

CLASS STRUGGLE

Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

VOL. 14 NO. 6 JULY-AUGUST 1990 30p



香港

A MATTER OF HONOUR
The nationality question
of Hong Kong

WHAT VALUE IN A
BRITISH PASSPORT
FOR THE PEOPLE
OF HONG KONG ?

INSIDE:

opting in
NHS doctors at
their patients' side

palestine
temperatures
rising

**IRA inter-
viewed**

AZANIA WILL BE FREE!

South Africa
an 'illegal
regime' - BCM(A)

Remember Soweto

On behalf of the RCL I would like to say a few words about how we, from our angle in this country, perceive the historical process today, and the significance of the Azanian people's struggle within this.

Undoubtedly, the African continent has from the earliest times been a great initiator of progress in human history. The historical dynamic of this continent was in full development when it was interrupted by the terrible depredations of the slave trade and colonialism. Not only did the colonisers try to interrupt this developmental process, they even wrote their history books in such a way as to deny that it had ever existed. But in fact it never really was interrupted, it simply surfaced in a new form, in the struggles against colonialism, in the liberation movements. We consider the Azanian people's struggle, which Soweto personifies, to be an authentic carrying-forward of Africa's great creative role in opening new directions for human history.

The necessity of this contribution is clearly shown by the unprecedented barbarism of European history. There is ample evidence for this even during the present century, without needing to go any further back. At the same time, many people used to cling to the view that the core of human progress was to be found in Europe, in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This assumption has now been exposed as a hollow sham. Diehard Soviet supporters everywhere are asking themselves, what the hell am I doing here?

This is in fact the bankruptcy of a certain form of what presents itself as Marxism. This was a trend which took on board fully the unilinear and Eurocentric assumptions of imperialism. From the point of view of the revolutionary movement, good riddance! We are better off without it! In the coming period, there is sure to be a realignment of the revolutionary movements. They will further liberate themselves from sterile dogmas and integrate themselves more deeply with the rich variety of concrete conditions. Those trends like the BCM, which have been doing this for a long time, will undoubtedly have the opportunity to act as poles of attraction in this process.

A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The collapse of what was called socialism in Eastern Europe will have another important result, in relation to the structure of capitalism. The full

As an editorial, we print on these pages a speech by a representative of the Revolutionary Communist League, on the occasion of the Soweto Commemoration Meeting called by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, on June 16th, 1990.

incorporation of these vast new areas into the capitalist system constitutes what can probably be regarded as the third stage in the restructuring of the capitalist economic base over the past decade and a half. The first was the extracting of a massive surplus from the oppressed nations through various means including the so-called third world debt, a term which we regard as an absolute obscenity, bearing in mind the centuries-long history of colonial plunder. The second was the introduction of the new technology and the restructuring of the productive process itself.

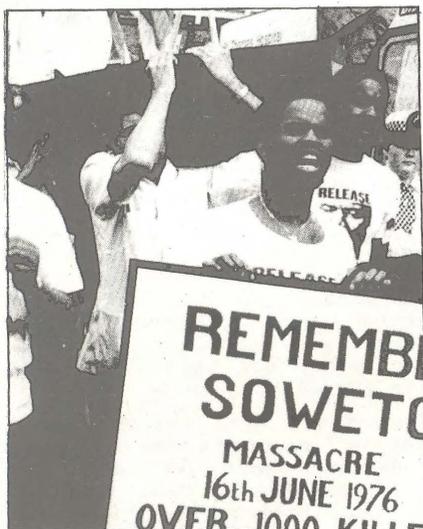
Together, these elements add up to a new stage in the political economy of imperialism, which creates increased mechanisms for the peripheralisation and super-exploitation of the working masses. The transnational corporations are able to fragment the productive process in such a way that individual processes can be hived off to any part of the world, and a reversion to the

primitive putting-out system can coexist with ultra-modern technology at the core. This will increasingly expose as hollow the pretence that so-called newly industrialising countries can 'take off' within the orbit of world capitalism.

In this context, we think it is particularly significant that the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) has raised, far more clearly than any of the other political forces in Azania, the crucial question: Granted that change is important, but what sort of system are we changing into? The search for a form of society and economy which will resist peripheralisation within world capitalism will be the crucial question in the coming period, not just for so-called third world development, but in a broader sense for the vision of an alternative, socialist society.

The old definitions of socialism tended to fall into capitalism's way of seeing things and simply tried to do the same things better, for example producing more steel. But in the future, the line of demarcation will be much more qualitative than merely quantitative. In doing so, the revolutionary movements will unleash new forces which in turn will lay the basis for a constructive delinking.

The most critical of these will, in our view, be the women's movement. This will be the real test of the creativity of the movement for change, its ability to advance beyond even the most progressive and dynamic social movements of the past. All later forms of peripheralisation and super-exploitation are foreshadowed in women's oppression, which at the same time also has its own specificity, and women's struggle against this stretches back beyond imperialism and capitalism, and probably even beyond class society as such. The many outstanding women comrades in the vanguard of the struggles waged by AZAPO and the BCM are undoubtedly the harbinger of something much greater in the future, and constitute the firmest guarantee of success in building a new social order.



Revolution in Azania, and in the other oppressed nations will weaken imperialism and precipitate change world-wide. We have to realise today that this will necessarily be a protracted process. The imperialist powers, whether we speak of the USA, Europe or Japan, are still strong, and whatever their rivalries in the economic plane, they have so far been able to contain these to a point where they do not seriously threaten their joint hegemony over the world system.

BUILD SOLIDARITY

Here in Europe, the process of building a revolutionary alternative will be very protracted and complex. The spiritual void left by a decade of monetarism has left the way open to the spread of a horrendous cancer of racism, which is amply reflected in the policies for 1992 and the 'common European home', something which also finds a basis in the new centre-periphery relationship of the world economy. But the forces for change do exist. Classes and class struggle are still there, and show no signs of melting away, in spite of the predictions of the apostles of the designer lifestyle politics of so-called 'new times'.

The class struggle and the national minority and anti-racist struggles have many potential points of contact. The challenge is to build a strategic alliance between these currents on the basis of principled respect by the white working class for the

specificity of black and national minority demands, including that of free national development. This is a very difficult task, but it is the only way of breaking the ideological hold of imperialism over the majority population in the capitalist heartlands.

The restructuring of the labour process has also altered how we understand the working class. The organised stronghold of labour at the point of production has been deliberately undermined in favour of a more fragmented and peripheralised workforce into which women are being recruited in the expectation that they, together with black people, can be pushed into a super-exploited status. But in doing this, capitalism has only unleashed fresh forces of opposition, where the hold of opportunism will necessarily be weaker than in the traditional labour movement. The challenge for communists is to change their perspective accordingly.

In advancing the cause of revolution in a country like Britain, it is crucial that anti-imperialist solidarity be developed on a principled basis. According to some reports, British imperialism has been putting pressure on AZAPO and saying that it will view with extreme displeasure any attempt to disrupt the process of negotiations. Of course this is to be expected of imperialists. But what is more surprising is that some forces which claim to be on the left try and tell the liberation movements what to do, and express their extreme displeasure at this or that policy. We consider that it is the sovereign right of the organisations to which the liberation movement has given rise to determine the conditions in which they deploy various forms of struggle, including of course the armed struggle.

