

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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SACTU Statement

Thozamile Gqweta - another victim of apartheid terror

According to information just received by the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the President of the South African Allied Workers Union, Thozamile Gqweta, is in a serious condition in the psychiatric ward of Johannesburg Hospital after being detained by the regime in East London on December 8 last year.

He was admitted to the ward last week, and is believed to be at least the sixth detainee to be taken to hospital since the beginning of the year. His family visited him on Wednesday when they found out through unofficial sources of his hospitalization. His brother Robert, who had visited him earlier in detention following the death of Dr Neil Aggett when some visits were allowed, said he found Thozamile 'unrecognizable' yesterday.

Among Thozamile's symptoms were a severe headache at the back of the head, severe depression and anxiety, difficulty in speaking, partial memory loss, as well as a dramatic loss in weight. When speaking to his brother Robert, he was resting his head on a table. His eyes were bloodshot, and at one stage, tears started rolling down his cheeks. Thozamile complained his brother was talking too loudly.

Once again, SACTU alerts the International Trade Union Movement, solidarity organisations and democratic people of the world about dangers faced by trade unionists who are detained by the racist regime.

We want to emphasize the point that these trade unionists are detained because of organizing workers, and this new incident underlines the continuing attacks on the Black Trade Union Movement.

SACTU calls upon you and your organisation to do everything in your power to get the regime to stop the harassment of trade unionists through bannings, detention, torture and murder.

SACTU urges you to send cables to the Prime Minister of South Africa, demanding the release of all detained trade unionists.

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

South African Congress of Trade Unions



Black workers hoist ANC flag in Johannesburg

APARTHEID MURDER

On 5 February 1982, Dr Neil Aggett, a leading white trade unionist and anti-racist was murdered by the South African security police during his eleventh week in detention without trial. This was the latest attempt by the apartheid regime to crush the trade union movement which threatens the very basis of its racist rule. The response of the black people of South Africa showed that for each new act of brutality by the guardians of apartheid, there is a corresponding increase in the unity and size of the revolutionary movement.

Neil Aggett's death came hours after a statement to the South African parliament by Police Minister Louis le Grange, in which he said that 'detainees are kept in police cells or prisons in the most favourable circumstances'. A letter to white liberal MP Helen Suzman has revealed that his death followed extensive torture. The following Press statement was released by the South African Congress of Trade Unions:

'The murder in detention of Dr Neil Aggett, Transvaal Secretary of the African Food and Canning Workers Union, is part of the increasing attack by the Apartheid regime aimed at destroying the black Trade Union movement in South Africa. This is manifested by the mass detention of 205 trade unionists in East London in September 1981, the

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IRA SINK SECOND SHIP

On 23 February the IRA carried out their second spectacular attack on a British ship by sinking, at an estimated loss of £1 million, the collier St Bedan in Lough Boyle. This operation comes about a year after the sinking of the Nellie M. The Nellie M was salvaged some months later but found to be beyond repair and had to be sold for scrap.

The attack on the St Bedan involved about a dozen Volunteers who seized the pilot station at Moville Co Donegal. About six Volunteers then took a pilot cutter out to the St Bedan. They rounded up the crew and placed their explosives and put the crew aboard a liferaft in plenty of time to avoid any injury from the explosion. One striking feature of the operation is the crew's testimony that at no time were they ill-treated or abused by the Volunteers. Indeed when the Volunteers asked the crew to shout 'Up the Provos' and the crew refused, the Volunteers joined with them in fits of laughter. One Volunteer took pictures of the occasion! A far cry indeed from the rabid imperialist propaganda about the 'mindless fanatics' of the IRA!

This disciplined and highly successful operation once again confirms the capacity of the IRA to attack British targets inside or outside the Six Counties.

Terry Marlowe

LIVERPOOL RAIDS

The reality of 'community policing' in Liverpool was revealed for all to see on the afternoon of 4 February. An eight-months pregnant woman, Debbie Alcock, was knocked to the ground and kicked and beaten; a 61-year-old woman was kicked by the police while trying to protect her; the police also beat up Debbie's father, sister and younger brother. The four of them now face nine charges of assaulting the police and one of attempted GBH.

The incident started at about 4pm, as dozens of police, with panda cars and transit vans of the OSD (the Liverpool SPG) flooded into the Upper Pitt Street area of Liverpool 1 in pursuit of some youths who had allegedly taken some carpets from a warehouse. Following one youth who in fact escaped, they smashed their way into the home of the Lavell family in St James's Gardens. They dragged out Chris Lavell, who had just got out of his bed and was still in his pyjamas, and threw him into a transit van. He was followed by his sister Pauline, who went to assist him, and his brother Tony. They were all taken down to Copperas Hill police station.

The police then continued their search in the Cookson Street area. They started at the home of the Hornby's, but when they demanded to be let in, Mrs

Hornby firmly refused to open the door, as they had no warrant. At this point, PC 6599 was heard to shout 'Let's get Kenny Alcock', at which the gang of them moved to the next door, the home of the Alcocks.

They were met by 21-year-old Debbie, who was standing in the front porch. She also refused to let them in without a warrant but she was pushed aside, manhandled, hit, then thrown to the ground. PC 6599 kicked her once as she lay on the ground, and was then aiming a kick at her stomach when Mrs Rose Petino, 61 years old, pushed in front to take the full force of the boot on her shin. Although neighbours screamed at the police that Debbie was pregnant - and very obviously so - this did not affect them. Hearing the screams and shouts, and seeing Debbie



The Alcocks (l to r) Maxine, Kenny Sr and Debbie who has now had a boy

now being dragged along the ground, her sister Maxine and her friend Marlene came running down from an upstairs flat to help her. They too were hit and beaten, Marlene with a walkie-talkie. All three were then dragged - Marlene by her hair - into panda cars and driven off to Copperas Hill.

Some 15 minutes later, Debbie's father Kenny, ignorant of what had happened, returned home with younger son Floyd from some shopping. They found policemen still inside the house, illegally searching it, and others loitering around outside. Finding they had no warrant, Kenny chased them out, to be told by a neighbour that one of them had punched Maxine. Seething with anger, Kenny suggested to the

policeman that they sort it out man to man in the square in front of the house, and see whether he could hit a man as well as he could hit a woman. The copper responded typically by hitting him on the head with a truncheon.

In the ensuing fracas, Kenny was badly knocked about, and 15-year-old Floyd, who came to his assistance took an even harder beating. They were then thrown into a meat wagon and taken to join the other six in Copperas Hill.

As all this was going on, 16-year-old Phil Hall had arrived outside on his bike to pick up his aunt's three-year-old son. He too was knocked to the ground, hit and thrown into a transit van. All of them were held overnight in the main Bridewell and charged the next

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EDITORIAL

SOUTH AFRICA: SWP OPPOSES SANCTIONS

At a time when the ANC-led struggle in South Africa is striking blow after blow against the racist apartheid regime and its imperialist backers, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and other middle class socialists are opposing the ANC's call for sanctions against South Africa.

In a thoroughly deceitful and reactionary article by Neil Faulkner in the March issue of the SWP's *Socialist Review* we read:

'...comprehensive and mandatory UN sanctions on South Africa...is pure pie-in-the-sky...'

What would be the effect of the implementation of this demand on the struggle in Southern Africa?... the destruction of the only class with the power to smash the apartheid state...'

The blanket boycott is an absurdity. It means breaking up the black industrial working class, leaving it with no means of livelihood and no leverage over the system.'

Under the guise of 'concern' for the black working class movement in South Africa, the SWP thus totally rejects the revolutionary demands of the politically conscious section of the working class in South Africa, of the ANC and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). The ANC and SACTU have repeatedly appealed to the workers in imperialist nations to mount a campaign to totally isolate the apartheid regime economically, militarily, politically, culturally and diplomatically. Just at the moment when support for mandatory sanctions against South Africa is growing the SWP proclaims that 'the blanket boycott is an absurdity'.

What lies behind this?

First, the SWP's refusal to acknowledge the leading role of the ANC in the struggle to smash the apartheid state. Second, the deep-rooted labour imperialist, racist contempt which the SWP and other British middle class socialists have for the ANC and all other national liberation movements fighting imperialism. Third, their fear that the victory of the ANC will strike a mortal blow to British imperialism.

Neil Faulkner's article is deceitful. Throughout, he never once (in two pages) refers to the ANC. This in spite of the fact that even the apartheid press daily admits the leading role that the ANC plays in the workers' struggle, students' struggle, women's struggle, community struggles and the armed struggle in South Africa. Indeed the very week that Faulkner's article appeared, thousands, the vast majority black workers, marched with ANC and SACTU banners and placards at the funeral of murdered trade union leader Neil Aggett in Johannesburg. They risked arrest, detention and torture to do this. This proves conclusively that, unlike the SWP, the black workers in South Africa are aware that the 'workers' struggle' is inseparable from the national liberation struggle to overthrow the racist South African state.

