find jobs. Around 75,000 do so legally, but between 50,000 and 65,000 more do so illegally. In total, they make up around 40% of the West Bank workforce.

Working hours vary considerably, depending on where the migrant workers are employed. Some do an eight hour day, but instances have been found of children working 13 hour days. What also has to be taken into the reckoning is that it is illegal for workers from the West Bank or Gaza areas to stay overnight in 'Israel', so that many spend up to four hours a day travelling to and from work. Others stay illegally: several years ago, a fire in a Tel Aviv factory killed Palestinian workers who had been locked in for the night by their boss.

In recent years, West Bank unions have won successes over hours from Palestinian employers. In many places, an eight hour day has been gained, and in many unionised workplaces in Nablus, Tulkarm, Bethlehem and Ramallah, May 1st and International Women's Day have been recognised as public holidays.

As in other countries, in Britain the length of the working day cannot be separated from other working conditions. While on the one hand, unemployment increases, workers in jobs find that they are forced to do longer hours either in order to earn a decent wage or for fear of losing their jobs altogether. At the same time, an increasing number of full-time jobs are being replaced by part-time, lower paid jobs.

AL SOLIDARITY

"smash imperialism and socialism in order to end unemployment and poverty, but end existing jobs most will back the struggle their' company to defend imperialist markets and of cheap raw materials. s the greatest source of unionism in Britain, and pre- the working class from itself. It can only itself by ridding itself cism and chauvinism and ng for the destruction perialism in alliance with ppressed national minor- in Britain, and the ssed nations of the world.



WORLD CONDEMNS U.S. ATTACK ON LIBYA

Most of the world has condemned the USA's attacks on Libya in March and April. Britain and Israel were the only two states to give practical co-operation to these acts of terrorism, and few others went on record as giving their support in words - South Africa, not surprisingly, being one of them.

The US campaign against Libya has been a long one. Under Reagan's presidency, Libya and Nicaragua have been the targets of campaigns to brand them as "centres of international terrorism". Since he came to office, Reagan has called Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, the West's "enemy number one" on many occasions. In August 1981, the US deliberately sent its ships into waters which Libya claims as its own, in order to provoke a clash in which two Libyan planes were shot down. This was intended to intimidate Libya and to destabilise it. In 1985, there were reports in some western papers that Libyan security forces had cracked a plot by pro-US officers in the Libyan army to carry out a coup against the country's leadership.

Last December, following attacks on passengers at Rome and Vienna airports which left 20 people dead, the US blamed Libya, and Reagan warned that the US would take action against it. From then on, it was only a matter of time before the US struck.

The first attack came on March 23rd, when ships of the US Sixth Fleet entered the Gulf of Sidra on "exercises". Libya declared the Gulf to be part of its territorial waters in 1973. Though the western powers have never accepted Libya's claim, the issue has not been fiercely contested, as the Gulf of Sidra is surrounded on three sides by Libyan territory, and no international seaways (except to Libya itself) pass through it. The entry of the Sixth Fleet into those waters can only be seen as a deliberate provocation to Libya, intended to lead to conflict.

SECOND ATTACK

Then in April, having blamed Libya for an explosion in a West Berlin discotheque in which an American soldier was killed, the US struck again.

People Protest

On the afternoon of April 15th, as news spread of the US attack on Libya and of Britain's part in it, protest gathered pace. Groups of people rallied in the town centres of Birmingham, Bristol and other cities. In London, some went to protest at Downing Street and Grosvenor Square, outside the US embassy.

That evening, about 2,000 people, largely mobilised by peace groups, including CND, picketed Downing Street, at one time blocking Whitehall. At the same time, there were several hundred at the US embassy, where a 24-hour picket was maintained until the following Saturday. Also, on the evening of April 15th, protesters held a vigil outside the Welsh Office in Cardiff.

On Saturday, April 19th, nearly 10,000 packed Grosvenor Square on a cool but sunny day to make their protest heard. Later, as they marched to nearby Hyde Park, a large section of the demonstrators sat down in Oxford Street, blocking Britain's busiest shopping road for an hour. Over 60 people were arrested. On the same day, protests that had already been planned outside every US base in Britain turned into demonstrations against the attack on Libya.