Solidarity world-wide will be the most important guarantee of our mutual success, and this is why we value so highly our links with the Azanian struggle, via the BCM. We wish on this important occasion to express our absolute confidence in the victory of the Azania's struggle and in the growing revolutionary unity of the world's people. ■

Contents

- Economic League.....4**
- Mandy's Diary.....5**
- Health Service.....6&7**
- Azania.....8&9**
- Eritrea & Tigray.....10**
- Hong Kong.....11**
- Palestine....12&13**
- Ireland.....14&15**

**PUBLISHED BY
THE REVOLUTIONARY
COMMUNIST LEAGUE
C/O 203 SEVEN
SISTERS ROAD,
LONDON N43NG**

WHO IS WATCHING WHO?

"Innocent people have nothing to fear." This was the assurance given by the Economic League's Director General, Stanford Hardy, to a House of Commons' Employment Select Committee, on June 13th. The right-wing vetting agency acknowledged that it kept secret files on thousands of people and compiled information on the majority of MP's. Jack Winder, the Economic League's Director of Research, also said that information had been given to trade union officials, who were under attack from "suspected extremists".

Former Economic League Director, Michael Noar, had complained, in an internal letter, about "unfair" attacks in the media. He argued that the Economic League was not anti-union, and that "senior trade union leaders have participated in League functions at both regional and national level" - a reference to the involvement of former railway union boss, Sid Weighell.

The Economic League said that it had been asked to check 200,000 names by employers, who subscribed £750,000 annually. Ford Motor Company admits to having used the services of the Economic League. In theory, no-one can be sacked for being a trade unionist. The reality, however, is that activists are sacked on a minor technicality or never get a job in the first place.

The Economic League claims to keep its records on alleged "members and supporters of extreme political organisations" on a card index. This is to avoid disclosure provisions which apply to computer-held records under the Data Protection Act.

LEAGUE WATCH

The Economic League has suffered recently from the establishment last year of **League Watch**, an independent research agency set up to expose and curtail the shadowy practices of the League. There were a lot of red faces around when the Economic League's Annual General Meeting, at the Cavalry and Guards' Club, in Piccadilly, London, was covered by League Watch. The then-Director General, Michael Noar, and Research Officer, Thom Robinson, were dismissed as a result of breaches in security arrangements. Delegates were photographed entering the meeting and League Watch researchers gate-crashed the meeting, held in the Balaclava Room.

Our MP's should take a look closer at home if they want to find out who is watching whom. A report from the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL), issued in January, pointed out that about one million jobs in state and private industry are subject to Secret Service vetting. This includes jobs in British Telecom, the BBC and defence

contractors, as well as the police, Ministry of Defence and Home Office.

The NCCL points to the power that this gives to an unrepresentative group of middle-aged white men, drawn from the police and armed services, whose political impartiality cannot be taken for granted. Such a group does, indeed, sound like just the sort of group to whom the state would entrust its security, when it is not contracted out to groups like the Economic League!

Five years ago, the national police computer held a name index of about one tenth of the population. That was five million "criminals" and more than 3.5 million sets of fingerprints on file.

NOT SO SECRET

Patrick Jeremy Walker, attached to the Ministry of Defence, was awarded a medal in last month's Queen's

Birthday Honours List. He is better known around Gower Street as former head of F-branch, which deals with domestic subversion and counter-terrorism. He was posted to the North of Ireland during the shoot-to-kill period of the early 1980's. Now he is more simply head of MI5.

.....
League Watch, Tenants' Corner, 48A Oval Mansions, Vauxhall Street, London SE11.

THE PARTY IS OVER

Contributed

In the wake of the collapse of the Eastern European regimes last year, the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) has taken drastic moves to distance itself from what was once wrongly described as "existing socialism".

A special party conference will debate three options for the future of this politically bankrupt party. So bad has the morale and commitment become, that a party which claimed a membership of 7,600 was unable to sustain the weekly rag, 'Seven Days', which has now been closed down, unlamented.

If the CPGB is thinking of a new name, the Social Democratic Party would suit the bill and it has recently become available, with the retirement of David Owen, whom

the CPGB once courted for the anti-Thatcher alliance.

SLIPPERY SLOPE

Here is not the place to go into details of when the slippery slope began. But some credit should be given to the CPGB's theoretical poverty and adoption of opportunist and Labour Party orientated strategies.

At the special executive meeting held on the weekend of June 17th, the latest General Secretary, Nina Temple, was left with the task of completing the funeral arrangements. The winding up of the party is spelt out in the options of amending or suspending the constitution; forming a new party that would seek to attract the Greens and marginalised Labour Left; or rejecting the party structure in favour of a "loose network

of movements and forums".

One cannot but welcome this decision to follow the example of their discredited 'comrades' in Eastern Europe, to abandon their spurious claim to be Marxists. Marxism has been tarnished by the actions of such people. There will be less confusion on what communism really stands for; not the anti-revolutionary, anti-working class, bourgeois arguments of that coffee table glossy, 'Marxism Today'.

The collapse of international revisionist forces is vindication of the correct stand taken by anti-revisionist forces in the sixties, and the task for all 'Class Struggle' readers should be to join the fight back and rebuild the communist movement.

Mandy's Diary

June 24th: Our telly has been out of action now for three weeks. I'm surprised at how little I miss it. In fact, it's a relief not to be shouting above the background noise. But I've no idea what's going on in the world. I don't often get the time to read newspapers, not on a regular basis. So my thoughts this month are introspective.

I went to see a friend last night. She's moved out of the flat she was sharing with her boyfriend. They've been together at least ten years. Well, in a way they're still together. They haven't split up. They've just decided not to live together. She couldn't stand his dirty socks any longer, and the way she always ended up cleaning the loo and emptying the bins. In a way, I envy her that freedom. He still comes round at weekends and they go out together. They spend time together because they want to, not because they're married and that's what you do when you're married.

When I think about it, a lot of my friends live this sort of life, and are quite happy with it. Especially the women. They want their independence and privacy, and who can blame them?

I met a 20-year old the other day. She said: "When I get married, there will be one room for him, one room for me, and one room for us both." Isn't it nice to be young and idealistic? Before you realise how much a house with all those spare rooms is going to cost?

Is this the new trend, I wonder? In the sixties, it was "living together". Now it's "living apart".

It got me thinking about marriage. What's it all about? Why do it? With one third of marriages in this country ending in divorce, and probably many more couples staying together out of habit or because of the children, probably at least half the marriages are miserable. Many more have serious problems. If we only knew, the number of people who are happily married are probably quite a small minority. Given all the social, emotional and financial pressures to get married, and stay married, it's not working, is it?

Unlike most, I'm not sorry. In the past, women put up with it because they had no choice.



Now, they have a choice and a lot of them are voting with their feet. Now women can control their own fertility, now they can earn their own living. Women know when a situation is oppressive to them and they have the right to break out of it.

But is marriage inherently oppressive? Yes, I think it is, because men-women relationships are inherently oppressive. I think the fact that women are recognising this and acting on it, can only be a good thing.

Of course, living apart wouldn't work for everybody. It wouldn't work for us, for a start. We give each other a lot of support. He does pull his weight most of the time. We are one of the minority who are happily married. Both of us love the kids and there's no reason to split up. Besides, we couldn't afford to run two households.

I keep seeing these statistics in the papers: "Number of divorces at all-time high", "Government urged to act on split families", "A quarter of all children born out of wedlock". Can anything be done, they ask, to reverse these trends, to keep the family together? As if having to live together, whether you like each other or not, is automatically going to resolve all your problems.