There are none so blind as those that refuse to see. But there is method in the SWP's blindness. For years the SWP has attacked the ANC. At the root of this is the SWP's rejection of armed anti-imperialist struggle, whether carried out in South Africa by the ANC or in Ireland by the IRA.

'ANC's military strategy means that it must concentrate the bulk of its resources on organising and servicing guerillas, to the detriment of the mass movement. Moreover, because of its advocacy of an all-class alliance against apartheid, it tends to downgrade the significance of the black working class, and to demand of workers simply that they support the armed struggle.' (*Socialist Review* 14 July 1980)

It terrifies the SWP that workers should be called to support the armed struggle against imperialism, especially when the target is British imperialism!

The SWP, a predominantly middle class organisation, has the racist arrogance to tell workers in South Africa to reject the political demands of the movement they have chosen to lead their struggle - the ANC. Moreover the SWP is saying this about the black workers in South Africa who have fought for decades against the brutal South African regime and who know through struggle

and sacrifice what is the real revolutionary path.

The SWP's argument against sanctions is reactionary. They argue that applying sanctions would create unemployment and therefore undermine the black working class movement. Their ignorance about the appalling conditions of black workers in South Africa matches their arrogance. Like the SWP, the imperialists too argue that sanctions would undermine the conditions of the workers! Does the SWP not know that imperialism and capitalism has never offered the black workers of South Africa anything but grinding poverty, unemployment and starvation. Or is the SWP saying that British imperialist investment in South Africa is something beneficial to black workers? Is this why the SWP opposes a blanket boycott?

Thozamile Botha, the black working class leader of the Ford Workers strike in Port Elizabeth 1979-80, answered the liberal-imperialist arguments now repeated by the SWP.

'When we say that the multinationals and foreign firms must disinvest from South Africa, the reply is that black people are going to starve. We say we will starve, but we will not be starving worse than we are starving today. We are saying that foreign firms must disinvest from South

Africa. We will know then that we are dealing with one government - the government of South Africa - and not with other foreign governments.'

Thozamile Botha knows that apartheid cannot survive without imperialism. That is why he, along with the ANC, SACTU, and the politically conscious sections of the working class movement in South Africa call for sanctions against the apartheid state.

Faulkner tries to back up his reactionary arguments by saying

'We have no way of knowing what black production-line workers at Wilson-Rowntree think about sanctions, but it seems quite reasonable to suppose that they would, to say the least, be rather bewildered by a demand that meant their factory be closed down!'

In fact the Wilson-Rowntree workers have repeatedly called for a boycott of all Rowntree products. They are far more conscious of the role of imperialism that Faulkner is, and have no illusions in its 'progressive' character.

The black South African workers have experienced the fact that imperialism can play no progressive role in South Africa. That is why they have taken the revolutionary road which in South Africa necessitates the armed struggle against the racist apartheid state and its imperialist backers. The SWP rejects this revolutionary road and joins Bill Sirs and other reactionary elements in the British Labour and trade union movement in calling for continued links with South Africa. They, the privileged beneficiaries of the super-exploitation of oppressed peoples by British imperialism, earnestly desire that black workers in South Africa should reject revolution and take the reformist path.

FRFI condemns the reactionary arguments of Neil Faulkner and the SWP. We call on all readers of FRFI to stand with the ANC, SACTU and the black masses of South Africa and fight for the total isolation of the racist South African regime.

ACT NOW! JOIN THE FIGHTBACK

'What a marvellous paper this time'
writes an FRFI reader from Workington sending us £10.

'I would like to take copies of the paper to sell. Please send me 10 copies'
writes another reader from Middlesborough.

These letters - and others like them - show that support for FRFI is undoubtedly growing. More readers are becoming sellers and supporters. FRFI is more than a 'good newspaper', it is a voice for the developing revolutionary movement.

FRFI is Britain's only anti-imperialist, communist paper. Its impact and appeal to those suffering at the hands of the British state is immediate. On the streets of London, sales of FRFI have rocketed in the last month. At a street meeting in Tooting supporters sold 175, in Balham 150, Kilburn 138. In just 2 hours!

Supporters in South London have organised Friday night sales at tube stations - selling 130 in an evening.

This is the kind of support which FRFI needs. People who commit some time and energy into putting their support into practice. We need more supporters who will organise sales and street meetings in 4 or 5 parts of London every Saturday, and in Manchester, Leeds, Scotland... everywhere.

Your support must now become active support. By selling FRFI and working with its local groups, you will be helping to build support for those fighting racism and imperialism.

In this country, truth is rare, and democracy is reserved for the rich whilst the oppressed suffer racist attacks, frame-ups, murder in police stations and prisons. YOU can play a vital part in the fightback against the rich and powerful by giving FRFI your active support.

What can you do? Look at the suggestions below. Think about which of them you can undertake and let us know by sending in the form below.

I want to build FRFI

I am willing to (please tick):

- Take _____ copies of each issue to sell
- Make a monthly pledge to FRFI's fund drive.

I will pledge _____ per month

- Become an FRFI supporter - I enclose £5 and want to receive a year's subscription and details of the work you do in my area.
- Organise street sales in my area
- Organise supporter meetings for FRFI in my area.

Further please send me details of how I can join the work of FRFI in my area

Name _____
Address _____

Return this form to FRFI BCM Box 5909 London WC1N 3XX

SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

● Black workers strike

1981 witnessed yet another massive increase in the militancy of black workers in South Africa. From 12 strikes and work stoppages in 1980, there was an increase of 65% to 342 in 1981. The strikes involved over 93,000 workers against a figure of 55,000 in 1980. These figures are compiled by the South African Workers Association and thus do not include many that the state do not choose to report. Furthermore the figures do not include such industrial action as overtime bans and go-slows. The rising tide of black working class struggles against starvation wages and lack of social services is an ever increasing threat to apartheid rule. This explains the mounting racist attacks on black workers and their leaders by the apartheid regime.

● Black journalist gaoled

The news editor of *The Sowetan*, a newspaper read by black people in South Africa, Mr Thami Mazwai, has been given an 18 month prison sentence by a court in Johannesburg. This was because he refused to testify for the apartheid state in the trial of a Soweto student leader Khotso Seathole who is standing trial under the infamous Terrorism Act. Mazwai's sentence is yet another act in the apartheid regime's campaign against Thami Mazwai. In fact, he was with Zwelakhe Sisulu, banned President of the South African Workers Association of South Africa, has been detained since 17 June, and until 7 November he was held in solitary confinement. Zwelakhe Sisulu has now been released after 250 days in detention. This example of apartheid treatment for those who do not aid it contrasts with that of a state witness. In the press was forbidden to identify, who claimed he had been feted by the police at a barbecue after agreeing to become a state witness.

● Oscar Mpetha taken to hospital

Oscar Mpetha, leader of the African Food Canning Workers Union has twice been taken to hospital from his prison cell in the first week of February. Detained since August 1980, Oscar Mpetha and 18 of his comrades are standing trial under the Terrorism Act. Oscar Mpetha who is 72 years old suffers acute diabetes has been consistently in hospital despite the marked deterioration in his health. His trial which is not expected to end until next year, thus being used by the apartheid state to murder in prison.

● The Commission for more state control

The proposals of the state-appointed Commission would give the South African government virtually total control over the mass media in the country. On 1 February the Commission produced a report which is currently being considered by the white only South African parliament. It includes the following recommendations:

1. that a General Council of Journalism be established, made up of 3 people appointed by the state, and three each from the controlled Broadcasting Corporation, newspapers, papers and magazines,
2. that only the work of Council enrolled journalists could be legally published,
3. that only South African citizens would be eligible to enrol [thus the 7 million South African citizens who have been declared 'bantustan' concentration camps would be ineligible],
4. that anyone convicted of a 'subversive offence' would be ineligible,
5. that the state set up a more effective information service to counter anti-apartheid propaganda.

The Commission criticises even mild opposition, and praises the state run City Press for 'preaching the way of moderation'. It concludes that South Africa 'is a peacefully developing country expanding democracy'.

● SAAWU harassed

The offices of the South African Allied Workers Union were raided 3 times in the space of two days in the first week of February. In a statement issued by the SAAWU, the full reactionary significance of the 'independent Ciskei' was exposed. The statement said that the security policemen who carried out the raids stated that the union had no right to operate in South Africa as its officials are 'foreigners'. The security police ransacked the offices, took away documents and detained two SAAWU officials for two hours. Meanwhile Thami Mazwai, President of the SAAWU, Sam Kiki, the union's General Secretary and other SAAWU officials are still being detained by apartheid in its attempt to destroy this revolutionary union.

