

CLASS STRUGGLE

Political Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

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These 12 young Asian men, aged 17-25, were arrested last July in a series of dawn raids across Bradford. Many are members of the United Black Youth League, an independent organisation committed to fighting racism. In the first two days after their arrest, the twelve were subjected to racist abuse by the police. They were harassed and denied access to solicitors, friends and relatives. Most of them have already spent three months in prison and they were only given bail when they refused to go to court for the weekly remand hearings they considered a farce. When bail was allowed, conditions were attached. The most important of these is that the 12 are not allowed to take part in the campaign for their own defence.

LIFE SENTENCE

The 12 are charged with making explosive substances and conspiracy

to make explosive substances. These are the most serious charges in the country arising from the July uprisings. Yet, in Bradford, there were only minor disturbances and no petrol bombs were used. The case against them rests on so-called 'voluntary' statements made while they were detained, and on their record of political activity. All 12 are pleading not guilty to the charges.

NATIONAL MINORITIES ON TRIAL

The trial is clearly political. The aim is to put down some of the most active fighters against racism and thus intimidate the national minorities as a whole. The black community is on trial! The British state was shaken by the massive tide of rebellion that swept the country last July. About 3,500 were arrested and around the country local defence committees and action groups have organised

political and legal defence in their own areas. But nationally resistance to the repression following the summer has in many ways focussed on the campaign to free the Bradford 12. In attacking the UBYL, the state is attacking the right of national minorities to organise in their own defence. The severity of this attack has been widely recognised.

TRADITION OF RESISTANCE

The UBYL is part of the black youth movements that developed out of a long tradition of black people's struggles against racism in this country. The history of their fight is largely unwritten, and unknown by many. In fact black people have always fought against the racist oppression they faced here, just as in the Third World they have always resisted imperialism. Many different organisations have been built at different times, in the

towns and cities on March 15 and the spectacular sinking of the collier ship St. Bedan in Lough Boyle on February 23.

The IRA operation of March 25 fully exposes the false nature of the claims by the imperialists, their armed forces and their media that the IRA were defeated and disintegrating. In the House of Commons, northern Ireland Secretary Prior and 'opposition' spokesman Con-cannon had to swallow their own imperialist vomit and acknowledge that the IRA remained a thorn in the flesh of British imperialism.

British imperialism can never crush the Irish revolution. Whenever the imperialists say the IRA is defeated it comes back stronger than ever. With their mercenary and grasping nature the imperialists never learn that the bright flame of Irish nationalism cannot be extinguished through buying off a few informers, grasses and touts.

I.R.A. STRIKES BACK

The revolutionary forces of the IRA gave a definitive reply on March 25 to ruling class propaganda about the IRA disintegrating due to the work of informers.

In a carefully planned and daringly carried out ambush, IRA soldiers killed three Brits from the Royal Greenjackets and wounded one other. IRA volunteers returned safely to base. In a statement the IRA said that the attack "demonstrates that the struggle will continue until our objectives are achieved."

The IRA have carried out a large number of other armed actions recently, most notably a bomb blitz against commercial targets in five

Britain's Prisons Hell Holes of Oppression

As the crisis of imperialism deepens, the British state increasingly has only one thing to offer the poor and the oppressed who are driven to resist their oppression. The only thing they have to offer is repression, in the form of impoverishment, loss of hard won democratic rights, imprisonment, torture and murder.

In this repression, a key role is played by the big prisons which, under the cover of a law and order furore, are being prepared to house a growing number of working class people, in particular youth from the oppressed nationalities, who the state aim to criminalise, just as they tried with the freedom fighters in Ireland.

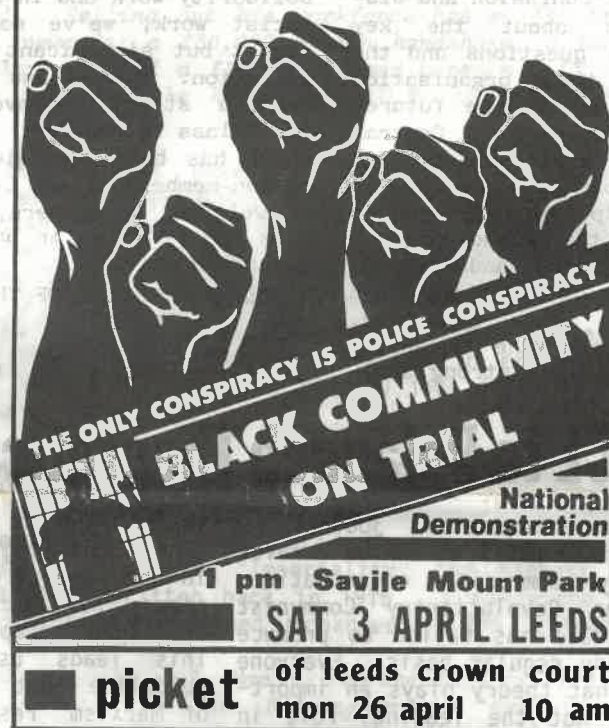


FREE THE BRADFORD 12!

Trial Starts April 26

FREE THE BRADFORD 12

12 Asian youths charged with Conspiracy face life imprisonment for fighting Racism.



Caribbean community and in the various Asian communities: at times alliances have been built between national minorities and with progressive white people. Often the particular committee or organisation has broken

down or re-formed, but the struggle has been continuous. In general black people have relied on their own communities for support, sometimes building new organisations, sometimes

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During this attack, which resulted in 69 prisoners needing stitches for head wounds, a disabled prisoner was beaten to the ground and beaten whilst lying there and Irish Prisoner of War (POW), Roland Lynch suffered heavy loss of blood from a head wound.

After this unprovoked attack, the prison was completely cut off from the outside world. Exercise was forbidden for 3 days, washing facilities denied for 7 days, work denied for up to 9 weeks, and association denied for over 4 months. All visits were stopped for 2 weeks. 142 prisoners received further punishment, one losing 120 days remission. Not one screw has ever been disciplined for this vicious assault on defenceless prisoners.

Now, 2½ years later, an

Cont. page 6

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

On 31 August 1979, 300 heavily armed prison warders (screws), especially assembled from four prisons, launched a brutal attack on 220 prisoners who were staging a peaceful protest in D wing in Wormwood Scrubs.

BUILD CLASS STRUGGLE! BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY!

This is the first issue of a new look "Class Struggle". We aim to develop the paper in this format, improving its content and appearance steadily in the months ahead.

"Class Struggle" has now appeared for a number of years. It has always tried to be a good communist paper, orientated towards the working class, and, since the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) grasped the revolutionary importance of the struggle of the oppressed national minorities in Britain, towards them too. For a period of over a year before the League's Second Congress (July 1981), there was political confusion and disagreement about the key political questions and the course the organisation should take in the future. The League's Central Committee was unable to give good, consistent political leadership to the paper. However, the Second Congress did determine and clarify the line of the League on many of these questions. It affirmed the necessity of us having a strong anti-

imperialist line; it stated our firm support for the Irish people's struggle and for its Republican leadership; it re-affirmed our commitment to a firm stand against opportunism and for industrial base-building; and it recognised the national minority peoples in Britain as a revolutionary force whom the working class must build a firm alliance with.

This created a situation where the League could go forward with some confidence once more. Since the Second Congress, there have been some very healthy developments in our mass work, both in terms of quantity and quality. In Ireland solidarity work and in anti-racist work, we've made a modest but significant contribution. There has also been a steady improvement in "Class Struggle", too, which has been acknowledged by non-members of the League as well as by members, and this has resulted in an increase in sales.

THE SCAFFOLDING OF THE PARTY

It is from this rela-

tively strong foundation that we want to develop "Class Struggle". In pre-revolutionary Russia, Lenin argued for a political paper which would serve as "the scaffolding of the party".

We believe this is what "Class Struggle" should be, not because we are mechanically following what Lenin said, but because it is valid for, and directly related to, our needs and those of the broader revolutionary movement we seek to build and strengthen. We need to use the paper to link up the different areas of struggle that the League and its contacts are engaged in, to serve as an instrument in building the revolutionary communist party and spreading the influence of revolutionary politics and to be a voice in the wilderness of the "left" for consistently revolutionary anti-imperialist politics. The paper should be at the centre of the League's work, explaining and arguing its stand; serving its expanding mass work and linking up the different fields of struggle in Britain.

