

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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THE RCL AND CWM HAVE UNITED !

On June 1st, the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain (RCLB) and the Communist Workers' Movement (CWM) united. At the Unity Conference there was a unanimous vote to unify the two organisations. This decision came as a culmination of a long and often exacting process of struggle over a wide range of political and ideological issues. The two organisations have now merged into one, under the name of the RCLB.

A lively spirit of democratic discussion prevailed at the conference, and there was full, free and frank discussion on the way forward for revolutionary work in this country today. The agenda ranged over questions of our organisations' history and organisational structure, and helped to lay groundwork for the development of a programme for revolution in Britain.

Also attending the conference were fraternal

delegates from other progressive organisations including the Birmingham Communist Association, the Bangladesh Workers' Association, the Youth Forces for National Liberation (Jamaica), and Indian comrades. Also in attendance were correspondents from China's Xinhua News Agency.

Messages of support were sent to the conference, among them messages from the Proletarian Party of Iran and the Communist Party of Kampuchea.

Although our unified organisation, the RCLB, is still small, this Unity Conference is a significant step on the road to uniting the genuine revolutionary forces in Britain and we believe that the RCLB will soon become a force to be reckoned with on the left.

For an account of how the RCLB and CWM, came into being, and how they came to unite, see pages 4-5.

RICHARD 'CARTOON' CAMPBELL

DIED IN CUSTODY



HOW?

Contributed by Youth Forces for National Liberation (Jamaica).

On the morning of March 1st 1980 a young black man, Richard Campbell, was arrested by Brixton Police, taken to the Police Station and charged with the attempted burglary of a local sports shop. From there he was taken to Camberwell

Magistrates Court where he was remanded in custody to Lewes Prison on March 3rd.

A visitor to the prison has since repeated that Richard said he had been beaten up at Brixton. Nevertheless he was in reasonably good health at the time. On the 10th, he was returned to Camberwell, where he was convicted and sent to Ashford Remand Centre for social reports. While all this was taking place, the Campbell family was trying to find out what had happened to their son.

PHONE CALL

On March 31st, Mrs Campbell received a phone call informing her that her son had died in custody. This call was made by the Probation Officer allocated to Richard in the past when he had been in trouble for minor offences.

It turned out that this official had seen Richard about ten days before his death, when according to him Richard was "in a bad condition". When asked why no effort had been made to contact the parents he said he didn't know. It is not hard to understand why no contact was made - the prison service is notorious for that.

Before the body could be

identified an autopsy was carried out, despite which no cause of death was given. The identification was only possible because of a broken front tooth. The condition of the body was considered peculiar by all present, being bloated and swollen.

When questioned, the authorities at Ashford said that Richard had assaulted a Prison Officer and a nurse, and had to be restrained when trying to escape. Those familiar with the forces of the state know full well what lies behind words couched in these terms.

CAMPAIGN ORGANISED

The Campbells have since taken legal advice and have employed a pathologist. They have initiated a Richard Campbell Campaign, and have called for a full inquiry and justice. The campaign's committee has organised widespread leafletting and limited fund-raising. £600 has been raised, but this is far from enough.

The committee called a meeting at Brixton Town Hall on June 4th. The meeting was well attended. It heard the committee report on latest developments, one of which was the preliminary coroner's hearing at which the Home Office pathologist stated that the cause of death was "dehydration brought on by clinical schizophrenia." The family pathologist has yet to make his report.

A programme of street meetings was announced, including a demonstration outside Ashford Remand Centre on June 13th at 1.30 pm, and leafletting in Lewisham by the Clock Tower on June 14th at 11am - 2.30pm.

INCORPORATING

NEW AGE

Monthly Paper of the Communist Workers' Movement

From our Postbag

MAY 14th DAY OF ACTION

Dear Comrades,

I was very pleased to see the full coverage **Class Struggle** gave to the nationwide struggle on May 14th, which did something to make up for its complete sectarian neglect of the March 9th demonstration of over 100,000 against the government's "Employment" Bill.

But why did you report only slogans that the RCL agreed with? This isn't based on reality. On some demonstrations on May 14th the only chant was "Maggie, Maggie, Out, Out, Out!". Did CS supporters join in these chants or keep their mouths shut? It would be good to hear different experiences.

I hope there will be editorials and a lot of debate in the letters column about just how much we should unite with and how much we should struggle against Labour Party supporters in the course of the present fight against the government's offensive. This is the most central and immediate problem of the class struggle in Britain today, and I hope CS will tackle it directly.

