

CLASS STRUGGLE

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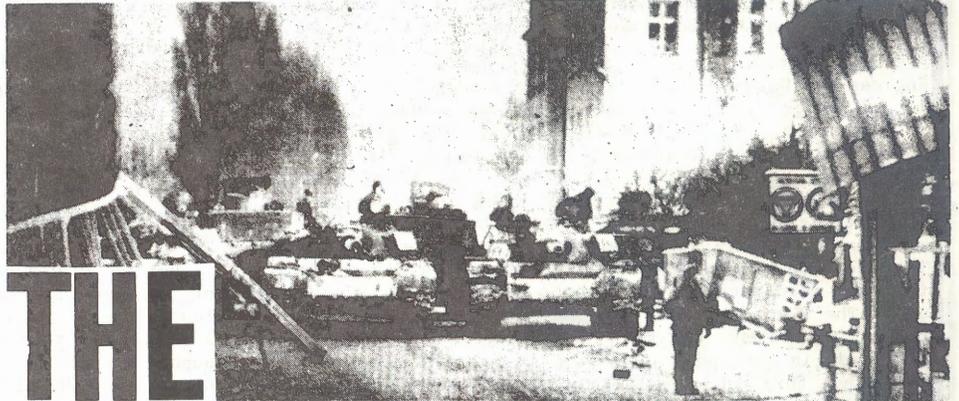
POLAND

The courageous workers and people of Poland have lost a battle, but the social fascist junta of Jaruzelski has by no means won the war!

The imposition of a brutal martial law regime on the Polish people is the symbol of the bankruptcy of bourgeois revisionist rule in Poland, and throughout the Russian empire. The claims of the likes of Jaruzelski and Brezhnev to represent the working class lie irrevocably in tatters. The only way that the corrupt and privileged leaders of this so-called "workers state" can maintain themselves in power is through the most vigorous suppression of the mass organisations created by the working class, the arrests of tens of thousands of the finest sons and daughters of the Polish working class, the clubbing to death of miners in the snows of Silesia, the snatching back of every democratic right fought for and won by the Polish people and by the placing of the working class under a military discipline as rigid as in Nazi Germany, a discipline where workers can be shot for not coming to work.

NO RETURN TO THE PAST!

But the workers and people of Poland have not struggled throughout their history, did not rise up in 1956, 1970 and 1976, did not fight every inch of the way to build Solidarity as the mass, democratic organisation of the working class and focus for all progressive and patriotic forces in society, just in order to meekly go back to the serfdom of the past. No, from underneath the crude blanket of censorship (the most all-embracing in modern Europe), there emerges an inspiring picture of struggle. And,



THE PEOPLE FIGHT ON

we can be sure that what manages to evade military censorship is but a small fraction of the true scale of the resistance.

OPPOSITION CONTINUES

After the imposition of martial law, strikes, sit-ins and occupations were reported from virtually every town and city and virtually every major factory: from the Baltic regions of Gdansk and Szczecin, from Silesia, Katowice, Lublin, Lodz, Poznan, Wroclaw and Warsaw. The city of Ransom - the centre of military equipment and ammunition factories - was totally sealed off by the army. Particularly strong centres of resistance were the major heavy industrial plants, like the Katowice steelworks, the Ursus Tractor Plant near Warsaw, the Gdansk shipyards where Solidarity was born, and, of course, the mines of Silesia.

Thursday 17 December was the anniversary of the 1970 massacre of shipyard workers. In a new upsurge of the struggle to mark this date, two days of riots left hundreds injured. In Krakow, dogs were set onto the steelworkers. At least 14 miners were killed at the Wujek

mine. (The regime said it was seven.) Eyewitnesses say that some of the miners were clubbed to death as they lay injured in the snow. Other workers were killed at railway wagon plants, tractor factories and throughout the country. At least one soldier was shot by his officers for refusing to fire on workers and there are reports of deaths in the internment camps. Altogether, hundreds have been killed and injured around the country.

Inside...

cont. p. 11

Poland - the background

What lies behind the imposition of martial law in Poland? In a special pull-out supplement we look at the nature of Polish society, the revolutionary history of Polish nationalism and the relationship between socialism and national independence.

On page 10 we look at the reaction of the West and we call for building solidarity with Solidarnosc.

Conspiracy

The trial of the Bradford 12 begins in April. Conspiracy is a powerful weapon in the legal arsenal of the ruling class. What is its history? Part 1 of a new series on pps. 6&7.

Class Struggle or Collaboration

Our Editorial shows the need for the working class to spit out traitors like Gormley and Duffy. p. 2

Going for Republican Press

The Republican Press in Ireland faces sustained Brit/RUC harassment. p. 12

Fighting on two fronts

Laurence Scott workers fight on - against the bosses and the union bosses. p. 4

Vietnamese aggression

We show how Vietnam has lost the military initiative in Kampuchea and how it dominates Laos. p. 9



WITH FRIENDS LIKE THIS...

by our Ford Halewood Correspondent.

"We were sold out!" That is the resonance of huge numbers of Ford workers throughout Britain after the strike that never was. How else do you describe a deal that gives:

1) A wage "increase" of 7.4%, when inflation is over 12%. In reality a wage cut of 5.5%.

2) A reduction of 1 hr in the working week brought forward a few months, which will anyway not effect the many thousands who already work a 37½ hr week. The justifiable demand was for 35 hrs.

3) Acceptance by the workforce of 5 points in "efficiency" clauses, which herald a serious attack on

SEE PAGE 4

CLASS STRUGGLE OR CLASS COLLABORATION

The extreme right wing of the Trade Union leadership has been having a field day in recent weeks. The gróvelling Gormley, Mineworkers President, was given a full page in the Daily Express on the eve of the pit-head ballot which had been called to determine whether to give the national executive the power to call a strike. Gormley set out in detail why he thought that the miners should vote against the executive. He had not the slightest compunction in using every dirty demagogic trick in his repertoire including expressing his burning concern at the prospect of pensioners and the unemployed suffering from the strike.

Such sentiments were also expressed by Duffy, the Engineering Union President, in a half-page diatribe printed in the other "progressive working-class journal", the News of the World, on the following Sunday (Jan 17th). Duffy commented of the train drivers struggle: "their strike action has caused suffering to thousands of my members." Of the miners he said, with sickening insincerity, "If a coal strike does happen, my first thoughts will go to the sick and the elderly whose electric fires give little heat." The question of why thousands of pensioners die every year from the cold because they cannot afford fuel, is not taken up. The fact that the working class have to constantly resist persistent attempts to force down their living standards is ignored. He states in his article that it is "tragedy" that "some workers distrust other workers, and some Unions distrust other Unions". yet he goes to considerable efforts to spread such distrust and to build on divisions that already hold back the working class. Indeed he has given every worker solid cause for distrusting him and his whole anti-union and anti-working class clique.

He does, however, have something to say about the line that makes the working-class pay for the bosses' crisis. He actually laments that, "We are light years away from the American car workers at General Motors who have just agreed to cut their pay packets so that car prices can be more competitive against the flood of Japanese imports." Now we are getting to the crux of the matter.

Duffy and his like are open about how they see the future of the working class in Britain. Class struggle is

out. ("Bosses and workers must trust each other far more.") Strikes are out. ("It is time we sought other weapons than strikes.") The imperialist system is permanent, good and wholesome; not decaying, crisis ridden and oppressive, and we must unite with "our" imperialists and take on "our main competitors." And what can we expect to get out of it? A wage cut. Now, that's an offer we can't refuse.

Just to show he is not all mouth, Duffy, it must be admitted, does regularly sell-out his members in practice. The Laurence Scott workers, who have fought tenaciously against the closure of their factory, have been knifed in the back by their union leadership all along the line. No doubt it will gladden their hearts to know that Duffy will shed a little tear or two if their fires are a little less warm!

Duffy, however, is aware that his panacea for the working class is hardly universally acceptable. So he argues that individual unions should be controlled by the T.U.C. "It needs the teeth to take and even impose the wider view."

But we should not allow all the credit for the betrayal of the working class to go to the far right of the Union leadership! It has to be admitted that Ron Todd has had a field day this last month. Todd is one of Benn's solid supporters in the T.G.W.U. and has clearly set out to demonstrate what Bennism actually means. The Ford workers have had a taste of it, and a bitter taste it is indeed.