It might resolve some of the government's problems, like they won't have to fork out so much in Social Security money. It might resolve some of men's

problems, like they have an unpaid cook, cleaner, nursery nurse and whatever, on hand 24 hours a day. But it doesn't resolve women's problems. It does nothing for the quarter of the female population in this country who have been battered by men at some time in their lives. It does nothing for the one in five women whose husbands commit adultery. It does nothing for the many who are raped, quite legally, by their husbands, second class citizens, not worth equal pay, deprived of equal rights, money, status, the right to speak up, answer back, hold different opinions.

Who does the family in its present form serve? It serves children, it serves men and it serves those who run the socio-economic system. It does not serve women, because it is women who do the serving.

It is well known in general that the children of single parents have a harder time than children with two parents. There are many reasons for this, one of the most important being financial: the single parent either lives on Social Security or has to spend some of the salary on childcare. There is only one salary coming in, whereas many households have two.

But the fact that one-parent families have a harder time than two-parent families seems to lead to a jump in logic: that the ideal situation is for all families to have two parents and therefore extra pressures are placed on single parents. They are blamed for splitting up. Fathers are forced to support their estranged families.

But the policies of oppression cannot and will not succeed. Neither economic pressures nor social pressures like being made to feel guilty, will force people to live together if they do wish to.



Health Service: END OF AN ERA



Since April 1st of this year, General Practitioners (GP's) have been trying to work their new contracts of employment, rejected by them but forced on them by the government. Their worst fears are being realised. General practice is in chaos, is under new management set on cutting costs and, for the first time ever, is suddenly and drastically cost-limited.

The new contract requires GP's to offer a whole set of new services to patients and requires them to produce a huge number of new statistics, involving a mass of paperwork, for no extra pay. At the same time, not only are they not allowed to take on more partners or staff, or to enlarge their premises, but funding for all these options is being cut.

General practice in this country has always been funded in these respects by demand, within certain limits, and has been managed by Family Practitioner Committees (FPC's) which had local lay and medical representation.

Since April 1st, the FPC's have been re-organised and each is now run by a General Manager appointed by the government, responsible only to central government and paid on a bonus scheme, according to the budget savings he can make. He has been allocated a budget at the very last minute, which is inadequate for the new contract requirements.

PRACTICAL RESULTS

What does this mean to us when we next visit our doctor? If you reckon to be healthy and normally steer clear of your doctor, you will start getting letters asking you to come for a check-up. The government has decreed that everyone not seen for three years is identified and seen every three years for a weight, height, blood pressure and urine check, together with a discussion of life-style, including sexual practices. (Such ridiculous demands on doctors as asking them to measure adults' height every three years is the sort of thing that is driving them to despair!)

If you are a woman, you will either be forced into having a cervical smear test or totally ignored, depending on whether your doctor thinks it is worthwhile to try and reach the target number of smears (and provide the paperwork to convince the FPC each quarter.)

If you actually go to see your doctor, you may well find both the receptionist and the doctor hidden under computer forms. Possibly, they will be asleep as well, because if the doctor has been up all night on-call for the practice, the new contract forbids the partnership from arranging the next day off... They must be in surgery five days a week, as well as provide twenty-four hour cover, seven days a week for their patients. And so it goes on...

The only thing that people really want from their doctor, time for listening, discussing and caring about a problem, is not mentioned in the contract and is bound to suffer.

Within a year, GP's will be having to refuse patients the medical attention in their prescribing, in their ability to offer counselling and nursing within their practice, in their ability to refer patients for hospital treatment and tests. All this seemed impossible a few months ago, but is certainly understood by GP's, who are retiring early and not applying for advertised posts. Training schemes for general practice, for years over-

subscribed by newly qualified doctors, cannot even find enough young doctors to fill the posts.

ROOT OF THE NHS

You may well think this is an exaggerated picture of the changes. That GP's have been well-paid and smug for so long that they deserve it. But general practice is the very root of the NHS. It is the point of demand which the rest of the service is bound to try and fulfil. The NHS has been savagely attacked at this level, for the first time, and the effects of this will filter through to everyone.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION FIGHTS BACK



John Marks, Chairman of BMA.

The British Medical Association's (BMA) £2.5 million campaign against the government's Health Service "reforms" began a new phase in June when the 600 doctors at their conference voted unanimously to oppose them.

Dr. John Marks, Chairman of the BMA Council, said doctors would be urged not to cooperate with introducing the changes provided that patient care was not harmed.

He went on: "I suspect the number of hospitals which volunteer for self-governing status will be reduced almost to zero."

DOCTORS OPPOSE OPTING OUT PLANS

Opposition to hospitals opting-out as self-governing trusts is widespread amongst hospital consultants.

In 21 out of 28 hospitals, where the consultants were balloted, there was a clear majority against opting out.

Originally, 189 out of 300 Hospitals eligible showed an interest in opting out in June 1989. By November 1989, 80 were said to be "front-runners".

In May 1990, Duncan Nichol, NHS Chief Executive, said 50 were likely to become self-governing.

Where ballots and public opinion surveys have been done amongst all the staff and the local population, all have had massive majorities opposing opting-out.

IN LEEDS:

Consultants at St James' Hospital in Leeds have overwhelmingly voted against opting out.

Organised by Dr Ian Adams, an accident and emergency consultant, the ballot produced a 57-44 vote against the hospital becoming a self-governing trust.

AT GUYS:

The government's plans for Guy's Hospital, touted by the government as a jewel in the crown of its opt-out plans for

hospitals, has been dealt a powerful blow by local GP's.

In response to a questionnaire only 1.4% said they would vote in favour of Guy's becoming a self-governing trust, with 66.7% definitely voting against.

Three out of four said the quality of patient care would become worse if Guy's became a Trust.

CLARK CHANGES THE RULES

As more and more hospital opting out plans are being rejected by staff, including hospital consultants, the predictable has happened in that the government has changed the rules.

Kenneth Clarke has publicly announced that he will override votes by consultants against their hospitals opted-out, self-governing trusts. He told the Institute of Health Services Management conference that the critical factor was whether the change would be in the interests of patients. He did not say how this was to be judged. But one can presume that he will be the sole judge!

This statement is in direct contradiction to the wording of the White Paper 'Working For Patients' which states



that: "Senior professional staff, especially consultants, must be involved in the management of the hospital" and that "Any successful proposal would need to demonstrate that it carried the substantial commitment of those likely to be involved in the new management".

It remains to be seen whether consultants can form a coalition with local public opinion to prevent this sort of steam-rolling, or whether fears for their personal futures will silence them.

AFTER THE AMBULANCE DISPUTE...

THE CUTS

Non-emergency ambulance services in Dudley, in the West Midlands, and in Worcester are being cut.

In Dudley, the ambulance service has been cut by £100,000 as part of a £1.6 million cost-cutting package. New guidelines have been issued restricting the type of patients who can use the service.

In Worcester, new guidelines restrict the use of non-emergency ambulances to stretcher cases who need the help of two ambulance workers.

If you only need the help of one, then you do not qualify, even though you would find it impossible to use other types of transport.

In Worcester, a NUPE spokesperson pointed out that the cuts reduced the service to below that provided by suspended ambulance workers during the recent dispute.

John Dempsey, regional NUPE organiser, commented: "The public have an absolute right to an ambulance service if they require one. We are

moving towards a situation where a patient has to be at death's door to qualify for an ambulance."