From,

A London reader

Dear Comrades,

The reports in you last issue on the May 14th Day of Action were really good. It was the first time I was able to read about what really happened. The bosses' press and TV had made a lot of my friends at work who did strike downhearted by their distortions and partial news blackout.

The report from Liverpool was very good, but one criticism I have of it is that when writing of the Labour Party and its CPGB and Trotskyite hangers on, the report failed adequately to dis-

tinguish between hardcore and less committed members. In fact people down here found a lot of unity with Labour Party and CPGB members.

At a rally in Bridport an RCLB comrade spoke from the platform, and was able to put over the importance of learning from workers' international experiences in fighting the capitalists' offensive - for instance in Sweden and France. Also, said the speaker, Labour's record and policies prove it would never serve the working class.

Supporters of **Militant** and other workers were keen to talk about RCLB policies. Such friendly but principled contact on a number of occasions has helped break down a lot of sectarianism.

From,

A Yeovil reader

Dear Comrades,

If you read only the bosses' papers on the 13th, 14th and 15th May, you'd believe that everyone in London fought to get to work on the 14th to show their support for the Government and defend their cuts! The bosses' papers only let us know what they want they want us to believe. In fact the streets of London were empty.

Your last issue showed that **Class Struggle** can provide a real alternative. The reports from round the country really do help build confidence in workers to fight back and stick together, and provide answers and information for the 'doubting Toms'.

From,

A London reader

RACIST SLOGANS

Dear Comrades,

I was very heartened by the report from Middlesbrough about a group who organised them-

selves to rub out a racist slogan in a public place.

It reminded me of 20 years ago in Newcastle when, individually and far less militantly, I went into premises with racist slogans on their street walls and asked them to remove them. As older people will remember, half of the cards advertising rooms and flats used to openly say things like "No blacks need apply". People were hurt and angered by such things but I don't remember anyone getting it together to take direct action against them.

I hope the example of the Middlesbrough group is followed everywhere in Britain!

From,

A London reader

SUB JUDICE = COVER-UP

Dear comrades,

Almost daily now we read about court cases where no mention of the facts of the case is allowed until a judgement is arrived at.

This 'sub judice' ruling means that papers may not present facts, but nevertheless go to great lengths to stress opinions. These opinions over a long period become firmly entrenched in people's minds, so that in the end the truth becomes difficult to get across.

One example is the case of Blair Peach, who was shown to have been legally murdered by the police, yet from conversation at my place of work it is clear that none of the evidence had sunk in, and many people believe contrary to what was proved at the inquest.

Give a dog a bad name and it sticks! 'Sub judice' is a convenient method of suppressing the truth until it is too late.

From,

A London reader.

★ POEM BY COMRADE JOSHI ★ "Spring Thunder over India" ★

Naxalbari, a village in west Bengal's Darjeeling District, North Eastern India, is a great symbol of the people's revolutionary struggle in India. In 1967 an armed struggle erupted there, mobilising the peasants under Marxist-Leninist leadership. Already there was armed struggle in rural areas in Telengana and Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh State in South India. The Naxalbari uprising was followed by a wave of similar uprisings throughout India. Despite vicious repression, the beacon light of Naxalbari still burns today, and will again burst into flame.

Comrade Jagmohan Joshi, late General Secretary of the Indian Workers' Association (GB), whose death occurred one year ago, wrote a poem, entitled "Spring thunder over India", inspired by a report in **Peking Review** on the armed struggle in India. The poem was written in Urdu, and the following is a free translation:-

Light lamps of ghee for joy in every village,
Life becomes as lovely as a dream;
For years our blood has fed our heart's desire,
Now all we longed for lies within our reach.
Out of the darkest centre of the night time,
Soon the light will spread its morning rays.
The depths where only dark has held dominion
Will sparkle with the masses' marching might.
This is the last gasp of cruel oppression's system,
New ways will turn the old world upside-down.
Colours which only flowers took delight in
Will paint the fabric of the lowly thorns:
From my homeland word has travelled with the
morning,
For those existing in an endless autumn
Spring thunders now across the Indian land.

Fords...

RECORD PROFITS AGAIN

By a Class Struggle correspondent

With a great fanfare of publicity, Fords of Britain boasted new record profits - £586 millions. This represents an increase of over 50% on the previous highest profit of two years ago. But let's get one thing clear - that massive profit was not created by the financial wizardry of the Ford bosses. No! It was screwed out of the labour of the 56,000 Ford workers in Britain, sweating it out from shift to shift, 48 weeks each year.

But will those workers get their rightful share? Not on your life! We are supposed to turn a blind eye to the fact that the Ford shareholders in Detroit have received a nice, fat, juicy dividend of £135 millions from that profit.

