

CLASS STRUGGLE

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SCARMAN COVERS FOR RACISM



On November 25, after a 7 month 'investigation', Lord Scarman finally unveiled his report on the Brixton uprising. Its content was not unexpected. Lord Scarman is a 'Liberal' Judge, who is frequently trotted out to 'study' difficult situations where the forces of state repression have been used so openly as to incur substantial public criticism.

Scarman is a cover-up man, whose reports regularly defend state repression but also include vague

statements of 'liberal' sentiment, minor criticisms of some of the methods of the state forces and sometimes a lowly figure is picked out as a scapegoat. The Scarman card was played after the murder of 13 unarmed civilians peacefully demonstrating in Ireland by the British Army in the bloody Sunday massacre in 1971. It was played again after the murder of Kevin Gately by police officers during the anti-racist 'Red Lion Square' demonstration in 1974 and Scarman was there again during the Grunwick dispute.

Cont. on P.4.

"The allegation that the police are the oppressive arm of a racist state not only displays a complete ignorance of the constitutional arrangements for controlling the police: it is an injustice to the senior officers of the force."

"The direction and policies of the Metropolitan police are not racist."
The Scarman Report

Inside...

Scarman

Starting on this page we take a detailed look at the Scarman Report and expose its racist and anti-democratic essence. Our Editorial on page 2 exposes the revisionist CPGB who grovel before Scarman. On page 5 we highlight some of the victims of the British state's attempts to criminalise the uprisings.

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LORD SCARMAN, THE STATE, AND THE "COMMUNIST" PARTY - Revolution or Counter-Revolution

To understand that classes exist in Britain and that class struggle also exists is not particularly hard. Pick up any paper and you can read about it. Whether it is an economic struggle, or a struggle against any form of oppression, you can see it there - every day. But it is also apparent that those struggles are in the main spontaneous. They are not part of a conscious overall struggle by one class and its allies against another. Conscious struggle requires a far deeper understanding than the mere recognition that class struggle exists.

Central to that consciousness is grasping the role of the state. Since its inception the Communist movement has understood the nature of the state. Marxism-Leninism holds that the state is the organ of class rule. That class rule can be exercised in half hidden form as the state seeks to 'moderate the class struggle'. In acting as though it is a 'neutral referee' in the struggles that inevitably break out, the state is acting as a force to keep the struggle within acceptable limits so that it does not develop as a threat to the system. But at times the state also acts decisively and directly on the side of the ruling class. It is common to see police breaking up a picket line, but impossible to imagine them helping to strengthen one! Far more important though is the state acting with all its force against any political movement that threatens the rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The British state can be seen in its true colours on the streets of Ireland. Such naked force was also seen from time to time in various cities on the streets of Britain itself over the summer. The tendency in Britain, as the economic crisis bites deeper is for a gradual but continuous strengthening of legislation so that the state acts more and more openly as an arm of the imperialist ruling class. When the class struggle can no longer be contained, the facade of 'democracy' will be stripped away and the state will act as the organ of an open terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary sections of the ruling class. Or, to put it another way - fascism.

Such a situation has not yet been reached. But the tendency is clear. Lord Scarman's report on the Brixton riot reflects both the present situation and the tendency to fascism. It is couched in democratic language, it is 'concerned' about 'deprivation'. But it is also clear about what it considers the main issue - that is the danger of further 'disorder'. It is also explicit that the main purpose of the police (an arm of the state) is not to prevent crime, but to "keep the Queen's Peace" and "prevent disorder". Behind the words of concern the report urges more repressive laws, the greater militarisation of the police, greater self-censorship by the media. The report sees such measures as providing a back up - they are to be "kept in reserve" to the first tactic. That is to 'moderate' the severity of the oppression and discrimination, which breeds 'disorder' to encourage the development of a black traitor class and to improve police/community "consultation" - but not "accountability".

The report is a thoroughly bourgeois response to the summer uprisings. The job of communists in such a situation is to seek to deepen the consciousness of the most advanced workers on the nature of the report and on the state and the class that it serves.

It does not come as a surprise to us that the 'Morning Star', the "Communist" Party of Great Britain's daily rag, chose to do exactly the opposite.

It's headline the day after the report was "TORY REFUSAL TO PLEDGE ACTION OVER SCARMAN". Far from exposing the report the Morning Star was most concerned that the Tory government would not implement it in full immediately. It's Editorial was actually entitled "No Whitewash but ..." and said "Lord Scarman has spent a lot of time on a very careful and useful document". The Morning Star, to be fair, did offer a very secondary piece of fraternal advice to his Lordship that he didn't go quite far enough, "but it must be acted on with speed and be treated as just a starting point" it hastily added.

The Morning Star claims that the report was a "blunt indictment of police behaviour" and praised it "for not fudging this crucial issue". Yet Scarman explicitly denied that the state and the police were racist institutions, and admitted only to a very small number of prejudiced

officers. Scarman described the national minority communities' criticisms of police racism as being based on "rumours" exaggerating one or two incidents. Even on the Brixton uprising itself Scarman criticised only the timing of Operation Swamp 81, but defended the tactic itself. His main



criticism was that the police were not sufficiently forceful. The Morning Star is silent on Scarman's support for new para-military equipment. The Morning Star was also silent on Scarman's urging of greater powers to ban all marches that might give rise to disorder, and on his proposal to include an "ethnic question" in the next census.

Far from arming its readers on the dangers of the Scarman report, the Morning Star welcomes it. Far from exposing the state as an organ of class rule, its representative is presented as if he really is a 'neutral arbiter' and has come down on the side of the oppressed!

The Morning Star's pro-imperialist propaganda on its front page and in its editorial, is translated into a direct racist attack of its own on page 4. "In a society as comparatively developed as ours there ought not to be riots. The fact that they have taken place and may well do so again in a society where there are relatively few restrictions on political organisation reflects not only upon the state. It simply will not do in the case of Toxteth and Brixton to scapegoat the police and the government. If ethnic minorities have found it 'necessary' to riot, then that is as much a reflection on their own lack of experience of organisation ..."

This trashy chauvinist garbage completely ignores the reality of the everyday state oppression of the national minorities. It is terrified of any sign of political struggle outside of those acceptable in bourgeois, parliamentary, reformist politics. The Morning Star will just have to lump the fact that the oppressed national minorities do not see their salvation in the likes of Lord Scarman, nor in orienting their political activity towards the election of the Labour Party which has not only introduced and enforced racist laws in the past, but now enthusiastically welcomes the Scarman report while the fake "Communist" Party applauds enthusiastically in the background.

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

just which side is Duffy on?

• What have the following brand names got in common? Krona, Stork, SB, Flora, Blue Band, Summer County, Echo, Outline, Cookeen, Crisp'n' Dry, White Cap, Walls, Mattessons, MacFisheries, Batchelors, John West, Snackpot, Cup-a-Soup, Vesta, Walls Ice Cream, Birds Eye, Persil, Surf, Omo, Drive, Radiant, Sunlight Lemon Liquid, Vim, Jif, Domestos, Lifebuoy, Shield, Lux, Pears, Elida, Gibbs, SR, Signal and Close-up.

They are all marketed by one company - Unilever. Unilever is one of the 18 companies that control the food industry in Britain. All these companies have considerable holdings in a wide range of other profitable undertakings.

• So much for the freedom of choice under capitalism.

• No disciplinary action is to be taken against any of the police involved in the death of teacher Blair Peach. (Surprise, surprise!) The Police Complaints Board said it had not been possible to identify the officer who struck the fatal blow. The Friends of Blair Peach Committee is taking legal advice on whether to prosecute the officers privately.

And police accused of damaging homes in Brixton's Railton Road will not be prosecuted. A report was sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions after residents claimed that televisions were smashed and furniture ripped in a search for equipment to make petrol bombs.

• The Christmas turkey is big business. Approximately 10 companies dominate the poultry industry in Britain. One of them, Bernard Matthews, had a 24% increase in pre-tax profits last year which brought the company's profits up to £4,751,000. Bernard Matthews, the company's top Director had an average weekly wage of £7,452 (made up of his salary plus dividends paid on his 4 million shares in the company).

In the same year his employees earned on average £83 per week.

• The numbers of people living below the government's official poverty line has more than doubled since 1977 - from 2 million to 5 million, nearly one in ten of the population - according to Professor Peter Townsend, Chairman of the Child Poverty Action Group. The government response to this poverty has been to cut social security payments by another 2% by failing to keep pace with inflation and to continue to phase out the earnings related part of unemployment benefit.