AGAINST LIQUIDATIONISM

The continued existence and development of the League and its paper testify to our rejection of the liquidationist trend in the Marxist-Leninist movement internationally - a trend to which some much larger organisations then our own have fallen victim. We have tried to recognise, overcome and learn from our past errors, in order to strengthen our Marxist-Leninist stand; we reject any view which would blame our own errors or those of others on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought, in order to discredit it.

In this connection, the League is also re-launching its theoretical journal this month, (see article this page).

BUILD "CLASS STRUGGLE".

The arguments for building a strong revolutionary paper are all around us in the events of Britain and the world today. In the month before this paper went to press, we've seen new moves by the Soviet Union in its struggle with the U.S. for world domination; we've seen a great popular upsurge in the revolution in Central America and a new Republican offensive in Ireland. We've heard - in the space of a week, a chorus of bourgeois voices calling for the restoration of hanging in Britain, and

seen the appointment of a new police chief for London, with years of experience of repression and imperialist butchery behind him, which are further indications of a trend towards fascism in Britain. The need for a good communist paper with a wide influence which can take up such questions is quite clear.

"Class Struggle" readers can help take the paper forward. We are launching a sales campaign to promote the wider distribution of "Class Struggle" and the spreading of its influence. You can help by taking copies of the paper to sell. We want to make improvements in the content and technical production of "Class Struggle". You can help by sending your comments, criticisms and financial contributions. You can help us to link up the different areas of struggle going on at present by sending in articles, reporting on them and summing them up. In these ways, you, our readers, can help support the building of the revolutionary party in Britain, the promotion of the fight-back of working and oppressed people here, and the development of revolutionary solidarity between the world's peoples on the basis of opposition to imperialism, colonialism, and hegemonism, for the defence of world peace, and for the victory of the revolution around the world.

RCL to Relaunch Theoretical Journal

A regular theoretical journal is an essential publication for a revolutionary communist organisation. Yet the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) has failed to produce one on any regular basis. Everyone agrees that theory plays an important, if not the leading, role in the struggle to rebuild the communist party in Britain. Yet theory has been neglected at a time when Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought is being shelved in the most insidious way in some parts of the anti-revisionist, international communist movement. We do not include in this the attempts made to evaluate Comrade Mao Zedong's contribution by our Chinese comrades, an evaluation which has nothing in common with the crude attacks on Marxism-Leninism made by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress when he made his

secret speech denouncing Stalin. The abandoning of Marxism-Leninism in the name of combatting dogmatism seems to be peculiar to some developed capitalist countries. This leads us to take as our guideline that the present "crisis of Marxism" results from the ever-present, eroding influence of opportunism, promoted in new and old forms by imperialism.

Lenin concluded that the revolution would be difficult to start in the advanced capitalist/imperialist countries but easier to complete because of the tremendous concentration of production. Part of that difficulty in starting the revolution is for Marxism really to take root in Britain. Certainly Marxism has won "recognition" for itself here. But what is recognised are distorted, truncated views of

Marxism from the likes of Benn. The sign that Marxism has taken root here will be when a really internationalist movement of thorough and genuine support for the struggles of all oppressed peoples plays a decisive role in working class politics in Britain. This is the cornerstone of Marxism in the era of imperialism, and when it is heading for total collapse, i.e. Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

"October" to be published

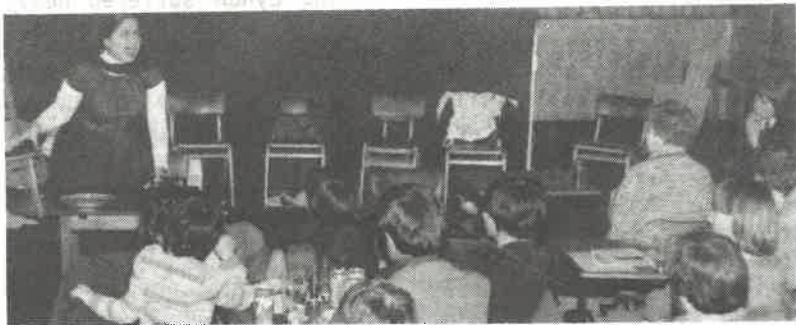
"October", which will appear in mid-April, is a contribution by the RCL to the struggle to establish and apply Marxism-Leninism in Britain. Two issues will dominate this first edition. The uprisings of youth, particularly national minority youth, in 1981 are part of the reality of the revolution in Britain, and the fact that rebellion took place indicates where the contradictions are sharpest.

Lessons must be drawn and theoretical conclusions made. Articles dealing with the question of developing our line are therefore carried in this first issue.

Since the beginning of the anti-revisionist movement in the early 'sixties and the contributions made by Comrade Michael McCreery, little has been done to study the origins of revisionism in the CPGB. The first of a series of articles will be carried in the first issue of "October" dealing with errors in the CPGB's line on the colonial question.

This first issue of "October" will be small. But we hope that it will strike the right chord among communists and class-conscious workers and lead to a genuine revival of interest in questions of line and theory.

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70 men, women and children attended a successful meeting, organised by the Birmingham branch of the Revolutionary Communist League.

A speaker from the Troops Out Movement spoke on the problems faced by the women of Ireland. She pointed out that they faced triple oppression from being working class, Republican and women, and that the British troops and RUC played on the particular problems faced by women to try and break their opposition to British imperialism.

Anwar Ditta used the example of her own struggle to be re-united with her children to highlight the racist nature

of the immigration laws and the British state. She pointed out that for every successful campaign to prevent a deportation of a black person, there were hundreds of such people deported unnoticed every year.

Another national minority woman spoke about the local campaigns going on in Birmingham against deportations and the need to link them to the more general struggle against the racist state.

Banner Theatre rounded off the evening with their highly entertaining play called "Women at Work". The show was in two parts and highlighted the right of women to be employed and the problems they face from employers and the chauvinist attitudes of male trades union colleagues.

MAY DAY RALLY

On Saturday May 1st, the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain is holding an Anti-Imperialist rally to be followed by a social. (Time and Venue details on back page).

To build a consistently anti-

imperialist current in the British working class is an essential precondition for founding the revolutionary party. To this end, the meeting will be a statement of support for all anti-imperialist struggles, in particular that of the Irish people. As well as an RCL speaker there will be speakers from Iran, El Salvador, Bangladesh, Eritrea and Azania. Speakers from Ireland and Afghanistan have also been invited.

Come to the rally and show your support for the frontline fighters against imperialism.

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Race Checks on the Dole

"Class Struggle"
Correspondent.

Race checks at sixteen selected dole offices throughout the country were started by the Department of Employment in February. From February 15 under a four-week pilot 'ethnic monitoring' scheme new non-white claimants registering for unemployment benefit were, in some offices, asked to state their 'ethnic origin', and in others 'visually assessed' by staff.

In the first type of scheme non-white claimants were asked whether they were of West Indian, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African or 'Other Commonwealth' origin; in the second, staff 'visually assessed' claimants as Asian, West Indian, African or Other (i.e. other non-white).

OPPOSITION

The scheme met with opposition from black organisations, anti-racist organisations and civil service trade unions, particularly

Indian Workers Association, Campaign against Racism and Fascism and others picket a Dole office in Birmingham.



Kill The Bill

The new 'Employment' Bill continues its steady journey through Parliament, and will soon become law.

The Bill will remove immunities which prevented Trade Unions being sued by employers when the workers were involved in an industrial dispute. The bosses used the civil courts particularly to oppose 'new unionism' in the 1880s and 1890s, suing the unions, the union officials or the workers themselves for 'loss of trade'. In 1906 this was finally stopped. The new Bill will allow employers to sue the unions when workers engage in solidarity actions with other workers or industrial actions for political purposes. So it will be 'unlawful' for one group of workers to refuse to do work that has been transferred from another factory if they want to support the workers who originally did the job. It will be 'unlawful' for workers, to black work in solidarity with workers in, for example, Poland or Chile. The 1980 Employment Act has already taken away the rights of workers to picket places other than their own workplace. Now it will be 'unlawful' for other workers to support them at all! Even actions such as that of the London Transport workers can be construed as a 'political' strike. Who will

the CPSA. In Birmingham the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, Claimants Union and Indian Workers' Association picketed the three dole offices operating the scheme, and leafleted claimants both before and during the scheme. Although the CPSA leadership turned down calls from their members for industrial action, staff at Wandsworth Unemployment Benefit Office in London refused to operate the scheme.