THE WAY FORWARD

There is a way forward. It is the road of unity with the oppressed; of unity with the anti-imperialist fighters of the third world and Ireland; of unity with the oppressed national minorities in Britain in the struggle against the racist state; of unity with the international working class; and of unity in the struggle against "our" imperialist ruling class. And that includes spitting out their crawling, grovelling agents who have done nothing but attack any basis for the struggle in Britain: both the immediate economic struggle and the revolutionary struggle for socialism.

PEACE DEBATE

From: An East London CND member

Your articles reviewing the history of superpower competition for the re-division of the world were correct in targetting the USSR as well as the US as the enemies of world peace, but neglected the practical question - of how nuclear disarmament and reliance instead upon people's defence is to be achieved. You were also incorrect in demanding civil defence from the government now.

How do we force our government to nuclear disarmament?

The first step must be to show people that the government's present policy does not defend them but is leading to the destruction of a nuclear war. CND is already winning this battle for popular opinion and is correct to point out that Civil Defence is not defence whilst NATO missiles stationed in Britain will inevitably attract a devastating Soviet pre-emptive attack. Britain must therefore leave the American alliance and adopt an active neutrality against the two superpowers.

How then is Britain and Western Europe, if the movement succeeds there also, to be defended against Soviet aggression?

Here Marxist-Leninists in CND can give a lead over pacifism and wishful thinking about Soviet intentions by urging preparation for a people's war of national defence. This is an essen-

tial replacement for the threat of nuclear deterrence and reliance upon the US deterrent and must take place simultaneously with nuclear disarmament and disengagement from NATO. It will mean training and arming the whole people as in the Second World War. We can learn much from the initiatives which Communists took then in the Home Guard and for air-raid shelters.

But even people's war is not a guarantee against nuclear attack, as the US threats against Korea and Vietnam showed. The possibility of pre-emptive strikes against nuclear bases can be removed however by the removal of those bases. Then Civil Defence against the indirect effects of nuclear war between the superpowers and preparation for people's war against any invasion by them will make sense, as it does today in neutral countries, such as Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: The above letter is a welcome contribution to the necessary debate on the nature of the present world situation, the danger of war and the stand that communists should take now. That the letter clearly targets the two superpowers and has the basic stand of reliance on the armed people is most welcome. But in our view the author is misguided on two counts: 1) what should be the main target for the nuclear disarmament movement and; 2) the major question of how a defence strategy based on the armed people can be developed.

The two superpowers both hold mighty nuclear arsenals far outweighing those of the Western European countries. The view that the weaker should disarm

first has never prevented an aggressive power from attacking a weaker one. From this point of view the struggle for peace, as far as demands on disarmament are concerned, must target the two superpowers first. With their vast preponderance in weapons over all other powers combined, how we force "our" government into nuclear disarmament cannot be the main issue; that must be a matter of forcing the superpowers to make the first move. This is truly compatible with the correct demand for the removal of US troops and the missiles the US controls from Britain, as this is part of targetting the superpowers.

Secondly whilst wanting to disengage Britain from an "Alliance" which is dominated by US interests, we cannot ignore the real threat posed by Soviet Imperialist aggression, as it struggles to take over US spheres of influence. Whilst people's war is the only reliable defence, we are not yet in such a situation and to win such demands, and make our own preparations is a long term task. So to talk about leaving NATO without discussing what sort of defence force can deter aggression and delay the outbreak of war, is to talk of complete unilateral disarmament and concretely, (whatever good motives lie behind this) is the same stance as that of the appeasers; of those who deny any Soviet intent, and indeed of openly pro-Soviet forces. The RCL holds that at this stage we should struggle for NATO to be replaced by a European alliance. This of course in no way implies that we should stop the struggle to build a revolutionary party, which can lead the struggle to overthrow the Imperialist state.

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

☐ Nurses are notoriously overworked and underpaid. Many are deterred from going on strike to try to improve their wages and working conditions by the knowledge that sick people will be the first to suffer from their action. In this way the ruling class keeps a stranglehold over them, and now adds insult to injury by offering a paltry 4% pay rise when inflation is 12% - in fact, a pay cut of 8%!

☐ Actor-writer Kenneth Griffith has reason to be bitter about TV censorship. He has in recent years seen two major documentaries - both on Northern Ireland - fall foul of the TV watchdogs. Two others were scrapped before completion. The reason given was that 'they were not up to broadcasting standards'. A leading member of the Association of Directors and Producers (ADP) said that the IBA's obsessions are firstly Northern Ireland, then sex, and bad language. On both channels it is clear that the political coverage of Ireland is the main concern of the censors.

☐ Unemployment figures are drastically underestimated. There are 55.9 million people in the UK. Of these 33.4 million are of working age, but only 23.7 million are working. Where are the others, all 9.7 million of them?

Well, a lot of them are women. Women who have to stay at home to look after children, or women who don't bother to register as unemployed because they're not entitled to benefits. Of the others, some are retired early. Approximately 200,000 are school leavers on YOPs courses or government training schemes. Some are part-time workers who, although looking for work, are not counted as unemployed.

☐ The State, the Tory Government and private employers not only disregarded the International Year of Disabled People, they all continued to break the law. The 1944 Disabled Persons Act says that all employers with more than 20 workers, must employ 3% of the workforce from the Registered Disabled.

Most civil service and local government departments only have an average 1.7% of their workforce as disabled persons.

Charities and other organisations concerned with the needs of disabled persons are pressing for penalties to be enforced against an estimated 44,000 companies that fail to employ their quota of disabled persons. Recently the Manpower Services Commission (a government body) recommended that there should be a scrapping of penalties against employers breaking the 3% quota.

Disabled persons are one of the groups of the population which has been especially hit by the effects of public spending cuts.

Also, unemployment amongst the Registered Disabled is currently estimated to be 40%

Perhaps the last word on what the ruling class attitude to the Disabled is should be left to Mrs. Thatcher:

"Most of us think that it is more laudable to try and do something for oneself than to get up and take a public stance on an issue to try to persuade the Government to do it."

Which, in reality, means she, and the capitalist system, don't give a damn about disabled persons.

☐ Inequality in Britain can clearly be seen from class differences amongst the unemployed. The most obvious difference is that it is the capitalist class which sacks the working class. Big differences can be seen when you consider the rare cases of bosses being made redundant.

When the deputy chairman of Express Newspapers, Jocelyn Stevens, got the sack he got a golden handshake of £130,000. He now intends to take a six month break from "work" to catch up with his reading and do a bit of travelling. Currently he is enjoying a well-deserved winter holiday in Switzerland.

☐ Despite Thatcher's comments to the contrary, the capitalist crisis continues. In 1981 a record 8,227 firms in Britain went broke (that's almost twice the number going broke in 1979).

And although stockbrokers Phillips and Drew predict an increase in profits for industry in 1982, they also predict that living standards will be crushed by rising prices.

Banks on both sides of the Atlantic have warned that Britain and America are sliding into a deeper economic slump. And city bankers Schroders warn that the present recovery in output will die out as living standards are squeezed in 1982.

☐ The hard-pressed working people of Britain gave over £2 million to the families of the brave men who died in the Penlee lifeboat tragedy. But Averavon Council, West Glamorgan, cannot find £5,000 a year to run Britain's only coastal-rescue training centre. National government's cutting of local authority funding is blamed for the stopping of the £5,000 grant.

Last year men trained at the Centre rescued 6,870 people in 3,744 incidents.

SHIRLEY WINS But Pass Laws are here

by a member of the 'Shirley Graham Defence Committee'.

Shirley Graham, a Jamaican born nurse has won her fight against deportation. The Home Office have given her "indefinite leave to remain" in Britain. They said they were "prepared to give her the benefit of the considerable doubt that any previous misrepresentation had not been deliberate." This is a cop out. Shirley has been allowed to stay, because thanks to her support campaign, thousands of people are now familiar with the real facts of her case. The Home Office bungling, the intimidation by the immigration officers and of course the vicious racism of the Immigration Law. (See C.S. Vol 5. No. 11.)

The support campaign has been responsible for organising meetings, pickets and a benefit. The black community in Newham, London, where



Photo: David Mc Calla, East End News.

Shirley lives, helped collect over 5,000 signatures petitioning the Home Secretary to allow Shirley to remain. Despite ill health, Shirley addressed Trade Union meetings and public rallies up and down the country. Shirley says she has been "overwhelmed" by the support she has received from the public.

STATE RACISM STEPPED UP

This is a great victory for Shirley. But state racism remains and is on the increase. The Immigration Laws threaten every black person living in Britain. In the same week that Shirley heard the news that she could stay, black people were being asked to show passports before they could claim benefits at her local social security office. The same demand is being made at the Labour controlled Newham Labour Exchange and local Housing Department. The courts are now calling for cases against black people to be adjourned to study their passports to see whether deportation is a viable sentence.