In Manchester, over 6,000 marched through the city centre to show their anger. In

This time the attack consisted not only of planes from the Sixth Fleet, but F-111's from US bases in Britain. Official US spokesmen claimed that this was an operation against "terrorist bases and training camps". But it immediately became clear that this definition included practically any Libyan military installation, as well as the home of Libyan leader Gaddafi. The US attack resulted in the deaths of about one hundred Libyan people, many of them civilians, including Gaddafi's adopted daughter. The US admitted losing one of its planes.

THE ACCOMPLICES

Two states directly assisted the US in this murderous attack. One was Israel, which helped the US with intelligence about its "terrorist" targets. But the main accomplice was Britain. Before the attack in the early hours of April 15th, British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, had met his EEC counterparts and agreed a declaration calling for "restraint" when he must have been aware that the government of which he is a member had already given the go-ahead to the US to use its bases in Britain. During the House of Commons debate on the attack, Thatcher fully supported the US action and her government's decision on the use of the bases in Britain. "It is inconceivable that we should refuse United States aircraft and pilots the right to defend their own people."

As some commentators said, Thatcher's action was a repayment of the support which Reagan gave the British government over the war in the South Atlantic in 1982. But it also testified to the closeness of views between the US and British governments on how troublesome Third World regimes should be handled, especially one like Libya's which has supported many

Glasgow, protesters showed their anger by laying wreaths to commemorate those Libyan people killed in the raids.

About 150 people gathered in Yeovil on the same day to protest at the attacks. There were people of all ages, backgrounds and political persuasions with a large number from local peace groups. With Yeovil and Sherborne's colourful banner at the front people marched through the town centre, quietly but with lots of good placards. Yeovil had not seen such a big march in years and some people joined in on the way round. There was little open hostility. The march ended with a short rally. Then people joined hands in a huge circle and had one minute's silence. People there were united in the feeling of sickening shock they had felt on Tuesday morning and a determination that Reagan and Thatcher must be stopped NOW.

In numerous other towns and at US bases and installations, people marched, protested and petitioned. Public opinion polls put opposition to the British government's decision to let the US use the bases in Britain for the attack at anything between two thirds and four fifths of the public, and Downing Street officials admitted that thousands of letters had been sent to the Prime Minister since the attacks, the vast majority opposing her stand.

'Class Struggle' correspondent. liberation movements detested by the US and Britain, including the IRA, ANC and PAC.

WORLD REACTION

The great majority of countries around the world strongly condemned the US attacks. Strong denunciations came from the Arab League, Islamic Conference Organisation, Organisation of African Unity and Non-Aligned Movement, as well as China, Korea, Albania, Yugoslavia and the Soviet bloc countries (although the US had only gone ahead with the attack after confirming from its sources in Moscow that the Soviet Union would not concretely help Libya if attacked). The governments of Spain, Portugal and France had all refused permission for the F-111's to fly through their airspace during the attack, and they joined in a general chorus

of criticism from West European governments.

A particularly significant reaction was that of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. At times, relations between the PLO and Libya have been very bad, especially when Libya has tried to play on divisions among the Palestinians or has backed the terrorist Abu Nidal group, which has assassinated PLO members. However, the PLO gave its unreserved support to Libya in the face of Reagan's onslaught.

THE REASONS WHY

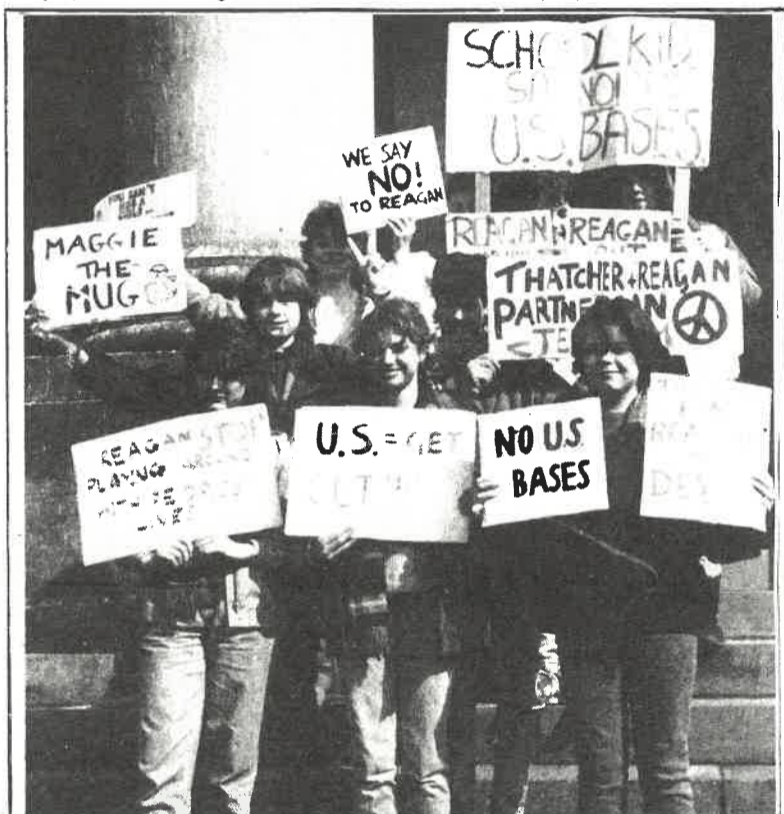
When the Reagan administration claimed to be attacking a centre of "international terrorism" in Libya, it may well have believed its own propaganda, but certainly it suits the purposes of America's