• Since Arthur Snipe Bought Laurence Scott Electromotors last year he has sacked a thousand people ... How is Mr Snipe bearing up? At Doncaster yearling sales last month ... he bought one colt for £109,000. The previous all-time highest for the sales was £44,000. In one evening Mr Snipe lashed out £261,500 on horse flesh.

• INSIDE STORY? An elderly Asian man was put into prison recently because his permit to stay in this country had expired - he was an 'over-stayer'. However, he was refused bail on the grounds that he might leave the country! It would appear that 'British Justice' wants it both ways!

• A recent report on Lucas Industries shows how firms are coping with the present crisis. They swung from a profit of £41 million to a pre-tax loss of £21.4 million in the year 1980/81 and yet in the same period the Board of Lucas Industries shared £1 million in salaries and fees. This is an 11% increase on the previous year and includes £127,000 for Godfrey Messervy, the Chairman. This comes at a time when leaders of the Engineering Union have just accepted a 5.06% pay deal for their 175,000 members. Mr Terence Duffy, the union's President, said they acknowledged the present poor economic condition of the industry and that this was the Engineering Employers Federation's final offer! The crisis is their crisis - it's the crisis of imperialism - but who is paying for it? And

• At a meeting in the Shaheed Singh Centre in Birmingham on the 14 November, comrade T.S. Sahota (President of the Indian Workers' Association GB) unveiled portraits of the late comrades A.D. Kataria and Manjit Kaur. Comrade Kataria, a founder member of the Dalit Mukti Alliance and member of the IWA since he came to Britain, died on a demonstration last year. Speakers from the IWA, Indian Youth League, Joshi Memorial Committee, Dr Ambedkar Society and RCLB paid tribute to both comrades' contributions to the struggle against racist oppression and talked of the present struggles for the rights of national minority people in Britain, and particularly the campaign to defend the Bradford 12.

The following week the IWA held an anti-racialist rally to commemorate the martyrs who died during the struggle against the British Raj. Speakers described the continuing struggle in this country against racist violence and state oppression. A representative of Birmingham Troops Out Movement talked of the struggle in Ireland and pointed to similarities between that struggle and the struggle of black people in Britain. Several speakers urged the audience to support the campaign to defend the Bradford 12.

• The people of the Orkneys and Shetlands are concerned about intrusion into their fishing grounds by the government and the Common Market. (The Orkneys and Shetlands are island groups off the northern coast of Scotland) Fishing is one of the main sources of the islanders' livelihood. They are demanding preferential rights in a proposed 12 mile fishing limit and are calling for a licence system for boats using the "Shetland box" to the north. Unless these concessions are granted the small fishermen risk being impoverished by huge trawler ships. Council leaders are even talking of declaring independence if their demands are not met. "We don't want to leave the EEC or the UK but we wish they would show they really care about the islands. This matter is life or death for our communities."

From Our Postbag

The official Chinese News Agency, Xinhua, celebrated its 50th anniversary recently. On this occasion, the Editor of "Class Struggle" sent a message of greetings to the London office of Xinhua. The letter said in part:

"'Class Struggle', as the paper of a young and small Marxist-Leninist organisation had derived and continues to derive, enormous encouragement and assistance from the work of the Xinhua News Agency."

The reply received from Xinhua is printed below:

"Thank you very much for your message of greetings to the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Xinhua News Agency. We are very grateful for your kind words to our news agency on behalf of the Editorial Committee of 'Class Struggle'.

"We would like to take this opportunity to ask you to convey our best wishes and friendly greetings to other members on your editorial committee.

"Thank you again."

From a Liverpool reader

Over the last 9 months or so we have witnessed the growth of another political party within Britain - this being the S.D.P. The net result of the coming about of the S.D.P., is now we have three parties not working in our interest. The S.D.P. put forward great grandiose claims about itself, but in actual fact the positions that it does hold, are no different to the ones already held by Labour or Tory. They say nothing new for example in areas like incomes policy, Trade Unions and EEC. The only area which seems to be crystal clear in their policies is the fact that they are committed

to the channel tunnel.

The main interests served by the emergence of the S.D.P. are the bosses. They see the hold of the Labour and Tory parties diminishing, they desire to rule by consent, so they have to find a way to renew peoples interest in parliamentary democracy. The S.D.P. is for carrying out this task.

Be it Labour, Tory or S.D.P./Liberal alliance they all represent an interest which is not going to change things for the benefit of the working class. The workers get what they fight for and nothing else!

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Scarman...

DOES STATE RACISM EXIST?

The essence of the Scarman report is to deny the existence of state racism. We are expected to forget that we live in an imperialist country, which built its wealth on the plunder of the Third World and that still today despite its decline as a number one power, makes considerable super-profits out of Asia, Africa and Latin America. We are expected to forget the development of immigration laws, which not only seek to blame immigration (and therefore immigrants and their descendents) for the economic crisis generated by the system itself, but also strips away a number of democratic rights of black people in Britain. We are expected to forget the new Nationality Bill and the deportations. We are expected to forget the systematic denial and suppression of the cultures of the national minorities.

But Scarman could not possibly succeed in his job without, to some extent, recognising the position of black people in Britain. He admits to 'some' discrimination in housing and education. "There is evidence that it occurs", he says, and quickly adds, "unintentionally no doubt". As to jobs Scarman openly states of the "higher level of unemployment among young black people", that, "it seems clear that discrimination - by employers and at the workplace - is a factor of considerable importance". But just to make sure that no-one thinks he is actually making too deep a criticism of the system or the bourgeoisie itself, he precedes such comments with attitudes that put the main onus on the oppressed national minorities themselves: "The problems which have to be solved, if deprivation and alienation are to be overcome, have been identified - namely, teaching a command of the English language, a broad education in the humanities ... and the basic training in the skills necessary to obtain work." Note Scarman's preference for words like 'deprivation' rather than 'racism' which allow him to condemn the deprived themselves.

ARE THE POLICE THE 'OPPRESSIVE ARM'?

It hardly needs a big jump in logic, to conclude that if the state is racist, then it is the police which enforce racist laws and protect the system. But leaving this aside, although it is the main issue here let's look at the police themselves. Scarman, himself, was moved to make public criticisms when slap-bang in the middle of his 'researches', the police mounted a night time operation, breaking into a number of houses in Brixton, supposedly looking for a 'petrol-bomb' factory. Furniture was smashed, TV sets kicked in, walls badly damaged, bannisters on stairs ripped off, musical instruments broken. Scarman was blazing mad. Here he was in the middle of a tricky bit of white-washing and the police were creating mayhem all around. Nothing of course was found. But the whole affair was 'justified' by the police 2 weeks later, when they found some empty bottles on a bit of waste ground. What an unusual discovery! But come the publication of the report and the whole affair is

mysteriously forgotten. A week later the Director of Public Prosecutions announced that none of the police officers would be prosecuted.

But Scarman's report cannot deny that some racism exists. So he does state that "racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers". Harassment too, he adds. But to make his real point clear he stresses that "even one isolated instance of misconduct can foster a whole legion of rumours which rapidly become beliefs firmly held within the community". Like a good liberal Scarman firmly insists that racially prejudiced behaviour by police officers should be explicitly an offence in the 'Police Code' and should normally lead to dismissal. Scarman is open in his report for the need to have an 'acceptable' police force, so whilst it is basic for him to deny the existence of 'institutionalised racism' as he calls it, he does deplore open racist behaviour by individuals which leads to a condemnation of the whole police force. The flaw in Scarman's approach, from his bourgeois point of view, is that black people in Britain are well aware of state racism and will not be conned.



SOUTHALL, April 23rd 1979. The British state shows its determination to provide Nazis with the freedom to organise.

A recent case is sufficient to put the lie to Scarman's contention that it is just the fault of a few individuals. Errol Madden is a West Indian art student. During the summer he was walking home one night when he was stopped and searched. On him were two toy cars, which he used in sketching. Errol says he was threatened with being beaten up and called, among other things a "black bastard". After being 'questioned' through the night at Battersea Police station he signed a confession admitting he stole the cars. Luckily for Errol he found the receipt from the shop was still at home and the shop assistant identified him. He was found not guilty. The Police Complaints Board criticised the two officers for making "an extraordinary mistake". It is not admitted that it was racist. No action will be taken for framing Errol. Instead they will be given "strict advice on the need for careful questioning". And there's no institutional racism?

THE BRIXTON UPRISING

Scarman's summary states: "The social conditions in Brixton do not provide an excuse for disorder ...