All this amounts to a concerted attack by the state against the rights of all black people. Shirley's case shows that battles can be won when people are organised and prepared to fight back.

LAURENCE SCOTT FIGHTING ON TWO FRONTS

by a Class Struggle Correspondent

Laurence Scott Engineering workers continue to put up a bitter fight against the closure of their Manchester factory, despite being attacked from all quarters. Just before Christmas L.S.E. boss Arthur Snipe won a crown court injunction against the workers secondary picketing of his main factory Mining Supplies in Doncaster. Six L.S.E. workers now face trial in March.

L.S.E. workers had previously picketed their own Manchester factory, but following the helicopter airlift, which by-passed the picket and removed the principal products, the pickets decided to switch their main attention to the Doncaster headquarters. From November they set out to hit Snipe where it would hurt him most.

Not surprisingly, this secondary picketing - the most effective - is illegal. But it was not only the law that the strikers faced.

Cont'd from
Page 1.



working conditions, and weakens the abilities of the shop floor to resist redundancies.

In December, almost 95% of the shop floor voted to strike on January 5th. Ron Todd came back with essentially the same offer, which still included the "efficiency" clauses which had previously been described as "totally unacceptable". Despite the constitutional vote to strike, Todd and other Union leaders unilaterally suspended strike action to call for a new vote and opened up a barrage of propaganda in alliance with the Ford bosses, the media and the government.

Swansea and Halewood workers knew what was happening, knew the issues, and walked out as previously decided. Come the "constitutional" voting later in the week, these plants which were clear on issues like the "efficiency" clauses, stood firm. In others, confusion reigned, a confusion made worse by the machinations of local union leaders. Ford workers now have a series of bitter struggles to face as the management move in to make the "efficiency" clauses bite, through redundancies, job "flexibility" and wholesale attacks on conditions which the workforce has fought to gain over many years.

OUR FORD DAGENHAM CORRESPONDENT ADDS:

The outburst of violence at Dagenham P.T.A. (Paint, Trim and Assembly), in the early hours of

A.U.E.W. SELL-OUT

The A.U.E.W. had withdrawn its official support after it had negotiated a sell-out deal in July, which the workers rejected. But the A.U.E.W. was not content with this. It was determined to break the back of the strike. So, through the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions a letter was sent in December to the National Union of Mineworkers. The letter to Joe Gormley, President of the National Union of Mineworkers complained that the pickets: "were receiving support from Trade Unionists in Manchester including members of various regions of your own Union." It continued: "We believe that this support is misguided and is also being given contrary to the feelings and decisions of the Union at national level and we would therefore once again be obliged if you could use your good offices to inform your members to cease blacking work from the factories of Mining Supplies Ltd." Gormley of course obliged.

January 7th, was as justified as it was inevitable. If it needed a mass assault on the stewards and the wrecking of the Convenor's office to record the bitter resentment of men who have been betrayed, outmanoeuvred and defeated by their national Union leaders, so be it. What else from men who know exactly how and why they are being sold out; men frustrated at not yet having developed sufficient consciousness and organisation to smash the unholy union-management alliance to smithereens - an alliance which deliberately created total confusion as part of its strategy.

At Dagenham, the body plant declared 2 split votes. The PTA day shift meeting on January 6th ended in some fighting when the convenor declared that a split vote had gone in favour of accepting Ford's offer. So it was down to the night shift. Union militants knew that a vote against acceptance would have to be accompanied by a vote to strike, and if possible an immediate walkout. This alone would have established unity with Halewood and Swansea, and rallied the majority of the 54,000 workers nationally, to clear and effective action.

Placards had been spontaneously produced; heckling and chanting delayed the meeting. Finally the chairman and convenor explained to the 2300 strong meeting that they opposed Todd's national resolution. But this could not undo the harm of their failure to explain and mobilise opposition early, and was merely a token. When the chairman declared a split vote, all hell broke loose, and led to serious violence for half an hour.

Needless to say, persecution of militants by management began immediately after the abortive strike, and will doubtless be intensified. As will the exploitation of the whole workforce as the "strings" on the pay deal are carried through.

Scargill modified Gormley's directive and said that only those lorries which had actually been seen crossing the picket line should be blacked. This directive, impossible to apply, effectively destroyed the blacking campaign, but allowed Scargill some chance to uphold his image.

Even local union leaders who made paper resolutions of support for Laurence Scott failed to inform, let alone explain the issues to, their members, which meant many crossed the picket line.

CONTINUING THE STRUGGLE

Laurence Scott workers are continuing the struggle, and have circulated a bulletin to all branches of the A.U.E.W. They have called for a ballot on the removal of the executive council which must be held under rule 14 paragraph 5 if it is supported by 10% (roughly 260) of the branches. If A.U.E.W. members have not seen the bulletin they should demand to see it, and move the resolution in their branch.

L.S.E. strike committee can be contacted at 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.

One member of ASLEF, an engine driver with 20 years' service, explains what the British Rail Board's proposed nine-hour 'flexible' roster would mean to him:

"One proposed roster has me starting at 6.20 a.m., which means rising at 3 a.m. to catch the 4.05 a.m. staff train from Bletchley. I will still be at the controls of a crowded commuter train at 3 p.m. There is no second driver or assistant with us. We are driving trains at speeds of up to 90 m.p.h. The trains run at 2 or 3 minute intervals in the rush hour and are sometimes only 440 yards apart. I am certainly not prepared to risk my own life or scores of other lives driving trains in an exhausted state, for a wage increase equivalent to the price of a couple of packets of cigarettes."

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FILM REVIEW: Grove Music

- contributed -

How important a role does music play in the struggle for national democratic rights - or indeed, in the struggles of oppressed peoples for national liberation? Reggae music forms an important and fundamental strand of black - and in particular - Caribbean - history and culture. From its origins in the ska and rock-steady music of the early '60s, reggae has developed into a militant, unifying force for thousands of black people in England today.

The rock-steady lyrics of the '60s were for the most part preoccupied with love, sex and drugs. The music of oppressed peoples in many cases centres around the only forms of pleasure available to them in an oppressive and exploitative society. The lyrics of rock-steady - and of some reggae today and American blues before it - frequently can be objected to in terms of sexism and attitudes towards women. But to dismiss these forms of music purely on those grounds is to fail to understand that, denied of effective political leadership, the music of oppressed peoples is often a celebration of material pleasures.

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

But reggae lyrics have come a long way since then. The rise in the development of black consciousness through the struggles of the Black Panthers in America and the national liberation struggles in Africa and elsewhere, find an effective parallel in the increased militancy of reggae and Caribbean based music. Fans of the late Bob Marley will have detected the steady growth of his own political development. From the fairly innocuous, rhythmical lyrics of his early rock-steady songs, his succeeding albums have displayed an increasing awareness and understanding of the nature of state oppression, imperialism and the need for black people to resist oppression and exploitation.

'Grove Music' was filmed against the background of the 1980 Notting Hill carnival. The joyous, affirmative music of the reggae bands is in stark contrast to the scenes of police and their surveillance gear perched high up on bridges watching with amused contempt the events below. Scenes of arrests are shown to the accompaniment of a black reggae singer urging black people

to stand up for their rights. 'Brinsly Ford, vocalist with the Aswad band and star of the excellent film 'Babylon' talks about the passivity of their parents before them, the first generation of Caribbean immigrants. He talks about the way they were used and exploited and strenuously announces that black people today are no longer prepared to tolerate racist abuse and state harassment. Another black musician states that black people do not want to fight, but if attacked will defend themselves with every means at their disposal. He describes the music scene today as a 'Battle-ground' and a prelude to the real battles which will come.

RASTAFARIANISM

Rastafarianism is an inseparable ingredient in most black reggae today. There is much that is negative in Rastafarianism but there is also a great deal that is positive. From the springboard of Rastafarianism believes many thousands of black people have come to develop an understanding of imperialism and state oppression. Rastas are no longer abused in Jamaica today. They are no longer laughed at and pointed at by children who once called them the evil, 'Blackheart Man'. Rastas have forced the government of Jamaica to give them a voice, and Robert Mugabe took them seriously enough to invite Bob Marley to perform at the independence day celebrations. Rastafarianism has achieved a credibility that can no longer be dismissed as just another 'bizarre religious cult'. If an alliance is to be formed with the black youth of England then it must be understood that the roots of Rastafarianism lie in oppression and, like all other popular responses and movements against oppression, it possesses many imperfections and much that is not ideal. But we must support and defend vigorously its positive aspects. Rasta musicians, like the ones interviewed in 'Grove Music' have become a mouthpiece for the grievances and aspirations of almost every black youth in England today.