SOUTH AFRICA

BRITISH LEYLAND: LACKEYS OF APARTHEID

British investment in apartheid South Africa now stands at £8 billion, accounting for over 50% of all foreign investment in that country. As the rate of profit in Britain falls, imperialism transfers its capital to countries where brutal repression enables multinational companies to pay poverty wages and thus extract high profits. South Africa is ideal for this: on the one hand it is a highly advanced industrial country, on the other, the lack of any democratic rights for the black population combined with appalling unemployment means a plentiful supply of cheap labour. Investment profits from, and props up apartheid and is combined with direct military and political support for South Africa by the British state: imperialism and apartheid are interdependent.

Amongst the many British firms investing and operating in South Africa is British Leyland (BL), directly owned and controlled by the British state. In the past four years it has sacked 70,000 workers, cut wages and closed factories. It has threatened those who resist with more sackings and closure. Meanwhile it has steadily expanded its operations in South Africa – in the first six months of 1981 it opened two new plants at a cost of £4 million: Leyland South Africa is BL's largest foreign subsidiary, and it controls 41 other South African subsidiaries. Michael Edwardes is paid £90,000 a year and was knighted in 1979 for his services to industry. He knows well the profits to be made through the exploitation of the black South African workers, for he was a capitalist in that country for 20 years and is remembered

by his colleagues as a racist.

The growth of Leyland SA is closely associated with the growth of the South African police state: it provides an increasing number of vehicles for the South African military including Landrovers and armoured cars. At the same time it pays the lowest wages of all the imperialist car firms in South Africa. Its manual workers earn 60p an hour – approximately 25% of their British counterparts, despite the fact that the cost of living is the same as in Britain.

In order to maintain such starvation wages British Leyland readily utilises apartheid's reactionary and racist state apparatus and its laws. On 15 May 1981 2,400 Leyland workers went on strike demanding better pay, a minimum wage of R2 (£1) per hour and better health conditions. Leyland responded by



Police use Leyland Landrovers

refusing to negotiate with the unions representing the black workers. It then suspended the entire workforce and after 3 days declared the strike 'illegal' and sacked 1900 workers. The strike coincided with others at Sigma Motor Corporation and Fords and General Motors in Port Elizabeth. It was a critical test of the strength of the black workers unions in the car industry. An immediate appeal for solidarity was issued by the black workers in Leyland SA to British trade unions and for a week some parts to Leyland SA were blacked.

In the meantime, Leylands and the apartheid regime were moving fast. Through bribery new labour was being hired: workers were collected in company cars and offered 3 days pay for 1 day work. Leyland took on black

women workers and re-employed under worse conditions those it had dismissed: their alternative was starvation. On 1 June, one of the key unions involved (MACWUSA) was banned under the Riotous Assemblies Act. On 8 June Dumile Makonda, leader of the Sigma workers, was detained together with 4 other leading trade unionists.

Four weeks after the mass sackings, when the strike was effectively defeated, Len Murray, leader of the British TUC, made an 'intervention'. He 'protested' to Sir Michael Edwardes by saying that 'the mass sackings will isolate BL and damage its reputation in Britain and internationally...the TUC deeply regrets BL's actions'. The TGWU asked BL to ask Leyland SA to negotiate with the workers: Leyland SA declined the invitation. The British trade unions, rather than organising mass strike action in defence of black workers at Leyland SA, were more concerned with Britain's reputation. They did nothing when, without doubt, immediate action by British unions would have helped win the black workers strike. By their inaction they helped Leyland defeat the strike. At a mass meeting on 28 June the Leyland workers in South Africa decided to appeal to the British ambassador to intervene and, should he fail to do so, they would demand that Leyland leave South Africa. The British Consul-General in Cape Town replied: 'While a close interest is taken in the industrial relations of British subsidiaries in South Africa, we cannot intervene in any industrial disputes even though it may involve a British subsidiary'.

Whilst the representative of the British state and Len Murray defended British imperialism in South Africa, the South African workers see their true allies in the ANC and its armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe. On 26 July militants of Umkhonto we Sizwe destroyed two motor showrooms in the centre of Durban (one Sigma and one Leyland). Four days later Comrade O R Tambo, President of the ANC, stated that 'firms which victimise strikers do so at their own peril...the ANC intends to see to it that the workers' right to strike is defended'. This was unity in action.

British workers should ally themselves with the ANC rather than those Trade Union leaders who have proved themselves incapable either of defending the working class in this country, or supporting the struggle of black workers in South Africa against British imperialism.

Chris Fraser

NO TO IMPERIALIST PLANS FOR NAMIBIA

Britain, France, Canada, West Germany and the USA, meeting collectively as the Contact Group on Namibia, have for the past year been attempting to devise a plan to end the Namibian liberation war. Their primary concern has been to ensure that any independent Namibia, would be independent only in name and that Namibia remain within the circle of imperialist influence. The imperialist powers are trying their utmost to retain control over Namibia's rich supplies of raw materials and minerals, particularly uranium. To this end they have been seeking to undermine the UN Resolution 435, under which the South West African People's Organisation would unquestionably win any UN supervised elections.

On 23 January SWAPO and the Front-line states rejected some of the key provisions of the Contact Group settlement plan. In an attempt to give the puppet Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and the 90,000 white population an extra advantage in any elections, the Contact Group proposed a very complicated 1-man 2-vote system. This has been rejected by SWAPO who insist that any elections to a constituent assembly should be on a simple and preferably proportional representation system. In addition, the imperialist plan insists that the relations between executive, legislative and judicial branches of an independent Namibia be determined in advance – by imperialist powers and their puppets. SWAPO has stated that such relations can only be determined by the people themselves after elections to a constituent assembly.

omits any provisions, contained in previous plans, guaranteeing non-discrimination in all private, cultural, social, health and educational institutions. Imperialism's attempts to reduce an independent Namibia to no more than a vassal state of imperialism is revealed most clearly in its refusal to treat Walvis Bay as part of Namibian territory. Walvis Bay is Namibia's only deep water port and without it Namibia would not be economically viable. Yet the Contact Group proposes that the future of Walvis Bay will be decided by negotiations between Namibia and South Africa, Walvis Bay being regarded as part of South African territory. Sam Nujoma on 14 January stated that SWAPO will under no circumstances relinquish Walvis Bay to apartheid and imperialism. He said SWAPO is:

'...fighting to liberate each and every inch of Namibia, including Walvis Bay.'

These latest proposals are in addition to those already demanding that any independent Namibia 'guarantee' minority (white) economic rights and remain 'neutral' where apartheid is concerned.

Unfortunately for imperialism its plans are suffering a battering. In Namibia itself, the much vaunted Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, imperialism's puppet 'alternative' to SWAPO is disintegrating. The main black political organisation in the DTA, the National Democratic Party led by the Rev Peter Kalangula has withdrawn from the DTA as it has become increasingly clear that the black masses will have nothing to do with it. Kalangula, in hoping to save his own skin, has dashed all DTA chances in any elections however rigged. As a result the entire imperialist manoeuvre to deny SWAPO its legitimate victory is in serious crisis.

Meanwhile SWAPO and its army – the People's Liberation Army of Namibia – is continuing its revolutionary struggle. On 17 February, SWAPO announced that its fighters in Namibia had shot down a South African fighter plane and helicopter and that PLAN guerillas had put out of combat 360 South African soldiers in Namibia.

**No imperialist plans for
Namibia!
Victory to SWAPO!**

Eddie Abrahams



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continued detention and trial of Oscar Mpetha, National Organiser of ACFWU, and the detention of over 20 trade unionists in November.' (See FRFI 16 – ed)

ACFWU is one of the unions whose basic policy states that a trade union must organise workers irrespective of race, colour, or sex. ACFWU is non-racial, democratic and does not divorce the struggle for better wages and working conditions from the struggle for political rights. It participated in the very successful Unity Conference in Langa in August 1981. The follow-up to this Unity Conference had to be postponed because of the mass detention of trade unionists.

The main priority of South African trade unionists is unity and a joint response to the increasing state repression. No measures taken by the apartheid regime will smother the determination of our people. Internationally, SACTU renews its appeal to all Trade Unions and solidarity organisations to voice condemnation of these repressive measures.'

The black working class in South Africa has massively demonstrated its anger and its determination to continue the struggle. On 11 February, black workers throughout South Africa went on strike for half an hour in protest at the murder of their revolutionary comrade. Three of the country's major ports in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London were closed down whilst in the East Rand 23 factories were forced to halt production by striking workers. On 12 February 3 parcel bombs exploded at different locations scattering thousands of leaflets urging people to attend Neil Aggett's funeral and take revenge for his murder. The following day saw the largest open display of support for the ANC in Johannesburg since the banning of the ANC in 1963. Thousands marched through the city centre behind ANC banners and listened to representatives of the ACFWU and the Metal and Allied Workers Union.