BACKGROUND

Race checks at employment offices began in 1963, supposedly to monitor unemployment amongst black people and promote equal job opportunities.

However the original scheme began immediately after the introduction of the 1962 Immigration Act, the present procedure was implemented immediately following after the 1971 Immigration Act, and now this scheme follows immediately on from the passage of the Nationality Act. Is this coincidence? What effect

was the collection of such statistics had on black unemployment and job opportunities?

THE REAL REASONS

The police and Home Office already have access to social security records, and the new scheme will make it simple to feed records directly to the police computer for use in harrasing and repatriating 'alleged illegal immigrants.'

Further under the new scheme checks will be made before dole claims are accepted so that harrasment could extend to the routine refusal of dole claims 'pending immigration office investigations.'

Finally, the White Paper on Nationality alluded to different entitlements for different classes of citizen, and the eventual feat is for a system of differential social security benefits.

EXPOSED

In Birmingham at least, so many claimants refused to co-operate with the scheme as to destroy any hope of collecting 'meaningful statistics.' It remains to be seen whether the scheme still will be introduced nationally, and if this happens its true purpose will be exposed.

LABOUR'S TRACK RECORD

Despite the way Labour leaders have flung their arms up in 'horror' at the Bill, we should not forget the real history of such legislation. In 1969 the Labour Government introduced a white paper entitled 'In Place of Strife'. Many of the ideas in this were incorporated into the Tory Government's Industrial Relations Act in 1971. In 1978-9 the then Labour Government drew up a 'Code of Conduct' with the reactionary Union leadership, which was mainly aimed at preventing effective picketing and solidarity picketing and provided the basis of the Tories' 1980 Employment Act. Labour's track record shows it to be just as much an imperialist bourgeois party in this, and in many other respects. Their difference with the Tories is that whilst both will attack rank-and-file workers in struggle, Labour prefer to do it in collaboration with the Union leadership, whilst the Tories oppose the Union leadership too. The Social Democratic Party have also taken a clear stand for once. Most voted for the Bill. So much for the 'new alternative' and their 'classless' image.

DEFY THE LAW

The Bill is an attack on the working class and must



As usual, the Budget speech was greeted with a flurry of excitement on the T.V. and in the papers. And as usual, it left most people worse off than before. For working people, what they will have to pay in increased National Insurance contributions more than covers what they will receive in tax allowances. For the unemployed, what they gain in unemployment benefit, they lose in supplementary benefit. And an extra 60p on child benefit in November is hardly generous. Increases in petrol costs and road tax affect not only the private motorist but public transport as well, coming on top of already phenomenal fare increases in London, Birmingham and other places. Beer and cigarettes will soon cost more than most people can afford. They might be bad for your health, but they can't be any worse than this stinking system.

Ex-miners' leader Joe Gormley showed his true colours this month when he said he wanted to join the House of Lords so that he could 'continue his fight against the left'. Selling out his workforce has so far brought him rich rewards: a £30,000 golden handshake, a two-year-old Daimler car and a £10,000 a year pension. Of course its only fair that he keeps his N.U.M. house - with swimming pool naturally.

The enormous power of the banks in the capitalist economy was highlighted by the collapse of the textile and engineering giant Stone Platt. The withdrawal of support for the company by the Midland bank will throw 7,000 people on the dole.

The big four banks, Barclays, Lloyds, Midland and Nat West have £1,000 million invested in endangered firms. That investment controls 250,000 jobs directly and nearly as many indirectly.

Last year those four banks made a combined profit of £1,700 million.

Lenin clearly highlighted the enormous power of the banks in his book "Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism" written back in 1916. Clearly the nature of imperialism has remained unchanged for the last 66 years.

On Thursday 18 March representatives from Tenants Associations met in Birmingham to set up a joint Federation. They were following the lead set by other associations in the West Midlands who have already committed themselves to take part in a national campaign to withhold payment of proposed rent increases in April.

As one women delegate put it: "Estates all over Birmingham are in the same situation. If we are all together we will be a force to be reckoned with."

A Sandwell delegate pointed out that because of the cuts in his area the housing account lost £14 million and the residents were being forced to cough up.

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be opposed. So far, whilst the TUC have wept many tears about it and made 'militant' denunciations, they have not only failed to organise any action, they have even failed to do any real work to expose the nature of the Bill. This, they say, they will do after the Bill becomes law! When it does become law there will be only one way to fight it - mass opposition and a preparedness to break the law. Some leaders will support this, most won't. But it is the

only way to defeat the law. That is how the Industrial Relations Act had its teeth drawn. Already the 1980 Employment Act has been defied a number of times, notably by Lawrence Scott workers, who engaged in picketing places other than their own workplace, and in large numbers. They did this in defiance of union leaders - both 'left' and right. This is how the opposition must be built - by direct action of the mass of workers.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSPIRACY LAW PART III

As has been shown earlier in this series of articles the development of conspiracy law had been left mainly to judges, who by setting precedents in the course of a number of trials defined 'conspiracy' and established different rules of evidence from those which normally apply in court cases. The 'common law' development of the use of 'conspiracy charges' as a political weapon of the state has however been modified at times by parliament - statutory law. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century two laws were passed in parliament which affected the use of 'conspiracy' law. One was the 1883 Explosive Substances Act; the other the 1906 Trade Disputes Act.

THE EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES ACT

The Explosive Substance Act is the act which is being used to attack the Bradford 12. During 1883 Irish Nationalists (Fenians) carried out a series of bomb attacks in Britain. Shortly after Gallagher and three others were convicted of attempting to blow up the House of Commons the act was pushed through parliament. Section 3 of the act provided for a maximum twenty years sentence for conspiracy to cause explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious damage to property. It provided an alternative charge to treason and sedition when explosives were involved.

In 1892 the police raided a Socialist Club in Walsall. Six members of the club were charged under Section 3 of the 1883 Act, and with possession of explosives (a fuse) under Section 4. The defence argued that materials found (a brass screw, a lead bolt and a brass casting) were not to be used for causing explosions and that there was no evidence to say they were. During the trial the judge stated that by application of the doctrines of agency (a concept in commercial law) each member of a confederacy (conspiracy) was responsible for explosives, and materials held by the others. In the event the 'conspiracy' charge was dropped, but three of the accused were convicted under section 4 (possession) and sentenced to ten years.

However, the use of 'agency' in conspiracy trials continued and made further developments in the special laws of evidence in conspiracy trials which make it easier to convict and lead to harsher sentences.

"CIVIL CONSPIRACY"

During the mid-19th century trade unions had won a number of rights to organise and had largely been accepted. However, at this stage the unions were mainly those of skilled workers, who had themselves passed union rules banning politics in the unions, and many also had the vote. Towards the end of the 19th century, however, the unions of the relatively privileged workers found their counterpart in the rapid growth of organisations of unskilled workers. This 'New Unionism' had its connections with the emerging socialist movement. Many unions adopted expressly political programmes of class organisation and action, rather than the protection of skilled trades. The law might have been charged to allow many immunities so far as criminal conspiracy was concerned, but the ruling class still had another weapon up its sleeve - civil conspiracy (legally

How Conspiracy Law Works

What is a 'conspiracy'?

The Criminal Law 1977 Act definition amounts to this: A conspiracy is an agreement to do something which would amount to or involve an unlawful act. This general definition of a statutory offence (a law made by parliament) is backed up by particular 'conspiracy' offences defined in other acts such as the Treason Felony 1848 Act and the Explosive Substances 1883 Act.

"Inference" not Proof

In a conspiracy trial it is not necessary to prove that any one defendant knew all the others, or all the details - just that he knew the general aim.

Archbold, a sort of legal bible used by all lawyers as the basic text for reference, says that the prosecution need only "prove circumstances from which the jury may presume a conspiracy", and goes on: "Proof of the existence of a conspiracy is generally a matter of inference..." so showing that "beyond all reasonable doubt" is thrown out of the window.