It is not just in Dudley and Worcester that the ambulance service is being cut. Nor are cuts in the NHS restricted to the ambulance service.

Despite government claims about extra money going to the NHS, the majority of the country's health authorities face a financial crisis. They are being forced to cut services. The commitment to patients by the staff is being stretched more and more as the health service is being changed into a "cost-effective" production line.

(Information on the ambulance service from West Midlands Health Service Monitoring Unit publication: 'Health Watch', May 1990.

10 Years Young-

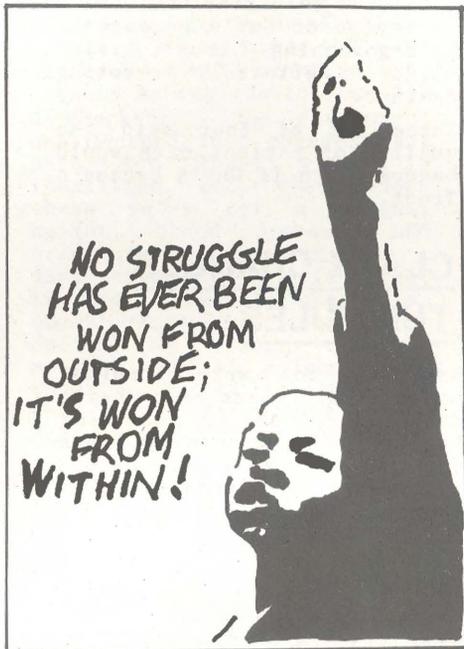
At a meeting called by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCM) to mark the anniversary of the Soweto uprising of 1976, a member of the organisations's Central Committee, Molefe Pheto, spoke of the historical experience of Soweto, and of the role of the BCM in today's situation.

The uprising in 1976 had been preceded by a long period of conscientisation, mental decolonisation, and work on cultural projects, he pointed out. Nothing could be more false than to say that the struggle was imported from outside. What was significant was the people's resolve to be free, once and for all. Since that time, there has been no turning back.

That period also saw the implementation of the South African regime's 'Bantustan' project. The BCM was the first to draw attention to this threat, and its members have in fact been the main object of attacks by Inkhata, which has always been a puppet of the regime. The contradictions which arise today are only due to the fact that Inkhata has seen the negotiations between the regime and the African National Congress (ANC), and wants his share of the cake. But at no stage have the Bantustan puppets been part of the liberation process.

In the years following the uprising, most of those who died in detention were members of the BCM. This made it inevitable that a number of activists leave the country. In 1980, in Brixton in South London, Black Consciousness members abroad met to found the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, which is now, as they say, "ten years young". This was a positive development, because the struggle inside the country was tired, and what was needed was to inject fresh momentum.

Also in 1980, the BCM attempted to raise the issue of unity with other organisations. But it met with nothing but refusal, and various aid organisations which are supposed to channel funds to support the struggle in South Africa gave the BCM nothing. However, Comrade Pheto referred to those organisations which have given principled solidarity over a long period: the Revolutionary Communist League, the Party of Labour of Belgium, Black Action for the Liberation of Southern Africa (BALSA) and Revolutionary Education



Development (RED). Today, he stressed, this support is needed even more.

Over the past decade, the BCM has been able to build the Azania National Liberation Army (AZANLA), its fighting wing, and to consolidate the home base. Today, there can be no advance to liberation without the Black Consciousness stream. They are, in a sense, brokers for the political problems inside the country, standing as they do between the two other organisations, the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress. The BCM calls upon the ANC and PAC to bury their old quarrels, and go forward.

Last December different trends in the liberation movement held the Conference for a

It is clear that sanctions and other pressures exerted by the international community on the regime have an effect on the South African economy, morale and psychology of the white minority. The announcements by de Klerk are meant to persuade the international community to lift sanctions and trade with the regime normally. The Central Committee urges the international community to maintain sanctions against the regime until liberation is achieved. It condemned the British government for lifting cultural and scientific sanctions against Pretoria."

- From a communique of the BCM Central Committee, 8th February, 1990.

Democratic Future, and the Black Consciousness trend, through the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) made a big impact. Suddenly the outside world has started finding out about Black Consciousness, but the

organisation will be careful not to lose its home base.

The release of a number of prisoners is a very good thing. But the situation has still not fundamentally changed, and many people are still detained. The position has to be that not a single black person can rightfully be imprisoned by an illegal regime.

"This is Our Country"

At present, according to the BCM, the situation is not right for any negotiations at all. At the Congress for a Democratic Future, the BCM pointed out that you do not negotiate with the criminal, you take him to court. "This is our country", Comrade Pheto stressed: "We are simply pro-Black and pro-ourselves! What the people want is not change, it is political power."

"Some people say this is a dream", he continued. "If so, we will die aspiring to it. The touchstone is the suffering of the people in the rural areas. If we take power and betray them and continue to oppress them, they have every right to take up arms against us!"

The Black Consciousness Movement is dedicated to consulting with the masses, and will leave it to them to decide who is articulating their aspirations.

Ending his speech, Comrade Pheto stressed: "It has to be real liberation or nothing at all!"

The Black Consciousness Movement of Azania

We print below an extract from a speech by the President of the Azanian People's Organisation, I.J. Mosala, at the Conference for a Democratic Future, held in Azania on 9th December, 1989.

I think that we need a climate conducive for negotiations. But I do not think that F.W. De Klerk and his crowd have the moral wherewithal to provide it. We cannot negotiate with them to negotiate with us. We must seize the initiative, and relocate it in the struggles of the most oppressed and exploited class of our country.

What we need is a programme of action that can bind together the forces of liberation in the country. Yes, we need a climate for negotiations. But we must create the climate for negotiations ourselves. The only way to do this is by intensifying the struggles of the oppressed people and classes at all levels of society. We need a programme of action whose aim will be to

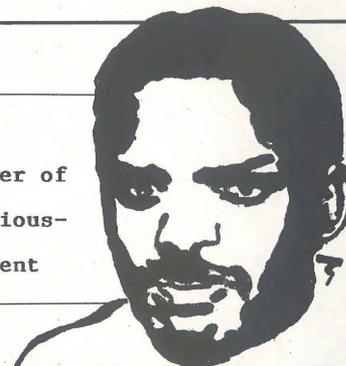
galvanise the oppressed to struggle for:

- 1) the total transfer of political power from a racial minority to a national majority;
- 2) the re-conquest and re-organisation of access and control of the land;
- 3) the liberation of the national productive forces and their re-constitution on the basis of socialist economic theory and practice; and the development of a national culture that can guide and define the identity of all Azanians, irrespective of race and gender.

The organisations of the oppressed must come clean on the questions of the struggle

against imperialism, capitalism, racism and sexism. These systems have done enough damage to the economies and cultures of the countries of the Third World for us to bracket them or postpone them to a later period.

Steve Biko, Founder of Black Consciousness Movement



"Well, I am one who does not believe in deluding myself. I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner. Sitting at the table does not make you a diner, unless you eat some of what is on the plate."

- Malcolm X, quoted by AZAPO leader, Jerry Mosala, in his speech at the Conference for a Democratic Future.

IMBELEKO~ women who work amongst the oppressed

For three years, a core of women in the BCM have been developing projects amongst black working class and peasant women. They have also been helping self-development amongst other sections of the oppressed. They have organised clinics for squatters and asbestos-affected mine workers together with the Community Health Awareness Project (CHAP), another BCM organisation. Their organisation is called Imbeleko Women's Organisation.