So, go and see 'Grove Music' and 'Babylon' if you can; and if you like what you hear go and check out the sounds of Bob Marley, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Black Uhuru and others. If nothing else, reggae is great to dance to!

Cornelius Cardew 1936-1981

Contributed by a former colleague in the Scratch Orchestra.

Cornelius Cardew, an active anti-imperialist and anti-fascist musician was killed in the early hours of Sunday 13th December. He was walking from a night bus to his home in Leyton when he was run down by a hit and run driver.

Cardew, once regarded as the "enfant terrible" of English music, had, since an incident of state and press harassment of the Scratch Orchestra, which he founded and led, been politically active in cultural, anti-imperialist and anti-racist work. For some years he was much inspired and influenced by the example of socialist China, though, regretably, in the wake of the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, he became disillusioned with China and, along with some of his colleagues, veered to the ultra-left.

Since becoming politically conscious he was active in his support for many just struggles against oppression. On a visit to Belfast, where he performed at the Andersonstown Social Club, he was "lifted" and interrogated by the British army for several hours, during which interrogation he remained calm

and resourceful, aiding the Brits not one iota. His work in the field of anti-racism also earned him the ire of the state to the extent of a prison sentence in 1980.

In the field of music, Cardew had begun to build anew his great compositional skills in order to serve a new audience, the working class. This was a task involving an almost complete return to basics in music - the



bourgeois avant garde do not deal in such "plebian" concepts as melody for instance. In this new stage Cornelius

made some significant first steps, as witnessed by his "Boolevogue" for two pianos, broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 28th January.

The regard in which Cornelius was held by his musical colleagues, national minority people of his area, and fellow anti-imperialists, was shown by the attendance at his funeral in East London of some 300 people of many nationalities and walks of life. At the funeral, John Tilbury, a close musical colleague of Cardew's, spoke of Cornelius' wide ranging activity and ability as a teacher. A concert of representative works from the different stages of his musical career is being organised for his 46th birthday on May 7th.

Like everyone else, Cornelius Cardew had his weaknesses, but it would be shallow indeed to dwell on them. The inquest into Cardew's death returned a verdict of accidental death, despite eyewitness evidence that the hit and run driver immediately switched the car lights off and sped off after the killing. Whether the car driver knew the identity of his or her victim we cannot say; but what we can say is that in Cardew's death the state has lost an enemy, and the people a true friend.

The development POPULAR STRUGGLE AND S

The use of conspiracy law in the economic struggles of the British working class dates back at least to 1721 when a number of Journey-men tailors in Cambridge were convicted of "conspiring" to raise their wages. This case followed a year after Parliament had fixed by a law a 14-hour day and a maximum daily wage of 2 shillings for tailors, perhaps the first government incomes policy!

But it was in the 19th century that Common Law (created by judges) really developed the use of 'conspiracy' trials, not only against the development of the Trade Unions, but also as a major weapon in the state's legal arsenal against progressive and revolutionary political movements in Britain and in Ireland.

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY

In 1800, the Pitt Government passed the Act of Union which abolished the Irish Parliament and put the whole of Ireland under the direct rule of Westminster. The struggle of the Irish people for independence became organised principally through the Repeal Party led by Daniel O'Connell.

In the same year Parliament passed the Combination Act which made all 'agreements' for the purpose of increasing wages or altering hours of work criminal. This was one of the first statutory (parliamentary) laws on conspiracy.

This was the time of the Napoleonic wars, when France fought other European powers, including Britain, for spheres of influence in Europe and for control of the colonies. In 1815 the war ended with the defeat of France. It was followed in Britain by an economic crisis, with massive unemployment and starvation.

RESISTANCE AND REPRESSION

In 1817 a big demonstration was held in the East End of London at Spa Fields. The protest was swelled by large numbers of ex-soldiers and sailors who had been demobbed. The demonstration developed into large-scale 'rioting'. One of the principal organisers, Dr James Warner, was arrested and charged with 'conspiracy to overthrow the government' and evidence of his "subversion" in the form of leaflets urging soldiers "not to add to the miseries of their starving brethren" and other documents were submitted to the court. When the jury acquitted him, the judge, Mr Justice Bayley, rounded on the jury saying, "did he fly away from Justice?"

Two years later came the Peterloo massacre when a demonstration of 100,000 was broken up in the centre of Manchester by the local yeomanry, who killed 11 protesters and seriously injured hundreds more. The leader of the demonstration, Henry Hunt, and nine others were charged with seditious conspiracy, and found guilty. In the course of

In Bradford the 12 members and supporters of the United Black Youth League have had the date of their trial fixed for April 26 in Leeds. The Bradford 12 are charged with conspiracy to cause fire, explosions and intending to "endanger the lives of others".

These charges brought by the state arise from the summer uprisings in many of Britain's cities. The severity of the charges reflects a political decision to hit back against the national minorities and other anti-racists who have shown themselves prepared to stand up and resist state racism.

It is generally claimed that the state stands above, and is neutral in, the struggle between classes. Similarly, bourgeois propagandists frequently claim that the courts are not 'political' and are interested solely in dealing with those who 'break the law' and in 'administering justice'. There is an obvious response of "whose law?" and "whose justice?"; and the truth of the issue is clear in even the most cursory examination of British history.

the trial, the judge, Bayley again, added to the common law on conspiracy by saying that a conspiracy was inferred if the events could not have occurred without a plan. In other words, proof 'beyond all reasonable doubt' is unnecessary in a conspiracy trial - "inference" is enough to convict. He also argued that anyone who joined the 'conspiracy' after plans were made was equally guilty. So those who attended the protest were guilty of conspiracy even if they did not help plan it. These two basic planks of conspiracy law have survived today and help make "proof" of "conspiracy" much easier than proof of an actual act.

A year later, in 1820, George Edmonds was found guilty in a similar trial after a big demonstration in Birmingham. On appeal he faced Justice Bayley, who made absolutely clear the role of the law:

"I have no difficulty whatsoever in saying that to insinuate into the minds of the lower orders that they have certain rights, which they have not and to insinuate to them that they are oppressed ... is certainly an offence of a very aggravated description. To state to people at large that every one of them has the right to concur in the election of a member of parliament is advancing a doctrine which is not warranted by any of the principles of the constitution.

Meanwhile, the struggle in Ireland was developing apace, and had its own conspiracy trials. In one of them in 1823 Forbes and a number of other Irishmen were charged with conspiring to

The article below is the first of a series tracing the development of conspiracy law, and deals with the period 1800-1848. Through it, what becomes quickly apparent is the use of 'conspiracy' trials as a weapon of the British ruling class both in the class struggle within Britain, and in the revolutionary struggle for national liberation in Ireland. Indeed, in the 19th century, the judges themselves did not deign to conceal the political nature of the trials.

The conspiracy laws were created from the start by the courts themselves. For hundreds of years charges of conspiracy have been levied not mainly as a result of statutes passed by Parliament but through the use of common law. Common law is law based on the decisions of individual judges and of the law lords, which have been passed down as legal precedent and used as the basis for charging people with crimes, for the rules of evidence, for deciding whether they are 'guilty' or not. In such common law trials, the judges have been free to decide the length of the sentence

riotously assemble' at the Theatre Royal in Dublin. They were accused of throwing 'divers pieces of wood and pieces of copper and divers glass bottles' at the Duke of Wellington who was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland - the "king's representative". The defendants had to be released after the jury failed to agree a verdict.

THE STATE ATTEMPTS TO CRUSH TRADE UNIONISM

As well as the political movements in Ireland, and Britain, the economic struggles over wages and laws were still facing the conspiracy weapon as evidenced by the case of the Tolpuddle martyrs in 1834, when a group of farm labourers in Dorset were sentenced to 7 years' transportation for conspiring to form a union. Another example was the conspiracy weapon as evidenced by the "Bykerdike" case where a group of miners was convicted in 1838 for conspiring to strike. This was a period when it was estimated that half the children of the working class died before the age of five, and when 8 year olds often worked a 14 hour day.