	1974.....£8.7	millions
Ford of Britain's	1975....£14.1	millions
profits over the	1976...£121.6	millions
last six years show	1977...£246.1	millions
dramatic increase.	1978...£242.0	millions
	1979...£586.0	millions

Are they satisfied? Of course not. Although they made a "substantial profit", Ford of Britain boss Sir Terence Beckett insists it still isn't enough. They need even bigger profits, to invest more into new plant and equipment (more robots), which will do away with more of the workers' jobs.

SLUMP HITS US CAR WORKERS

All things aren't well in the Ford camp, however. Back 'home' in the United States there are big problems. Dearer petrol and fierce competition from Japanese and European cars have made a shrinking market tougher still for the 'big three' (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler). Total new vehicle sales in the US are down 30% so far this year. Ford have reacted by laying off tens of thousands of workers and are closing three plants sacking 15,000 workers. By July, half a million US car workers will be laid off. Ford(US) are expected to make a big loss this year, so £229 millions from Ford of Britain's profits have been 'loaned' to the parent company to provide cash for investment in new models.

The US car slump is recognised as part of a world slump in car sales which will hit this country hard soon. As Sir Terence Beckett himself says, "The fall in vehicle demand already apparent around the world has been slow to hit the British market - but we have to expect a downturn in this country, despite a record first quarter."

"The fall in vehicle demand already apparent around the world has been slow to hit the British market-but we have to expect a downturn in this country despite a record first quarter."

And when the car slump does hit this country, we can be sure that Fords will try to ensure that it's the workers who will pay for it through layoffs and redundancies.

RCLB PRESS FUND APPEAL

The unity of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain and the Communist Workers' Movement gives us many opportunities to advance the revolutionary cause. One of the most immediate and important results will be the development of our revolutionary press. The editorial committees of Class Struggle and New Age have now merged.

Please help us in our work by contributing to our press fund. Address: CS, c/o New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Rd., London N4.

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

THE VICIOUS HEARTLESSNESS OF CAPITALISM was highlighted by the story of how Kay Kelly had her benefit payments cut by £15 by Social Security officials. And what had Kay done to incur the wrath of these state representatives? Cancer-victim Kay had been on a fund-raising trip to Ireland, not only to raise money for cancer research but to 'spread courage and hope' amongst dying cancer victims like herself. This visit Social Security officials interpreted as a 'holiday', and it was for this reason they stopped Kay her £15. The priest who arranged Kay's visit to Ireland slammed the Social Security decision as 'cruel and iniquitous' and said he was 'sickened and disgusted by a system that could do this'.

SOME PAPERWORK FIDDLING by the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) has boosted its Labour Party votes by 250,000 in the last two years. The TGWUs two million members nearly all pay a political levy to the union (currently 32p a year), but because this would give such an embarrassing block vote the union has in the past only passed on half of these members to the Party. Over the last two years Moss Evans has increased this block vote to 1,250,000-four times the number of party members in the constituencies. This amounts to a total of £400,000 p.a., and will have an enormous effect on the internal power struggles in the Labour Party. The union bureaucrats play around with the political levy and party membership to suit themselves. But the real question is: Do the members of the TGWU want to be Labour Party members and boost its funds by £400,000? Do we really support the Party which brought in the 'Social Contract', strengthened the racist immigration laws, and allowed inflation to slash our standard of living? The Labour Party in power was the best bosses' party. Do we really want to pay Labour to attack us?

IF WORKERS GET PAY RISES it results in 'massive inflation'; when the bosses get pay rises it's simply 'just remuneration' for their 'hard work and efforts'. This is the so-called logic behind Thatcher and Co's announcement of the huge pay rises being awarded to state industry chairmen and top civil servants. For example, the salary of state industry boss Sir Dennis Rooke, chairman of British Gas, who is now on £44,000 a year, could go up by an incredible £200 a week more! (How many workers even earn £200 a week?) Meanwhile the nurses have been offered a miserable 14% increase. That's how much the state thinks health care for the working class is worth!

AN ENLIGHTENING SPEECH was made last week by Frank Chapple, General Secretary of the 420,000 strong Electricians' Union. His theme was a new era of "co-operation between government and trade unions". And his line on the May 14th action was, "It was a failure from the start. It would have been a failure for the country even if it had succeeded." In putting forward this rubbish about the bosses' government and the workers' unions being able to work together for the good of the country, Chapple is trying to cover up a fact known to all workers: that they do the work and the bosses get the profits. "For the country" means "For the ruling class" and that includes such snakes as Chapple. Chapple finished his speech by saying, "The Government must push the boat out and the TUC General Council must be big enough to share the rowing." Careful lads: you're not used to hard work like that!