How Liberalism Protects State Racism and Strengthens Repression



LORD SCARMAN

Nothing can excuse the behaviour of the rioters ... both the police and the community leaders must carry some responsibilities ... the police response is to be commended not criticised." Scarman's criticism of the police was a criticism of the timing of Operation Swamp 81 and to an incident where police searched a cab at a time of high tension on Saturday morning as part of a general 'stop and search anyone policy'. They then arrested a youth for 'obstructing them in the course of duty'. Scarman states directly that he supports the need for such operations as Swamp 81 and indeed the use of the SPG. His criticism concerns only the timing of this operation. His criticism also says that the police failed to act with sufficient force.

As for the community leaders, Scarman condemns the local Council for Community Relations in Lambeth for withdrawing from a 'Police Liaison Committee' in 1979, because of police racism, which had culminated in the arrest of 3 members of the CRC itself. Scarman also lambasted a report by a working party set up by Lambeth Council which had, in the same year investigated police racism and exposed "a picture of violence, intimidation and induced confessions". Scarman argues that such a report, "succeeded" only in worsening community relations with the police". He does not feel the need to criticise that police activity himself.

SCARMAN'S PROPOSALS

Scarman presents a liberal gloss about the need to educate new police officers "better" in community relations! He proposes that training be extended from 3 months to 6 months, but the main extra time should be spent in training in dealing with disorders (The main function of the police). He also stresses "the importance and necessity that such equipment as water cannon, CS gas and plastic bullets should be available." Scarman is fully in favour of the greater militarisation

of the police, but this is covered over with a set of proposals which appear liberal, but which are very dangerous to the oppressed people in Britain.

Scarman is concerned at the decay of the inner cities and the condition of the working people resident in those areas, particularly the national minorities, whom he recognises as more "deprived" and "alienated".

The report urges action to improve the situation. Although he has nothing to say about what sort of action. But why is he concerned.

On page 2 the reason is given: "Unless the police adjust their policies and operations so as to handle these difficulties with imagination as well as firmness, they will fail: and disorder will become a disease endemic in our society ... (and without proper facilities) ... the street corners become the social centres of people ... with time on their hands ... to engage in endless discussion of their grievances".

Scarman stresses the necessity to give black people a stake in the system. His solution? Why to encourage the development of a black bourgeoisie, a traitor class. How that will benefit the masses he does not say. "The encouragement of black people to secure a real stake in their own community, through business and the professions, is of great importance if future stability is to be secured."

Our 'democratic' Lord is most concerned with the lack of consultation between the police and the 'local community'. But he goes out of the way to stress that consultation must not be confused with accountability. The 'independence' of the police force must remain inviolate. They must not be answerable to democratically elected authorities.

In particular he condemns recent proposals that the London police should come under the direction of the GLC. Scarman would however make 'consultation' compulsory through the law and he urges an examination of the role of Community Relations Councils. His orientation is to force them to meet with the police and to intervene in such struggles as those in Brixton. Together with his proposals for the development of a black bourgeoisie Scarman's apparently liberal recommendations amount to a call for a system of institutionalised touting.

Even his recommendations for changing the system of police complaints are limited. The complaint system whereby the police investigate themselves has been totally exposed. Condemnation has been so widespread that even the Police Federation itself which has always defended the system, has now finally called for its replacement. Scarman however does not call for an 'independent system', merely that the complaints system has an 'independent element' introduced into it.

Scarman makes proposals on a change of law, if necessary, to give direct powers to ban particular racist marches. But even here there is more than meets the eye. Firstly his reference is to racist marches through areas with a high concentration of national minorities. His concern is entirely over the possibility of 'disorder' i.e. resistance. Secondly he points out that

his reading of the law is that this power already exists. So why hasn't it been used? Because the ruling class prefers to make blanket bans and has used the 'danger of disorder' from racist marches as an excuse to ban a whole variety of political protests. Throughout most of the hunger strike by prisoners of war in Ireland marches were banned in London and Glasgow.



★ Paul Conroy, who had his back broken by police, during their para-military battle with Toxteth youth in Liverpool, is being set-up in order to excuse the police assault. He has been accused of throwing two petrol bombs. A lad who came to his assistance after he was run down, was smashed over the head with a baton. His evidence is now being discredited by the same device. The police claim that he had thrown a stone at a police vehicle causing it to crash (!) and that he was caught after he tripped, running away from the incident.

In October 20 members of the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee, who picketed Liverpool Crown Court, protesting at such 'legal' oppression were arrested and held for 'contempt of court'. Undoubtedly this was an attempt to scare-off such protests. While such pickets have always technically been in 'contempt' the law is not usually applied. But with the vicious rail-roading that we have been seeing, it is suddenly being used to silence the people. No wonder more and more people do have nothing but 'contempt' for the courts.

Ann Harris, framed for throwing a petrol bomb in Liverpool has been sentenced to 3 years. Despite technical evidence that she could not have thrown the missile, she was found guilty. Why the frame? Ann was a witness to the murder of David Moore, who was run down by a police vehicle. Phil Robins, who readers will remember was badly injured after being shot in the front and back by CS gas projectiles is being charged with a burglary committed 4 months earlier. Police claim to have just discovered his fingerprints. Kenny Anderson, also injured after being shot in the groin, put in for compensation. Now he is

Far from dealing with this problem, Scarman is actually proposing that such bans be extended. He argues that whereas marches (whether racist or any other) can at present be banned if there is a danger of "Serious disorder", the law should be changed to allow a ban if there is any danger of "disorder". It is an extension of the power to ban all demonstrations.

Scarman's liberalism has 'credibility' only because there is a wing of the bourgeoisie who are fully prepared for open class warfare, open oppression and the ready use of the forces of the state against the working people and particularly against the most oppressed. Scarman however, proposes a combination. He wants some (vague) changes in conditions, institutionalised touting, 'consultation', a black traitor class with a stake in the system and a more publicly accepted police force. But he recognises that this will not prevent the development of revolutionary extra-parliamentary struggle. So Scarman wants the maintenance of the SPG, use of swamp police tactics (at the right time), more training in the handling of 'disturbances', more power to ban all political protests, and a 'militarised' force equipped with armoured cars, CS gas and rubber bullets. In the last resort the police must be accountable only to itself. Scarman's iron fist may be wearing a pretty tatty velvet glove, but it is an iron fist every bit as strong as that of the loudest mouthpiece of the 'hang-em and flog-em' brigade.

being charged with being a ring leader of the uprising. Police took away his coat and jeans - doubtless they will 'discover' petrol, just as they 'discovered' Phil's fingerprints.

★ Meanwhile in Manchester James Gittings has learnt at first hand what 'British democracy' is all about. During the July uprising James was walking through Moss Side. He stopped to watch events and was stood on a grass verge for a couple of hours, where he got talking to two women from the neighbouring housing estate. After a couple of hours (at 2 a.m.) a group of police dashed across to him and he was hit with a truncheon. His face was cut, eye blacked and bruised on the back of the head.

Astonishingly police claimed he had just been somewhere else and thrown a petrol bomb. They said they had chased him to the estate and recognised him, because he was wearing bleached jeans! For the crime of wearing the wrong clothes, James was viciously assaulted. He was then refused bail for 3 months on the grounds that he might produce 'false witnesses' if released. Despite the attempt to prevent him seeking out genuine witnesses, the two women came forward and did speak in his defence. Both had previously been complete strangers.

Despite any look of real evidence and the testimony of his witnesses, James was sent down for 6 years. The Moss Side Defence Committee is campaigning for James Gittings and many other victims of Manchester's police and courts. They can be contacted at:

MSDC, c/o Moss Side Peoples Centre
St. Mary's Street, Moss Side,
Manchester M16. Tel. 061-226-7015

In order to do something about the threat of war the Peace Movement must have a scientific understanding of the forces involved. In the last issue of "Class Struggle" our correspondent traced US crimes in starting the nuclear arms race and the Soviet Union's degeneration from a socialist to an imperialist country. In this second, concluding article we show how the Soviet imperialists have taken the lead in the arms race and deal with some key issues for today's peace movement.

We welcome comments and criticism from our readers.

After some initial preparation the USSR was ready to go on the offensive by the late '60s. In 1968 it not only invaded Czechoslovakia but also expanded its naval forces into the Indian ocean, thus taking the initiative in contention with the USA for the first time. Around this time too it was speedily clawing back the supremacy in nuclear weapons which the US had enjoyed. A new phase was beginning in the arms race, with the Soviet Union acting more and more as the leading element. This arms race swallowed up immense resources, drawn among other things from the imperialist super-profits of the superpowers. This is an international scandal as public opinion in the Third World has many times pointed out. But such is the 'logic' of imperialism.