THE GROWTH OF CHARTISM

In 1838 William Lovett drew up the People's Charter which demanded Universal Suffrage, Equal Electoral Districts, annual elections and payment for MPs. The Charter became the basic common demand of revolutionaries, reformists and the illegal trade unions. Most significantly, there also developed united action between chartists and Irish nationalists during the following ten years.

of conspiracy law

STATE REPRESSION 1800-1848

without any limitation being set by statutes of Parliament.

From time to time, however, Parliament has passed laws on aspects of conspiracy and played its part in refining the 'legal' weapons of the ruling class, but it was not until 1977 that a major act was passed, and even that has left wide areas in the field of common law and much else to the discretion of prosecutors and judges, whom history has shown to be anything but neutral. (Our next issue will contain an article on the 1977 Act.)

This history shows judges and Parliament creating laws and legal practices in response to the people's struggles in Britain and in Ireland, and that history is no dead duck but lives on today in cases involving Irish revolutionaries, trade union activists (the Shrewsbury pickets), political activists such as the Welsh Language Society, and militants of the oppressed national minorities, as in the Bradford 12 trial.

Henry Vincent, the Editor of Western Vanguard, was the first of the Chartists' leaders to be charged with conspiracy. After he toured Gwent urging the beginning of an armed uprising, John Frost led 2,000 people in a revolt. The uprising was defeated. Frost was found guilty of Treason and transported.

Vincent faced charges of seditious conspiracy and unlawful assembly. Eventually he beat the conspiracy charge but served 12 months on the other.

Two years later, Samuel Holberry and three others, all chartists, were found guilty of conspiring to cause a breach of the peace. Sam Holberry died in prison.

1842 saw Britain in a deep recession. A militant strike movement spread everywhere and 3 million people signed a petition supporting the charter. In that year another chartist called Shelling was convicted with one other for conspiring to raise an insurrection. The prosecution claimed that he was calling people together at a race course for this purpose, and produced a witness who said he saw another person completely tell people to meet there. The defence objected that this was no evidence against Shelling himself, but the judge allowed the evidence, thus permitting evidence against one person to be used as evidence against another in conspiracy cases. This set a new common law precedent relaxing the laws of Hearsay in conspiracy cases.

Following strikes and rioting

The people are conspiring

Listen my brother! Listen my sister!
Go tell my mother -
Her sons are once again behind
these walls of oppression.

Lie down and be murdered by the fascists
Keep quiet as you are stealthily deported
Stay silent as you are criminalised and raided
Don't say a word! For you will conspire.

Your crime is not your acts
Their proof is your thought and not any facts
The reason is you stood up and you fought
For the rights of your people.

There is violence in the air
In the lives of our people
As they starve to their deaths
There is anger everywhere
As we are cut down by the fascists,
Criminalised by the cops,
Imprisoned by the courts.

Our beliefs are our beliefs not the thoughts of any
bandits
We can't rob the robbed nor sit down and be robbed
Nor lie down and be crushed
Aloud my friend 'Enough is enough'.

And now that they are shaking, our enemy is perspiring
What else can they think? But - 'the people are
conspiring!'

Poem by one of the Bradford 12

throughout the Potteries, Thomas Cooper was convicted in 1843 on a charge of seditious conspiracy for calling on striking Staffordshire workers to stay out till the Charter became law, and served two years. At the same time another Chartist leader, O'Connor, and 58 others, faced similar charges in Lancashire. O'Connor had already served 18 months for conspiracy after saying that they would win the Charter "peacefully if we may, forcibly if we must". In this case the prosecution dropped the charges halfway through the trial.

THE CONSPIRACY WEAPON IN IRELAND

The struggle in Ireland was also reaching a high point. The Repeal Party was growing rapidly and had widespread influence. The state and its courts stepped in. Public meetings by the Repeal Party were banned and David O'Connell, its leader, was charged with seditious conspiracy. The charges were written on a piece of paper 100 yards long. The prosecution evidence came from speeches, meetings and articles and the case set a legal precedent in finding him guilty of conspiracy for what he said even though no actions had been taken towards an uprising.

In Britain the revolutionary trend was linking with the Irish struggle. Tom Rankin and 45 other people in Manchester were tried together in a single 'conspiracy' trial. They were described as 'Chartists, Irish Confederates and unemployed', and accused of calling on the people to 'arm and resist the

government' and with supporting both the Charter and the repeal of the Act of Union. At the same time an Irish Nationalist, O'Donnell, was charged with conspiracy in Liverpool on a similar basis. All the defendants in these trials were found guilty.

THE LAW EXISTS TO PROTECT THE RULING CLASS ... IT'S OFFICIAL

Throughout the continent of Europe great revolutionary movements were brewing, and the British ruling class reacted to protect its position. Sir James Fitzjames Stevens, a bourgeois legal historian, wrote later that "the disturbances consequent upon the continental revolutions of that year were considered to require new legislation." In 1848 the Treason Felony Act was passed, allowing a range of sentences for conspiracy - to depose the king, incite invasion, levy war or constrain either house of parliament to change its policy.

IRELAND IS THE TESTING GROUND

The first Treason Felony trial was in Ireland, where the Young Ireland Movement had become the main centre of the Irish Nationalist struggle. Young Irish Movement leaders had organised an uprising in Kilkenny where a Provisional Government of Ireland had been proclaimed. The previous two years had seen the failure of the potato crop. Half a million Irish people had died of starvation, 2 million had emigrated, and the number of small farmers cut by half. The rebellion was put down and O'Brien and Meagher, two of the principal leaders, convicted and transported. Another leading Republican, the Editor of the nationalist paper the Irish Tribune, C. Doherty, was three times tried for conspiracy to depose the queen. After twice being acquitted he was finally found guilty and transported.

In another 1848 case the Chartists Lacey, Cuffey and Fey were found guilty of conspiracy under the Treason Felony Act. The "inference" proof of conspiracy was used again (as it had been in O'Donnell's trial). Evidence was given by a state agent who said he had attended a meeting where a plot to launch a national uprising was discussed. He also claimed to have seen armed men in a public house. Although the three defendants were not present at either of these events the 'evidence' was allowed to be put to the court under the special rules for conspiracy trials.

END OF AN ERA

1848 marked the beginning of the decline of Chartism as a major revolutionary trend in Britain. The following period, to be dealt with next time, saw the use of conspiracy law in Britain mainly in an attempt to hold back the right to strike and the 'new unionism' of unskilled workers; while in Ireland it was a major weapon against the growth of the Fenians.

LAOS: UNDER THE HANOI HEEL

A vivid exposure of how Vietnam's treacherous leaders have undermined and destroyed the Lao revolution has been given by a former top Lao official. Dr Khamsengkeo Sengstith was the Director of the Health Bureau of the Ministry of Public Health and Secretary-General of the Lao Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. In December he finally broke with the Laotian government whilst on the way to a meeting of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation in Afghanistan, and went to socialist China.

Addressing a Beijing press conference, Dr Sengstith said,

"As a cadre for so many years, I am a patriot ... Since the founding of the Laotian People's Democratic Republic, I have seen with my own eyes the Le Duan clique reducing Laos to a colony of the so-called Inochina Federation step by step."

There are some cadres and peasants, however, he said, high in political consciousness, who have taken up arms against the occupation of Laos by the Vietnamese.

In a statement he said that the Laotian People's Revolutionary Party is "merely a branch of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Its lines, policies and the composition of top leading



Dr. Khamsengkeo Sengstith (left) at a press conference in Beijing.

cadres are all decided by the Le Duan clique.

"The Le Duan clique has appointed a Minister without Portfolio and one vice-minister from each Ministry of the Vietnamese government to be solely in charge of controlling and directing the work of all the ministries and commissions at the ministerial level under the Laotian government.

"They purge patriotic cadres who refuse to co-operate with them, throw into prison those cadres whom they do not trust and torture them to death."

He exposed Vietnamese crimes in using chemical weapons to practise "a policy of genocide towards national

minorities".

"The Vietnamese have kept this affair secret from the Laotians. Chemical weapons are being used directly by the Vietnamese themselves.,,

"The Le Duan clique has taken Laos as a base supplying raw material for Vietnam's industrial growth and a place for dispersing her dense population."

In reply to a question, Dr Sengstith said, "There are now 3,000 Soviets in Laos, some being KGB agents" Russians have taken control of the Laotian Air Force.

He recalled that China had given unconditional support to the Laotian people's struggle against imperialism. Le Duan had attempted to wreck Sino-Laotian friendship, but the Laotian people remained friendly to China.

Dr Sengstith has been given permission to live in China.