From Saturday May 12, 1990 to the next day, Imbeleko women held their first Congress in Jabavu, Soweto. Over 500 delegates came from different parts of the Transvaal, Natal, the Orange Free State and the Eastern Cape. The theme of the Congress was, **A Nation Will Never be Free Unless its Women are Free: Fight Sexism.** The congress was very successful. Like most BCM organisations, Imbeleko does not receive a lot of outside money. As a result, its members have learnt to make a lot from the little they have.

The women of the BCM spoke about the causes of their problems and how to solve them. They looked at the present violence amongst black people and organisations;



negotiations and negotiated settlements; issues affecting the lives of women; the campaign by the de Klerk regime to privatise social services. Imbeleko had already started a campaign against the privatisation of health services. This was discussed very thoroughly. It was shown at the Congress that black people receive the lowest pay in the country. Once the government stopped paying for the treatment of the sick, those without money would die when they needed treatment. Clinics, surgeries and hospitals now want health cards when people are sick. Less than 10% of black people have health insurance cards.

Some oppressive ideas which encourage women to 'suffer in silence' were condemned. The police and hospital staff were criticised for the way in which they treat women who go to report rape cases. Imbeleko is going to work with crisis centres to help the healing of women attacked in this way.

(Information from the BCM paper, *Letsetse*, May, 1990)

ON TO VICTORY!



EPLF Freedom Fighters

The longest war in Africa, and one of the longest in world history, is drawing towards its end in the Horn of Africa. For nearly thirty years, since 1961, the people of Eritrea have been fighting for their independence from Ethiopia. The Eritreans rely on themselves: no great power has supported them. Nevertheless, they have a just cause and, especially since the emergence of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) as the leading force in the independence struggle in 1970, their aims have been clear and they have found the means to win, however long it takes.

The EPLF want national liberation, but with social justice and democracy, which means doing away with the exploitation of the peasants and townspeople by those who want simply to remove Ethiopian rule so that they can be masters of the Eritrean masses themselves. Carrying out land reform; building up co-operative production; developing medical, educational and other services and fostering democracy serve both the long-term social and national aims of the Eritrean struggle.

One of the most remarkable advances has been in changing the status of women, who enjoy equal rights with men in the liberated areas, in spite of the fact that in traditional Eritrean society, they were not allowed any independence and were subject to the wishes of their fathers or husbands.

The EPLF and the National Union of Eritrean Women worked to change Eritrean society by persuasion and education, not by force. They are well aware of how women have played a major role in other liberation struggles, only to see them lose any gains they had, once victory was won.

In Eritrea, the gains have been great and are being woven into the framework of the new society. Women even make up 40% of the Eritrean armed forces, and frequently stand for election in popular organisations to the highest positions and get elected, when such a thing would have been unthinkable only twenty years ago.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Similar gains have been made in neighbouring Tigray, where the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has waged a fifteen-year fight to win self-determination for Tigray. The TPLF do not believe that this necessarily means breaking away from Ethiopia. If a democratic and progressive Ethiopia emerged, then it would certainly be in favour of Tigray remaining part of an Ethiopian state.

Until 1974, when the Haile Selassie regime was overthrown, the Ethiopian state's main backer was the USA. The Dergue (a military clique) took over and consolidated its hold on the state machine, destroying revolutionary and popular organisations in Addis Ababa and elsewhere. It allied itself with the Soviet Union and received Soviet aid (although the EEC matched Soviet military support with economic support).

In Eritrea by 1978, the EPLF had liberated almost the whole country: only Asmara, the capital, the port of Assab, and half the port of Massawa were left in the hands of the Dergue at the height of the Eritrean advance. Then, massive Soviet support for the Mengistu regime temporarily turned the tide, and resulted in Eritrea and Tigray facing another twelve years of war, as well as devastating famine.

During the last year, the Soviet Union decided, following great victories in Eritrea and the liberation of the whole of Tigray, that it would not go on providing military aid to Mengistu to fight a war that his regime could not win, and urged his regime to seek to negotiate peace with its opponents.

ISRAEL STEPS IN

Talks began. But the Ethiopian regime was unwilling to agree to any framework within which the Eritrean and Tigrayan people could freely exercise their right to decide their own future. Now denied the backing of any major power, the Dergue renewed its relations with Israel.

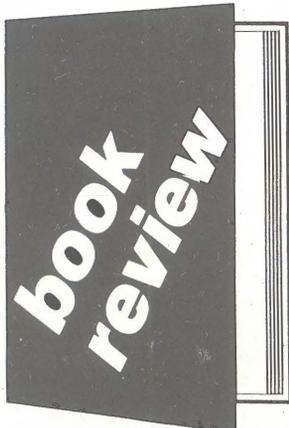
Israel welcomed the chance to renew ties with another African state. It also wanted to deny victory to the Eritreans in particular, who it saw as aligned with the Arab world. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Meir Joffe, said that it was strategically vital to Israel that the rebel forces should not turn the "Red Sea into the Arab Sea".

Soon Ethiopia was dropping Israeli-supplied cluster bombs on newly liberated areas as the TPLF, with its allies of the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM), advanced southwards towards Addis Ababa and the heart of the country. The cluster bombs were soon in use at Massawa too. In February, attacking by land and sea, the EPLF liberated this, the main port of Eritrea. Ethiopia sent its bombers in to destroy the famine relief aid piled up around the harbour, and since then, has sent them back regularly to try to prevent the revival of normal life in the city.

Israel has also supplied small arms to Ethiopia and sent over trainers for its army. But it appears that its assistance has come too late. Eritrean forces are closing in on Asmara's airport, threatening to cut the last supply line for the army of occupation in the city. In June, the TPLF-EPDM alliance trounced an Israeli-trained elite unit of the Ethiopian army only eighty miles from Addis Ababa. Any aid to the Mengistu regime at this stage amounts to little more than a spoiling exercise, costing the peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea more blood and more suffering but merely delaying the inevitable collapse of the regime by days, or weeks at the most.

Hopes are now high that the wars will soon be over, and that Eritrea and Ethiopia will be able to get on with rebuilding their economies and developing free, independent and prosperous societies. With morale in the Mengistu regime's armed forces at its lowest ever, the liberation forces hope that the army will see the futility of prolonging the fighting and surrender or negotiate terms for the peaceful resolution of the wars. ■

A Matter of Honour



"Promising us democracy now is like the crew of a rescue helicopter, instead of throwing down a lifebelt for shipwreck survivors, saying "And now we will teach you to swim....." This is how local Hong Kong people see Britain's promises of political change in the colony, as reported in 'A Matter of Honour: The Nationality Question in Hong Kong'. This pamphlet has been produced by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), as a follow-up to their 1985 report, 'A Question of Belonging'.

Although the pamphlet touches on the question of democracy in Hong Kong, it points out that guarantees about democracy and human rights in Hong Kong after it has been handed over to China in 1997, are in fact meaningless. The only practical guarantees that the British government can give to the people of Hong Kong are in relation to immigration and nationality, the most important aspect of which is the right of abode in Britain.

'A Matter of Honour' is a concise, factual report written after consultation with a wide range of groups in Hong Kong, following the events in China, last June. It sketches the background to the present position of the two major political parties on immigration to Britain; the effects that this is having within Hong Kong and makes some concise proposals for a principled policy towards Hong Kong.