SOVIET OFFENSIVE

In fact by the end of the 1960s the decade of US-Soviet collaboration in policing the world system had ended. The phase of a yielding and considerate Soviet Union had given way to the rise of an assertive and boisterous would-be world ruler. But crucial to the Soviet strategy was to persuade its rival that there was still a chance of restoring the old collaboration. Beleaguered militarily, economically and politically by the early '70s, United States imperialism could easily be misled into thinking that by giving concessions to its rival, by allowing and even encouraging it to attain 'parity' in military strength, the USSR might be transformed from a dissatisfied superpower into a satisfied one and a new era in the vampires' honeymoon of the two ghastly world predators might begin.

But in fact the parity which the Soviet Union achieved in various fields during this period was only used to prepare the ground for further expansion.

DETENTE

Negotiations over nuclear arms went hand in hand with the development of so-called 'detente' as a wider political phenomenon. The strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) showed that the two sides spoke the same strategic language; in these circumstances the Soviet Union was able to realise its scheme for a European Conference on Security and Co-operation (the Helsinki Conference, 1975) a major ideological-political anaesthetic.

The SALT 1 Treaty (1972) was publicised by the superpowers as a major achievement, showing that the fate of the world could safely be left in

their hands. In fact, it inaugurated a period of unprecedented development in the arms race. It is not commonly realised that, curiously enough, the main provision of SALT 1 was to limit defensive weapons systems. The ballistic missile had given rise to its opposite, the anti-ballistic system (ABM). Typically, the ABM intercepts the missiles on its trajectory and detonates it before it re-enters the earth's atmosphere.

These defensive systems, if they became 'too' effective, might remove the situation of mutually assured destruction (MAD) and disturb the 'balance of terror'. So they had to be limited. Does this sound like some appalling updated Alice in Wonderland? This is simply the kind of 'reasoning' we have to thank the superpowers for. Is it surprising that we call for them to be targetted as the enemy of the peoples?

From quite early on in the nuclear arms race, the idea had been put forward that, instead of staging an all-out attack on the enemy's territory, there would be the option of undertaking a 'lower level' of nuclear action. This could be seen in two ways: on the one hand it could be used as part of an actual battle situation, hence the idea of tactical nuclear weapons. On the other hand, this 'lower level' action could be used to signal that there was a danger of 'escalating' - to use a term which was originally coined as part of nuclear-weapons jargon - to a higher level of confrontation. These two notions are in practice usually confused. While the Third World has borne much of the brunt of the superpowers' struggles for influence, a threat hangs over Europe of being used as a tactical-nuclear battle field, and/or as a testing ground for an elaborate game of bluff where the superpowers try out how far they can go without sustaining strategic nuclear attacks on their own territory.

SUPERPOWER BALANCE

Before discussing the present form taken by this threat to Europe, we have to see how the overall balance between the superpowers has developed. The cut and thrust of competition between the superpowers is continually giving rise to new elements in the arms race. One of the most important of the last few years is the introduction of the multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV) whereby a ballistic missile divides itself up into several separate warheads before re-entering the atmosphere. This has the advantage of being more difficult to counter attack with ABM, but its main advantage is that the deployment of 'mirved' missiles is difficult to observe or monitor; the superpowers can count one another's rocket silos, but cannot easily tell which rockets are 'mirved'.

So, the outstanding feature during the past decade, precisely during the period of so-called strategic arms limitation, has been the massive increase in the destructive potential of the super-powers' nuclear arsenals, through introducing MIRVs without greatly increasing the number of rockets.

The Vladivostok agreement (1974) limited the number of vectors (carriers of warheads) but the 'mirving' went ahead full blast: from 1972-79 the number of US warheads rose from 7000 to 20 - 30,000 and in 1972-78 the number of Soviet warheads rose from 2600 to 17 - 26,000.

For a time, a certain balance was maintained between the larger size of the Soviet missiles and the greater technical sophistication of the American ones; but now, by mirving its large missiles, the Soviet Union has tipped the balance in its favour. In 1973-75 the Soviet Union introduced three new types of Intercontinental Ballistic missiles (ICBM), (SS19, SS18, and SS17). All these can be mirved and the SS18 can carry 8-10 separate warheads. It takes time to develop a new missile system, and this clearly shows a strategic decision by the Soviet rulers to go onto the offensive, which must have been taken in the latter part of the '60s.

The USA by contrast did not introduce a single new ICBM during the 70s and its next development, the missile MX, is not due till the latter part of the present decade. This missile will be mirved, and also displaceable (that is, not tied to a fixed launching site which could be kept on permanent target by the adversary). But the Soviet SS20s for example, trained on Europe, already have both these features.

SPACE INVADERS

The introduction of mirved and displaceable missiles has led to the superpowers introducing much more sophisticated surveillance and control systems while at the same time trying to disrupt the adversary's systems. Hence one of the most striking developments of recent years, the militarisation of outer space, in defiance of international conventions which the superpowers claim to subscribe to. Both sides have large numbers of satellites to control their own weapons and spy on the other side, and are now feverishly working on killer satellites which can destroy the adversary's control systems at the crucial moment. They are cheerfully mustering forces for a terrible Space Invaders game just outside the earth's atmosphere. Here too, the Soviet Union now holds the initiative: SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) figures show that the number of its satellite launches, including those for openly military purposes, greatly exceed those of the USA during last year.

CRUISE MISSILES

Another important recent development has been the cruise missile. In essence the cruise missile is really a pilotless plane, like the V1 developed by Nazi Germany in the later stage of World War II. This seemed to be rendered obsolete by the development of the ballistic missile, but an important technological breakthrough was provided by modern computers - the terrain contour matching system (TERCOM) enables the cruise to hug the contours of the landscape while flying only a few metres above the ground, rendering it extremely difficult to intercept. The Soviet Union was the first to

NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

experiment with such a missile, but for a while both superpowers seemed content with ballistic missiles.

The reason for the change was the American reaction to the Soviet advance in modernisation of its strategic missiles: the USA planned to hit back by constructing a new bomber, the B1, for an initial outlay of \$100,000,000,000 (just to give an idea of the cost of modern weapons systems, and the kind of money the Soviet Union must have ploughed into modernising their systems). Carter cancelled this in 1977, and decided on a relatively cheaper alternative: instead of a new bomber they would turn the existing B52 into a missile-carrying plane by equipping it with Cruise.

SS20s AND 'ZERO OPTIONS'

At present the Soviet Union has medium range missiles deployed in Europe (the SS20s) and the USA is planning to introduce them (the cruise and Pershing II). The distinction between medium-range missiles and ICBM is not very precise. The SS20 for example is essentially two stages out of the three-stage SS16 ICBM; the large number of Soviet missiles described as ICBM could easily be trained on Europe. But there remains a real and important difference between the American and Soviet Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBMs). It is quite simply that the American MRBMs target the Soviet Union in exactly the same way as its ICBMs and could thus be regarded as a forward-based contingent of its strategic strike force; but in the case of the Soviet Union its ICBMs are directed against one target (the USA) and its MRBMs against a different target - against Europe. Thus from the American point of view it isn't really a crucial question whether some of its missiles directed against the Soviet Union are actually stationed in Europe or not. The main reason for proposing to station these missiles in Europe is precisely as a bargaining counter enabling it to put forward the 'zero option' proposal. The Soviet Union however is very unlikely to accept this proposal, because its medium-range missiles fulfill a distinct purpose in its strategy: as part of a carefully worked-out overall plan to browbeat Europe into submission. In effect, the Kremlin leadership hope that if it were to threaten western Europe with its MRBM, the USA would still hesitate before using its own European-based intermediate range systems against Soviet targets, because the Soviet Union would still retain the option of hitting American targets with its ICBM.

In any case the 'zero option' is not a reliable safeguard for Europe because even were the USSR to scrap all its MRBM west of the Urals it could still threaten western Europe just as easily from the eastern part of its territory. As for Brezhnev's hint at a proposal to remove a few missiles from European USSR, that would have no concrete effect whatever. In any case there are some obsolete SS5s waiting to be phased out.

