

BRADFORD 12 AND IRELAND

Solidarity between the different sections of the oppressed is a mighty weapon in the struggle against imperialism. The mutual support between the Bradford 12 and the Irish people has been one very important instance of this solidarity. Below we reprint a letter sent by Tariq M. Ali, one of the Bradford 12, to "An Phoblacht/Republican News" which was published in its July 8th issue.

"It is some two weeks since the jury at Leeds Crown Court returned a 'not guilty' verdict on the 'Bradford 12' of which I was one. I write this letter as a gesture of solidarity both to the nationalist people of Ireland and the freedom fighters who are waging a heroic and just war against the British imperialist forces.

"It was heart-warming to receive telegrams from comrades in Ireland as indeed it is heart-warming to hear that the IRA have carried out yet another successful operation. It is the latter that has always filled me with a sense of imminent victory.

"Whilst I write this letter of solidarity, many miles away in Lebanon the Palestinians are once again being brutally butchered by Zionism. All the freedom-loving people are horrified at this terrible, terrible slaughter of the gallant Palestinians and their Lebanese allies. All the wealth and power of Saudi Arabia has once again left them to suffer untold misery at the guns of America in the hands of the Israelis. All of us committed to the struggle against imperialism must come out and show our solidarity in whichever way we can. I have no doubt that not only the Republican Movement but the nationalist people of Ireland will continue to stand by the Palestinians as they have done so in the past.

Capitalism in crisis is a violent, aggressive creature indeed. Britain in her true hypocritical manner was prepared to send a mighty armada to the Malvinas Islands and bring havoc and destruction there all in the name of 1,600 loyal Brits and a load of sheep. In the name of justice on the British mainland she is imposing a massive repressive regime, today against black people which tomorrow will be unleashed against the British working class. In the name of peace she brings war to the Malvinas Islands. In the name of British unity she maintains the division of Ireland. In reality it is all in the name of the maintenance of imperialist domination of the peoples of this globe.

"On many an occasion whilst in prison on remand, I gained strength from the martyrs of the Irish struggle. They may be buried a long way away in Ireland, but their spirit of resistance shone through into my life in prison.

"I learnt one very important lesson from the stance of Bobby Sands and the many other comrades that came and went before and after him. That is, prison walls can break your bones but never your will to struggle for what you believe is just. To all those who have sacrificed their lives and are continuing to sacrifice themselves for the unification of Ireland I send revolutionary greetings and fraternal salutations.

"For us, by our charges, the state made a mountain out of a mole hill. In their blind determination to send us to prison for a mighty long time, they ended up by making a monument to our beliefs. We will continue to defend ourselves by whatever means we feel are necessary.

"Victory to the nationalist people of Ireland!

"Victory to the IRA!"

Tariq M. Ali