Rules of evidence which make it easy to convict

In order to "infer" a conspiracy, defendants have had evidence brought against them such as what books they have in their house, who their friends are, what their general political views are, other political activities, speeches, etc.

Evidence of acts by one of the defendants can be produced as evidence against others.

Evidence of acts that are alleged to have happened can be used

known as 'Tort'). In a civil conspiracy action an employer could claim damages against workers who 'disrupted' his business, thus hitting them and their unions economically; or could win an injunction to prevent them picketing. If the workers broke the injunction they could then be charged with contempt of court.

In 1895 a union, the London Building Trades Federation issued black-list posters to prevent the use of non-union labour. One of the builders, Trollope, won an injunction against the union. The judge, Kekewich, held that the workers had committed a conspiracy:

"The principal and primary motive was to injure the workmen mentioned ... and to prevent them carrying on their lawful trade or businessness."

The political basis of this judgement is seen by comparison with the 'Mogul' case in the same year. A group of tea merchants had black-listed a rival in order to force him out of business. The House of Lords held that this was not a conspiracy as they had merely acted with the lawful object of protecting and extending their trade.

Later, in 1902, a union man, Bulcock, applied for an injunction against St Anne's Builders' Federation, an employers' organisation, which had produced a blacklist of union members. The Lord Chief Justice, Alverstone, held that this was not a conspiracy as the employers were motivated solely by 'legitimate' self-interest!

against a defendant even if he or she is accused of joining the 'conspiracy' after those acts were done.

Such evidence, including 'hearsay' evidence, is not allowed in other trials.

All in all, the evidence can amount to prejudicing a jury so that they can "presume" or "infer" that a conspiracy took place.

The conspiracy charge may be related to charges of specific offences alleged to have been carried out. But even if the defendant is found not guilty on all the specific charges, they can still be found guilty on the conspiracy charge.

Punishment

The punishment for someone found guilty of conspiracy in statutory law (made by parliament) cannot exceed the punishment for the offence itself if it had been committed. In practice, the conspiracy charge can be worded in such a way ("with intent to endanger life" for example) that the maximum sentence is life imprisonment. Conspiracy charges brought under "Common Law" (made by judges) have no fixed limit.

Common Law

The 1977 act stopped the use of conspiracy charges in Common Law except for (a) conspiracy to corrupt public morals or outrage public decency, and (b) conspiracy to "defraud". It is worth noting that in legal terms "defraud" means "to prejudice or run the risk of prejudicing another's right. No deceit is required, nor need the right be a pecuniary (money) right". (Archbold) Just consider the political implications of that.

Capitalism accepts such struggle between rival capitalists and attacks on workers by capitalists; but when workers oppose employers the state is clearly the instrument of the employers' collective interest.

SUED FOR PICKETING

Another attack on the legal rights already won by unions was in the Lyons -v- Wilkins case. Wilkins and other union officials had called a strike against Lyons and against manufacturers who made goods for Lyons only. The Court of Appeal held that the picketing was illegal, except for the purpose of communicating and obtaining information only. As a means of pressurising the employer, they were illegal. The union was exempt from criminal liability by the "Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act (1875)" under which acts during a trade dispute are not a conspiracy if the act is not illegal when committed by one person, which clearly legalises picketing. However, the judges in the Lyons case had now made it illegal in a civil court, by developing common law.

In another case, the employer, Quinn, who was a butcher was in dispute with the union which was fighting for a closed shop. The union approached Quinn's main customer and told him that if he did not stop trading with Quinn they would call a strike in his own business. Quinn took the union to court. The House of Lords on Appeal granted Quinn substantial damages on the

grounds that the combination of union members to injure Quinn was a conspiracy. This was a major precedent which severely curtailed union rights. The precedent was further established in the Taff Vale case in 1901 when the House of Lords ruled that damages awarded by the courts could be directly enforced against union funds.

In 1906 the use of civil conspiracy as a weapon against the new unionism was effectively ended when the new liberal government passed the Trade Disputes Act. This change of law, as a result of the workers' struggle, gave unions complete immunity against civil conspiracy and legalised peaceful picketing in furtherance of trade disputes. The legal position remained for over 65 years. Although there are cases where charges of conspiracy to 'intimidate' are made for example, and where special war-time regulations were used, the basic legal position remained until Heath's Industrial Relations Act was passed. Now the present government is restricting the immunity with further legislation, and has already changed the law on picketing along the lines proposed by leaders of the last Labour government. The laws passed already attack the workers' right to strike in sympathy or picket places other than their own workplace or to have more than four pickets. In a number of areas unions are again liable to civil court actions and the new Bill presently before parliament will take this further.

CIVIL CONSPIRACY IN IRELAND

Whilst the Fenians pursued Irish national demands through bombing campaigns in Britain, and the Parnellites pursued the struggle in parliament, the Irish National Land League (INLL) whose leaders linked with Parnell's movement pursued the tenants' struggle against rapacious, mainly English, landlords. One of the tactics adopted established a new word in the English language. Captain Boycott, an estate-agent for Lord Erne, was faced by a struggle over rents. The tenants refused to pay the high rent and offered a more 'reasonable' one. Boycott issued eviction notices. The INLL issued a ban against him. His domestic staff and farm hands left. Shopkeepers, postmen, laundresses and blacksmiths barred him. Shortly Boycott resigned his agency.

Such tactics became common. They were answered with "civil conspiracy" actions against the tenants in the courts. The tactics built up by the INLL were continued by the United Irish League. In 1903 ten members of the League were sued by O'Keefe who claimed damages after they organised a boycott against him. O'Keefe, a grain dealer, had bought a farm from which the tenants had been evicted. He was awarded £5,500 plus costs by the court (a lot of money in those days). During the case Lord Chief Justice O'Brien commented:

"When the existence of a criminal conspiracy is proved and it is shown that at a certain date the defendant joined the conspiracy evidence of acts committed before that date is admissible as evidence against that defendant ... there must be one continuous conspiracy."

The use of conspiracy in civil courts mirrors that in criminal courts, and clearly has been used as an alternative weapon when, for one reason or another, there are no criminal charges that can be brought.

Cont. from front page

relying on traditional ones like the temples and mosques.

YOUTH MOVEMENTS

Among the younger generation new forms of resistance and struggle emerged. In Brixton in the late 60's, the Black Panther movement grew up. The famous Mangrove trial resulted from a police attack on a club used by young blacks. The Rastafarians developed their own particular style of resistance to imperialism. Often the older and younger generation fought together like in the New Cross Massacre campaign, but it was the youth who turned out in their thousands to take over the streets of London on the Day of Action in 1981.

In the Asian communities, it was the youth movements who raised the slogan, 'Here to Stay, Here to Fight!' Again it has often been the youth who spearheaded the fight against racism - against racist attacks, against the immigration laws, and on many other issues, as in Brick Lane where numerous Bengali youth groups grew up in the 70's.

And although many different people joined in, it was the black youth who led the country-wide uprisings last summer.

UNITED BLACK YOUTH LEAGUE

The UBYL grew out of this new militant trend. In Bradford some of those now on trial raised the slogan 'Here to Stay, Here to Fight!' At a time

when many people, particularly the Anti-Nazi League were focussing on the fascist organisations like the National Front, they targeted state racism: immigration and nationality laws, the police, the courts and many different forms of state racism. They took up the defence of individuals threatened by racist laws and won them the right to stay. One of the best known campaigns was fought to stop the deportation of Saeed Rahman who was leading a fight against redundancies when he was suddenly picked up as an 'illegal immigrant'. The Asian youth organisations led the fight and by building massive support in the community, they won it.

A LIVING LEGEND

The United Black Youth League was formed

later and the most famous battle in which its members were centrally involved was the fight to bring Anwar Ditta's children here. Anwar has become, as a UBYL spokesman said: 'a living legend among her people'. Because of her courage and the determination of those who supported her, another victory was won. This victory was a watershed in the history of individual campaigns and has inspired many others to follow her example. As Anwar Ditta often says, her victory was a victory for all black people.