WHAT IS SOVIET STRATEGY

What then is the Soviet strategy? It should not be thought that they are eager to unleash nuclear war. The purpose is rather to use the threat of nuclear war in order to attain their goals by other means. This threat could be used to deter resistance to a conventional military attack; even a conventional attack would not necessarily be used if they could subdue Europe by political and ideological means. So the nuclear, conventional and political-ideological aspects of the Soviet offensive are all interconnected. Probably we can say that the conventional military threat is the key aspect it provides the muscle behind the political pressure, and it is the aspect of strategy which they are constantly testing out and refining, from Czechoslovakia to Afghanistan. According to 1979 figures, every day the Soviet Union produces 7 medium and heavy tanks and 3 military aircraft at this rate the whole of its heavy armament will have been completely modernised by 1985.

THE NEUTRON BOMB

It is in this context that we have to see the growing threat of a theatre nuclear war. This has many aspects, but a particularly telling example is the neutron bomb planned by the US. This is often referred to as the bomb which kills people and leaves objects intact. Certainly, its introduction forms another episode in the catalogue of crimes of imperialism. From a military point of view, however, the main significance of the reduction of blast effects in the neutron bomb is to increase the possibility of using it in an actual battle situation, in close proximity to friendly troops.

The whole essence of American strategy, which imposes itself upon NATO as a whole, is to make a first use of nuclear weapons against a Soviet armoured assault on Europe. Reagan admitted this and then tried to deny he said it, but in fact this is elementary and obvious.

THE MAIN DANGER - SOVIET EXPANSIONISM!

However, while we condemn the notion of the first use of nuclear weapons - and the neutron bomb which concretely expresses this - we must never forget that these American policies are a response to a real Soviet threat. From Europe's point of view, there is no doubt where the main danger lies - Soviet expansionism. The Russians provide the threat - that is the main thing. The Americans propose a response to that threat which we happen strongly to disagree with.

In answer to the concerted nuclear, conventional and political strategy of the Soviet social-imperialists, we urgently struggle for a concerted response: effective civil defence preparations to protect the people against nuclear blackmail; preparations for people's war in defence against a Soviet conventional attack; and a thorough political exposure of just what the Soviet social-imperialists are up to.



Soviet magazine shows 'their coastal invasion plans.'

NEW TSAR'S ROYAL WELCOME



Brezhnev met substantial opposition on his recent visit to West Germany. A demonstration organised by the Christian Democratic Party mobilised 50,000 to demand, "Russians Out of Afghanistan" and "Brezhnev, Hands off Poland".

The Green Party, which is very active in the peace movement, organised a separate protest of 12,000. Taking part were a number of Marxist-Leninist organisations and revolutionary organisations from the third world, including many Turkish workers.

The most militant demonstration was held by Afghan patriots who denounced the occupation of their country. In spite of police instructions to many of them to stay at home, more than 5,000 demonstrated in Bonn and two other cities.

Photo shows an Afghan contingent on the Green Party march.

Sweeping Victory for Scargill

At the beginning of December, Arthur Scargill won a resounding victory in the Presidential election of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Scargill's victory is an important defeat for the most reactionary section of the union leadership, which has in a number of unions set out to stifle any tendency to militant action. The type of 'leadership' shown by the likes of Duffy and Chappel in the Engineering and Electrical Unions has now been defeated in the NUM with Scargill replacing Gormley. Trade Unionists in many industries who have continuously had to fight a battle on two fronts - one with the bosses, and one with a union leadership which is looking for any opportunities to stab the workers in the back and sell-out - will be welcoming Scargill's

victory, and they are right to do so.

If Scargill continues his past practices, then he will be more democratic, more prepared to mobilise the miners in their own struggles and more prepared to mobilise support and show solidarity with other workers engaged in struggle. This will give a greater opportunity to develop the class struggle, both on immediate issues and for socialism

BY NO MEANS ALL ROSES

But no one should be blind to his weaknesses and certainly not to the most important questions of political direction. Scargill recently refused to back the blacking of the products of Lawrence Scott and its associated companies in the mines, despite the intense and bitter

struggles of the workers in Manchester against the closure of the factory there. Why? Because Duffy won't make the strike official. But Scargill's limitations in the field of Trade Union struggle are more apparent in the political arena.

Scargill is closely linked with Benn, who in fact spoke for Scargill at rallies during the election. The labour 'left' line does nothing to break with reformist politics which tie the working class to British imperialism. On the contrary - it promotes those politics. Until that link is broken, in both ideas and activities, our class is hamstrung as far as making any substantial gain is concerned. The Labour 'left' by not challenging imperialism, is failing to deal with the cause of an economic crisis that is very real, not just a product of Tory policies. Economic militancy is important, but in itself it offers no solution to the problems of the working people of Britain.

FORD WORKERS READY TO FIGHT

Below we print two articles sent in by correspondents inside the two biggest Ford plants in Britain. Despite the fact that they are a little dated, due to the necessity of printing this issue early because of the Christmas holiday, we still feel they make a number of important points.

(Incidentally, have you considered becoming a regular Class Struggle Correspondent for your work place, community, or in your area of political activity?)

From our Ford-Halewood Correspondent
Sunday 6th December

At a mass meeting in a local football ground, workers from the Body and Assembly Plants at Halewood (totalling 10,000 workers) voted almost unanimously for an all-out strike, to begin after the Christmas shutdown. This decisive rejection of Ford's "final offer" reflected the growing enthusiasm for an all-out strike, once the suggestion had been made to postpone any action till after Christmas. Previously, with Ron Todd threatening to call for immediate action in late November, many workers at Halewood would not have wanted to accept Ford's offer, but neither would they have supported a prolonged strike so soon before Christmas.

For several months now, Halewood workers have been feeling the effects of successive years' wage-cuts. So the claim for £20, whilst it might sound a lot, is felt by many to be fully justified as it would only restore living standards to the level of a couple of years ago. Most workers depend completely on the night-shift wage (with a take-home of about £90) as the day-rate (about £70 take-home) is so low.

But even so, Ford's 7½% offer might well have satisfied many who wanted to avoid the financial hardship of a long strike, if it wasn't for the conditions demanded by the company. It is these conditions which has really got the backs up of many here. Halewood workers are well used to never-ending battles with Ford to resist speed-ups, cuts in manning levels and increased workloads. In fact, such struggles are part of everyday life here. So it is becoming clearly understood that to accept them in exchange for a wage-rise would write off years

of struggle, at a stroke!

The more aware sections of the workforce have only one reservation with the struggle so far this year. And that is a reflection of a deep mistrust of the top union leadership. It would not be the first time if they cooked up a deal with Fords to accept their conditions, whilst giving the impression that they had been withdrawn.

* * * * *

On the previous day, the Transmission Plant at Halewood (population 1,800) also voted unanimously for the New Year strike. This was despite the fact that the plant has suffered from lay-offs, short-time working and redundancies over the last 18 months through recession.

Furthermore, plant is now suspicious of the possibility of closure, following Fords decision to make the new 5 speed gearbox (for "Toni" and Escort cars) only at the Bordeaux Plant, France.

(From our Ford-Dagenham
Correspondent)

Throughout the Dagenham estate, as at all other Ford plants without exception, rejection of management's "offer" has been almost unanimous. The extent of the opposition to Ford's terms, and the support for a strike in the new year, has surprised every one concerned.

On the face of it Dagenhams like the other plants have rallied solidly and confidently behind Ron Todd and the union leadership. But it's more complicated than that. The decision to strike is an expression of the mounting resentment and bitter hostility to management - totally justified, but spontaneous and a little desperate too. It does not

represent any conviction that the strike will necessarily succeed, and certainly no confidence that the leadership is willing or able to lead the strike to victory.

UNION SITTING BACK

Preparations for an effective strike have been and are being systematically avoided by the union leadership. For example, management is in the process of a massive re-organisation of the Dagenham PTA (Paint, Trim and Assembly) ready for the launch of the new car - the Toni - in the spring of 1982. The union leadership has decided that pickets will allow contractors, but not materials into the plant during the strike, presumably to avoid any big confrontation. This is a joke. All the materials the contractors need to do the job are being stockpiled now. If we want to really put pressure on the company, it is essential to stop the contractors entering the plant.

Furthermore the union leadership have no plans to organise moral-boosting meetings or strong pickets. They are content to leave workers sitting it out at home, ever more broke and liable to demoralisation as the initial outburst of enthusiasm begins to wain.

These are some of the real immediate problems that we will have to be dealing with, starting now, despite and increasingly against the union leadership if the unity of the workforce is to be strengthened in the course of the strike, to make it effective.