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG WOMEN is now growing twice as fast as among men - an increase of 56,000 in the twelve months to March 1980 compared to an increase of 20,000 for men.

THE WORKING CLASS NEEDS ITS OWN PARTY

It doesn't matter where you work or where you live. All around you are faced with the reality of economic crisis. Factories are being closed down, workers laid off, some areas suffer up to 50% unemployment. Rents are going up, mortgages too. Inevitably there is struggle—class struggle. But the spontaneous reaction to exploitation and increasing attacks on our living standards is not enough. It is good, but not enough.

The British imperialists, who oppress the people of Ireland, Azania, Malaya and many other countries also oppress the people of those countries who have settled in Britain. The attacks on these national minorities are increasing. So is the resistance.

At the same time the struggle between the two superpowers for world domination is sharpening as the Soviet Union steps up its aggression and expansion. A world war is brewing. Meanwhile the people and countries of the third world are carrying their great

struggle for independence forward.

We can react spontaneously to all these things. We can oppose oppression and exploitation, but we need more. We need conscious struggle. We need to have a clear understanding of all the main issues and of how they relate to each other. We need a programme. Just as vital we need organisation.

In other words we need a Party – a Party of our class. And it is we the workers and working people of Britain who must build our own Party. It is we who must analyse, who must develop our strategy and tactics, who must learn from the history of the international working class and apply the lessons to our conditions today. It is we who must organise ourselves. No one else can do it for us. We must build our own Party.

The unity of the RCLB and the CWM is an important step in that direction.

How we united

There is no way that the RCLB and the CWM could have united without one fundamental factor. We both understood that it was essential for revolutionary communists to unite and to work together, and we strongly wanted to unite. Without that basic and real desire—not just empty words about unity—it would have been impossible.

STRUGGLE FOR UNITY

But that desire was not enough in itself. Our two organisations had different backgrounds, different methods of organisation, different styles of work, and most importantly different political positions on some questions. We also had important differences over what mass work we should be doing. If we had united without solving these differences, we should soon have split again. So what did we do? We struggled over the important ones. Often that struggle was quite sharp, but it was always based on our desire for unity and carried out with the aim of learning from each other.

In April 1977 a unity committee had been established between the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and the CWM. When the RCLB was founded – after the CFB(ML) united with the Communist Unity Association (Marxist Leninist), the Unity Committee continued with representatives of the RCLB and the CWM.

At the same time the RCLB and the CWM co-operated in some practical struggles.

CONCENTRATE ON MAIN ISSUES

By the second half of 1979 both organisations had developed through learning from their own experience and through the struggle for unity. At that time we were able to isolate just three main questions where important differences still existed

between us, and we decided to concentrate just on these. They were on Ireland, Democratic Centralism and style of work. At the same time joint practical work was developing further. We were working together, organising or taking part in a joint contingent on demonstrations; we organised public meetings and produced joint leaflets. This was very useful in getting us all thinking on the same wavelength about things.

As we thrashed out the three main issues that still divided us, we learnt a great deal from each other and reached a common understanding of these questions that was better than either organisation had managed on its own.



INTEGRATING THE ORGANISATIONS

By January 1st 1980 we were able to publicly state that no fundamental differences existed between the two organisations that should keep us apart. We still did not agree on absolutely everything, but the differences between us as organisations were smaller than the differences which inevitably exist within each organisation anyway. Further progress in our understanding of various issues could be much better resolved within a single lively Democratic Centralist organisation where every member of both organisations would be able to learn from the other.

From January 1st a process of uniting the organisations began –establishing joint committees and gradually integrating the RCLB and the CWM. Finally on June 1st 1980 the membership of both organisations met in the Unity Conference and voted unanimously to unite.

How the RCL and CWM developed

The RCLB was founded in July 1977 when the Communist Federation of Britain(Marxist-Leninist) united with the Communist Unity Association (Marxist-Leninist). At the same time the RCLB Manifesto was published as a first step in the struggle to produce a revolutionary communist programme in Britain.

The Communist Workers' Movement was founded in Autumn 1976 after some of the best sections of the Communist Party of Britain(Marxist-Leninist) split away because of the degeneration of the CPB(ML), which they had found impossible to prevent due to the CPB(ML)'s thoroughly bureaucratic structure.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

The RCLB from its inception was a democratic-centralist organisation but in reaction to the loose liberal federalism of the old CFB(ML), in which most of its members had been, it had important errors of over-centralism, lacked a lively inner party life and had tendencies towards dogmatism and sectarianism. The CWM members, after their experience in the CPB(ML), tended towards opposite errors, and organised themselves in a very loose way. This created some problems as it moved towards a more effective democratic-centralist form of organisation. But it succeeded in doing this over a period of time, while keeping hold of a good down-to-earth, lively and straight-forward way of doing things. This lively democracy

in turn will be a contribution to the unified organisation as the RCLB has gradually been overcoming its overcentralism, during a campaign against ultra-left idealism and dogmatism. Unification will take all of us further forward.