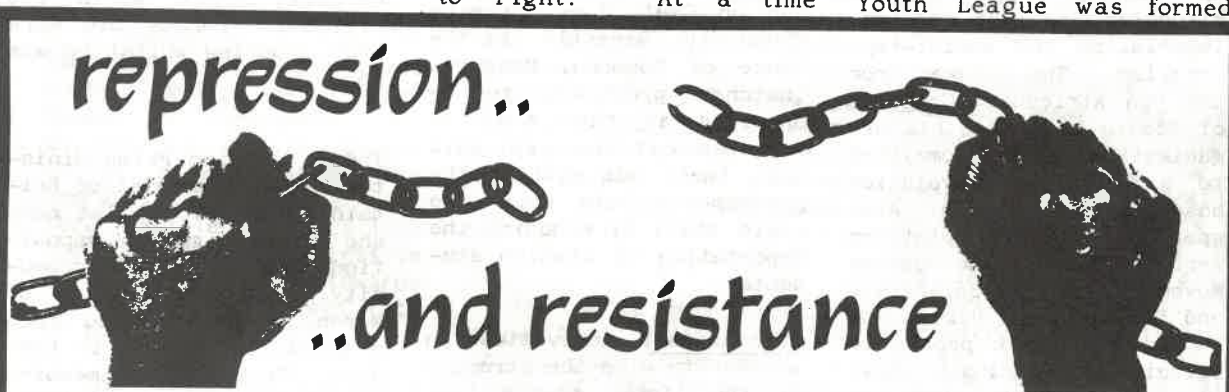
BLACK PEOPLE MUST UNITE

The UBYL often used the slogan 'Black People Must Unite'. They hold that the oppression faced by Asian and Afro-Caribbean youth calls for a common organisation. They successfully fought a defence campaign around Gerry Pemberton, an Afro-Caribbean, in Bradford who was wrongfully accused of assault by the police. They take a consciously anti-imperialist stand and see the struggle of black people being not just against racism but against the whole system of

imperialism. They make conscious links with the Republican movement in Ireland and consistently supported solidarity activities in this country.

DEFEND THE BRADFORD 12!

It is clear from their record that the UBYL is under attack because they stand for the defence of the black community and the unity of all those opposed to imperialism. That is why the campaign is calling on all progressive people to support them and demand that the charges be dropped. Defence committees have been formed in Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Leicester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Huddersfield and London. In December 2,000 marched in Bradford. More recently a local demonstration in Bradford attracted 900 on March 20. We call on all progressive forces to unite and support the demonstration on April 3 and the mass-picket on 26 April. The courts are using their well-tested weapon of the conspiracy laws. We have a much more powerful weapon, the power of the angry and militant people!



● Reggie Yates' grandfather is British born. You may think that even under Britain's racist immigration laws that this would give him the right of residence. But Reggie is black. His grandmother is black. And at a tribunal, where he appealed against a deportation order, he met an ex-colonial magistrate who served in Ghana - from where Reggie originally came. The magistrate made it quite clear that in his view white settlers' relationships with black women could be regarded as only for sexual gratification and the tribunal would not accept the validity of a custom marriage in an African country. Reggie is also married to a UK citizen, but she can't confer the right of settlement. Why? Because she, too, is black. A man could do so. A woman can't. Yet again the racist and sexist immigration laws are being used either to split a family or to also deport the wife, Felicia, and child who have the right of residence in Britain.

For more information c/o MIERU, 439 Harrow Rd., London W.10.

● Sultan Mahmood, who lives in Oldham, has been trying to bring his children to Britain for ten years. He has every right to do so. In February a Public Meeting of over 100 people was held in Oldham. At it he said: "Here in this room there are over 30 people from the same village; they say the children are mine. Two independent investigators have produced a big report saying that the children are mine.

What more can I do? The Home Office just repeats it has not been convinced. The campaign is active. A demonstration was held in Oldham on March 13th. That is what he is doing - fighting for his rights.

Contact the campaign at: Sultan Mahmood Support Ctee., 27 Gower St., Oldham.

● The Khan family, whose children have the right to live in Britain, are still threatened with deportation (see last issue). Mr. Khan has had to leave home to avoid deportation. Mrs. Khan was taken to the airport for deportation, but had a temporary reprieve on medical grounds. She and the children are still at home dreading the day the order is enforced.

The Support Group address is: c/o 593, Stockport Rd., Manchester 13

● Carl Williams is a U.K. citizen, born in this country, and has a legal right to live in this country. But a judge has created a new form of deportation. Carl, who, you will be surprised to learn, is black, was charged with stealing a TV set and a couple of clocks. The judge bound him over to keep the peace on condition that he left Britain for five years. Hardly a sentence a white youth could have got! So deportation of 'illegal' immigrants is followed by deportation of black U.K. citizens. Could this be a test case for the next round of uprisings?

● The state continues to frame and imprison militant youth in the wake of last summer's uprisings. 22 year old Barry McGowan, from Battersea, South London, has been jailed for three years for allegedly possessing nine petrol bombs. He pleaded not guilty and was able to account for his movement during the period in question. Nevertheless, the evidence of the police was counted in preference to his.

● White racist thugs are making life a misery for some 36 Vietnamese boatpeople in the Dockland area of Lewisham, South London. Most of them live on the Pepys Estate and since their arrival, they have been plagued by National Front and British Movement scum.

One fifty year old Vietnamese woman was beaten up by three thugs in a lift and in another incident a mother had to run with two toddlers through a barrage of sticks and stones. Because of this harassment many of the refugees are confined to their homes most of the time, living in a constant state of terror.

The majority of the refugees were members of the Chinese national minority in Vietnam, who fled from the racist persecution of the Vietnamese authorities. It is ironic and tragic that they should meet with racist persecution again.

Black community newspapers have called on black people to support and defend the boat people.

THE STATISTICS OF STREET CRIME

How the Police Spread Racism

"Black crime - the alarming figures". That was the front page headline of the Daily Mail on the day after Scotland Yard made a new departure in giving the press their annual crime figures. For the first time the police produced a racial breakdown of street crime in London.

The police claimed that "honesty and openness will at the end of the day be helpful" and that their action was "not directed at any section of the community or another". But "Black muggers blamed by the law", was another headline in the gutter press the day after.

"Honesty and openness" was not however apparent in the police report.

CAREFULLY SELECTED FACTS

What the trashy bourgeois press conveniently ignored was that in London there were 631,328 cases of serious crime last year. Instead they took their cue from Scotland Yard, and concentrated only on "street crime" of which there were 18,763 cases. This is only 3% of the total. Yet the police made a racial breakdown of these. Why? Because it was the only way to whip up racial hatred to a higher level.

In fact what are normally called 'muggings' (there is no such crime on the statute book) made up only 5,889 cases, or 9 out of every 1000 cases of serious crime. The police and the press however could conveniently 'forget' who committed the other 625,439 serious crimes.

TURNING TRUTH ON ITS HEAD

There are one or two other statistics that the racist propaganda never mentioned. For example, a report on racial attacks produced by the Home Office last November showed that if you were an Asian you would be fifty times more likely to be attacked in the street than if you were white. West Indians are thirty six times more likely to be assaulted.

The same report showed that street crime was more prevalent in Newcastle F division, where very few black people live, than in Lambeth, which includes Brixton.

Such comparisons show the truth of the matter.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM? WHAT IS THE CAUSE?

National minority people are subjected to racist attacks on the streets. These attacks are systematically ignored by the media, and often dismissed by the police who claim that there is "no apparent racial motive". The police then go on to give highly selective and distorted facts to the press and encourage them to paint a lurid picture of "black crime". Thus encouraging more racist attacks. Thus the oppression of national minority people in Britain is turned on its head to scapegoat them and blame them for the evils of the system. In the inner cities where decaying imperialism is most apparent, crime is also on the increase. It is the evil of imperialism that is the root cause of oppression and of rising crime. That is the problem which must be dealt with.

World in struggle



Central America: As "Class Struggle" goes to press, phoney "elections" are due to be held in El Salvador on March 28. The only parties allowed to stand are pro-imperialist, ultra right wing parties. The patriotic and revolutionary opposition, organised in the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Movement and the Democratic Revolutionary Front are not allowed to stand. In this situation, where the elections are a farce and fraud, the guerrillas are going all out to sabotage them. The last week has seen a major upturn in the armed struggle, throughout the countryside, and in particular in the capital, San Salvador.