"The Lessons of the 1978 Strike." This pamphlet was written shortly after the defeat of the last national strike at the end of 1978. Though produced with a mind to the immediate situation of defeat, it contains many valuable lessons with regard to future struggles. It is available from New Era Books - price 10p + 12p p&p.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

SEYCHELLES: An attempt by racist white mercenaries to overthrow the anti-imperialist government of the Indian Ocean state of Seychelles was defeated by the Seychellois armed forces on November 25. A number of the mercenaries were killed and others captured. They are to be placed on trial. 44 others escaped to South Africa - from whence they had come - by hijacking an Air India plane. In the face of demands for extradition of the mercenaries, the South African racist authorities have responded by releasing 39 without charges and releasing 5 on bail, after having charged them on minor counts. The South African authorities are trying to disguise their complicity in this latest act of aggression against independent Africa. Many of the mercenaries were former members of the South African armed forces and a number are still serving members or reservists.

The present Seychelles government came to power in 1977 and has consistently supported the non-aligned movement and the national liberation movements in Southern Africa. It has won support in the United Nations for the decolonisation of the Chagos Islands (the most well known being the military base, Diego Garcia) which are still held by British imperialism. London is a haven for right wing Seychellois exiles who dream of turning it back into a tropical paradise for the imperialists and hell-hole for the people. They are, of course, allowed to carry on their subversive activities without any hindrance from the British police or state.

The Seychelles is a small country, but it is determined to protect its independence and freedom. South African aggression has been condemned by the Organisation of African Unity, a number of African states and the African National Congress (South Africa).

ROMANIA: A broad mass movement against the war preparations of the two superpowers is developing in Romania. 300,000 people demonstrated in the capital, Bucharest, on December 5. Speaking at the rally, Romanian President, Nicolae Ceausescu, appealed to the European peoples to stay the hands of nuclear war-mongers. He said, "It lies within the power of the European nations that united we can avoid the danger threatening us ... Whoever dares to launch a nuclear war cannot get away with the righteous verdict passed down by the people of various countries." He called for the dissolution of military blocs, an end to deployment of new weapons systems and for disarmament.

Late in November, Ceausescu, publicly called on the Soviet Union to withdraw its nuclear missiles from Europe and urged the United States not to deploy its Pershing 11 and Cruise missiles in Europe.

Romania is a member of the Warsaw Pact but does not send its troops to the Pact's manoeuvres.

It does not allow any foreign troops on its territory.

THAILAND: There has recently been an upsurge in the armed struggle being waged by the Thai Peoples Liberation Army (TPLA), which is led by the Communist Party of Thailand. This comes hard on the heels of Thai government claims that it had wiped out the revolutionaries. In the last week of November and first week of December the TPLA killed over 40 government troops, and wounded hundreds more. These attacks were concentrated in the south of the country. The Thai authorities reacted by launching a major offensive which they said would continue until they had wiped out the people who two weeks previously they claimed that they had wiped out! The government operation included saturation bombing of villages suspected of being friendly to the guerrillas.

An American reporter has recently visited a liberated area in the north of Thailand. He reports on the social reforms that have been carried out by the revolutionaries, such as the breaking down of old feudal traditions. This has enabled Thai women to play a full part in the life of the liberated areas, the Communist Party and the Peoples Army. One peasant woman told the reporter:

"Women were looked down upon and abused in the old order. They were completely subject to their husbands who could freely beat them. After being mobilised by the Party, women now speak out loudly against all forms of mistreatment. We have the right to make decisions about family life and we take part in politics and in the armed resistance. We are no longer afraid of men."

ETHIOPIA: According to recently available information, one out of every fifteen people in Ethiopia is in prison. It is very difficult today to find an Ethiopian family that does not have at least one family member in prison. A number of new prisons are being built by the Cubans, complete with special torture cells, in a "generous" act of "socialist" aid.

The Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) which is leading a struggle for national self determination of one of the oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia, is scoring important successes in its armed struggle. It has recently been striking at military and political targets in other parts of Ethiopia. Some 80% of Tigray has been liberated by the TPLF, which is working to build an alliance of all revolutionary organisations in Ethiopia.

OMAN: The reactionary regime in Oman recently played host to

American troops as part of "Operation Bright Star". Oman is increasingly important to the imperialists. In the words of the "Financial Times" it is, "the West's most effective military ally in the Arabian peninsula." In order to deflect opposition the Sandhurst-trained ruler is promoting a type of phoney "democratisation" by establishing a consultative Council. The members will be appointed not elected and will not be able to legislate. Meanwhile the Chief of Staff and Army, Navy and Air Force Commanders all remain British officers. In a statement, the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) expressed its belief that the people would not be fooled by the new council and the struggle would continue.

"We pledge to our martyrs who irrigated with their blood our beloved land that we are going ahead with the revolution ... until Oman gets its freedom, independence and national sovereignty."

An SAS Sergeant who took part in the raid on the Iranian Embassy in London has been killed in Oman.

In a statement the British Ministry of Defence said that he died in a parachute accident. We wonder ...

AFGHANISTAN: The Soviet puppet regime in Afghanistan is committing provocative acts of aggression against Pakistan. Raids by Afghan Helicopter gunships have caused numerous casualties amongst Pakistani civilians. Whole areas have been mined and many victims have lost hands and feet. Their wounds are slow to heal. Many of the mines are disguised as toys and so many of the worst injuries have been inflicted on little children. The Pakistani press has pointed out that this is part of a Soviet tactic to put pressure on Pakistan so that it will give up its support for the Afghan peoples struggle. Sayed Ahmed Gailani, President of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan recently showed a press conference in France, remnants of napalm and phosphorous bombs that have been used against his people in what he called a "scorched-earth policy".

MAURITIUS: The British High Commissioner in Mauritius recently admitted that he had been working for MI6 as a senior intelligence officer, after being seconded from the northern Ireland office. Later, before going to Mauritius he was head of the "Overseas Information Office" set up by the Foreign Office in 1947. His most recent job there was to supervise British propaganda abroad against the Irish hunger strikers. These admissions were forced out of "our man in Port Louis" by demonstrators from the Mauritius Militant Movement (MMM). The MMM has been the victim of covert operations leading to assassinations of members and arrests of its MPs. They suspect that this dirty trickster and his friends are behind it.

REBEL DAUGHTER HAS HER FINAL SAY

Review of "We shall Rise again" by Nora Connolly O'Brien

Contributed

In this book, Nora Connolly O'Brien, at the age of 88, provides a fresh, first-hand record of the Easter uprising of 1916 and the preparations for it. She discusses the part played in the uprising by her father, James Connolly, and gives a fresh account of her final meetings with him before his execution for leading the insurrection in Dublin. She related memories of her subsequent sixty-five years of activity in the republican cause, as a propagandist in the US after the uprising, as Acting Paymaster-General of the IRA in 1923, as Senator in the Dail, as a prisoner, as a socialist and as a well loved speaker and public figure in Ireland and in the US. She also puts forward her views on socialism, women in Ireland's fight, rebel songs and verse, Ireland and the world outside and Ireland's fight today.

Tragically, Nora Connolly O'Brien died in June 1981, just as this book was going to press.

LEGITIMACY OF THE 26-COUNTY STATE

The key to Nora's great significance in Irish politics lay in the historical significance of the Easter uprising itself. For the uprising, far from being confined in its importance to the actual week of fighting itself, has effectively set the tone for Ireland's political history ever since.

The Proclamation of the Republic of a united Ireland that was issued by the Republican leaders of 1916 is the single most important Irish constitutional document.

Nora was universally known to have been very close to her father throughout the preparations for the rising. He was one of the drafters of Proclamation, and she was the last to discuss with him the fate of the Republic it proclaimed. Her endorsement of the legitimacy of the Dublin-based state has consequently been dearly sought-after by Dublin's rulers.

Nora Connolly disagreed with the long-standing policy of abstentionism followed by the Republican Movement. Under this policy, Republicans occasionally stood as candidates for one or other of the two Irish parliaments established by Britain's neo-colonial partition settlement, but only as a propaganda tactic, and on the basis that they would not actually take their seats if elected. In the 1950s, De Valera persuaded her to sit in the Dublin Senate, thus helping give some credence to De Valera's government's claim to be the upholder of the Republic declared in 1916. However, her continued anti-partitionism eventually proved an embarrassment and she was dropped by Lynch in the 1960s. She nevertheless continued to the end to advocate that Sinn Fein should not only campaign for seats in the Dail, but should actually sit on it. This was a sharp difference which always remained between her and Sinn Fein, though she retained cordial relations both with Sinn Fein and with the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

ENDORSEMENT OF TODAY'S REPUBLICAN STRUGGLE

With the resumption of the armed struggle against partition by the Provisional IRA at the beginning of the 1970s, Republicans were faced with various options:

- * Were they to support the IRA's armed struggle?
- * Were they, like the Dublin government, to oppose it while at the same time continuing nominally to uphold Irish unity?
- * Were they, like the 'Official IRA' to abandon the armed struggle against partition as a nationalist deviation from 'pure socialist' ideals?