MASS WORK

At the beginning the CWM sought to involve itself very broadly in mass work, taking part in a variety of anti-imperialist and anti-racist struggles and in the trade union movement. This strong desire for extensive mass work was excellent, but the CWM learnt through time the need to be more systematic about establishing deeper political analysis and leadership, and to set realistic priorities in its work.

Many members of the RCLB had had previous experience of undirected work in a variety of broad front committees. So when the RCLB was founded it concentrated exclusively on building communist bases in industry.

The RCLB's industrial work was its main strength, but its exclusive concentration on it isolated it from broader mass struggles that were taking place. Over a long period of time the RCLB and the CWM have both come to a better understanding by learning from their own and each other's experience. The RCLB will now, as the unified organisation, continue with its industrial work, but also be involved in anti-racist work, and in solidarity struggles against superpower domination and against British Imperialism.



IRELAND

In the struggle against British Imperialism the RCLB has also criticised itself for its error in aiming to build a single communist Party which would be based in northern Ireland as well as in England, Scotland and Wales. This line had shown a failure to grasp that the Irish struggle was a unified struggle of a single nation against British Imperialism, and that therefore the Irish people need their own all-Ireland Party. This was a social-chauvinist error. The unity conference stressed the importance

of building solidarity with the Irish peoples' struggle against British Imperialism and for national independence and reunification.

UNITY MUST BRING FURTHER ADVANCES

The RCLB and the CWM have both gone forward in the last three to four years. The unified organisation is stronger in all respects than either of them. It will take forward the work of developing a programme, while clearly recognising that a genuine Communist Party can only be rebuilt in the midst of the class struggle itself.

Building the party

The unity between the RCLB and the CWM is an important step forward in rebuilding a Communist Party of the working class in Britain. But there is still much to do.

In the next period the unified organisation will work with the aim of producing a deeper programmatic document at its second congress, which will be stronger than both the RCLB Manifesto and the CWM Programme. We will study and struggle to deepen our grasp of certain important questions. There are a number of questions, including those of British imperialism in Ireland and the liberation struggle, of deepening a class analysis of British imperialist society, of world developments towards war, of racism etc. that we must understand better. That work is essential for giving conscious direction to our struggle. But it cannot be done in ivory towers in isolation from the struggle. The RCLB will be involved in mass work building communist bases in industry and actively fighting for working class politics in the Trade Unions. It will be involved in the struggle against racism and fascism, in anti-imperialist work in solidarity with the struggle in southern Africa and in Ireland. The RCLB will actively support the people of Kampuchea, and expose superpower hegemonism and Soviet aggression.

The Party must be built in the struggle by uniting the masses against the open class enemy, but in the course of that struggle it is essential to fight opportunism. Marxist-Leninist theory must be integrated with the concrete reality of the class struggle in Britain.

At the same time the RCLB will continue to seek unity on a principled basis with other communist groups, including communist organisations that are presently based entirely in particular national minorities. All these aspects are part of Party-building in Britain today. There is still a long way to go. But the 1980s will see the rebirth of a genuine Communist Party in Britain.

Unity social

Comrades took time out from the busy conference agenda to relax and enjoy themselves at a social on the Saturday night. Celebrating together with them were a large number of supporters and friends from many countries.

The entertainment was kicked off with songs by the New Era Singers (one of the first joint activities in which both the CWM and RCLB participated) and by the Red Flag Singers from Liverpool.

Comrades and friends from other countries gave a richly internationalist flavour to the cultural events with revolutionary songs and poems in Urdu, Bengali and Punjabi. Members of the Confederation of Iranian Students sang a revolutionary Iranian song on the importance of unity and a comrade from the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania sang songs of the African freedom struggle in Zulu and English.

A woman worker from Camden Town, in North London, gave a fine rendering of "Solidarity Forever" and in a short talk told the audience of how she remembered thousands of workers singing this during the St Pancras Rent Strike of 1960. The renowned Scouse Male Proletarian Voice Choir more than compensated for any lack of professional training with their enthusiasm and evident class feeling when they treated the audience to their versions of 'Union Maid' and 'Dockers' Tanner'.