ruling class to preach to the people of the United States that the liberation movements of the world have arisen, not because peoples oppressed by imperialism are bound to revolt, but because some sinister force is manipulating them. The US sees the Soviet Union as its main rival for world domination but at the present time does not want a direct confrontation with it. Therefore, it is prepared, by and large, to respect what it considers to be the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union (i.e. those areas agreed at Yalta during the Second World War, plus Cuba), but under Reagan, it is determined to roll back what it sees as "Soviet influence" elsewhere

In hitting Libya, Reagan knew he would have the full backing of practically all sections of the US ruling class and its political representatives: his administration may well hope that having got the liberals on the war wagon over Libya, it can keep them on when it turns its attention again to trying to destroy free Nicaragua.

Finally, the US knew that the Soviet Union would be bound to cancel the next summit meeting on arms limitation with the USA if it attacked Libya, and it saw that as a good thing. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the US has boosted its weapons spending to levels that the Soviet Union cannot match. The new Gorbachev leadership is prepared to be more flexible in arms limitation talks because it badly needs to slow down an arms race which it is losing. But the Reagan administration can only come empty handed to negotiations, as it is not prepared at present to make any concessions which might stop it from pressing home its advantage and gaining a great edge in weapons over the Soviet Union.

Those who died in Libya are unlikely to be the only casualties of the US attack.



LIBYA: where we stand

The RCL supports Libya against the attacks launched by the USA with the full cooperation of the British government. The true terrorists are the big imperialist powers who use their armed forces and their military aid to reactionary governments to suppress people who fight for national independence, national liberation and socialism. It is hypocritical nonsense for the USA to call Libya a centre of terrorism, when last year alone, the Contra thugs who are armed to the teeth by the USA, killed 200 unarmed peasants on Nicaragua's northern border. Over 2,000 people have died in the north of Ireland since 1969 because successive British governments have refused to accept the right of the Irish people as a whole to decide their own future. Britain has used torture, plastic bullets, assassination squads, imprisonment without trial and no-jury courts to maintain its rule.

Britain and the USA are the main backers of the racist South African regime, condemned by the great majority of world opinion for its barbarism. The USA in particular, but Britain too, backs the Zionist state of Israel, whose many acts of terrorism include the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, in which around 20,000 people, the great majority civilians, were killed.

The Third World was subjected to colonial rule and is still

seeking to shake off neo-colonialism. Its fight has taken and will take many diverse forms from the national liberation struggles to the struggles of Third World governments for a New International Economic Order. Many of the policies of a government like that of Libya express the desire of the Third World peoples for an end to imperialist domination. Our stand with Libya against US and British imperialism is fully consistent with our stand towards the struggles of the Third World nations and peoples in general.

LARGE SCALE PROTESTS

The large-scale protests which have taken place in Britain against the actions of the USA and Britain confirmed that on this issue, the government is isolated. That can only be good.

While seeing all protests as welcome, we reject the positions taken by Neil Kinnock and other social democrats and reflected within the peace movement. To condemn the US raids on the grounds that they will not be effective against "terrorism" plays into the hands of those who brand all or most liberation struggles as "terrorist": the issue becomes one of how best to fight movements labelled as "terrorist", not one of actually taking a stand of solidarity with the genuine liberation forces.

We also reject the arguments centring on the fact that the raid led to the deaths of civilians, including children. That was indeed horrific. But to limit criticisms to the fact that there were civilians killed means accepting that it would probably have been all right to carry out such raids if only the correct targets had been hit. This is actually a presumption of the 'right' of imperialist countries to seek to impose their will on countries trying to escape their oppression.