Right from the start, Nora left no doubt at all where her sympathies lay. In a letter to the Irish Times in July 1971 she stated: "I believe that the people who are fighting the British in the North are just a continuation of the fight that we fought in our days ... I am with the people of the North in their fight and believe they are justified in it."

As for the IRA, she made it plain to the end of her days that she felt herself quite simply to be still part of it. Nor did she leave any doubt that by the IRA she meant the Provisionals. ("As for the Officials ... I never had anything to do with them and I never will have anything to do with them")

During the 1970s it began to appear as though Nora's active opposition to the partition of Ireland was a feature of the Irish political scene that was just never going to end. Her frail but dignified form, topped with a broad-brimmed black hat worn slightly cocked to one side, became a familiar sight at Republican gatherings, as did the rousing speeches which she continued to deliver right up to the end of 1980.

EMBARRASSMENT TO DUBLIN RULERS

Even in death, Nora bequeathed further embarrassment to the Dublin political establishment. As a Republican commentator wryly observed:

"On her death, Free State Premier Charles Haughey, seeking like so many others the implied imprimatur of James Connolly, announced that he would be attending her funeral.

"However, on Friday it was learned that in her will she had requested a Republican funeral and this was complied with, being presided over by Sean Fitzpatrick and with Sinn Fein Vice-President Daithi O'Conail to give the oration.

"In the event, Haughey ducked out." (Article by Kevin Burke in An Phoblacht/Republican News, June 27 1981)

Lynch and some other Fianna Fail and Fine Gael dignitaries attended the funeral mass but slid off after it, rather than attend the burial ceremony.

Thus unencumbered, Daithi O'Conail delivered his graveside oration, in which he recalled Nora's endorsement of the present Republican

struggle and told of how, right down to her last days, she had expressed her concern for the hunger strikers.

COMMUNISM

Nora's account of her experiences with the Irish communists in the 1930s, though unfortunately very brief, is an illustration of why it is that so many Irish Republicans have at one time or other taken an anti-communist standpoint. For then, as in the 1960s, the word 'communist' was almost exclusively associated with meddlesome British lefties who reckoned they knew a lot more about Ireland's fight than the Irish themselves. In Nora's day, it was Willie Gallacher; in the 1960s it was even worse elements - the Stickies (the 'Officials') such as Thomas Johnstone and Co. With such bad eggs claiming the name of 'comm st', it is not surprising that Nora (like the Provisional leadership when they first broke with the Stickies) called a plague on communism and all its works.

However, though her experiences led her to sustain to the last an opposition to what she considered communism, it is nevertheless clear from her book that it was Russia's misdeeds that she had in mind. By contrast, she had a warm regard for Poland, and as for China, she regarded it as having "more the type of socialist freedom that my father fought for."

Nora explains how she identified with the Chinese revolution from the beginning. "I have loved China all my life. It is the one place I could have wanted to live in, apart from Ireland." Nora disagreed with the Cultural Revolution. "It seemed more like they had gone mad than that they were keeping to the tenets that Mao had developed for them." But Nora expressed her confidence in the future of China. "Now China has turned to the right way, I think."

Her view on communism as such, therefore, though couched in anti-communist terms, can be seen as having more in common with anti-revisionism than real anti-communism. The overlap of her views with those of the anti-revisionist movement is especially striking in her support for the nationalist resistance in Afghanistan, which she sees as "very much like our flying columns when we beat the Black and Tans". In this connection, she recalls a statement by her father that, "the internationalism of the future will be based upon the free federation of free peoples and cannot be realised through the subjugation of the smaller by the larger political unit".

"FINE BOOK"

As Danny Morrison wrote in a review in An Phoblacht/Republican News, "We shall rise again" is an easily read and fine book of the rich commentaries of an honoured veteran. Recommended."

Available from New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Rd., London, N.4. Price £1.95 + 20p postage. Bulk terms available. Or from the publishers: Mosquito Press, 27A Old Gloucester St., London, WC1N 3XX.

TROTSKYISM AGAINST REVOLUTION

The IRA's military struggle against British imperialism forces revolutionaries in Britain to take a stand. They can be with the oppressed in their struggle against imperialism, or they can look down, criticise and so, in effect, stand with the oppressor. With the Irish war having been extended to Britain, the Trotskyites have finally nailed their colours to the Union Jack.

The paper "Newline" of the so-called "Workers Revolutionary Party" (WRP) goes so far as to say that, "The greatest enemy of the IRA today is not the British Army or the Loyalist extremists. It is ... its middle-class leaders." "Newline" was forced into this vile abuse by the IRA execution of Unionist MP Robert Bradford.

Bradford was an arch-fascist and darling of Loyalist terrorists. During the "no-wash" protest in the H-Blocks he called for people to, "pray for a long hot summer and pray that typhoid breaks out in the H-Blocks". He was euphoric over the deaths of the hunger strikers. In claiming responsibility for the execution of Bradford the IRA said,

"Armchair generals who whip up anti-nationalist murder gangs, responsible in the past for the assassination of ordinary civilians as well as the deaths of political activists like Miriam Daly, John Turfily, Noel Little and Ronnie Bunting, cannot expect to remain forever immune from the effects of their evil work."

The execution of Bradford - an example of just revolutionary violence by the oppressed - is slandered by "Newline" as "murder".

In Ireland, the central question is the national question. For so long as the Irish people are denied their basic democratic right to run their own affairs it is impossible to make real progress in the fight for socialism. The winning of national independence is the prerequisite for socialist advance in Ireland. But for the WRP the central questions are, "jobs, inflation, homelessness and poor housing". These can apparently be resolved by ignoring the force that sustains them: British occupation and the partition settlement.

The WRP attacks the IRA for not uniting with Protestant workers on "class questions". It says that this is because of the IRA's "religious sectarianism". This is a monstrous slander. The IRA has not united with Protestant workers because such unity cannot take place until the imperialist domination - which grants Protestant workers certain marginal privileges - is smashed.

As a leading spokesman for Sinn Fein commented recently, "After partition in 1921, the ordinary Protestant working class interest in the north was tied in with that of the state and that of the union with Britain. And that has remained so to this day ... as long as they are tied to the philosophy of Loyalism, any progressive thinking will

always be subverted." However, in the course of unifying Ireland, the Provisionals hope to see, "a new militancy in the Protestant section of the working class." (Interview with Danny Morrison in *Marxism Today*)

The stand of the WRP is one of classic Trotskyism - idealist preaching from the sidelines and reservation of their venom for those who daily risk their lives in the struggle against imperialism.

PEACEFUL ROAD

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has developed the Trotskyite contempt for the oppressed a stage further. It is easy to support revolutionary violence when it is far away, but confronted with it close to home they run for cover. In doing so the SWP has discovered the "universal applicability" of the revisionist peaceful road to socialism. In case our readers think we are making this up, allow us to quote from "Socialist Worker" of 7 November 1981. In an article "IRA bombs are not the answer", they say:

"And here there IS a contradiction: not between bombing-in-London and 'politics' but between the bombing tactic anywhere and socialist politics.

"While the bombers go about their anti-imperialist business there is a natural tendency for others to say 'leave it to the lads'. And indeed Republican leaders are frequently quite specific about this. Thus political involvement is diminished.

"Moreover, it is fundamental for socialists that strategy is decided democratically by a movement's members and its implementation open to debate.

"But that can't be done with, for example, bombing which of necessity has to be carried out by the smallest possible number operating in the greatest possible secrecy. You cannot have a show of hands at a branch meeting whether to blast Chelsea barracks next week ...

"If it is true - and it is - that internal democracy is necessary for the development of socialist politics, you cannot bomb AND develop socialist politics simultaneously."

"The main reason to oppose the bombs, hasn't to do with the place where they are planted but with the fact that, planted anywhere, they do not speed the socialist victory which alone can end imperialism."