This merging of the black workers' struggle for basic democratic rights with the liberation struggle led by the African National Congress is the unity which will smash apartheid. It is through such unity displayed at Neil Aggett and other militants' funerals that the apartheid state's Rabie Commission recommended that South Africa adopt laws which British imperialism used in Ireland to divert or altogether prevent funeral demonstrations which proclaim revolutionary opposition to imperialism! But the ANC will win.

Chris Fraser

STOP PRESS

Detentions in South Africa

Sam Kikne, General Secretary of South African Allied Workers' Union who was detained along with Thom Gqweta and other trade unionists last November, has now also admitted to psychiatric treatment.

FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

● Deportation conspiracy

Police and court officials in Greater Manchester have been guilty of conspiracy in their haste to deport black workers from Britain. Immigrant workers who have 'overstayed' and have appeared in court are being denied bail unless they agree to buy a ticket out of Britain. If they refuse they are remanded in custody until a deportation order can be obtained.

This conspiracy was exposed when Constable Laithwaite of Greater Manchester police reported this practice during a court case. He said: 'On production of a ticket I give him back his passport and a letter to the immigration officer who will ensure his departure from the country. The immigration officer confirms that this has happened and I report that fact to the court.'

In the majority of courts in Greater Manchester the police and court officials are guilty of conspiring to break their own laws, in their haste to deport immigrant workers!

Bob Shepherd

● Nelson

In Nelson, Lancashire on 10 February, four racist thugs viciously attacked two Asian men late at night leaving Ali Asghar, 28, dead and Munnir Hussain seriously injured. This is the latest in a series of brutal racist attacks in the town, including the murder of an Asian youth in 1980. The anger of the Asian community has been heightened by the failure of the police to catch the racists.

John

● Hospital spies

Nationality checks are to be made on all people seeking hospital treatment from 1 October this year. This will coincide with the introduction of high fees for overseas visitors to Britain seeking medical treatment. These steps will undoubtedly lead to passport checks on all black people needing hospital treatment.

Such checks have in fact been going on for years at the instigation of the DHSS. In 1976 185 Asian women attending antenatal clinics in Leicester were forced to produce their passports and one was denied treatment when she refused. In 1979 a Cypriot woman went to St Bartholomew's Hospital, London for an appointment with a surgeon. A clerk there checked on her status with the DHSS who checked with the Home Office. They discovered that she was due for deportation. The hospital shamefully supplied the DHSS with her address and next appointment date.

These vile practices will now increase. Black people will face humiliating passport checks and the hospital system will increasingly be used as a spying tool for the racist British state.

● Reunite Sultan's family

Another example of the deliberate denial of the basic right to an ordinary family life for countless Asian families has come to light in Oldham. In circumstances reminiscent of South Africa's migrant labour policy Sultan Mahmood has for the past 11 years been denied the right to live with his wife and four children. Whilst Sultan was living and working in Britain, his family was in Pakistan being denied entry permits to this country.

They first applied for entry in 1971 and were refused, since then two further applications and two appeals have been turned down. In 1980 Sultan's wife, separated from her husband for over nine years, died from TB. His two eldest sons are now over 18 years old, too old therefore to be allowed to reapply for entry.

Sultan is determined to fight to be reunited with his younger sons Arshad and Shadhad. He sought the advice of Anwar Ditta who proved you can defeat the immigration laws. Now there is a Sultan Mahmood Defence Support Committee. At its first public meeting there were over 100 people, the vast majority of them from the Asian community in Oldham. A demonstration is being organised in Oldham on 13 March.

Malik Sivam



NEWTON ROSE FRAMED

At about 2 am Friday 8 May 1981 Tony Donnelly, a white youth associated with the National Front Constitutional Movement, was stabbed to death in Glyn Road Hackney. Newton Rose and his friends were on their way home in a taxi three miles away. Roxanne Walden saw Donnelly attacked by white youths shouting 'Nigger lover'. These facts did not prevent the police from framing 21 year old black youth Newton Rose for the murder of Tony Donnelly. But then truth never did stand in the way of the police 'in the execution of their duty' to oppress blacks.

Donnelly's body had been dumped near the home of Sandra Alexander who had been with Donnelly earlier that evening. The fact that she also, a long time ago, was a girlfriend of Newton Rose was enough for the police to concoct 'a crime of passion'. After all Newton was black which was sufficient evidence for the Hackney police.

Detective Inspector Goodall conducted the enquiry—organised the frame up in plainer language. On 29 May two of Newton's friends, who had been with Newton at a friend's birthday party on the night Donnelly was murdered, Ian Henry and Michael Clarke were pulled in for a second round of questioning. In the tradition of racist British police 'investigation' they were both threatened with further assaults if they did not make false statements implicating Newton Rose in the murder. They broke under the police pressure and made the police-concocted statements. A third friend Orville Johnson was given the same treatment and forced to make a statement against Newton. All three youths subsequently retracted their statements for which, in typical imperialist fashion, they were

charged with perverting the course of justice—perverting the course of a frame up is in fact their only 'crime'. For this they were sentenced to six months in prison.

Newton Rose was duly charged with murder and brought to trial in December 1981. The fact that the only evidence against him was the police-extorted statements—there was no forensic evidence, no traces of blood, nothing connecting Newton Rose with the murder—meant that the jury could not reach a verdict. At this point Judge Edward Clarke—who proved himself a capable supporter of racist British 'justice' in the Mangrove trial 1971—took a hand by secretly and illegally ordering the jury to reach a verdict in fifteen minutes. This sufficed to rescue the frame up and secure a guilty verdict against Newton who was sentenced to life imprisonment.

This, the latest in a long line of police frame ups against blacks, has not gone past without protest in the black community of Hackney. Newton Rose's family and friends, the family and friends of the other defendants, the local Stamford Hill Youth Club and

Paul Worrell—another prison death

Paul Worrell, a black youth from South London, was found dead in his cell in Brixton Prison on 12 January this year.

Paul had spent four months on remand. During that time he had spent four days in the medical wing of the prison where he had slashed his own face, had been seen by three different doctors who all agreed he was in a disturbed state, and had even been put under a court order that recommended hospital treatment. At one point a hospital bed was made available for him but this offer was not taken up by the prison. Instead this young man, in a confused and depressed state, was given drugs and left in a small cell for 23 hours a day and was not allowed free association with other prisoners.

Brixton Prison made out a report on Paul that stated there was nothing wrong with him, this at the same time as classifying him as a 'suicide risk' and putting him on a 'special watch' which meant he was visited by a screw every 15 minutes.

On January 12 he was found hanging in his cell at 8.20 in the morning.

The inquest into his death, held on 3 February, failed to answer the many questions which surround his death, such as why he was left in prison in the first place. It only served to cast more

doubts on the explanation for his death given by the prison authorities. For example, why can't a prisoner who allegedly saw Paul hang himself be found? Where did the shirt he was supposed to have hung himself with come from given that Paul was wearing his shirt at the time?

During the inquest a doctor was asked why the bed that was made available for Paul was not taken up. He was simply unable to answer this question. The point was not pursued by the coroner, indeed he was openly hostile to any criticism of the authorities in Brixton Prison. When the family's solicitor asked questions about the desirability of Paul's treatment, given that he was unwell, the coroner jumped to their defence saying it was 'the best the prison system could do'. When the question of how many suicides are committed in Brixton came up he strongly protested saying that the question was irrelevant. It took the coroner five minutes to decide that there was nothing mysterious about Paul's death and he instructed the jury to bring in a verdict of suicide or an open verdict. The jury returned an open verdict.

others have come together in a campaign to free Newton Rose. The campaign has already shown its strength in securing the release on bail pending appeal of Henry, Clarke and Johnson.

So far the campaign has organised public meetings, a powerful march in Hackney of 300 who went to Hackney Police Station to demand that Newton be freed. Hackney Police Station only narrowly escaped attack such was the anger of the youth on the march. On January 30 a highly successful picket involving nearly 100 was held outside Wormwood Scrubs where Newton Rose is incarcerated. Chanting 'Newton Rose is innocent! Lock up Goodall!' the youth gathered at the very gates of the prison causing great consternation among the assembled screws and police.

When the bail pending appeal hearing came up in the Strand Law Court 40 gathered to picket the court at very short notice. Hackney Police Station was again picketed on Monday 22 February when more than 40 supporters added a new variation to their demands by chanting 'Lock up Goodall! Throw Away the Key!' 'Mash up Goodall!'