Lastly, there is the argument that Britain's involvement only invites "terrorist" attacks in reprisal, which simply dodges the issue of what is right and wrong. Such opportunist arguments can only harm the peace movement, as they seek to align the movement with the British ruling class against the oppressed peoples and nations. The best allies for those wanting to promote peace are the national liberation movements and those forces fighting to bring down the imperialist system, the main source of war in our time.

The reactions of thousands of people to the US actions against Libya, and the growing recognition of the demands of the oppressed peoples fighting for liberation shows that this goal is definitely realisable.

TIGRAY:

We reprint below an edited statement from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in which they reply to slanders that they deliberately killed US aid workers.

On 8th March, 1986, the Tigray People's Liberation Front launched an attack on the military garrison of the Ethiopian government at Alamata on the north-south highway cutting through Northern Ethiopia. This attack was typical of recent TPLF military actions, which during the eleven year war with the central government have often focussed upon the concentrated forces of the Ethiopian army and have, since 1981, moved steadily southwards.

Since the onset of severe famine in 1983-84, the Ethiopian government has established feeding centres staffed by western-based relief agencies in the major garrison towns of the contested Northern Region, including Tigray. The US-based agency World Vision International has knowingly operated its programmes in government garrison towns for some time, and is certainly aware that Alamata is quite vulnerable to the military situation surrounding it.

TPLF CALL FOR SAFE PASSAGE

In an effort to ensure that emergency relief aid is safely delivered to all in need, whether their place of residence be government or TPLF administered, the TPLF has, since June 1983, called for the establishment of a safe passage agreement and indicated its willingness to participate in such efforts. Although our desire to see a safe passage agreement implemented still stands, the Ethiopian government has refused to address the issue, and has, during the worst famine in living memory, taken the initiative to escalate the war in Tigray, by mounting major military offensives in 1983 and in 1985.

AID WORKERS CAUGHT IN CROSSFIRE

During the March 8th battle at Alamata, two Ethiopian staff members of World Vision were killed and four wounded after being caught in the crossfire between the TPLF and government

troops, which are stationed throughout the town. Officials of both the US-based World Vision and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in the Ethiopian capital have since alleged that the attack was directed specifically against World Vision, and have attempted to apply pressure on the TPLF as a result of this view.

..... In keeping with the view that relief aid allocated in a war situation should be provided on a neutral basis as far as is possible, the TPLF has for long stated that 90% of Tigray's population can only be reached with aid channelled through the Relief Society of Tigray (REST) because the central government controls only the main towns in Tigray. However, it should be recalled that at the height

U.S.A.



slanders T.P.L.F.

of the famine in 1984-85, the TPLF encouraged civilians living in our administrative areas to seek food aid wherever they could find it, including the government held towns.

FORCED RESETTLEMENT

Contrary to the views attributed to "western diplomatic sources" quoted in the Washington Post, the TPLF has no objection to people receiving food aid from the government side or from agencies there. We do, however, object strenuously to attempts by the government to lure civilians into the towns with promises of food aid and then to forcibly resettle them to the south where, according to

our information and the evidence of several western relief agencies, hundreds of thousands are perishing....

US SLANDER

World Vision and USAID officials are quoted in the Washington Post as stating that there were no members of the Ethiopian military within twenty miles of the alleged "attack" on World Vision. This suggests that they are either completely ignorant of the military situation in Ethiopia or that they are deliberately misrepresenting the situation...

...Any garrison in Tigray can come under an attack by the TPLF aimed at the Ethiopian military presence there, but not at either the civilian population or any neutral agency present.

It has been noted by the international media that the Ethiopian government has repeatedly bombed REST emergency feeding and transit centres, dropped bombs on refugees and massacred civilians at crowded markets with massive aerial attacks. Meanwhile, its repeated attempts to disrupt the relief effort in TPLF-administered areas has been documented by REST, several western relief agencies and members of the media. However, the response of the US and many other western governments to these increasing and deliberate attacks on civilian targets, have been noticeably mild.

As the TPLF has made clear in

P.A.C.



answer back

On April 10th, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania issued a statement in response to comments by the Deputy Minister of South Africa, Louis Nel, in which he alleged that two members of the PAC had been arrested and that they were part of a group of 150 who had been trained in Libya as part of Colonel Gaddafi's "plot to spread terrorism in the world". The PAC statement read:

tried PAC National Leader Zephania Mothopeng and members of the Black Consciousness Movement in secret and sentenced him to 30 years imprisonment. This secret trial was never reported in the press in order to deny publicity to the PAC.