NEW ERA BOOKS

New Era Books sells a wide variety of revolutionary literature, e.g.

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KOREA— BEHIND THE HEADLINES

An uneasy calm has settled over South Korea as the martial law authorities attempt to consolidate their control over the country after the recent series of mass upheavals.

IMPERIALIST PUPPET STATE

South Korea is an artificial puppet state dominated by United States and Japanese imperialism. Korea had been a Japanese colony and at the end of the Second World War Korean revolutionaries and patriots liberated their country and established organs of popular power. At the same time, according to agreements reached by the Allied Powers, American troops entered southern Korea and troops from the Soviet Union, which was then still a socialist country, entered the north. This was supposed to be a purely temporary arrangement (the Soviet troops withdrew in 1948) and there was never any intention to partition Korea, which had been a united country since ancient times.

However, after the war the US imperialists became hell-bent on world domination and turned the spearhead of their attack against the newly emerged socialist camp. South Korea thus became part of its 'frontline against communism' - particularly after the liberation of China in 1949. The US proceeded to rig up a fascist state in South Korea and to build up a puppet regime using all the old collaborators of the Japanese colonialists.



Bordering the Soviet Union and China and facing Japan, Korea has great strategic significance.

US LAUNCHES WAR

In 1950, the US launched a war aimed at conquering all of Korea. However, the Korean people together with the Chinese Peoples' Volunteers fought the Americans to a standstill and an armistice was signed in 1953. This was the first major military defeat inflicted on US imperialism.



South Korean puppet soldier attacks defenceless demonstrator in Kwangju.

The Korean war was amongst the most brutal in history. The US only stopped bombing the north when their pilots pointed out that there was nothing left for them to bomb. Even more vile was the widespread use of germ warfare against Korea and Northern China. The British imperialists fully participated in this war of aggression.

Since the war the highest aspiration of all patriotic Koreans has been national reunification and all mass struggles in South Korea inevitably take up this question. This is why such large sections of the people are able to unite in struggle-workers, peasants, students, religious figures and bourgeois opposition politicians.

South Korea is still important to imperialism. The United States has 42,000 troops there. Both the United States and Japan also have immense investments and use the super-exploitation of South Korean workers who have no democratic rights in order to make superprofits. The South Korean authorities recently signed an agreement with Japan on oil exploration, which gives the Japanese imperialists the right to freely plunder this important natural resource of the Korean people. American corporations have \$6 billion invested in Korea; all major US banks have branches in the South Korean capital of Seoul and South Korea is the United States' 'number two "trading partner" after Japan.

South Korea is also of strategic importance to imperialism, particularly as a base to threaten the socialist north, the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea.

THE STRUGGLE HEATS UP

In 1979, South Korean dictator Pak Jung Hi was assassinated

by his own security chief who had come to desire greater democratic rights for the people. The death of the hated Pak raised great hopes of democratisation amongst the people. Opposition politicians, such as Kim Dae Jung, began to step up agitation calling on the authorities to democratise. It was the suppression of these struggles that led to the escalation of the peoples' fight into the most serious struggles since the overthrow of dictator Syngman Rhee in 1960.

Throughout April and early May students, professors and journalists staged strikes and demonstrations calling for democracy and the resignation of the 'Prime Minister'. The protests quickly spread to other sectors of society. On May 9, fourteen Roman Catholic bishops issued a statement demanding democratic rights for the people.

The working class quickly stepped into the struggle with mass strikes developing across the country. Textile and steel workers played a particularly militant role. Their demands ranged from wage increases, payment of unpaid bonuses, the removal of corrupt chiefs of phoney Trade Unions and, in one case, the dismissal of a brutal Japanese vice director of a textile company. Independent workers' organisations grew up in the struggle. For example, metal workers formed a 'Committee for Democratic Trade Unions' on May 9.

Peasants waged struggles for democratic agricultural policies and land redistribution and denounced the capitalists for their pollution of air and rivers which has destroyed much good farm land.

Faced with the steadily mounting resistance of the people,

the 'government' proclaimed martial law on May 17. The authorities made the ridiculous claim that the peoples' resistance was all the work of 'North Korean spies', as a prelude to an invasion. Although they made threatening noises, even the American imperialists had to admit that they saw no basis for this charge.

Martial law only increased the peoples' resistance. Opposition members of Parliament from the New Democratic Party, resigned en bloc and throughout the country students and workers rose up and, defying brutal police and army repression, inflicted heavy casualties on them. Admitting their total failure to control the situation the government resigned on May 20 and the military took over complete control.