PRESS RACISM

The gutter press has unleashed a flood of racist filth in connection with the trial of seven black youths accused of the murder of Terry May in June last year. The Sun's banner headline screamed 'Black Mob's Rampage of Death. Crippled boy was killed by "human ants", jury told'. The Standard screeched 'Black Fury of Murder Mob'. All this poisonous filth was being distributed to some 15 million readers of the gutter press. Yet not one word has been said about the fact that this racist abuse will clearly prejudice the trial of the accused youths. It seems that when blacks are accused of killing whites the racist press becomes part of the prosecution.

When crippled Davy Moore was killed by the Liverpool police we saw no headlines like 'Police Mob's Rampage of Death. Crippled boy killed by "human ants"' or 'Police Fury of Murder Mob'. Such headlines would be immediately attacked as 'prejudicial' 'contempt of court' etc. In Britain today black people are being attacked and/or murdered virtually every day by fascist thugs and/or the police. Where are the headlines about 'White mobs'?

This racist trash is being spewed out by members of the NUJ in blatant breach of the NUJ's Code of Conduct. Will the NUJ act against the racists in its ranks? The Daily Star and Standard reporters hide behind anonymity but the Sun reporter is one Victor Chapple. Will Chapple be brought to book?

TM

Paul's family and friends have set up the Paul Worrell Campaign and are determined to get an independent inquiry into his death. A militant picket was held outside the inquest on 3 February—slogans shouted were:

New Cross Massacre—Police Cover-up—Paul Worrell Murder—No Cover-up!

Stop the Death Sentence in Brixton Prison

You say suicide—We say genocide

Paul's name is now added to the list of black youth who have died in the hands of the prison authorities: Richard Campbell, Winston Rose and now Paul Worrell.

The Paul Worrell campaign has already planned a picket of Brixton Prison on 6 March and a demonstration in Brixton on 8 March. The campaign meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in the Simba Project at 48/50 Artillery Place, Woolwich SE18. For more information about the forthcoming events phone 317 0451. Donations are payable to the Paul Worrell Campaign and should be sent to the address above.

Carol Owen

'Newton Rose is Innocent! Goodall is a liar!' The militant and consistent support for Newton Rose among the local black community is a warning to Goodall and his cronies that this frame up will be fought until Newton is free again. Goodall is already justifiably hated for his role in the 'investigation' of the murder of black youth Michael Ferreira. Then Goodall had to be forced to take action. When Donnelly was stabbed, however, the frame up of an innocent black youth took no time at all!

The Newton Rose Action Committee is calling a picket of the Strand Law Courts on Monday 8 March and Tuesday 9 March at 9.30am when the appeal will be heard. FRFI supporters have supported the picket of Wormwood Scrubs and the picket of Hackney Police Station. All FRFI readers should support the picket on 8/9 March.

Messages of support and donations to, information from, Newton Rose Action Committee, 76 Stroud Green Road, London N4 (01-272 4889)

James Martin

St Saviour's

The ruling class press reacted with hypocritical outrage when the youth of St Saviour's school showed contempt for the school and its authorities.

Headlines of 'Mini-mobs', 'Mini-Mafia', the singling out of one girl as 'big, black and really nasty' (*Daily Star*) have been part of a vitriolic racist campaign. The fact that the school had been utterly disorganised by the loss of two-thirds of its most experienced teachers and its school secretary was of course ignored. The press is silent about the appalling educational and material conditions at St Saviour's—a direct result of the government education cuts. The actions of the youth at St Saviour's show an entirely legitimate contempt for a system which offers them only unemployment and repression.

Khan family

The Home Office is determined to deport the Khan family. Despite 3 demonstrations and pickets to support the Khans' right to live in Britain, Mrs Khan was ordered to report to the immigration offices at Manchester airport on 25 February to be deported!

Mrs Khan and her two children, both British citizens, are being deported solely because they are black. Mrs Khan and her two sons were not deported on 25 February only because one of her sons was too ill to travel. Once he recovers the threat of deportation will be a daily reality. Mr Khan has been forced to go into hiding in an attempt to remain in Britain and have a chance of supporting his family. The racist British state has succeeded in breaking up yet another black family. The case has aroused strong feeling in the community and a torchlight vigil was held on 25 February.

Malik Sivam



BRADFORD 12 CAMPAIGN

Supporters of the Bradford 12 in Bradford are now intensifying their efforts to mount a militant campaign in their defence. They are convinced that the maximum mobilisation of support must be forthcoming to fight the state's frame-up.

The July 11th Action Committee, now run by local black youth and students is meeting regularly to organise defence work. A demonstration in Bradford has been called for 20 March and extensive flyposting and leafletting is taking place. A programme of street meetings in the black working class areas of Bradford is also planned. Fundraising is being carried out by selling thousands of Free the Bradford 12 T-shirts. The 20 March demonstration and the national demonstration in Leeds on 3 April will be the focus of activity before the April trial. As the trial draws near a powerful show of strength on the streets would be the most effective way of showing the police that frame-ups mean fightback.

The July 11th Action Committee can

be contacted at c/o Students Union, University of Bradford, Bradford.

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Saturday 3 April 1pm
Assemble Saville Mount Park, Leeds
The Only Conspiracy is Police Conspiracy!

Free the Bradford 12!

NATIONAL PICKET OF TRIAL

Monday 26 April 10am
Leeds Crown Court

LEEDS 3: POLICE CHALLENGE VICTORY

The supporters of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! will remember the national defence campaign of the Leeds 3. Two FRFI supporters had been selling the paper door to door as they regularly do in Chapel-town when they were arrested by the racist Chapeltown police. It was clear to the people that the police were attempting to censor FRFI, the only revolutionary communist paper in Britain that fights for the interests of the working class and oppressed.

The charges were breach of the peace, obstruction and peddling without a licence. The police did win the first court hearing but at the Appeal the defence barrister, Courtney Griffiths, proved to the court how the police had lied and did not have any reason to arrest Gordon Teal or Bill Bolloten.

The victory over the police and the courts would not have been possible if it had not been for the commitment of FRFI supporters in handing out thousands of leaflets to publicise the cam-

aign and the help of the public who gave donations to build the Leeds 3 Defence Campaign.

The victory was sweet and short. The police are now appealing against the court judgement. The police will not accept the defeat they suffered and will go to any lengths to try to abolish the right to sell socialist papers.

The Defence Campaign is now once again drawing the attention of all democratic people to this state censorship of FRFI.

What you can do

- Offer help to your nearest FRFI Group.
 - Send donations to fund the Defence Campaign. Cheques payable to the Leeds 3 Defence Campaign.
 - Write to your local MP protesting about this.
 - Write to the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- The address of the Leeds 3 Defence Campaign is Box LAP 10, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

Leeds FRFI supporters

POLICE RAIDS

Police raids on homes are a particularly vicious form of state harassment. Unemployment and poverty level wages mean that working class people have to struggle hard to furnish often sub-standard housing. Frequently the few things that people have scraped together stand between them and destitution.

In the wake of a police raid people are left with smashed belongings, bills for repairs to walls, doors, windows etc, in some cases torn up floor boards and in all cases the misery that goes with having your home besieged and wrecked. This is, of course, to leave aside the question of physical attacks on residents and bystanders by the police.

Two recent examples from the Chapeltown area of Leeds show clearly the extent to which the state will go in its efforts to intimidate black families.

The police raid on the home of Winifred Anderson has already been highlighted in FRFI 14. In their attack on Mrs Anderson's terraced house Chapeltown police used 40 police with riot shields and truncheons, 3 inspectors, 3 meat wagons, a dog van and 3 CID cars and left as their trademark 4 smashed doors, one of them off its hinges and two smashed windows. Other belongings were strewn across a room and the TV set, pushed from its usual place was only saved by a cushioned fall. Only a few weeks after the raid, Winifred Anderson became seriously ill and died in hospital. There can be no doubt that the police siege on her home contributed to her early and unexpected death.

The second example brings out clearly the nature of community policing in Chapeltown. While a community constable chatted to Mr Francis in the basement of a house in Chapeltown, sixteen policemen refused the offer of keys to upstairs and smashed down doors in a raid. The community constable made no mention of his colleagues' invasion and Mr Francis, when he reached the upper part of the building, found that every door except one had been sledgehammered in and damage was estimated at £1,000.

These, it should be remembered, are just two examples among the many police raids carried out in Chapeltown.

Alison Scott

Ivan Freeman

The attempt by Liverpool police to frame Ivan Freeman is still continuing.

On 4 February, the same day of the attack on the Alcocks and Lavells, another major police operation was mounted - to arrest Ivan yet again. Once more, they waited until he was outside Liverpool 8. Once again, they found safety in numbers - about 20 were involved, as Ivan was taken out of Kirkland's bar in Harman Street. He was questioned about a robbery of £12,000, and then released. He is likely to learn if he is being charged when he goes for committal for the previous four charges on 8 March. He is calling for full support at the court that day - a call which Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! completely supports. Ivan's case is at 1.45pm at Dale Street Magistrates Court.