British imperialism has been playing a dirty role. It has attempted to lend credence to the phoney "elections" by sending observers. They are the only European country to join the U.S.A. staged farce. They join well-known fascists from the likes of Paraguay and Taiwan. By contrast, France recognises the guerrillas as a legitimate political force. Britain has also supported the granting of loans to the junta.

Fake elections cannot solve the problems caused by 0.4% of the population owning 37% of the cultivated land excluding that owned by imperialist multinationals, caused by 8% of the population earning 50% of the national income; caused by 33% unemployment and by 60% illiteracy. The solution lies in the unfolding of the revolutionary armed struggle until victory.

Imperialism, aims to bully, threaten and intimidate all the peoples of the region. A NATO exercise recently took place in the Caribbean. Openly billed as a rehearsal for an invasion of Grenada or Cuba, it was participated in by British warships. The U.S.A. has also incited Honduras to attack revolutionary Nicaragua, forcing Nicaragua to declare a state of emergency. American newspapers report that a plan has been drawn up for an American invasion of Nicaragua. The Reagan government has refused to deny the reports.

Communists in Britain give full support to the developing revolutionary process in Central America.

Southern Africa: Following the political changes in Zimbabwe the political situation in Zimbabwe is, "very good", according to the premier, Comrade Robert Mugabe in an interview with Chinese journalists. He told them that "upon our victory in 1980, we invited the Zimbabwe African



Salvadorean patriots ready for battle with the fascist regime.

People's Union (ZAPU) to join us in an alliance." "However, we are disappointed that ZAPU had been planning to overthrow the government headed by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU)." The discovery of hidden arms on ZAPU-owned farms supplied by the Soviet Union during the war, has affected the alliance with ZAPU. Now there exists an unpleasant relationship and conflicts between the two parties, he added.

But, he said, "we have refused to adopt the position that the whole (ZAPU) party is wrong. Our attitude is that its leadership is wrong and also the leadership of the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). That is why we removed the ZAPU leaders from the government and arrested the ZIPRA leaders."

He said: "We allow some members of ZAPU to remain in the government and I'll appoint some ZAPU members to be government officials who, we believe, are progressive and have not had a hand in Nkomo's plans."

Mugabe noted, "the people themselves are united, they don't want war. Whether they are Shona, Ndebele or any other tribe, they want unity. We will continue to uphold the people's unity."

On Sunday March 14, 15,000 people marched through London in a demonstration organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement. At a rally they heard speakers from the ANC of South Africa and SWAPO of Namibia. A telegram from leading cricketer Ian Botham who has refused to trade principles for blood money and has stayed away from South Africa, was read out to applause.

Earlier that morning, a bomb, almost certainly planted by South African agents, destroyed the London office of the ANC liberation movement. ANC Secretary General Alfred Nzo said: "If they think they can intimidate our people they have another think coming."

On Sunday March 21, Azania Solidarity organised an inspiring meeting in London to mark the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. Attended by 70 people it vividly highlighted the uni-

ty between the struggle of the Azanian people and all struggles against racism, imperialism and social-imperialism. The speaker from the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania said that his organisation was committed to a protracted revolution based on people's war. Also speaking from the platform were the Black Consciousness Movement, Azania Solidarity and No Pass Laws Here!, who showed how black people in Britain increasingly have to carry their passports at work, to hospitals and to dole offices.

The meeting received a large number of solidarity messages including from the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the High Commission of Uganda, Young Liberals, Canon Collins, London Support Group of the Bradford 12, Troops Out Movement, Indian Workers' Association, Bangladesh Workers' Association, El Salvador Support Committee, People's Liberation Organisation of Afghanistan, members of the Polish trade union Solidarity currently in London and the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain.

Iran: The Tudeh Party (Iran's revisionist party) has long been known for its opposition to all revolutionary movements of the Iranian people. When Iran's genuine revolutionaries were sacrificing themselves in the struggle against the Shah, the Tudeh Party leaders were living in luxury in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Now there is evidence that they are acting as Khomeini's secret police against the left. According to the Iraqi News Agency it was the Tudeh Party who informed on the meeting place of the People's Mojahedin, leading to the deaths of Moussa Khiabani and others (see last issue of "Class Struggle"). The Iranian authorities recently discovered a safe house of the Proletarian Party of Iran (a fraternal party of the RCLB). A number of leading comrades were captured and have been executed. They include Comrade Fereidoun Racisi, President of the Confederation of Workers of Iran. According to the Confederation of Iranian Students their comrades were also betrayed by the Tudeh Party. At the end of February, 40 leading members of another revolutionary organ-

isation, Peykar, were arrested. Iranian students in London went on hunger strike in an attempt to draw attention to the danger to the lives of these comrades.

The Soviet Union is strengthening its grip on Iran. Trade has doubled

in the last year and 50 joint projects are underway in Iran.

More Iranian students have been deported from Britain to execution in Iran. They were Araf Eqbal who was doing an HND at Bradford College and M. Arestany who did a B.Sc. at Huddersfield. They were killed for 'waging war on God', i.e. opposing Khomeini. Recently, in the House of Commons, Margaret Thatcher professed to be appalled at the level of repression in Iran, but said that there was nothing the government could do. She could start by stopping the deportation of Iranian students!

Afghanistan: Activities in solidarity with the struggle of the Afghan people took place around the world on the occasion of March 21, the Afghan New Year. The Afghan people are persisting in their fight. Recently a Soviet general was killed and during the last few months the patriots have frequently attacked the Soviet occupationists along the Salang highway near the Soviet border. They have also repeatedly attacked the southern city of Kandahar and the western city of Herat.

Palestine: Following the Camp David Agreements, Israel set about creating a puppet administration of the West Bank of the Jordan (part of Palestine occupied in 1967). It has tried to build up a quisling organisation, the 'Village Leagues', in opposition to the elected pro-PLO councils. A 'civilian' administrator was appointed to govern the West Bank - a 'civilian' who was an officer in the Israeli Army until his appointment!

Then, last month, the Zionists dismissed the nationalist mayor of Al Bireh. At this, the people of Al Bireh, spearheaded by schoolchildren and youths, took to the streets, setting up barriers of burning tyres and stoning the Israeli troops.

This spread across the West Bank, and to the Gaza strip (another area occupied in 1967) in the following days. Half a dozen Palestinians were killed by Zionists, including one by a fascist Zionist settler on the West Bank, and two more pro-PLO mayors were dismissed. But the Palestinians remained defiant: dismissed mayor Shaka stated: "We will remain loyal to our nationality, our country and our cause. We will never be tools in the hands of the occupation to use in achieving its plots." Meanwhile, an Israeli sergeant-

major was killed in a grenade attack by Fedayeen in Gaza.

Oman: Sultan Qaboos of Oman visited Britain from March 16-19. The British imperialists hailed him as "Britain's staunchest friend in the Middle East." Sandhurst trained, Qaboos was brought to power with British help and has signed agreements guaranteeing continuing British domination and neo-colonial plunder of Oman. Last year alone, Britain supplied Oman with Chieftan tanks worth £35 million. Qaboos did more arms shopping whilst he was here.

India: Indian Prime Minister Gandhi also visited Britain recently. Whilst here she faced vigorous opposition from the Indian community. On the evening of March 22 she had to face a 600-strong picket in London. This included members of the Indian Workers' Association, Kashmir Liberation Front and of India's Muslim and Dalit minorities.

Britain's Prisons

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.

incomplete, cover-up report by the Director of the South East Region Prison Department has been released. The original Home Office claim that only five prisoners suffered injuries is described as "incomplete and misleading", but not "deliberate concealment".

The one thing that the report does not reveal is the real reason for the attack. The Committee which led the protest was made up of an Irish POW, and a black prisoner serving a long sentence. The report states that the Irish POWs are, "the most organised" and that black prisoners are, "increasingly politically conscious". It is the developing unity between these forces that the state wishes to break. But it is also that developing unity which ensures that the struggle of prisoners against their oppression will continue.

At the end of February five prisoners staged a protest in Wormwood Scrubs, by barricading themselves into a cell. In an act of solidarity, 90 other prisoners refused to return to their cells until they had been given assurances that the five would not be harmed.

BARRY PROSSER

On March 19, three Winson Green prison officers were found "not guilty" on a charge of murdering remand prisoner Barry Prosser. Prosser was awaiting trial on a minor charge of causing criminal damage, of less than £2 in value.