KWANGJU SEIZED

In the next week the struggle reached its most intense. 50,000 people demonstrated against martial law in the city of Kwangju. In the repression that followed several hundred students were wounded and arrested. Two days later the people rose up again, breaking into an arms depot and seizing sub-machine guns and ammunition, and commandeering armoured cars. On May 21, the Mayor

fled and the people took over, organising a Citizens Committee to run affairs. Local peasants flocked to the city as did miners armed with explosives. Not until May 27 were the authorities able to retake the city with 17,000 troops, tanks, armoured cars and helicopters. Unable to successfully resist such a massive force the people avoided futile resistance which, at that stage, would only result in a bloodbath. Despite the cruel repression that has followed the retaking of Kwangju, many arms are still hidden, no doubt to be well used when the time comes.

During this crisis, the Americans sent two command and control aircraft to their base on Okinawa, Japan, allegedly in case of "trouble from North Korea". During the period when the people controlled Kwangju, the US imperialists arrogantly sent the aircraft carrier Coral Sea and three accompanying ships to anchor off North Korea. State Department spokesman Hodding Carter and others have repeatedly threatened socialist North Korea in recent weeks. This is despite the fact that the Korean government has declared that it has no intention of intervening in the south and has exerted every effort to explore ways to peaceful reunification without outside interference.

STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE

Temporary calm has now settled over South Korea. However, the people have overwhelmingly shown that they reject imperialism and national division and the struggle is bound to break out again in the near future. Having in the last year been kicked out on its backside by the peoples of Iran and Nicaragua, US imperialism now sees the writing on the wall in South Korea. This is what lies behind its statements about the danger of "another Iran".

Seeing its domination threatened, US imperialism may resort to desperate measures, even to the extent of launching another war against the socialist North. It is also possible that they may attempt to get active backing from the British imperialists as they did in 1950-1953.

All British workers and progressive people should be on guard against any attempt to unleash war in Korea, in particular against any attempt to send British working class lads to fight against the Korean people, with whom they have no quarrel, on behalf of US imperialism.

U.S. OUT OF KOREA!

NO IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION IN KOREA!

RECOGNISE THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF KOREA!

AZANIA IN FLAMES

The national liberation struggle of the people of Azania (South Africa) has been advancing in a new spirit of confidence following the peoples' victory in neighbouring Zimbabwe.

Last week, heroic guerillas of the African National Congress (South Africa) staged a spectacular raid blowing up the regime's oil storage tanks, which are of great strategic importance to the apartheid state.

Side by side with the armed struggle, the mass struggles of the people are spreading throughout the country, lighting the sky with the flames of resistance. These mass struggles will lay the basis for a real peoples' war to liberate Azania.

SCHOOLS BOYCOTTED

For over six weeks now, 'coloured' (mixed race) school-children (there are 3 million 'coloured' people in Azania) have been striking and demonstrating against the inferior education they receive at their

segregated schools. All over the country they have been boycotting those schools and colleges. In their tens of thousands, they have defied the authorities and shown their contempt for a government which spends 5 times more on the education of white children. (£500 a year per white child, £100 per 'coloured' and £50 per black).

Black students have been coming out in solidarity with their 'coloured' brothers and sisters, and wide-spread arrests and detentions have occurred everywhere. Near Port Elizabeth several hundred black students marched and 275 arrests were made.

In Durban, the Indian university was closed and 500 students given an hour to pack and leave their hostel. In Johannesburg 600 Indian students were arrested and hundreds more stormed their school in protest.

52 clergymen of different denominations were arrested

as they marched singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers' to protest against the police actions.

WORKERS HITBACK

There is also growing labour unrest in the Cape Province and Natal. 6000 striking textile workers at a factory near Durban were dismissed, and car workers on strike have been arrested.

POLICE MURDER CHILDREN

On May 28, police opened fire on a group of schoolchildren in Elsie River, killed two of them and wounded three more. The two murdered children were said to be 11 to 14 years old. Witnesses reported that the police arrived in a van, leapt out and started shooting. The children scattered. A bystander saw an 11-year-old shot dead and said, "It made me sick to see a child that young shot before my eyes. It was shocking and I cried".

THE SPARKS OF PEOPLES WAR

The oppressed Azanian people are wiping away their tears and pursuing the long struggle to win national liberation. The present upsurge shows no sign of abating.

Prime Minister visits North East THATCHER NOT WELCOME



Weed bouquet lands on bonnet of Thatcher's car

From a Class Struggle correspondent

A bouquet of dandelions was thrown at Mrs Thatcher by booring demonstrators when she visited Sunderland's Austin and Pickersgill shipyards on May 24th. Inside the yard, apart from talking with the executive and finding a retiring Tory to present a cheque to, Thatcher was largely ignored. Thatcher patronisingly called the workers 'shy', but it was clear they were in fact making clear their hatred of her government and its attacks upon the working class.