DEFEND BILL BOLLOTEN

Bradford FRFI Supporters are mounting a campaign to defend Bill Bolloten, who was arrested on a street meeting for the Bradford 12 last September. They are fighting to get the charge of 'blemishing the peace' dropped and for an end to police censorship in the city centre.

Support has come so far from ordinary black and white working people in Bradford, who have signed the petition condemning the arrest in their hundreds and given money to the campaign. Dennis Skinner MP has condemned the arrest as part of the police suppression of those that are building public support for the Bradford 12. Individual members of the SWP and WRP have also given money. Bradford Trades Council has also supported the campaign.

But many of the middle class socialists have again displayed their contempt for democracy by point blank refusing to support the campaign. The RCT-Party with their expected sectarianism refused to give money on the grounds that they kept their money to donate to more effective campaigns - presumably only those which build the RCT-Party. And when Barry Turner, Labour Party member and councillor-to-be and supporter of the Trotskyist *Socialist Organiser* paper was asked to support the campaign he was simply abusive. Cliff Slaughter, a leading member of the WRP, refused on three occasions to sign the petition. He eventually signed it but refused to give money on the grounds that he thought petitions were illegal and he would not want to 'implicate' himself in anything.

The fact that harassment of FRFI sellers in the city centre is continuing should alert all sincere socialists and democrats in Bradford to the

importance of this campaign.

STOP PRESS

On 1 March Bill Bolloten was found guilty and bound over in the sum of £200. He will appeal against this outrageous verdict which has opened the door for further police harassment. Donations urgently to: Bradford FRFI, c/o Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate, Bradford. 1
Bradford FRFI Supporters.

RACIST ATTACKS

The Bradford black community has recently suffered an escalation in violent physical attacks carried out by white racists.

The most serious occurred on 27 January when six racist thugs set upon three Asians in the West Bowling area. One suffered a broken finger and fractured ribs. Not half an hour later and only a few streets away, they attacked another Asian man. His skull was smashed by a concrete slab and he is fortunate to be alive today.

For these cowardly and vicious attacks the six racists have been charged simply with grievous bodily harm not attempted murder or conspiracy. The Court speedily granted bail to four of them, the other two being released shortly after. Compare this treatment to that meted out to the Bradford 12 - framed up on conspiracy charges and imprisoned for three months after injuring no-one. Angered at these murderous attacks and the Court's hypocrisy, almost 50 people picketed the Magistrates' Court on 15 February shouting 'No Bail for Racists' and 'Racists off the Streets'.

LOUIS BAPTISTA 4 YEARS

An incident typical of the vindictiveness and racism of the Liverpool police happened to Louis Baptista two days before he was sent down for wounding two policemen with intent.

He had just been driven home by his brother Eric after the court sitting had finished for the day. Eric wanted to take the car for a spin round the block. So they dropped off their father and Louis' girlfriend and went off. A couple of minutes later they returned. Immediately a car with four plain clothes policemen slewed in front of them on to the pavement. The coppers got out, dragged Eric and Louis out of the car and punched and kicked Louis and threw him into their car.

They took the brothers to Wavertree Road police station where both were charged with reckless driving and Louis additionally with driving while disqualified. Louis was held overnight and was taken straight to court to be sent down the next day. The fact that he was not driving, the fact that he was beaten-up by the police, the fact that the coppers had clearly been waiting for his return from court were witnessed by many of his neighbours who were outraged by this act. Louis was originally arrested a week after the first uprising on the word of two local coppers, PC Bullen and PC Cole. They claimed to have seen him attacking two other policemen with a spade although these two were later unable to identify him.

Both PC Bullen and Cole however have long been harassing Louis, PC Bullen having once got him sentenced for jaywalking - an indication of the

absurd charges that are used to harass youth in Liverpool.

Louis was found guilty on two charges and received an extremely severe sentence of four years. He also got nine months for throwing bricks and a day for handling a stolen lemonade bottle. The sentence of four years is now, along with John White's, the longest sentence handed out to anybody in Liverpool arrested during the uprising.

Liverpool Correspondent

Community police

The National Press has painted a rosy picture of 'community policing' in Liverpool 8. Pictures of smiling policemen talking with friendly locals have been legion. Indeed only a few days after the police beat up the Alcocks, the Guardian, pillar of British liberalism (ie sanctimonious hypocrisy) had half a page on how the incident had in fact brought the police and the community closer together.

The reporter clearly had not been to Liverpool at all to write this garbage. Community policing is policing in daytime with dogs. Community policing is policing at nighttime with armoured transit vans and jeeps. These are on the streets almost every night, for almost every night there are skirmishes between the youth and the police in some part of Liverpool 8; on occasions the youth are throwing up rudimentary barricades. The guerrilla attacks continue. Quite apart from the incidents on the night of 4 February one of the community policemen was hospitalised on the night of 15 February when he was jumped by three youths wearing balaclavas.

LC



● **Police investigate police investigating police ...**

If anyone can understand the complicated tangle of investigations various northern police forces are conducting into each other they deserve a prize. Cheshire police have recently concluded an investigation into allegations that senior Humberside police officers used police garages to service their private cars for free. The senior officers involved included the Chief Constable, who has since been 'cleared'. Meanwhile South Yorkshire police have completed a nine month investigation of another force, though finding 'no grounds for further action', they returned home, only to find Humberside police investigating the illegal drug dealing of South Yorkshire drug squad officers. During the investigation it was discovered that three unnamed South Yorkshire detectives framed two men up for a robbery. These men have now been freed from Walton prison and criminal charges of fabricating evidence are said to be pending against the detectives. Oh, and I nearly forgot, Merseyside police are investigating the conduct of the Humberside investigation into South Yorkshire police. Is that all clear?

● **Chief Inspector vandal** Staines police, noting the persistent vandalism of a local telephone box, posted PC John Kelly on an all-night vigil to keep watch for the mysterious vandal. Seeing a man enter the box and cut the handset cable, Kelly marched over to make an arrest - and now he alleges in court that the man he found was none other than one Chief Inspector Leslie Matthews-Stroud of Twickenham police! It is alleged by Kelly that Stroud justified smashing the box by saying he was 'fed up with people blocking his driveway' to use the phone.

● **£5000 mistake** Scotland Yard has admitted 'losing' £5000 confiscated from a man during his arrest in 1978. The police, who refused to hand over the missing money until threatened with legal action, said that there must have been a 'mistake' when the money was first counted.

● **Gun runner** The Special Branch's attempt to 'investigate' extreme right wing political organisations has come up with a problem. Guns illegally held by a neo-Nazi were traced to have gone through the hands of 2 members of two North-West gun clubs, one of them being a Police Sergeant Kenneth Morrison. Further investigation showed the Sergeant's home in Gatley to contain 3 shot guns, 2 rifles, a Smith & Wesson Magnum pistol and several rounds of ammunition. The sergeant is facing charges on two counts of having more than the legal limit of ammunition and one of alleged illegal dealing. Undaunted Sergeant Morrison is now attempting to gain the return of his mini-armoury claiming that he handed his guns over under duress!

● **SAS to lurk in dog dirt** Councillors in West Hallam in Derbyshire wish to hire a man to catch dog owners who let their animals foul the pavement. They say the ideal man for the job would be an ex-SAS man who must be 'agile enough to creep through the hedgerows and know how to conceal himself'. The official title of the job? 'A dog dirt lurker' - very

NOTES & COMMENTS

■ **Trade Union leaders on the make**

The enthusiastic support of the British labour aristocracy for British imperialism can be seen at the board meetings of many British companies. For example, Roy Grantham, the General Secretary of APEX who sold the Grunwicks workers down the river sits on the board of Talbot Motors. Tom Jackson, leader of the UPW and a member of the TUC's 'International' Committee, sits on the board of British Petroleum - the company that broke sanctions to ensure the racist Rhodesian regime of Smith was supplied with oil. Joe Gormley, Order of the British Empire, also of the National Union of Miners sits on the Board of British Investment Trust Ltd. Alan Fisher, leader of NUPE, sits on the board of the Belfast shipbuilders Harland and Wolff, the stronghold of loyalism in the six counties. This explains why his union viciously attacked its members who last year went on strike demanding the removal of British soldiers from Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital. Another of these brothers, this time Lord Allen of Fallowfield, leader of USDAW, sits on the board of Trade Union Unit Trust Managers Ltd who are advised by Hill Samuel, a leading financial prop of the racist South African regime. But if you really want to know about finance capital, go and see Geoffrey Drain of Nalco. He sits on the board of the Bank of England. Stephen Palmer