Three and a quarter million people in Hong Kong have British passports. In 1962, the Commonwealth Immigration Act made Britain the only country in the world that denied its own citizens the automatic right of entry and abode. This was followed up by the 1981 Nationality Act which classed British citizens

in Hong Kong as citizens of British Dependent Territories, redefined once again in 1985, as British Nationals (Overseas). Whatever the name, the policy is that some kinds of British passports do not imply any rights. As is well-known, it is non-white British citizens who are denied any rights. As the JCWI point out:

"Millions of other people from overseas have an absolute right to enter Britain: between three and nine million Commonwealth citizens, mainly from Australia, Canada and New



Zealand; over 200 million nationals of EC countries; about a million white South Africans. Almost all the people concerned are white; their right to enter Britain is unquestioned"

The situation of people in Hong Kong is different from that of many other colonies who have won their independence, where the question of self-determination was the main principle involved, as spelled out by the UN. Because Hong Kong has been recognised as part of China, this has not applied. The situation is similar to that of the people of Gibraltar, whose future is linked to Spain and of the Malvinas (Falklands), with Argentina. In both these

cases, British citizens have been given guarantees of right of abode and full citizenship, unlike people in Hong Kong.

The attitude of the British government (and the Labour Party) is also contrasted with that of the Portuguese government to the people of Macau. The 100,000 Portuguese nationals in Macau have been given full Portuguese citizenship (including the right of free movement within the EC), in the face of considerable opposition from Mrs Thatcher, among others. A representative of the Portuguese government told the JCWI: "The constitution views nationality as a fundamental right of every citizen ... indeed it is more than a mere constitutional right, it is part of natural law."

The position of the JCWI is that this should be the case for Hong Kong British citizens too. The pamphlet points out that the lack of a guarantee of the right of abode is causing large-scale emigration from Hong Kong. A guarantee would enable people to stay in Hong Kong and give them an escape route if needed.

The JCWI point out that there is no "electoral advantage" for the political parties in the UK in advocating the rights of people in Hong Kong. Only the Liberal Democrats have argued that Britain has to take responsibility for the people of Hong Kong. Both Tory and Labour have argued on the fundamentally racist position of keeping out as many non-white people as possible. The Tory position of at least allowing entry to some, is seen as preferable to the complete lack of commitment that has come from Labour.

The JCWI also points out that ironically, public opinion is not hostile to people from Hong Kong. The Corry Report also argued that immigration from Hong Kong would bring considerable economic benefits to Britain.

The main consideration, however, is Britain's responsibility to people in Hong Kong. This pamphlet argues a concise and factual case for the right of entry and abode for all the people of Hong Kong.

.....
 'A Matter of Honour: The Nationality Question in Hong Kong' by the JCWI, is available at £2.50 from: JCWI, 115 Old Street, London EC1.

Heading For A New Crisis

Over the past few months, the Middle East has moved towards a major new crisis. The threat of war and a serious attempt to expel hundreds of thousands more Palestinians from their land is very real.

The Palestinian Uprising, now over two and a half years old, has shaken Israel, but has not decisively shifted the balance of power in favour of the Palestinians. The PLO saw international pressure upon Israel as being crucial to such a breakthrough. Above all, this meant US pressure, as the USA has provided Israel with the backing which has enabled it to remain the strongest power in the Middle East, and to resist all demands for it to respect the human rights of the Palestinians, let alone their national rights.

The USA has made increased criticisms of specific Israeli human rights violations, and at the end of 1988, it opened a dialogue with the PLO. But these moves have amounted to little. Israel continues to be the largest recipient of US aid in the world, to the tune of three billion dollars a year in direct assistance alone. (Black US Congressmen recently pointed out that US aid to Israel in the latest budget amounted to just over one dollar per African; aid to Israel averaged out at 700 dollars per Israeli.) While the cash keeps coming, Israel need not feel too bothered about US criticisms.

The US suspended its dialogue with the PLO in June, citing as its reason the PLO's failure to condemn clearly and strongly an attempted armed attack near Tel Aviv by members of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). The PLF is a minor organisation within the PLO, mainly known for hijacking the cruise ship 'Achille Lauro' and murdering an elderly disabled Jew.

Asked why the PLO had not acted against it after its latest escapade, one of Yasser Arafat's top aides, Bassam Abu Sharif, explained that the PLO intended to follow its own procedures in dealing with the PLF, but that the US had placed PLO leaders in a difficult position by making demands upon them. In a situation in which their people had suffered much without any meaningful action being taken in their defence by the USA, the PLO leaders did not want to be seen as bowing to US demands, and so

were not prepared to rush out with the kind of statement the USA wanted.

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the United National Leadership of the Uprising called a strike in protest at the decision of the USA to suspend the dialogue. But in spite of this protest, Palestinians from a wide variety of political backgrounds were not overtroubled by the US move.

There was a strong feeling that the Palestinians had gone to their limit to meet US conditions for talking with them and for playing a role of sorts in talks about peace talks with Israel, and got nothing out of it.

In any case, the US had other reasons for breaking off talks, besides its stated one. With the establishment of the new Israeli government, which is not even prepared to go through the form of being flexible in its relations with the Palestinians, the so-called "peace process" of the last year or so was at an end. With Israel refusing to play ball in a US-managed try for a settlement, there is nothing left to discuss with the PLO any way.



THUGS AT THE HELM

The new Israeli government is the most chauvinistic and right-wing in the state's history. Three secular right-wing parties and four Orthodox Jewish religious parties are involved in the coalition government, although two of

the religious parties do not have ministers in the Cabinet. In addition, when the vote of confidence in the new government was taken, the two Members of the Knesset (MK) from Moldet (a party which was formed to campaign for the expulsion of all Palestinians from the land ruled by Israel) voted in its support. This gave it the backing of 62 MK's out of 120. (One of the other 58 abstained.)

The government includes a number of familiar figures from the largest rightist party, the Likud. They include:

Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, once a member of the terrorist 'Stern Gang' and a confirmed believer in Israel holding on to every inch of territory that it has.

Ariel Sharon, best remembered for his time as Defence Minister, in which capacity he played a crucial part in all the decisions concerning Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, as well as giving the go-ahead for Israel's Phalangist allies to enter the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla, where they massacred 2,000 people.

Moshe Arens, who is Shamir's favoured successor, has strong US connections, and has consistently advocated the technological upgrading of Israel's armed forces to maintain their overwhelming advantages over the Arab states.

David Levy, a rising star in the Likud with strong backing from Oriental Jews - he is of Moroccan origin himself.

All of these men are against talks with the PLO. All are against any withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. All believe in the expansion of Jewish settlement in the areas occupied since 1967. Nevertheless, some of their allies in the Cabinet are more extreme.

There's **Rafael Eitan**, for example, who was a commander during the Lebanon invasion, and who is remembered on the West Bank for giving encouragement to his soldiers' brutality. He was once reported in the Hebrew press to have told a group of soldiers that: "The only good Arab is a dead Arab." And on another occasion, he spoke before the Knesset Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee in support of establishing more Jewish settlements in the West Bank, saying that, once they were established, the Palestinians could "only

scuttle about, like drugged cockroaches in a bottle". Avner Shaki led the National Religious Party to the right, and he and his colleagues have close links with the settlers in the areas occupied in 1967. Yuval Ne'eman is one of the world's leading nuclear physicists, and lives in a West Bank settlement. His party, Tehiya, stands for the immediate annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and calls for measures to be taken to encourage their Palestinian inhabitants to leave, though it has so far stopped short of advocating forcible mass deportation.