By means of embarrassing grovelling to trendy, New Left ideas about "non-hierarchical forms of organisation" which is actually an expression of the vacillating petit bourgeoisie's hatred and fear of proletarian organisation and proletarian discipline, the SWP have, at a stroke, thrown overboard the lessons learned in blood by the international working class over more than 100 years. We can only be grateful that Lenin did not listen to such advice when the White Armies were advancing on Moscow, and be relieved that the IRA - or for that matter any other national liberation movement - will dismiss this drivel with the contempt it deserves. The danger of this type of article lies in the fact that the British left has traditionally been weak at identifying itself with the revolutionary anti-imperialist traditions of the oppressed and this type of article is the sort that will perpetuate the separation of many progressive people in Britain from the revolutionary forces in Britain and the world.

The communist standpoint - which has been verified in practice again and again - is that the ruling class maintains itself in power by force of arms and in the final analysis can only be removed by taking up arms. The experience of all revolutions has proved this. The destruction of imperialism, which alone can give genuine and lasting democracy to the working people, requires the use of armed force. And genuine and lasting democracy for the working people is far more important than "a show of hands at a branch meeting" of some "revolutionary sect".

Ireland-Solidarity

The oppressed people of the world continue to identify themselves fully with the Irish peoples struggle. Two Belfast Republicans, Tom Hartley and Kieran Nugent (who initiated the blanket protest) have recently returned from a successful trip to Mexico and Nicaragua.

The Mexican tour was at the invitation of the Comité San Patricio Battalion, a solidarity group named after an Irish contingent which fought side by side with Mexican revolutionaries in the 1847 war, an example of the deep rooted links between the Irish struggle and those of the oppressed peoples.

Hartley and Nugent also met representatives of revolutionary organisations from El Salvador, Guatemala, Argentina, Columbia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Peru, and were guests of honour at an international conference of Latin and Central American support groups.

The visit to Nicaragua was at the invitation of the revolutionary government led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. Coming at a time when Nicaragua faces a very real and growing threat of US intervention this was real internationalism. In discussions with leaders of youth, women and trade union organisations they learnt of the intense acclaim for the ten martyred hunger-strikers that is felt in Nicaragua.

PTA - IRISH ORGANISE

"Class Struggle" Correspondent

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, large sections of the Irish community in Britain vigorously took part in the solidarity movement with the Irish peoples struggle. Then, in 1974 the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was introduced. At one stroke all security for Irish people in this country was taken away. Under any pretext, or none, they could be arrested, held without trial and without access to lawyers or the outside world, and deported from the country. When the Irish peoples national liberation war is fought on the streets of Britain, the PTA is used to impose a virtual reign of terror on the Irish community.

(See details in the last issue of "Class Struggle") In Britain today any Irish woman can be labelled a "blonde bomber" and any Irish man can be branded a "cold, callous brutal, subhuman terrorist".

It is therefore to be greatly welcomed that the latest reign of terror is forcing mass organisations of the Irish community to take up a campaign against the PTA.

At a recent meeting, the Federation of Irish Societies unanimously passed an emergency resolution describing the PTA as, "an infringement of democratic and civil liberties" and calling for its repeal. The resolution was submitted by the Haringey Irish Association who noted that those recently arrested in north London had been denied access to a solicitor or independent medical advice.

A speaker from the Brighton Irish Society described the use of the PTA against the Irish community as, "a witch-hunt similar to that carried out against the Jews before the last war". She condemned the "Gestapo-type police raids" on Irish homes and reminded delegates that all of their sons and daughters were potential PTA victims.

Communists in Britain give their full support to the struggle of the Irish people, and indeed all peoples fighting British imperialism, whether in Southern Africa, Oman or Malaya. In doing this we do not think we are doing anything for which we should be particularly proud. We are, firstly, only fulfilling our internationalist duties and secondly creating the necessary preconditions for revolutionary advance in Britain. This is the communist standpoint.

IRELAND SOLIDARITY

There is an organisation called the Labour Committee on Ireland (LCI). Comprised of Labour Party members, it works to force the Labour Party to give support to the Irish peoples struggle against British imperialism. We think that the Labour Party is a fundamentally imperialist party that can never consistently take the stand of the oppressed. In our solidarity work, we do not take the Labour Party as a priority. We seek, mainly, to build support amongst those whose own oppression leads them to have objectively identical interests with the Irish people - national minorities and the ordinary working people.

Councillor John Costello of the Basildon Irish Society called for the Federation to, "throw its full weight behind the campaign. Otherwise democracy is dead in this country."

Two other Haringey speakers respectively described the PTA as "one of the most nefarious and racist acts ever passed in this country" and, "an intolerable strain on the Irish community."

The meeting decided that all member societies should lobby their local MPs in order to demand repeal of the Act.

OPPOSITION ON THE STREETS

Opposition to the PTA was also shown on the streets of north London on Friday 27 November, in a march called to mark the seventh anniversary of the Act. About 400 people marched. They included Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Socialist Party, a number of student unions and Iranian anti-imperialists. Along the route Irish workers and black youths came out of their homes to show their support through cheers, applause and clenched fist salutes. It is indeed to be welcomed, that black youth, the victims of state racist oppression, readily identify with the Irish freedom struggle. Similarly, a demonstration in October called by the South London Hunger Strike Action Committee received support from black youth, who shouted their support for the IRA as the march passed through Brixton.

In the last issue of "Class Struggle" we said that there was an "urgent need for all democratic, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist forces to take up a campaign to expose and smash the PTA". The growing mobilisation of the Irish community organisations around this issue creates the potential for a campaign with a mass, working class base to be built.

LABOUR PARTY PONCES

This does not mean we ignore or dismiss contradictions in the enemy camp. Neither does it mean that we turn our backs on those genuine anti-imperialists who are - mistakenly in our view - members of the Labour Party. Certainly the LCI has done some good work. We do not deny this. But neither do we exaggerate it.

IMPERIALIST PARTY

The Labour Party remains an imperialist party. At its last conference, the Labour Party decided on a "long term" commitment to Irish unity. But this would have to be on the basis of unionist consent. About as useful as calling for apartheid to be abolished when white South Africans desire it. In the meantime, the Labour Party heaps abuse on the armed struggle of the Irish people and refused even to support the five just demands of the prisoners of war. Labour's parliamentary spokesman on Northern Ireland, Don Concannon, even made an obscene visit to the death bed

Manchester Martyrs Remembered

"Class Struggle" Correspondent

The execution of the three Manchester Martyrs - William Allen, Michael Larkin and Michael O'Brien - in 1867 was the subject of a public commemoration in Manchester for the first time in seven years. A march was organised by the Manchester-based Tony Ahearne Sinn Fein Cumann. 300 people took part and the march was led by flag bearers and included two bands from Glasgow.

Having been banned from the cemetery where the Martyrs are buried, by the Catholic Bishop of Salford, the march proceeded to Fenian Arch near Belle Vue. Fenian Arch got its name because it was the spot where two Fenians were rescued from a prison van in 1867. A policeman was shot dead in the attack, and although it was widely accepted that none of the three martyrs fired the shot, they were hanged. Their reported last words inspired the famous rebel song, "God save Ireland".

A group of about 60 Loyalists and Nazis attempted to harass the march. They were not successful and there were no serious incidents.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY JANUARY 26.

Chinese Film - "Spring River Flows East".
3 hour epic on the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese war. 8 pm, Jackson Lane Community Centre, Archway Road, London N 6. Tube: Highgate.

SUNDAY JANUARY 31.

REMEMBER BLOODY SUNDAY.
Assemble 1.30 pm, St. Finbar GAA Social Club, Stony Stanton Road, Coventry.
Organised by Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee.
Transport from London. Details from TOM on 01-267-2004.

SATURDAY MARCH 20.

Conference on ethnic minorities in Britain and China, organised by Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding. To include panel with speakers to be invited from Indian Workers' Association, Bangladesh Workers' Association, Celtic League, Ghana Union, Brixton Black Womens' Group, Chinese Action Group.
Details to be announced.

of Bobby Sands MP to tell him that the Labour Party supported Thatcher on the hunger strike. So, the LCI has no reason to be conceited.

But the LCI has the cheek to appeal to the Irish community in Britain for finance, as though they should be grateful for all their fine work. Their treasurer said, "It would also be heartening if some Irish community organisations would organise fund-raising evenings for us."

This has been followed up with an advertisement in the "Irish Post", the weekly paper of the Irish community in Britain, appealing for funds. They stake their claim by saying that the Labour Party now supports Irish unity and that this is thanks to the LCI.

We do not seek to deny the small amount of useful work done by the LCI. But they should be more modest. Their party is still an imperialist party and their poncing off the Irish community is nothing short of disgraceful.