RACIST REGIME ISOLATED

Now that the racist regime finds itself totally isolated, it has been quick to jump on the western bandwagon because it is now fashionable to attack the people and government of Libyan Arab Jamahariya Republic and its leader, Colonel Gaddafi, for exporting "terrorism" to the world. Thus, the racist regime South Africa is attempting to link the PAC with Libya so as to win the Reagan Administration's sympathy.

The PAC maintains excellent relations with all the members of the Organisation of African Unity, including the Libyan Arab Jamahariya Republic. However, the PAC is the only liberation movement in South Africa that has consistently pursued an independent and non-aligned policy, and it does not belong to either of the super-power blocks.

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

We emphatically deny that we are sending people inside the country to eliminate so-called "eminent persons" because it has never been the policy of the PAC, nor is it the policy now, to attack individuals. The principal enemy of the people of Azania and the PAC is the settler racist regime and its collaborators backed by the Western imperialists led by the Reagan administration.

In the past the racist regime has deliberately embarked on a conspiracy of silence against the PAC by never mentioning the arrests and detentions of members of the PAC. For example, the recent trial that took place in Potchestroom of 5 PAC activists ... sentenced to a total of 33 years of imprisonment by Benoni Court.

This case of five PAC activists is similar to the Bethel Trial after the Soweto uprising in 1976, where the racists' court

V.P.Nomadolo, Chief Representative, London.

AZANIA A POEM BY A.SHEIKH



AVAILABLE IN POSTER FORM (A3 SIZE)
(Ahmed Sheikh is a member of the cultural group, The African Dawn.)
Copies are available through New Era Books at the bargain price of 50p + 20p P&P. Bulk orders at a lower rate by arrangement.

DEEPER SOVIET INVOLVEMENT

'Class Struggle' correspondent.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the armed struggle of the Eritrean people for their independence and liberation. During that period, the Eritrean people under the leadership of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) have been on the verge of liberating the last cities in their country still held by Ethiopia. In mid-1978, it was only military intervention by the Soviet Union that forced a strategic retreat onto the EPLF.

Once again, Ethiopia is preparing a new attack on the liberated areas of Eritrea, and there will be increased Soviet involvement this time, Eritrean sources say.

LIBERATION OF BARENTU

A lightning attack last July resulted in the liberation of the important town of Barentu, putting a great area of southern Eritrea under complete EPLF control, including good agricultural land. Fearing that its whole position in Eritrea was in danger of collapsing, the Dergue threw all the forces it could scrape together into re-occupying Barentu. The EPLF held on for 56 days and then withdrew from the town to

fight in more favourable conditions, having given the enemy a good mauling.

The Dergue followed this with 'Operation Red Sea', intended to take Nacfa within 5 days. This offensive was yet another dismal failure, and casualties were high. Ethiopian losses were about 30,000, many of them raw recruits flung into battle with little training. Since then, apart from an EPLF raid on Ethiopia's air base in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, which destroyed 44 Soviet-supplied planes, the situation has been relatively quiet.

MORE ADVISERS

Learning from its previous defeats, the Dergue has realised that relying on pouring in vast numbers of soldiers against an experienced, politically strong people's army like the EPLF, will get it nowhere. So it is preparing another offensive in which it will use more tanks, planes and advanced military technology. As it lacks the trained personnel to manage and coordinate an attack of this sort, it will be relying upon much more involvement by Soviet advisers.

The Ethiopian regime also hopes to harm the Eritrean struggle through striking a deal with

IN ERITREA

the Sudanese government. It would be prepared to stop supporting the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement in southern Sudan, in exchange for Sudan cooperating with it over Eritrea and Tigray. The pro-Soviet Sudanese Communist Party and some Sudanese government officials favour such a deal. But even if it comes about, it will not help Ethiopia much. The EPLF has always been based inside Eritrea, and has never had bases in neighbouring Sudan, although there are Eritrean refugees there.

The reason why the Ethiopian regime, with its Soviet support, EEC and American economic aid, Soviet supplied planes, tanks, rockets and cluster bombs cannot defeat the EPLF is that its support from the Eritrean people is solid and its political and military strategy effective. The way things are going, the situation in Eritrea may soon be back to what it was in 1978, when foreign intervention was the only thing which prevented total liberation being won and inflicted another eight years of war on the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples.