Ireland Solidarity

By "Class Struggle" Correspondents.

ARMAGH

MAY 8

A national demonstration marking the first anniversary of the death on hunger strike of IRA volunteer Bobby Sands MP will be held in London on Saturday May 8.

The demonstration is being organised by the May 8 Demonstration Organising Committee. It will commemorate the martyrdom of the ten hunger strikers last year and will call for: Britain out of Ireland! Self-determination for the Irish people! It is being called on May 8 because it is the nearest Saturday to May 5, the date on which Bobby Sands MP died after 66 days on hunger strike.

A spokesperson for the Committee said: "Last year, Bobby Sands, an elected Member of Parliament, was allowed to die on hunger strike, as were nine of his comrades, by a government that typified the callous indifference of successive British governments towards the wishes and indeed fate of the Irish people."

The organisers are going all out to build the broadest possible demonstration in order to show that substantial sectors of British society challenge the right of the British state to rule over any part of Ireland. They are concentrating in particular on the working class and national minority movements.

Sponsors to date include, Owen Carron MP (who will speak at a rally after the march), two MPs from the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, GLC leader Ken Livingstone, the Troops Out Movement, Brixton Black Womens' Group, Indian Workers' Association, Moslem Students Society, Veterans Against the War, Sinn Fein, Irish Republican Socialist Party and others including various Labour and Student Movement bodies and individuals. Organisations

in Canada, Denmark and the United States have also sponsored, and intend to send contingents to the march.

"Class Struggle" urges all its readers to support this demonstration. Further details from the Organising Committee, c/o Robert Jones, Box 353, London, NW5 4NH. Telephone 01-267-2004.

NLISC

The North London Irish Solidarity Committee (NLISC) is vigorously developing its work amongst the working and oppressed people of North London by means of regular street meetings, demonstrations and a petition campaign. Organised around the slogans "Victory to the Irish people! Troops Out Now!", the NLISC directs its work to the real allies of the Irish people, the working class and the oppressed nationalities.

The NLISC has launched a petition reading: "We the undersigned recognising the right of the Irish people to self-determination call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops." In just a few weeks over 1,000 signatures have been collected including those of renowned Irish musician Christie Moore, Richard Balfe, Member of European Parliament, GLC leader Ken Livingstone, and 22 other Labour GLC councillors. The vast majority of signatures however, have been collected from Irish, black and English workers at street meetings. Whilst these people have willingly signed the petition and contributed to the committee's funds, a number of 'left' Labour MPs and leading members of CPGB, SWP and RCT-Party have refused to sign, showing either their inherent sectarianism and/or their support for British imperialism.

campaign by organising vigils outside Winson Green Prison.

The British prisons have been built into a machine of brutality, torture, terror, sadism and murder. A machine that lies in wait for all who fight against oppression; a machine to break those who do fight back and to terrorise others into not fighting back.

This machine has been built up with scarcely a word of protest from the Labour Party, Trade Unions, investigative journalists, most of the British left, etc. It has been Irish prisoners of war (increasingly joined by black prisoners) who have led and are leading the fightback against British State terrorism in the prisons. They must receive the wholehearted support of all communists, anti-imperialists and progressive people in Britain.

SUPPORT THE FIGHTBACK
BEHIND THE WALLS!

The NLISC organised a demonstration on March 20, which had 150 participants at its peak. Amongst those taking part were North London Provisional Sinn Fein, Iranian revolutionaries, South London Troops Out Movement, Irish Freedom Movement, the Revolutionary Communist League, RCG and the Workers' Party.

The militant march received a warm response from local people. Passing down Tufnell Park Road, a number of people watched from their windows or doorsteps. Some applauded and at least one waved a tricolour.

At a rally after the march, all supporting organisations spoke and messages were received, including from Brent South Constituency Labour Party and Tyne-side Troops Out Movement.

A speaker from the RCL stressed that the armed struggle was continuing in Ireland, and that the co-ordinated bombing operations in 5 towns and cities the previous week showed that the IRA remained, "a disciplined, professional, revolutionary guerilla army of the people." The uprisings led by the black youth last summer showed that there was a force in Britain to stand alongside the Irish people in the anti-imperialist struggle. Therefore it was important that the march had not been one to beg, grovel and whimper to those who are controlled by British imperialism, but one that had addressed itself to the working class, the poor and the oppressed.

Future activities being organised by the NLISC include a public meeting to mobilise for the national demonstration on May 8. The Committee can be contacted by writing to: NLISC, bm Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX.

CAERNAVON

On Saturday the 13th March, the streets of Caernavon echoed to the music of the Welsh Martyrs' Fife & Drum band as about 150 people, including contingents from Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Socialist Party, marched through the town.

GERRY MacLOCHLAINN

Prison authorities in Maidstone, Kent, are subjecting Irish patriot political prisoner Gerry MacLochlainn to a campaign of deliberate harassment. Gerry worked in the tailor's shop altering jeans. When this work finished it was replaced by a contract to make shorts for the British Army. Gerry refused to do this on principle, whilst making it clear that he was prepared to do any other work.

For this he was charged with "refusing to work" and punished with two days in the punishment block and seven days loss of remission. When he returned

The march was called by the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement (WSRM), around the slogans: "Victory to the Irish Republican Movement! No more Welsh troops for Ulster!" It drew large and in general, sympathetic crowds, and an open air meeting, held outside Caernavon Castle was attended by about 200 people. The meeting was chaired by Robert Griffiths of the WSRM who spoke in Welsh and English. Terry Robson, from the Derry branch of the IRSP spoke tellingly of the brutal harassment that he and his comrades were subject to, and to applause, said that for every one of their members arrested, there would be others to take their place.

Claire Walsh, (Sinn Fein representative for Wales) in a short address apologised for the absence of a speaker from Ireland, and explained that just before he was due to leave he was detained by the police. Guto Eirian (WSRSM) gave a rousing speech in Welsh which drew applause from the large number of Welsh speakers in the audience. The final speaker was Meurig Parri (WSRM) an ex-army officer who served in Northern Ireland and resigned his commission in disgust at what he saw.

This demonstration was an example of unity in action between Welsh and Irish republicans, showing that the forces for revolution will increasingly co-ordinate their struggle against the British state, which is built on national oppression.

JOHN McCOMB.

On 24 January, John McComb was picked up by the RUC, from his home in Short Strand, Belfast. After arrest and interrogation he was handed over to the Brits, who flew him to Britain. From 25-28 January he was held in London under the PTA, and then charged with "conspiring to cause explosions", in relation to IRA armed operations in London one year ago. He is currently on remand in Brixton gaol. John's trial is not expected to start until September. His wife and 2 year old daughter remain in Belfast.

We denounce this Kidnapping and transporting of an Irish patriot.

Free John McComb!

to the wing, he was given the same work again, refused again, and was punished again. And the harassment continues ...

Gerry also faces other discrimination: the prison authorities refuse to pay for his Open University course, whilst they do so for other prisoners.

The prison authorities are clearly trying to provoke Gerry in order to impose an even harsher regime on him. Meanwhile, Gerry MacLochlainn continues to display the revolutionary determination that is the hallmark of Irish POWs.

Continued from back page.

Sile gave an example from personal experience of what international solidarity activities mean to prisoners.

"I sat in Armagh Jail for five years on the protest...and through contact with the Republican Movement on the outside...we used to receive every week, little pieces of cigarette paper with things written on them. Every single week, we got an International Bulletin. (It) would have said...400 people marched in Paris in support of the prisoners, 600 marched in Brussels, 200 marched in Australia...when you're sitting in that cell in Armagh Jail and you read that, suddenly you think... Good God, they know about me all over the world. It's a great thing to know things like that."

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Sile also gave her view on those in the women's movement who say that the struggle of the women POWs and the struggle for national liberation are not issues for women:

"The point is, within Ireland, there is freedom for no one. Therefore there's no freedom for women..."

"Within the Republican Nationalist Movement, men and women are working side by side for freedom for all. Women are also working on women's issues within the Republican Movement...In the Republican Movement you will not find discrimination, you will find it perhaps from individuals, but not from the movement. Our first point is that we are women nationalists. You can't have freedom for women if you don't have freedom for the people of Ireland."