■ **No Education for Unemployed Youth Under Capitalism**

The British state has taken yet another step in its relentless attack on unemployed working class youth. At the end of last year the Government announced that unemployed youth refusing to join bogus Youth Training schemes, under which they would be paid a paltry wage of between £15-23, were to lose their pittance of social security payments. Now the DHSS has issued a confidential circular to its staff instructing them not to pay out benefits to youth who utilise their unemployed time studying for qualifications! Thousands of working class youth now face the choice of either abandoning their studies or losing their social security benefits. A DHSS spokesman trying to justify this vicious move stated that social security benefits were never designed to finance training and that unemployed youth who spent their time studying for qualifications had an unfair advantage over those studying at school or college who could not draw social security benefits. This latest move is clearly designed both to further cut the already inadequate education facilities provided for the working class and to save money on social security benefits. Capitalism has not only denied working class youth the right to work, it is now denying them the right to education. Tony James

■ **Proposed US military spending for 1983: \$264 Billion**

On 7 February, President Reagan announced the proposed budget for the US economy for 1983. His administration intends to increase military spending by \$44 billion to a colossal \$264 billion - one third of US state expenditure. This increase will be made possible only by increasing the oppression of the poor in the USA. It will be taken from the mouths of the hungry, from the entitlements of the unemployed, from the housing of the homeless: there will be a cut of \$27 billion in welfare spending. The increase will be used to step up imperialism's cold war offensive against the USSR and other socialist countries on one hand, and on the other to counter-attack the growing worldwide anti-imperialist movement and bolster up the most vile, inhuman regimes in the world. But it will not bring

accelerate its death. The \$27b. cut in welfare spending includes cuts of \$5b. in medical aid for the elderly, disabled and poor, \$2.8b. from educational programmes (eg remedial schools), \$1b. from student loans, \$326m. from the infant feeding programme, \$2.2b. from child benefit, \$2.2b. in job programmes, and the ending of all public housing construction. In addition, there are proposed cuts in the education budget, the transport services, and in heating assistance to the poor.

The massive war budget includes a figure of \$55.1b. for new weapons, \$23.1b. for 'strategic nuclear forces' (ie an increase on the USA's present stock of 30,000 nuclear warheads) and \$705m. for chemical warfare, which is described by Reagan as 'essential for the national interest'.

Whilst these figures show the strength of the resources of US imperialism, they also show its weakness. It is only by the massive use of arms that the US can attempt to destroy the growing anti-imperialist movement and its socialist allies. It is only through their arms that fascism in El Salvador is maintained, that counter-revolution in Pakistan is sustained, and Zionism in Palestine perpetuated. The armed might of imperialism does not, however, destroy the movements of the oppressed, but increases their determination. Furthermore, in their desperate attempts to bolster up reaction in the third world, the US imperialists increasingly polarise their own people. The growing number who get nothing from imperialism but racism, poverty, and unemployment will inevitably revolt on a scale not seen since the 1960's, when the black working class led uprisings which made the very foundations of US imperialism shudder. Tony James/Chris Fraser

■ **Glasgow Blackhill community fights motorway dangers**

The Labour controlled Glasgow Council includes the small Blackhill housing scheme. Blackhill is one of the most deprived and oppressed areas in the city. Now another problem has arisen for the community. Blackhill stands next to a motorway which rings Glasgow and every day at the rush hour an average of 500 cars and lorries race through the streets of the housing scheme every hour. In recent weeks two small children and one senior citizen have been knocked down and seriously injured. This led the people of Blackhill to mount road blocks and pickets in an attempt to force the council and the police to do something before someone gets killed.

On Wednesday 10 February 500 local people took over the streets and turned cars away from the area. Most drivers complied with this request apart from one or two including a police patrol car which was driven through the group of protesters as it tried to make its way into Blackhill. The people of Blackhill are determined to continue their fight to make their streets safe to walk in. FRFI supports them in their struggle. Kirstin Carey

■ **Laurence Scott: Police strike-breakers**

Once again the Manchester police have joined with the management of Laurence Scott and Electromotors (LSE) factory in Openshaw to break the ten month old strike and blockade mounted by the LSE workers. On Tuesday 16 February all police leave in the Greater Manchester area was cancelled to allow 400-500 police to attack the picket line. The shop stewards committee in a statement describe the attack:

'The operation today was like a military manoeuvre, well rehearsed to the last detail. We saw police deliberately destroy pickets' shelters, brutally clear the

berately arrest two strike leaders.'

The two arrested strike leaders, Denis Barry and Phil Penning, have been bound over to keep the peace - a clear attempt to restrict their involvement in the LSE struggle. Three others were also arrested. The police drove the pickets back at least 100 yards from the factory gates to allow a convoy of 10 scab lorries to load up electric motors and leave the works. It was members of the Manchester equivalent of the SPG, the Tactical Aid Group, who arrested Denis Barry.

The ten month old strike is aimed at saving the jobs of 650 workers. Mining Supplies of Doncaster took over LSE in 1980. First they put all the workers at LSE on short-time and then they decided to close the factory and remove all equipment to another plant in Norwich. It is this cynical attempt by the management which the workers are resisting.

In their fight the LSE workers have faced an alliance of management and police. Last November the police attacked the picket lines to allow a helicopter raid by masked men when motors and other equipment were seized by the management. Since the 16 February attack the police are mounting a 24 hour guard operation whilst the factory is stripped bare of equipment.

The workers have also discovered that the alliance ranged against them includes the corrupt and traitorous TU leadership. Duffy and Boyd of the AUEW have withdrawn support for the strike, launched a 'red scare' against the strike committee and sabotaged the struggle at every stage. Denis Barry quoted Duffy on the question of democracy 'I'll tell you what democracy is: it's doing what I say.' This is what LSE workers are now fighting. Union leaders in Norwich have recommended that no action be taken which could jeopardise jobs in Norwich - the Manchester workers can go to the wall in other words! The LSE strike committee has launched a campaign within the AUEW calling for the removal of the scab AUEW executive. All FRFI readers in the AUEW should support this campaign. Messages of support and donations should go to:

G Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire. Tony Sheridan

■ **Wormwood Scrubs: Screw Savagery covered up**

On 31 August 1979 300 armed and disguised screws from four prisons - the MUFTI squad - savagely attacked 220 peacefully protesting prisoners in D Wing Wormwood Scrubs. A disabled prisoner was beaten to the floor and beaten whilst on the floor. Irish POW Roland Lynch was left with a heavily bleeding head wound. 69 prisoners had stitches for head wounds.

After the attack exercise was forbidden for 3 days; washing facilities denied for 7 days; work denied for up to nine weeks; visits denied for two weeks; association denied for more than four months; 143 prisoners were charged and 142 found guilty of disciplinary offences; one prisoner lost 120 days remission; 119 lost 28 days remission; 43 were transferred to other prisons in the month after the attack. Not one screw has ever been charged or disciplined in any way for this vicious planned assault on unarmed prisoners.

After 2½ years a half-completed cover-up report, by Keith Gibson Director South East Region Prison Department, has finally been released. Gibson 'suspended' his investigations in early 1980 to allow 'unprejudiced'(!) police investigation into possible charges against screws. As usual they decided that there was not enough evidence to charge any screws. 69 head wounds not being 'enough' evidence! It took then until December 1981 to reach this 'surprise' conclusion. Gibson was then instructed not to complete his inquiries! So much for the Home Office's relentless pursuit of the truth!

only 5 prisoners had been injured. This // Gibson calls 'an incomplete and misleading account' but not 'deliberate concealment'. The screws were apparently so 'tired' after beating the prisoners that they could not count them accurately! The assault was the result of 'organisational confusion' 'failure of communication' and so on. These meaningless phrases are meant to obscure the fact that it was a planned and carefully prepared assault to break the protest by terror. Gibson lets his liberal mask slip when he says 'The MUFTI techniques...succeeded on this occasion and have succeeded on subsequent occasions!'

The report, however, does reveal the real reasons for the assault. The committee of 3 which led the protest consisted of an Irish POW, a black prisoner and a long term criminal. The report notes that the Irish POWs are 'the most organised' and that black prisoners are 'increasingly politically conscious'. The growing unity of these forces, shown in the Scrubs protest, was the reason for the screws' vicious attack and for the escalating screw violence against any prisoners who resist the prison system and its hired thugs. It also shows that the screws, however vicious and however protected by the Gibsons of this world, will not succeed in crushing the resistance in the prisons. Terry Marlowe

■ **USA plans nuclear attack**

The barbaric threat of imperialism to the socialist countries has been exposed in recently declassified US government documents. They show that in 1955 the Strategic Air Command planned a first strike attack by 735 US bombers which would drop 600 to 750 nuclear bombs on the Soviet Union. Although the chief targets were airfields and atomic installations, an estimated 118 cities would have been destroyed and 60 million people killed. This plan for unprovoked mass murder on an unprecedented scale impressed Captain Moore of the US Navy who reported on the SAC plan to his superiors.