This government came to office with a hardline programme. It makes no bones about its determination to crush Palestinian resistance by force, and to push on with the settlement programme. Meanwhile, settler vigilante groups have become more highly organised and carry out raids on Palestinian villages, beat people up, smash up their homes and set up their own road blocks, with only the slightest show of discouragement from the army. Indeed, on occasion, there have even been ambushes on wanted Palestinians which were clearly co-ordinated between the army and the settlers.

What can kill the persistence of a struggling people?

My country — though they would forget has seen a thousand conquerors.

All have melted

just as

snow

melts!

Tawfiq Zayyad

On the few occasions when a settler has been arrested for murdering or injuring a Palestinian, he has only ever received a light sentence. Settler leader, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, for example, was recently sentenced to four years in prison for shooting dead a Palestinian in Hebron; by contrast, 19-year old Intissar al-Qaq, a Palestinian woman convicted of attempting to throw a Molotov cocktail, was sentenced to four years in prison this April, and when she was recently taken from prison to a hospital to have a baby, her hands were kept cuffed and her legs were only unshackled for the delivery.

The settlers have, quite justifiably, seen the army and government's indulgence towards them as giving them license to continue and escalate their anti-Palestinian terror activities. If, as many Palestinians suspect it will, the current



government opts to go to war with its neighbours and then carry out an attempt to expel hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, then the settler vigilantes will have a major role to play. They can do the state's dirty work for it, while the state will be able to shed crocodile tears and "condemn" settler massacres in a re-run of the government's performance over Sabra and Shatilla in 1982, when it tried to blame the Phalangists for the massacre. This threat deepened at the end of June when the Israeli government gave official permission to the settlers to form their own militias, which existed unofficially, in any case.

ALLIES?

In the past, the PLO saw the Soviet Union as a "strategic ally", and received support from the Eastern European regimes. Many Palestinians therefore feel betrayed after the developments of the last couple of years. Although the Intifada was in full swing, the old regimes all moved towards formalising their relations with Israel. (Romania did not, as it had always maintained friendly ties with Israel.) And the advent of the new governments only accelerated a trend which already existed. Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia have all renewed diplomatic relations now, and trade is booming with nearly all Eastern Europe, apart from Albania.

Worst of all has been the easing of exit restrictions on Soviet Jews. There has been an utterly hypocritical campaign by Zionist groups around this issue over the years, in which the hardships - real and alleged - of Soviet Jews have been presented to the world and pitiful pleas for them to be allowed to go to Israel have been issued. The very same people had nothing to say in support of the Palestinians, of course.

Three fifths of them have been denied the right to return to their lands for the last 42 years and it is precisely upon those lands that most of the Soviet Jews who go to Israel are settled.

Most Soviet Jews who wish to leave their homeland do not actually want to go to Israel. When they still had a choice, over 90 percent of them went to the USA. But Israel successfully lobbied the USA to deny refugee status to Soviet Jewish emigrants, so that now they can only enter the USA under the quota system. As a result of the Soviet relaxation of its restrictions and the US tightening of its own, the Israeli government talks of as many as 150,000 new immigrants arriving this year: new engineers and scientists to strengthen their military and economic machine and new soldiers to crack skulls in the Gaza Strip.

Jewish people who face persecution or the threat of it, should be able to go to other countries in order to escape from it. But they have no right to settle in Palestine at the expense of the indigenous people and without their consent.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that there is a growing feeling among Palestinians that they need to adopt more forceful methods of resistance against Israel if they are to have any chance of winning their rights. At the present time, Israel is far more powerful militarily than the Palestinians, and they know that an escalation of armed action against Israel will bring down upon them the most ferocious reprisals. But more and more people ask what other option there is.

The coming year is likely to be a violent one in the Middle East, and, should the media whinge again about "Palestinian terrorism", let it be remembered that the Palestinians consciously restrained the level of violence in their resistance for two and a half years, and lost nearly one thousand dead in the process. The PLO declared its willingness to recognise Israel and to accept a state in 20 percent of Palestine, which would live in peace with Israel, and it got nothing in return.

Israel and its supporters, first and foremost, the USA, are responsible for any consequences that may arise from their continued refusal to acknowledge the national rights of the Palestinian people. ■

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND

BRINGING THE WAR

HOME



'It is in their power to end it; should they fail to do so, they must bear the consequences'

Following the bombing of the Carlton Club, in London, the Republican newspaper, 'An Phoblacht/Republican News', carried a long article with a spokesperson from Oglai na hEireann. We reprint below some of the key parts of that interview. They need no introduction. They just challenge the way events are reported in the British press:

THE MEDIA

"....the British have a very sophisticated and well financed publicity network, especially internationally. Their methods of propagandising and spreading disinformation are legion. If one considers that in America alone they spend hundreds of millions of dollars in disseminating their version of events, you can appreciate the magnitude of their operation and the importance they place on it."

INNOCENT DEATHS

"....When Gerry Adams said recently that the deaths of two Australian nationals were inexcusable and unjustifiable, the IRA did not just accept this criticism, given by a comrade, but fully endorsed such criticism. His statement was both acceptable and necessary... Quite simply, the deaths of innocent civilians are unacceptable: they are tragic in themselves and do not advance our cause or bring closer the day of victory."

The IRA remains determined to do all in its power to avoid such deaths."

REGRETS AND APOLOGIES

When the IRA have made mistakes, we have admitted and genuinely regretted such mistakes and the resultant suffering. While not trying to diminish such mistakes, or our responsibility for them, it is nonetheless worth pointing out that we have yet to hear a single apology or expression of remorse from the British over Bloody Sunday, shoot-to-kill, plastic bullet murders, torture in Castlereagh or any of their long litany of violent outrages."

THE PROTESTANTS

"...It is nonsense to accuse the IRA of being at war with the Protestant people. We stand by the Proclamation of 1916 and the principles of Wolfe Tone in that we are fighting for freedom and democracy for all the people of Ireland, that is Protestant, Catholic, people of all religions and of no religion. We are aware of our history of the Protestant roots of Tone and many United Irishmen, and we number Protestants among our ranks throughout the Movement."

"We stand squarely against oppression no matter whom it affects. Contrary to British propaganda, we are involved in

a war of national liberation and not a religious war. We are totally disinterested in the religion, colour or creed of our enemy. If they are instruments of oppression then we must face them in struggle."

LIKE A HOT POTATO

"I sincerely reiterate our previous calls to unionists and loyalists to abandon the philosophy of colonialism. What marginal privilege there is for working class loyalists is gained at the expense of working class nationalists. They must realise that Britain, when it suits, will drop them like a hot potato. The Six Counties is the rubbish tip of British rule. In economic crisis it is the first to suffer and the last to recover, if at all. The loyalist/unionist population has no real power unless they join with the rest of the Irish people. In that position of unity we, the people of this island, will shape our own destiny and democracy, free from outside interference."