This factory visit was typical of Thatcher's whole tour of the area. Women workers wore the traditional Labour colours of white and green in silent protest when Thatcher visited the Pawson Clothing factory. More vocal opposition was evident on her 'walk about' in the town centre, when chants of "Maggie out!" greeted her. The usual reaction was that of the shopper who told her, "You try and bring up a family in this area with no work". "Where's the work?", said an unemployed lorry-driver who pushed his dole card in front of her, "Could you live on the dole?" (It will be a grand day when she does!)

"DIAMONDS IN THE STREET"

The situation regarding jobs is summed up in the words of the Durham Child Poverty Action Group: "For the unskilled worker, looking for a job is like looking for diamonds in the street. We are at present advising one person who so far has applied for 200 jobs without success."

Jobs, or rather the lack of them, dominate the headlines of the local press, and the celebration of Newcastle's 900th anniversary or Sunderland's promotion to Division One brings little comfort to the unemployed. Furthermore, those in employment often have the threat of redundancy hanging over them.

In the ten days preceding the Thatcher visit, the following toll was taken on jobs in the

area:

* 173 workers thrown on the dole by the closure of two subsidiaries of Northern Engineering industries.

* 20 redundancies at Shield Packaging (Washington), bringing total losses in Washington in the past month to 500.

* 70 redundancies announced for July by BSC's Consett subsidiary, Redpath Dorman Lang Are, as the first of the cutbacks linked to the closure of the steel-works, which will lead to 4000 workers losing their jobs.

* 66 workers to lose their jobs as a result of the closure of a textile firm in the nearby village of Leadgate.

* 50 jobs lost at Tyne Textiles.

* 22 jobs lost at Birtley Manufacturing.

* 100 redundancies announced for August by Builders.

This ten-day period is not exceptional. Over 11,000 jobs have been lost in the region since the beginning of this year.

'OUT OF THE WAY?'

This depressed region suffering from the worst depression since the war is politely described as a 'development area'. According to Thatcher, Sunderland's troubles are due to the fact that it is 'out of the way'. In fact, however, the North East was one of the power-engines for capitalist development in Britain, and it has declined in relation to the increasing crisis that that system undergoes. The sack is the bosses' way of trying to extricate the capitalist economy from recession.

The vicious attacks upon the working class have intensified under the Tory government, but Labour's record cannot bear close scrutiny as it served the capitalist system with its 'con-trick'. While slashing regional aid, the Tories have adopted a Labour method to aid businessmen by designating the Tyne and Wear region as an 'enterprise zone'. The magic word is 'investment'

that's supposed to be the Holy Grail that will cure all the North East's ills: It's the lack of investment, the argument goes, not the capitalist system that's the stumbling block.

Yet over the past five years (1974-79) over two-and-a-half billion pounds have been invested in the North East, while unemployment over the same period has risen by over 90%. This is because the investment has been mainly in capital-intensive projects such as coal, North Sea oil, chemical and steel complexes, etc. Meanwhile the traditional industrial base of the North has contracted.

While the Labour Councils slash services "under protest" and make political capital out of the fact that Tory councillors opposed a grant for Newcastle's Centre for the Unemployed, Labour activists take care not to mention Labour's role in adding to the ranks of the unemployed.

Labour's 'constructive actions', Tories' myths about small businesses being created to soak up the unemployed, increased military recruitment - none of these capitalist methods of shortening the dole queues are any more helpful than the recent petition in Sunderland to get Pope John Paul II to visit the town.

Subdued hostility prevailed in Thatcher's reception. It's unlikely she'll feel inclined to venture up North again soon.

Forthcoming events

Saturday June 14th.

BLACK WORKERS AND THE TRADE UNIONS.

One-day conference organised by the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, Birmingham. Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Details from Birmingham Trades Council, 191 Corporation Street, B4 6RP.

Friday June 20th.

THE BRITISH IMPERIALIST STATE.

Last meeting in the British imperialism discussion organised by the London district of the RCLB.

7.30 pm. Roebuck Pub, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1. (Warren Street Tube).

Thursday July 3rd.

THE STRUGGLE IN AZANIA.

The London district of the RCLB is organising a discussion meeting on the struggle of the people in Azania (South Africa) against imperialism, and the tasks of anti-imperialists in Britain. Details to follow in our next issue.

Saturday July 19th.

DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF ALL

THREATENED BY IMMIGRATION LAWS.

Assemble 12.30, Whitworth Park, Manchester.