VIETNAMESE PEOPLE OPPOSE LE DUAN, TOO

Meanwhile, Comrade Hoang Van Hoan, a former member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam who now lives in China, has been giving lectures on Vietnam-China friendship to Vietnamese residents in China. He reviewed the progress in struggling against Le Duan over the past year, and stressed the importance of making efforts to restore and develop Vietnam-China friendship.

KAMPUCHEA: Vietnamese — Lose Military Initiative

All observers agree: the Vietnamese have lost the military initiative. The Vietnamese army of occupation have been forced back nearer their supply bases as communication lines and isolated posts are subject to increasing attacks. Vietnam's army of occupation is spread too thin. Approximately half of the force is comprised of technical and logistic support needed in a conventional war, while the majority of the others are tied down (unsuccessfully) guarding roads, bridges and the strategic highways and rail links that are increasingly subject to attack. Democratic Kampuchea's (DK's) military priority is on cutting communications and transport lines and inflicting casualties in a war of attrition, with military success in the south around the port of Kompong Som (where a convoy transporting Soviet advisors was attacked last October), proof of DK's increased fighting ability.

While not seeking to openly control villages in the interior, thus avoiding Vietnamese retaliations against inhabitants, aid agencies officials based in Phnom Penh confirm that liberated zones extend into central and eastern Kampuchea, the provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondul-kiri, as well as western districts along the border with Thailand. Now over 1,700,000 Kampuchean are

living in liberated zones administered by Democratic Kampuchea.

POISON GAS

The deterioration in the military field for the occupation forces has weakened their fighting capacity and morale, increased desertions and rebellions among the predominantly south Vietnamese draftees, and led to serious health problems, mainly due to malaria. Although still numerically superior, the Vietnamese Army units are not up to effective strength and are in need of reinforcement. However, while Vietnam has more than a million under arms, there is a shortage of trained troops because of its commitments in south Vietnam, Laos and on its northern border with China, as well as the 200,000+ in Kampuchea itself. The use of highly toxic poison gas in remote areas of Laos and Kampuchea, where conventional weapons have proved ineffective, has not gone undetected. American author Sterling Seagraves documents the use of toxic chemicals by the Vietnamese in Yellow Rain, identifying it as a biotoxin, specifically trichothecenes, whose major source is the Soviet Union. (A UN team of experts sent to investigate the use of toxic chemical weapons by both the Vietnamese and Russians is expected to report shortly.)

COMMUNIST PARTY OF KAMPUCHEA

Against this background of military progress for the liberation

forces, the attempts to consolidate the moves towards unity of all resistance forces was the prime consideration for the December announcement of the dissolution of the Communist Party of Kampuchea. The situation that faces the Kampuchean people is unlike that of the war of liberation against American imperialism; once defeated the aggressor will not be returning to the other side of the Pacific, but will probably remain a hostile neighbour. The strategic policy set out in the political programme of the Patriotic and Democratic Front of Great National Union of Kampuchea (PDFGNUK) "constructs neither socialism nor communism... for tens or even hundreds of years to come, when the nation and people of Kampuchea are and will be threatened with extermination by the Vietnamese Le Duan clique." This decision does not negate the fact that the forces of Democratic Kampuchea provide the main bulwark against the occupying forces of Vietnam, nor lessen their determination to free Kampuchea of those aggressor forces. Nor do the Kampuchean comrades deny that, "During these 21 years, the Communist Party of Kampuchea has succeeded in fulfilling its successive historical tasks by raising high its banner of struggle for the national ideal of independence, sovereignty, peace, neutrality and for the people of Kampuchea to get free from oppression of all kinds. It has done so with its constant high spirit of

IRAN SOLIDARITY

The following is a reprint of the main body of a leaflet recently produced by Iran Solidarity:

The people of Iran, by their mass protest that culminated in the 1979 uprising, put an end to 38 years of brutal rule by the Shah.

Their aims were modest: an end to imprisonment, torture and execution of people for their political beliefs; freedom of expression and of the press; productive use of Iran's oil wealth for the benefit of the people instead of for arms and show projects; democratic and free elections; revital-

isation of agriculture and industry to avoid dependence on other countries; recognition of the democratic and cultural rights of national minorities; and an end to collaboration between Iran and imperialist powers in the region.

In order to see whether their demands were met, let us look at the record of the present regime ...

* officially there are 7,000 political prisoners out of a prison population of 28,000. In fact the true figure of political prisoners is believed by opposition forces to be some 20,000.

* there have been over 3,000 executions officially declared during the past 4 months alone. According to Amnesty International, over the last year Iran executed more people than all other countries put together!



POLAND & IRELAND

Shortly after the imposition of martial law in Poland, Sinn Fein issued a statement of solidarity with the Polish people. We reprint it below:

"As far back as August of last year (i.e. 1980), Sinn Fein expressed solidarity with the independent self-governing trade union movement whose founding principles were in keeping with our own Eire Nua policy of worker ownership/participation and self-management.

"We appreciated a message of sympathy from Lech Walesa on behalf of Solidarity at the time of Bobby Sands' death. Now with Poland in the grip of military rule our sympathy goes out to the entire Polish people.

"Sinn Fein stands with the popular democratic socialism of Solidarity. In Verona on December 14th and in Turin on December 19th our President, Ruairi O Bradaigh and Director of Foreign Affairs, Richard Behal, marched with Italian socialist and communist parties in support of the people of Poland.

"We deplore any attempt by Western imperialism to exploit the agony and suffering of the Polish people. This historic nation has been a buffer zone between East and West for too long and an acknowledgement of Poland's right to freedom and independence is vital for the advancement of socialism and the welfare of the Polish people."

sacrifice, patriotism and responsibility to its nation and people. Despite having gone through tortuous and complicated situations and having committed some mistakes, the Communist Party of Kampuchea has successfully fulfilled its glorious tasks to the maximum." (Communique by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea concerning the dissolution of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, December 6, 1981)

The announcement should be taken as a token of the seriousness of their endeavour to unite the anti-Vietnamese forces into an effective coalition that can use the increasing military victories to enforce a political solution that will guarantee Kampuchean sovereignty, independence and non-alignment.



Iranian revolutionaries on trial, shortly before being sentenced to death. "I know I will be executed as many of my comrades have been. It will be an honour to follow them to martyrdom."

* torture is a daily occurrence in Iran's jails, where all the horrific techniques - electric shocks, beating, 'hot tables' - are being reintroduced.

* there is no freedom of expression or of the press in Iran today. All newspapers are controlled by the government.

* the economy is in crisis, with 4-5 million unemployed in a country with no social security system. Inflation is officially put at 40%. Unofficially it is estimated at 100%. Iran spends £200 million a month on a war that has created 2 million refugees and destroyed some of the most important of the country's industrial areas.

* the demands of national minorities have been ignored, and the Arabs, Baluchis, Turkomans, and most notably the Kurds brutally suppressed. Aerial bombardment of villages in Kurdistan, and massacres by the army and the 'Revolutionary Guards' is well documented in the international press.

* women are treated as 'second class citizens in almost all walks of life. Under the new legal system the right of women to divorce their husbands has been withdrawn, except for very special circumstances. Women do not even have the right to choose their own dress, and must cover themselves from head to foot at their workplaces, or face dismissal.

* democracy today is only for Iran's ruling 'Islamic' Republican Party and its associates. The right to strike is not recognised in the Iranian constitution. All attempts to organise at the workplace have to be channelled through the pro-regime 'Islamic' councils in each factory and office. Industrial action is usually met by instant dismissal and imprisonment.

* religious minorities like Baha'is, Armenians, Sunni Muslims, are persecuted. Their children are forced out of schools, and they are forced out of jobs.

IRAN SOLIDARITY (IS) has been formed to inform the British people and the British labour movement in particular on the facts about life in today's Iran, in order to gain the widest support in opposing the present unjust system. The aims of this body - which is formed of radical progressive groups and individuals - are:

1. The condemnation of the tyrannical ruling regime in Iran and its policies of repression, torture, executions and denial of human rights.
2. Support for the struggle for democratic rights in Iran. This excludes any collaboration with the pro-imperialist forces inside or outside Iran.
3. Support for the struggle and demands of national minorities.
4. Support for the struggle for women's rights.
5. Equal rights for all religious groups.
6. To oppose any imperialist intervention in Iran.
7. To call for the dissolution of all special and military courts.
8. To win support for the workers' rights to form their own organisations and to take industrial action.
9. To support the freedom of belief expression and political activities.
10. This campaign aims to direct itself above all at the British labour movement.