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND



EASTER RISING.....70 YEARS ON RESISTANCE CONTINUES

"In 1916, the British thought they had killed the Irish struggle by executing the leadership. In 1981, Margaret Thatcher thought that the H-block hunger-strike was the IRA 'playing its last card'. On both occasions, they were wrong...."

"Our struggle cannot be beaten. It will not be beaten. It is Thatcher who should play her last card - a British withdrawal from Ireland." With these words, Pat Doherty, Sinn Fein's National Organiser, concluded his speech to the thousands of people who turned out to the Easter Uprising Commemoration March in Dublin, held on 5th April.

The 70th anniversary of the Easter Uprising was celebrated the length and breadth of Ireland over Easter weekend itself. The following Saturday, thousands of Dubliners joined Republicans from all over the country in Sinn Fein's national demonstration.

Speakers included John Noonan, of Dublin Sinn Fein, who was cheered when he reminded the crowd of Eiblin Glenholmes, which took place just yards away from the GPO, the centre of the 1916 uprising.

"In the same street where James Connolly was wounded by British guns in 1916, Irish Republicans again come under fire - this time from the agents of British rule in Ireland."

The platform included veterans of the struggle, bringing together past and present leaders. The Proclamation of the Irish Republic was read in Irish. Solidarity greetings came from Euskadi, Canada, Denmark, Greece, Belgium, France and Australia. A representative of the Green Party in Hamburg, was present.

CONTINUITY OF STRUGGLE

Speakers stressed the continuity of the struggle for Irish freedom, that the present day organisations of the Republican Movement are the true inheritors of the traditions of 1916, including the armed struggle and that the Dublin government too carries on an old tradition, one of collaboration with British imperialism, most recently in the form of the Anglo-Irish agreement.

Pat Doherty spelled out the link with the past:

"The failure of the Leinster House government to commemorate in a meaningful way the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic is an indictment of that government. It is also, in its own way, an indication of how embarrassed the twenty-six county establishment is by Irish history.



Reading the Proclamation of the Irish Republic

"The Dublin government is afraid to commemorate the 1916 Rising.

"The Irish establishment is afraid that the Irish people might take seriously the Proclamation of 1916; afraid that the social and economic intent of that Proclamation could be seized upon by the deprived and dispossessed sections of our people; afraid that the call to arms in that Proclamation would be seen as a rejection of the current collaboration with Britain and a vindication of the IRA's armed struggle."

He went on: "Since British guns were employed by the fledgling Free State government in the counter-revolution by which the Republic was overthrown, right up to the present day, the Dublin administration has never hesitated to defend British interests. The history of this state is a sad story of their acceptance of partition, the abandonment of Irish people -

both Protestant and Catholic - to the British state in the six counties, their recognition of that state, and their acquiescence to British interests in both parts of our divided country."

Later in his speech, he pointed to the continuity of the resistance to British rule: "...In every decade since the high period of the Black and

young Irish patriots who were not even born at its inception.

"We salute them.

"We are also mindful of the sacrifices of this struggle. We do not forget those who have died in every decade and we extend solidarity to their families. We remember our political prisoners in jails throughout Ireland and Britain, the USA and the Netherlands. Once more, we commit ourselves to securing their release into a society worthy of their sacrifices.

"... The right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies is sovereign and indefeasible. That truth will outlast and overcome any attempt to subvert it. It cannot be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people."

PEOPLE OF NO PROPERTY GIVE THEIR SUPPORT

The significance of the massive support in Dublin was pointed out in a commentary in 'An Phoblacht/Republican News':

"Not since the 1981 hunger-strike demonstrations, had such a show of republican strength been seen in Dublin. Much of the credit for that is due to the young activists and supporters of the Republican Movement, especially in Dublin itself. It was the hunger-strike and sacrifice of the ten H-Block martyrs which first motivated many of them to become active in the republican cause.

"On Saturday, the names of the hunger-strikers were prominently displayed on bass drums and cumainn banners alongside those others who have given their lives in the cause of Irish freedom, from 1916 right up to the present day.

"... And Saturday's massive and disciplined republican demonstration in the heart of Dublin, 70 years after the Easter Rising, clearly showed who that struggle belongs to and who carry it on - the people of no property."