Sile said that the struggle for women's liberation and the struggle for national liberation, "go together". She told us of a slogan coined by a POW in Armagh:

"Irish liberation frees women, women's liberation frees Ireland."

Finally, Sile told us about the developing work of the Sinn Fein Department of Womens' Affairs. She said they have taken up issues such as, "abortion, contraception, stereotyping, sexism, women within the home, brutality against women." Abortion and contraception are seen as matters for individuals to decide. She said:

"It's not up to the church or the state. It's nobody's right to tell you what to do with your life, how many children you should have."

The quiet confidence and determination displayed by Sile Darragh was a vivid example of the quality of the cadres of the Republican Movement, the movement that will liberate Ireland!

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND



International Women's Day Armagh Picket

By a "Class Struggle" Correspondent.

For the third year running, women from England, Scotland and Wales, and from Germany and Belgium, travelled to Northern Ireland to join the picket outside Armagh Jail, in order to show solidarity with their Republican sisters held there.

On arrival in Belfast, we were introduced to the families who were to put us up overnight. Within minutes we were made to feel completely at home. Our hosts were at once ordinary and extraordinary - ordinary and familiar in their family lives, extraordinary in their involvement in the Republican struggle, the sufferings imposed on them, their spirit, and their consciousness - particularly striking is the consciousness of the youth.

On Saturday afternoon an exhibition was held in a social club, showing the contribution by the women of Northern Ireland to the struggle, particularly over the last twelve years - as activists in struggles over housing, nurseries, centres for battered women, as firm supporters of their imprisoned relatives in the Relatives Action Committee, as political prisoners, and as armed freedom fighters.

On Saturday night everyone gathered again for a social evening which began in the most militant way I have ever experienced. The "special guests" who were to start the evening were a group of IRA volunteers - armed, the representatives of the men and youth sections entered the hall, while three members of the Cumann na Banh (women's section of the IRA) strode to the stage. Flanked by her two comrades, pistols held aloft, a woman read a statement. The statement said

in part: "There are no avenues of advancement closed to women within the Irish Republican Army. We receive full and equal recognition. Any promotion in the ranks of this army will be gained by individual effort and courage. We ask nothing more and will accept nothing less. Petty prejudices and sexism are luxuries that we in the IRA cannot afford, nor do we want."

Sunday morning was bright and sunny, as we gathered outside Armagh Jail. A statement from the women P.O.W.s inside was read by an ex-P.O.W. Again, a combination of the ordinary and the extraordinary - for whilst she looked as young and fresh as any woman could and like many called on to speak to a crowd, her hand holding the statement trembled like a leaf. Yet she had suffered eleven years imprisonment, some of it on the no-wash protest. Bernadette McAliskey also made an excellent speech, and a large number of messages of solidarity were read out. The included: Sinn Fein Women's Department, Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania, SWAPO Women's Council, International Women's Group, Maputo, Mozambique, People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran, a Basque organisation, branches of the Troops Out Movement, women's groups in England, Scotland, Wales, Germany and Belgium, Indian Workers' Association, Welsh Socialist Republican Movement, Armagh Womens' Co-ordinating committee, London, a small handful of trade union branches, the Revolutionary Communist League and the R.C.P.

In the hope that we'd be heard inside, we shouted the names of the POWs held there, adding: "You are not alone", and bawled out "The Women's Army".

If you want to find out what its like to be amongst a people who have risen up, or if you have any doubts about the support of the people for the Republican struggle - go and see for

yourself. There's a Youth Delegation this Easter, a TOM delegation in early August, and doubtless another delegation of women next March 8th.

ARMAGH - MORALE HIGH

"As regards the women in Armagh, morale is, always was, I suppose it always will be very good. Because Armagh - where protesting prisoners are concerned - it's like a very close knit community. They work together on everything."

This graphic description of the morale of the women Prisoners of War in Armagh was given by former Armagh prisoner, Sile Darragh. Sile served five years on a charge of membership of the IRA and was freed in August 1981. She was talking to "Class Struggle" Correspondents who visited Belfast last month.



She told us that since the hunger strike ended nothing much has changed in Armagh. The hunger strike was for five demands. At the end of the hunger strike, the British said that the men could wear their own clothes. The Armagh women could always do this. The British have no intention of resolving the question of prison work. They still want the prisoners to do penal work, and the prisoners are still refusing. So, the prisoners are: "Still losing remission, still being locked up, still losing visits."

Sile described the hunger strike as: "a very bad period, understandably because comrades were dying." She gave a very moving description of the solidarity that exists between the H-Blocks and Armagh:

"You hear people talk about being with you in spirit and the unity of the prisoners and the solidarity. You have to

have been a prisoner to have understood that. Because there's a great bond...between H-Block and Armagh. People tend to separate them, those two prisons, 'cause they're miles apart. Those two prisons are as close together as any two people. They can't be together physically, but in spirit, what they believe and what they stand for, they're very tight, close. There's great communication between the prisons, and the hunger strike took a lot out of the women in Armagh. Because we could appreciate it a lot more than people on the outside can."

"Since I've come out after five years in prison, you find that people on the outside, they try very, very hard to understand. To try and put themselves in the prisoners position. But it's totally impossible. You couldn't do it. You have to have been a prisoner."

HUNGER STRIKE

On the outcome of the hunger strike, Sile explained to us that:

"No one can claim an absolute victory through the hunger strike. The British government definitely can't. They did not break the hunger strike. The determination of the men on hunger strike, the determination of the prisoners, remained."

Sile explained that the hunger strike, "as a weapon was taken away", by "certain sections" of Irish society who put pressure on the families of the hunger strikers. The British government cannot claim a victory in the prisons. "Its obvious! Because the prisoners are still there. They're still on the protest. They've no intentions of coming of it."

THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT

Looking at the results of the hunger strike from the standpoint of the Irish revolutionary process as a whole, Sile explained: "where the Republican Movement is concerned, it was a major victory because all along Britain tried very, very hard to say these prisoners are criminals. There's no war in Ireland. Mind your own business..."

They didn't want the rest of the world to know what was going on in Ireland. But because of five years of protest, blanket protest, no wash protest, beatings, then the hunger strike, people, lots of people throughout the world know exactly what was going on in Ireland. Ireland then became a major international issue...Throughout the whole world people know what is going on in Ireland. They know that the IRA are not a band of terrorists, hoods or godfathers. They know that there's a freedom struggle going on in this country. They can't disguise this...130,000 people went to Bobby Sands' funeral. He was an Irish Republican Army volunteer. If the people didn't support the Irish Republican Army they wouldn't have been at his funeral."

Continued page 7.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY-MONDAY APRIL 9 - 12.
Youth Delegation to Ireland. Visiting Belfast and Derry, meeting anti-imperialist youth and the liberation movement. £30 per delegate. Transport from London, Midlands, Manchester. Organised by Irish Freedom Movement. Details 01-274-3951.

SUNDAY APRIL 11.
Easter Commemoration march from Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London, Assemble 2 pm. Organised by Sinn Fein.

SUNDAY APRIL 18.
Martyrs Day Rally. 3 pm Main Hall Munder College, Bedford. Organised by Indian Workers Assoc., Bedford branch.

THURSDAY APRIL 22.
Meeting to mobilise for May 8 march. Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! With video. Organised by North London Irish Solidarity Ctee. 7:30 pm., John Barnes Library, Camden rd., London N7.

FRIDAY APRIL 23.
Support the Bradford 12! London Support Group. Rally and Social. Central London Ploy, New Cavendish st., London W1. 7:30 pm.

SATURDAY MAY 1.
Internationalist Rally to celebrate Mayday. Speakers from Moslem Students Society (Iran), Democratic Revolutionary Front (El Salvador), Bangladesh Workers Assoc., Eritrean Workers Assoc., Pan-Africanist Congress (Azania), RCLB. Sinn Fein & IRSP invited. 2:30 pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Followed by evening social food. Organised by Revolutionary Communist League of Britain. 8:30 pm fill late at Hargraves Hall, Hargraves rd., Off Junction rd., London N19. Admission to social: £2. unwaged 50p inc. food
SATURDAY MAY 8.
National Demonstration in London. Britain out of Ireland! Self Determination for the Irish People! In Memory of Bobby Sands and his comrades. Details from 01-267-2004.