"Class Struggle" urges all its readers to support the work of Iran Solidarity. They can be contacted at BM Box 9270, London WC1N 3XX.

In a recent letter to Mojahed Brother Massoud Rajavi, in charge of the National Council of Resistance, the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain, declared its support for the National Council of Resistance and wished success to the struggle of the Iranian people against the Khomeini regime and for independence, democracy and progress.

In a forthcoming issue, "Class Struggle" will print an analysis of the present situation in Iran and explain how the courageous struggle of the Iranian people was usurped by a brutal and obscurantist theocracy whose continued rule carries with it the threat of reversion to foreign domination by one or other of the great powers.

Western Reaction

The western reaction to the military dictatorship in Poland is predictably confused and fragmented as each capitalist state considers its own immediate interests. Whilst all the states have criticised military rule and a number have pointed to the behind the scenes role of the Soviet Union there is wide variation in both the tone of the comments and the actual actions taken by different governments. The much claimed "unity" of the joint N.A.T.O. declaration on January 11th, which made vague possible threats of sanctions against the Soviet Union in a number of areas, was little more than a mutually agreeable form of words which committed no-one to actual sanctions, and which carefully made the point that each country would decide on its own reaction in the light of their own conditions.

Chancellor Kreisky of Austria has gone out of his way to criticise Solidarnosc for being 'politically unrealistic' and in going 'too far' with its demands. The West German Chancellor, Schmidt, joins Kreisky in his 'soft' line, and takes a less than lukewarm line on any question of applying sanctions against the USSR and Poland. Some Western media forces have justified such a stand on the

grounds that sanctions would hurt the Polish people, and totally ignore the fact that Solidarnosc itself has called for sanctions, and has pointed out that the government sponsored food aid to Poland from Western Europe was going only to the bureaucrats and had never been seen in the shops by the Polish people. The German reaction cannot be separated from the views of a number of bankers, and this is also true of a certain trend in other European countries, who have no objection to military rule if they think that it will 'stabilise the economy' and thus provide them with their profits and repayment of their capital. Indeed after the wave of repression began, a West German banker told the 'Financial Times',

"What I am saying may be a bit brutal, but I think the Polish government was no longer in a position to govern the country. I now see a chance for Poland to return to a more normal working schedule and this could be a good thing for the banks."

Many engineering firms in Europe, particularly Germany, and including John Browns on Clydebank, also have lucrative contracts connected with the construction of the gas pipe line which will connect the USSR and West Germany

and could provide three quarters of Germany's needs.

The strongest stance in Europe has come from President Mitterand of France, where Trade Unions too have been very active in solidarity with Solidarnosc. The Socialist led CFDT has called on its members working on projects connected with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to see what pressure can be put on. Even the CGT unions, led by the pro-Moscow Communist Party which supports martial law, have seen a massive protest at rank and file level, against the line of their 'leadership' who support the dictatorship.

The United States has carried out the unilateral imposition of certain sanctions, and made many high-sounding statements. But it should not be forgotten that whilst there has been a block on certain high technology exports, Reagan has been careful to allow massive grain deals with the Soviet Union. The USSR has just suffered another bad harvest and is seeking its biggest ever grain deals, and no good capitalist is going to miss a chance of profits that big. Another factor that progressive people will hardly have missed is the monumental hypocrisy of Reagan and his type, including Thatcher.

Consider Reagan's reaction to the Air Traffic Controllers (whose union PATCO, incidentally, supported Reagan's Presidential campaign). Their strike was illegal as US law bans strikes in the Public sector. PATCO was fined millions of dollars, its leaders locked up and all strikers sacked. Consider

Build Solidarity with Solidarnosc



Thousands of people in Britain have taken part in events to build solidarity with Solidarnosc. Of course, in the forefront of the campaign has been the Polish national minority in Britain, and also Estonians and other East Europeans. Meetings, vigils and demonstrations have been held. A committee has been calling for a boycott of all trade with the Soviet Union and its satellites, and has organised trade unionists to picket Soviet and Warsaw Pact ships at the London docks. The TUC has declared its support for Solidarity and has

broken relations with the East German state trade union. The National Union of Students has declared its support for the now banned Independent Students Association in Poland, and will be organising support, including financial support, for them.

Whatever dilemmas the Polish situation lands the British left in, British workers support their class brothers and sisters in Poland.

After the declaration of martial law, the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain, produced a leaflet calling for, "Solidarity with Solidarnosc!",

"Hands off Poland!" It has been widely distributed at Poland solidarity events and in other areas of mass work to members of the Polish community and working people of many nationalities.

SOLIDARNOSC
with
SOLIDARNOSC

"Class Struggle" hopes that all readers will help support the brave workers and people of Poland. Here is a list of organisations in Britain working to build solidarity with Poland:

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES WITH SOLIDARNOSC

Polish Solidarity Campaign, 69
Edinburgh Rd, London E13
Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group
in UK, 64 Philbeach Gardens, Earls
Court, London SW5. Ring 01-373 3492
Birmingham Polish Solidarity Committee,
c/o Roger Murray, Sparkhill Labour
Club, Stratford Rd, Birmingham.
Glasgow Polish Solidarity Committee,
c/o Ian McCalman, 18 Mossiel Rd,
Glasgow, G43. Ring 041-632 1839
Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity
Committee, c/o Jon Silberman, 51
Montrose House, Crete St, Oldham,
Lancs. Ring 061-620 2885
Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Box
23, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.
Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign,
10 Park Drive, London NW11.
Ring 01-458 1501

Thatcher's new anti-union legislation, and what her reaction would be to unions that support collective ownership, demand to elect managers etc! Finally, consider the US's reaction to other military dictatorships which it sponsors throughout the world. Turkey is a case in point.

Turkey

Since the imposition of martial law last year 1000 people have been sentenced to death, and 20 have died under torture. 52 leaders of the Trade Union, DISK, are on trial for 'subversion'. The prosecutor has called for the death sentence. 447 members of PPK, the Kurdish Liberation Party, one of 6 banned Kurdish Organisations, are presently on trial and face the same sentence. 2,331 trials of PPK members have been planned. This according to the Reagan logic is a good dictatorship defending democracy!

Reagan's reaction to the Polish dictatorship, is determined by US interests in maintaining their sphere of influence against Soviet expansion. It has nothing to do with concern for 'democracy'. The two superpowers attack each others hypocrisy and domination, and each calls on the people to side with them against the other. The people should oppose both. In the case of Poland, Solidarity has called for sanctions and they have the right to expect working class support in other countries. We must demand our unions take such steps, and demand our governments take effective action; but we don't have to tail behind Reagan.

Contd. from front page

STRUGGLE IN NEW FORMS

Of course with the balance of forces against them the Polish workers could not sustain major confrontations indefinitely. But the struggle continues with the people showing their ingenuity in countless ways. Bitter jokes circulate against the regime. Workers successfully sabotage production. In one week work by 14,000 workers at Ursus they produced precisely one tractor! Workers at a vehicle plant changed the tolerance levels of machine settings so that the cars disintegrated because of the consequent faulty design. Dockers in Szczecin have been repeatedly loading and unloading the same goods.

THE CROW WILL NOT BEAT THE EAGLE!

The people still defiantly wear Solidarity badges. Others wear black mourning ribbons, as they did after the 1863 uprising was crushed by the Russian Tsar. Citizens hand soldiers poisoned sweets. Graffiti refers to "Adolf Jaruzelski". One chemistry student developed an invisible ink paint spray. It defaces and disintegrates official posters after 30 minutes, long after the culprit has vanished!

Indeed, the crow will not beat the eagle, because through the centuries the Polish people have shown that they have what Bobby Sands called, "the spirit of freedom that cannot be quenched."

SOLIDARITY WITH SOLIDARNOSC!
VICTORY TO THE POLISH WORKERS!

IRELAND SOLIDARITY

Addressing the European parliament in Strasbourg on December 17, Thatcher faced an attack for her murder of the Irish hunger strikers. Mario Capanna, a Euro-MP of the Italian Radical Party held up a poster of Bobby Sands MP. Later, in a speech to the parliament, Mr. Capanna said that northern Ireland had become, "a small Afghanistan of Europe."

As 1981 drew to a close, Irish Northern Aid (the main Ireland solidarity organisation in the USA), represented Ireland at the annual function of the Captive Nations League. This is the first time that Ireland has been recognised by the League, which mainly works in support of oppressed nations in the Russian Empire.