Tan War, Republicans have continued the armed struggle. In the '30s, '40s, '50s and '60s, both in terms of armed resistance to British rule and in political opposition to the colonial and neo-colonial statelets, the freedom struggle has continued. Through low periods and high periods in every generation, the spirit of freedom has been kept alive.

"Sinn Fein salutes all of those resistance fighters. We especially, and with particular pride, applaud and salute today's generation of freedom fighters: the men and women Volunteers of the 1970's and the 1980's.

"This period has seen the most determined and consistent phase of political struggle and armed struggle in the recent history of this nation. It is now, in its 17th year, being refuelled by yet another generation of

not succeed in achieving their aims through strip-searching or indeed any other repressive policy they may enforce."

Extradition

*** Britain is reported to be putting pressure on Reagan to make extradition of Irish Republicans from the USA easier, in return for Britain's collaboration over the bombing of Libya.

Long court-cases have been fought and have delayed, and in some cases blocked the extradition of wanted Republicans to Britain.

The vote of Irish people in the USA is an important factor in US politics. But so-called liberals like Tipp O'Neill swung behind Reagan on his Rambo-style attack on Libya. New legislation is at present being drawn up on extradition procedures

and it is yet to be seen if "Irish" politicians in the USA will give it their support.

*** "An Phoblacht/Republican News" of 10th April carried the following report:

"Patrick Brazil, one of those acquitted during the Maire O'Shea trial in England, has been victimised by his employers, the B+I, since his return to Ireland.

Brazil, who was held in custody for 13 months, has been refused his job back on the grounds that he was "absent from work for over 12 months".

He has placed an official picket on the Bond Street entrance to the B+I every morning since his return, but his union, the Seamen's Union of Ireland, has instructed its members to pass until the outcome of a forthcoming Labour Court hearing is known.

*** Over the last month, the British press has given a lot of publicity to the attacks on the houses of RUC men by loyalists. It has paid little attention to the more traditional targets of the loyalist thugs - Catholic families and homes.

In the first two weeks of April, in Portadown, a score of isolated Catholic families experienced loyalist reaction to the Anglo-Irish agreement in the form of bricks, bottles or petrol bombs. Other tactics included threatening phone-calls and bullying of young children.

In another area, Ballymena, a Catholic home was petrol-bombed and burnt out on the night of April 4th. The family who lived there were fortunate to be out at the time of the attack or they might have lost their lives. Between Saturday night of 6th and Sunday morning of 7th April, six other houses were attacked throughout the north.



EVENTS

Friday, May 9th
ERITREA - 25 YEARS ON

Meeting with Food and Video
6.30 p.m.
School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet St., London WC1.
All proceeds to Eritrean Famine Victims

Organised by Eritrean Information Service and EPLF-UK Mass Associations
Presenter: Pitika Ntuli

TIOCFADH AR LA!
Bobby Sands, 1981

Commemorative Rally

Saturday, May 10th
2 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1

Music, Videos, Bookstalls.
Speakers include:
Jim McAllister,
Sinn Fein elected representative, South Armagh.

Bob Doyle
Irish veteran of the
International Brigade

WE SHALL RISE AGAIN!

THE YELLOW ACTION

May 31 - June 2

Blockade Trident Construction Work

Faslane Peace Camp

Yellow - Don't Let the Sun
Shine on Trident!
Yellow - To Show How Trident
Makes Us Sick!
Yellow - For a Trident-Free
Summer!

RALLY TO COMMEMORATE IRISH
HUNGER STRIKERS

Saturday, 21st June,
2 p.m.

Assembly Hall, Digbeth
Civic Hall,
Birmingham City Centre.

A rally to commemorate the heroic struggle of the ten Irish Hunger Strikers murdered by the British state. How their struggle is part of the ongoing Irish national liberation struggle.

MARCH FOR FREEDOM
IN NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA!

LONDON
Saturday, June 28th.

Organised by Anti-Apartheid
Movement.



*** The last International Women's Day picket of Armagh Jail took place on Saturday, March 8th, with the main demand being 'Stop the Strip Searches'.

The picket was the last of its kind because women prisoners from Armagh were transferred to the new high-security Maghaberry Jail. However, it was reported on March 28th that already 13 strip-searches had been carried out in the new prison - showing the real reason for the strip-searches.

As a recent statement by Republican POW's said: "The real reason is that strip-searching is a systematic torture weapon. The backbone of republicanism was not broken in Armagh and we stand resolved that the administration in Maghaberry will