ENGLAND AND EUROPE

"The IRA expanded operations to continental Europe and England for a number of reasons. The general one is to hit the enemy on as many fronts as possible and to stretch their resources and nerves. Another is that

CAGE ELEVEN

'Cage Eleven', by Gerry Adams, is based on a series of articles smuggled out of the cages of Long Kesh and published between 1975 and 1977 in 'Republican News' (now 'An Phoblacht/Republican News'. Writing in a weekly POW column, Adams and his comrades vented their spleen on issues as they appeared

England is the 'belly of the beast' and that is where it hurts the most.

"The power-brokers in Westminster are not moved except by political pressure from their base or by direct pressure on themselves."

NO RELAXATION

"On the wider aspects of our campaign in Europe and Britain, while they occupy any part of our country, they and their soldiers, the instruments of oppression, cannot be allowed to relax or rest. British soldiers come to our country for short tours of duty. They kick down our doors, wreck our homes, imprison our people, terrorise our communities and shoot dead men, women and children with lead and plastic bullets. They then think they can go back to Germany or England or wherever and relax while another regiment takes over their role. They can't. Nor can their political masters."

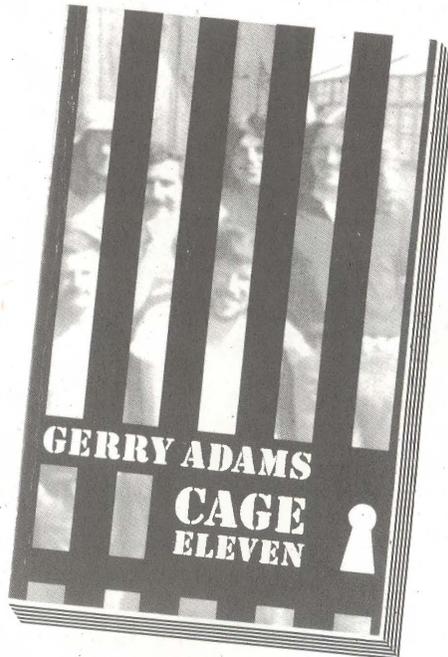
THE COST

"The cost of this war on the British at every level should not be underestimated. Our tactics will ensure there is no respite. Besides the high financial cost of maintaining their presence and guarding a vast array of potential targets, this war does and will continue to play havoc with their nerves and their lifestyles. It is in their power to end it; should they fail to do so, they must bear the consequences."

OUR VICTORY

Our victory will be a 32-County Republic which "guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens". Our victory will be the removal of the British presence from our country and in doing so we set the solid foundation for true democracy and a lasting peace in our country, denied for so many centuries by British occupation."

from behind the wire of Britain's concentration camps. Fifteen years on, Adams uses his informal but always fluent style to re-create the 'big-D's' and 'quare craic' of prison life.



At times, the tone is jubilant (Cedric's secret diary of the time they burned the Kesh). At others, it becomes harrowing (the brutal force-feeding of Frank Stagg who died on hunger strike in Wakefield gaol). Always, though, it speaks of the ability to endure. On 12th July, as the Orangemen parade through the streets of Ulster, 'Cedric' recites Seamus Heaney's poem:

"The Lambeg balloons at his belly, weighs

Him back on his haunches, lodging thunder

Grossly there between his chin and his knees

He is raised up by what he buckles under...."

'Cage Eleven' is what oral history should be. It is not quaint, sentimental or nostalgic. And it certainly is not part of any heritage industry. Like its predecessor, 'Falls Memories', this book is a piece of living history. Its heart is torn from the collective experiences of Irish women and men, incarcerated by the thousand over the last twenty years. Nearly eight hundred Republican prisoners remain behind the wire. 'Cage Eleven' is their story.

'Cage Eleven', by Gerry Adams, is published by Brandon, at £4.95.

ON YOUR OWN

The Evolution of Black Consciousness in Azania by Mosibudi Mangena Chairman of BCM(A)

'On Your Own' is a political biography of the leader of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (South Africa). It details his early life experience, to his detention and five years imprisonment in the notorious Robben Island jail.

Mangena was a close comrade of the late Steve Biko, founder of the BCM(A).

The book covers the role of the BCM(A) in Azania's liberation politics from the viewpoint of an insider. It gives an insight into how the racist state system dealt with any opposition or challenge to the system.

The BCM(A) is perceived by many white liberals as a racist organisation, claiming falsely that the BCM(A) excludes liberals from the strategy and tactics of the revolution. This book shows that they do in fact have a programme for a non-racial Azania, once liberated. This book is highly recommended.

£5 + 34p P&P

AFRICA COUNTS
Number and Pattern
African Culture
by Claudia Zaslavsky

This book is highly recommended, particularly for those who wish to learn about Africa's contribution not only to human civilisation in general but in particular to the system of mathematics. The author has debunked the racist European notion that Africa has not contributed to science. The numeration system, with its highly complex forms, is described and the mysticism attached to numbers. This work is written in a scholarly way and well-documented. It shows the richness of African culture and civilisation.

£8.95 + 78p P&P

THESE, AND MANY MORE PROGRESSIVE TITLES FROM.....

NEW ERA BOOKS

WHERE WE STAND

In the 1970's, the United Nations estimated that women did two thirds of the world's work, earned less than 5% of the world's income and owned 1% of the assets. In the 1990's, it is unlikely that this has changed.

Women's work often goes unrecognised. "Real work" is seen as 40-hour a week, waged labour in a big factory or mine. Women's work is made invisible, except at times such as in the First or Second World Wars in Britain, when women were encouraged into the factories to replace the men who were sent to the army.

In fact, everywhere in the world, women's work makes a major contribution to the economy and is essential to the well-being of the people. Women work in agriculture, whether in subsistence farming or as waged labourers in the production of cash crops. As well as bearing children, women do most of the work caring for others and raising children, in many countries, spending hours on basic tasks such as fetching water or grinding corn. Working class women in the imperialist countries have always had to combine paid work with family responsibilities, and increasingly in the Third World, women are being drawn into the factories of the transnational corporations.

Although women's position cannot be isolated from that of their class or their nation, they face an extra burden on top of other forms of oppression and exploitation. Women's oppression takes many different forms - economic, political, social and cultural - and the struggle against it has to be fought on many fronts. On the one hand, they face the greatest oppression. On the other, they stand to gain the most from change.

Many progressive people, including Marxist-Leninists, have either ignored the specific oppression of women or found it difficult to handle.

We think it is necessary to analyse concretely the relationship between women's specific oppression and that of class and national oppression, and the League has made this a priority in our current work.

We have adopted some initial positions:

- Women of different classes and nationalities face specific oppression as women under imperialism, although it takes different forms.
- Women's oppression is linked to their role in the family, reproducing and maintaining the labour force. The family, as the economic unit under imperialism, is oppressive to women.
- We support the right of women to organise separately. In particular, we support the right of black women to organise separately.
- We recognise the need for women in the imperialist countries such as Britain to consciously work in solidarity with the vast majority of the world's women, in the oppressed countries of the Third World.

OCTOBER

The League recognises that there is a lot of work to do, both in theory and practice, to develop our work on and with women. As part of this work, we will be publishing an edition of our theoretical journal, devoted to the debate round the question of women. This issue of 'October' will be ready in August or September. It will include:

- Articles on 'The Left and Feminism', from the Indian sub-continent and the summary of a book written by Norwegian Marxist-Leninist, leader, Kjersti Ericsson.
- Articles discussing the importance of the issue of reproductive rights for women's struggle and various positions from Marxist and non-Marxist writers on women.

PUBLICATIONS

AVAILABLE FROM: **new era books**
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