Sinn Fein has received a message of solidarity from the United Nations Office of the International Indian Treaty Council, which says: "In the long march toward liberation of our peoples from the streets of Belfast to the prairies of Wounded Knee, the friendship and solidarity will always remain a great weapon against the oppressor."

IRA on Red Brigades

The IRA has repudiated the allegation that it is involved in any internationalist 'terrorist' network or pact as alleged in a so-called Red Brigade's communique presently being quoted in the European and American press.

A statement went on to say:

"This is not the first time that such a slur has been made against the IRA in an attempt to distort our true image abroad and confuse politically sympathetic audiences.

"In fact, the decision to lump the IRA with individualist groups has been taken at the very senior levels of European and American governments as part of a propaganda drive to precede the introduction of repressive legislation aimed at abolishing the political status of political activists or refugees attempting to thwart extradition."

The statement concluded:

"We repeat, the IRA is a national liberation organisation aimed at ending British rule in Ireland and establishing a united Ireland."

(Reprinted from An Phoblacht/Republican News.)

Scots socialist on English

The Christmas issue of 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' (AP/RN) contained a letter from a self-styled 'English socialist' attacking the IRA military campaign in Britain. In a typically chauvinist manner he suggested that wars of national liberation are not won by the oppressed people but through the generosity of people in the oppressor nation. He wrote,

"It was the anti-Vietnam war movement in America which to a very large extent resulted in America pulling out ...

"The bombing campaign in England will not bring about a withdrawal of troops. But a mass anti-war movement has every likelihood of doing so."

In its January 14 issue, AP/RN printed a letter from the organiser of the Scottish Socialist Republican Clubs, Glasgow, repudiating the English social chauvinist and putting him firmly in his place. We reprint that letter below:

Congratulations on the Christmas edition of the 'Poblacht', especially the (unintentionally) humorous contribution from a member of the traditional Brit 'left' - the letter 'Bombs in England'.

As usual these pseudo 'lefties' will pay lip service and pass courageous resolutions supporting real revolutions in far away places (the further away the safer) but shrink in horror at the prospect of any serious revolution

happening on their own doorstep.

The particular correspondent didn't object too much to a military campaign in Ireland but thought it wasn't quite cricket to play the game on his home ground. After all, it might upset the Great British tame union movement. No matter that that reactionary body could end the war in Ireland tomorrow if they so desired.

Also, revolutionary action in the Home Counties would (don't laugh) alienate the Great British Labour Party, who - incidentally - sent the troops into Ireland, introduced internment, passed the Terrorising Acts, froze the Great British workers' wages and introduced Tory cuts.

It may be the great Brit 'left's' duty to cry 'Thatcher out', meaning the other Tories in, but certainly not the duty of serious revolutionaries. Ireland is showing the way for other oppressed Celtic colonies.

The Brit 'left' have set themselves up as champions of Westminster rule in Scotland and Wales by opposing the formation of nationalist or republican movements and demanding that we supply them with tame Labour MPs (as well as all our natural resources.).

The Brit 'left' know only too well that bombing campaigns in Ireland, Scotland, Wales or the Khyber Pass, will not worry the stockbroker belt of the south-east of England or the trendy Brit 'left' of London. One bomb in their holy city is worth more than a thousand bombs in oppressed Ireland.

MILITARY GO FOR REPUBLICAN PRESS

The increasing support for, and understanding of, the Irish people's struggle internationally (which reached a high point during the Hunger Strike last year), the increasing support for the Republican movement by the nationalist people, and Britain's continuing inability to defeat the military campaign waged by the IRA, is leading the British Army and RUC to wage an increasing campaign against the Republican Press Centre in Belfast. The Press Centre premises also house Belfast Sinn Fein Headquarters, Belfast office of "An Phoblacht/Republican News" (AP/RN) and the H-Block Information Centre.

Recent speculation by Republicans that a systematic campaign was underway to smash the republican information service, and possibly imprison leading political activists, were confirmed by a January 8 raid, the third in three weeks, in which seven people were arrested and held for two days in Castlereagh interrogation centre.

EARLIER RAIDS

Earlier raids, on December 18 when rooms were searched and photographed, and on January 4 when the distribution manager of AP/RN, Tom Hartley was arrested and held for 48 hours, concentrated on the telex room from where telexed Sinn Fein policy statements as well as supplied IRA statements are regularly issued to the media. Samples of telex tape and printed telex statements were confiscated and the machine dusted for fingerprints in an attempt to invent a direct connection between the machine, its operator and the IRA.

The third raid came shortly after a supplied IRA statement claiming the execution of a part-time UDR soldier earlier that day had been issued on the telex machine.

After taking 25 minutes to break down the door with crow-bars and sledgehammers, British soldiers and RUC men seized a copy of the IRA statement and arrested seven people - who they held for 48 hours - who refused to explain their business in the centre. One of them, former blanket man, Fra McCann was told, "Every time a telex statement goes out the centre will be raided."

The aim of concentrating on the telex machine as a probable stepping stone to attempting to suppress AP/RN and shut down the Sinn Fein office was spelt out to Tom Hartley in Castlereagh after he had been arrested on January 4. Tom recalls: "On Tuesday morning (January 5), two senior detectives of the RUC came in to see me and put a number of questions to me. I adopted the same policy throughout of not talking to them. At the end of the session they said that I had withheld information, and also that in conspiracy with other people I had put out a statement on a given date.

"During the various interrogation sessions I was told by the RUC that their target was the telex machine and that they were, in their own words, going to take out the big



● The Falls Road Republican Press Centre, Belfast, where the telex is the centre of RUC interest

boot. Which in fact means that they were going to try and take a case against members of the staff. It appears to me that what they are doing is to try and convict members of Sinn Fein under emergency legislation, make the running of the press centre illegal and as a consequence have it closed down."

Explaining the timing of the raids and the emphasis on the telex, AP/RN said in part,

"The timing of the current raids and the emphasis on the telex machine can be seen against the background of the hunger strike period. At that time, the republican ability to transmit news received from inside the H-Blocks immediately by means of the telex, as well as telexing statements which exposed the manoeuvrings of the British government on the hunger strike issue, and the ease with which republicans linked in to national and international press sources, seriously embarrassed the British and placed them on the defensive."

EARLIER ATTEMPTS

This campaign against AP/RN inevitably reminds people of the last major campaign against the Press Centre - the two big raids of December 1977 and April 1978. During those raids (which were considerably cruder than the present ones), office equipment was smashed and confiscated. Embarrassingly for the Brits one item smashed was the telex machine, hurled from an upstairs window. In fact it was GPO property, and the Brits had to pay compensation!

One of those held then was Danny Morrison, currently the Editor of AP/RN. He explains:

"They attempted to close down "Republican News" in 1977/78 but that attempt failed... This time they are attempting to do it again, less crudely than the first time... I expect that these raids are a prelude to a number of charges, possibly conspiracy charges, which will put Sinn Fein members in jail for a considerable length of time - possibly just on internment by remand, but even conceivably leading to convictions. All we can do is stand up to this, that's all we can do."

Commenting on British strategy, AP/RN said,

"Today the pressure is on the telex machine, tomorrow it will be on 'An Phoblacht/Republican News', the day after that it will be on political activists of all sorts; eventually they, the Brits, hope - though in vain - to get the whole republican political establishment closed down."

After the first raid on December 18, Danny Morrison, quite correctly pointed out,

"It ill behoves the British government to complain about crack-downs on freedom of speech in Poland when they are engaged in suppressing the voice of republicanism in Ireland."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday February 5th.

Anti-imperialist Rally.
Democracy for the rich. Repression for the poor.

Speakers: Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!, Sinn Fein (Britain), Alastair Logan (Solicitor), Ben Hill (brother of Irish political prisoner in Britain), Shirley Graham, and others. Organised by FRFI. 7.30 pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. Tube - Holborn. Admission 75p.

Saturday February 6th.

Poland Solidarity. Demonstration called by Polish Solidarity Campaign. Assemble 11 am Chamberlain Square, B'ham

Saturday February 13th.

Social - Organised by Irish Republican Socialist Party. 8 pm Hackney Trades and Labour Hall, Dalston Lane, London, E.8.

Saturday February 20th.

Victory to the Irish People!
Demonstration called by North West Irish Solidarity Committee. Assemble 12.30 pm Moss Side Birley High School, Chichester rd., Moss Side, Manchester.

Saturday February 27th.

Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now! Demonstration called by South London Irish Solidarity Campaign. Assemble 1.30 pm, outside Irene House, Balham High Road. Near Balham Tube.