'The final impression was that virtually all of Russia would be nothing but a smoking, radiating ruin at the end of two hours.'

This barbarism is not to be confined to the socialist countries, however. The Italian Panorama magazine reports details of a secret Pentagon document, dated 1973. It reveals that of 23,389 US nuclear targets, only 10% are located in Warsaw Treaty countries. The other targets include 'friendly' NATO countries. Although the socialist countries are the prime object of US nuclear aggression, the yankee imperialists are quite prepared to launch their most destructive weapons against anyone who threatens their interests. Stephen Palmer

■ **Abortion prosecutions dropped**

Following much bad publicity, the Government has abandoned its attempt to prosecute two doctors for offences against the 1967 Abortion Act. It is a temporary victory and no more. The danger to women's abortion rights remains. It was disclosed by Attorney-General Havers that the prosecutions planned were on charges of carrying out illegal abortions, a much more serious charge than that of failing to fill in the new abortion notification forms properly. This charge carries a possible 14 year sentence compared with a £100 fine. This confirms that the amended form is to be used to restrict abortion rights. Doctors who perform abortions for non-medical reasons of social need, ie abortion on demand, will inevitably be prosecuted. Many others will refuse to do abortions. The fight for abortion rights must continue in order to defend the slender rights existing under the 1967 Act and to extend them to free and safe NHS abortions on demand. Tony Sheridan

COMMUNIST TRADITION ON IRELAND PART TEN

THE LONG WAR

The fall of Stormont in March 1972 changed little. The Provisional IRA knew that direct rule from Westminster would not satisfy the needs of the nationalist minority. And as Sean Mac Stiofain later said

'... there was not an iota of difference, of course, in the behaviour of the British troops towards the people who were supposed to be receiving all the imaginary benefits of direct rule. A rifle butt in the stomach or an insult to passing women felt much the same along the Falls, whether the troops delivered it under Faulkner or the new Secretary of State, Whitelaw... It was not the pundits who had to trek out to the concentration camp at Lisburn, taking children to see their fathers after long waits and humiliating jeers from the camp guards.'

The Provisionals' military campaign would continue until Ireland was free from British rule.

British imperialism still faced the acute problem of drawing support away from the Provisionals. The fall of Stormont had led to a clamour from the SDLP, the Dublin government and the Catholic Church for the IRA to cease military operations. The British government knew it had to build on this. It had to undermine the unity of the nationalist minority if it was to destroy the Provisional IRA. For it was the Provisionals who posed the only serious threat to British imperialism's continued domination over the whole of Ireland.

To undermine the unity of the nationalist minority, the British government continued with the age old imperialist technique of the 'carrot' and the 'stick'. It would attempt to buy off the bourgeois nationalists of the SDLP and their supporters with the 'carrot' of power-sharing and the status and privileges of office which went along with this. The nationalist minority, however, would be 'discouraged' from continued support for the Provisional IRA by finding itself at the receiving end of a great deal of official and 'unofficial' British government directed 'stick'. Internment without trial would continue, later being replaced by judicial internment - systematic torture in police cells, long remands, Diplock courts and imprisonment in specially built concentration camps. British army and RUC terror and harassment of the nationalist minority, including the use of under-cover assassination squads, were to be regulated to the degree and extent the overall situation required. And when not facing the full force of official British state terror, the nationalist minority had to confront the 'unofficial' terror of loyalist paramilitary organisations. Finally, throughout this whole period, there was a barrage of lies and propaganda from both official and 'unofficial' British sources, directed against the Provisional IRA.

Truce

In April and May, the Provisional IRA campaign intensified with sabotage operations against 'the colonial economic structure' and attacks on the British army and security forces. 40 bombs were planted on the 13 and 14 April, hitting car showrooms, telephone exchanges, a bus station and other business premises. The big Courtaulds factory at Carrickfergus was bombed on 1 May and the Belfast Co-op, the biggest department store in the city, was blown up and destroyed on 10 May. The use of the car bomb increased. During April and May, sixteen British soldiers were killed in the Six Counties.

Early in May, Republican prisoners in Crumlin Road gaol went on hunger strike to back up their demands for political status. Five started the strike and they were to be joined by five more each week until the issue was decided. The leaders of the strike were the popular Provisionals Billy McKee and Proinsias MacArt, who had been sentenced to

the army on an arms charge. As the strike progressed, meetings and demonstrations took place throughout the Six Counties. Tension built up in Republican areas and street fights with the army and police frequently occurred.

In the South, the Fianna Fail administration went on the offensive against the IRA. After people in the Irish Republic overwhelmingly voted to join the Common Market against Republican advice, Lynch felt himself strong enough to directly attack the IRA. He introduced an Emergency Bill to enable civilian prisoners to be transferred to military custody, after Republican prisoners had taken over the inner section of the Mountjoy gaol on 18 May and released scores of prisoners in protest against prison conditions in the gaol. He followed this, at the end of May, with the reintroduction of part V of the Offences Against the State Act, which allowed the setting up of Special Courts consisting of three judges sitting without a jury. After raids by the Gardai and Special Branch, leading Provisionals, including Ruairi O'Bradaigh and Joe Cahill, were arrested. They were released after a hunger strike of thirteen and nineteen days respectively. The Provisional IRA GHQ were forced underground. Many Provisionals, however, were to be arrested and imprisoned after passing through these Special Courts.

Throughout this period, pressure for an unconditional ceasefire by the IRA came from mainly middle-class Catholics, the Dublin government and Church leaders. Speeches, meetings, protests along these lines, however insignificant, were given great publicity by the pro-British, pro-Unionist media. These protests received an enormous propaganda boost after the Official IRA executed Ranger William Best, a young local Derry man home on leave from the British army. He was stationed in Germany with the Royal Irish Rangers, one of the regiments the British could not trust for work in the Six Counties. Mac Stiofain says that the Provisional IRA had information that Ranger Best had frequently been out at night stoning British troops and that he was not going to return to his base in Germany. Mac Stiofain thought that the Official IRA must surely have been told this when they took him away.

There was bitter reaction to the killing in the Bogside and angry local women took over the headquarters of the Officials and formed a 'movement for peace'. The Church, press and television used the occasion to whip up anti-IRA hysteria. The 'peace at any price' brigade was reinforced by these developments. There were, however, large counter-demonstrations against this 'peace' movement, including a very large one by Provisional volunteers and supporters, but the calls for a ceasefire by political opportunists of all kinds inevitably increased. As Mac Stiofain, with some justification later said, 'this stupid killing had given them (the political opportunists) a chance to promote division and dissension in the midst of the



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The pressure for a one-sided ceasefire by the IRA built up. Peace pickets paraded outside the Sinn Fein offices in Kevin Street, Dublin. While the Provisionals and their supporters stood firm in the face of this pressure, the Official IRA did not. On the evening of 29 May, the Official IRA announced that it would terminate all military action. No terms were mentioned. Since ninety per cent of all operational activities were carried out by the Provisional IRA, the overall effect of the decision was insignificant. The popularity and political base of the Official IRA was not strengthened. The Provisional IRA was able to intensify its campaign and during the next four weeks casualties suffered by British troops were the biggest for any month since the start of the campaign. During May, according to British figures, there were 1,223 engagements and shooting incidents and ninety-four explosions. The sabotage operations were increasingly disrupting the day-to-day functioning of direct rule. As June began, the IRA stepped up the level of its offensive.

In the second week of June, a new and more serious peace proposal was put before the IRA leadership. It came from Republican activists in Derry and had the agreement of the local IRA military leadership. It was that the Provisional IRA should hold a press conference inside the Free Derry area and agree to suspend offensive operations for a seven-day period provided that Whitelaw agreed publicly to meet the IRA. The proposal was a good one. It gave an opportunity for the Provisionals to put their terms for a peace settlement formally to the British government. It offered a truce that was not unconditional, not one-sided and not for an indefinite period. From the military standpoint, it was a good time as the Provisional IRA were strong and were causing a great deal of damage and disruption to the economic life of the Six Counties. Finally, it shifted

back where it belonged, in the court of the British government. For, if the British now refused, it would show millions of people that the British government was more interested in destroying Irish resistance to British rule than in a peaceful settlement.

The Provisional IRA leadership agreed to accept the proposal. On Wednesday 13 June, Sean Mac Stiofain, David O'Connell, Seamus Twomey and Martin McGuinness gave a press conference in the no-go area of Free Derry and announced their offer of a truce.

Whitelaw responded quickly. He issued a statement that same evening rejecting the truce offer on the grounds that he ruled out any meetings with 'terrorists'. However, at the time of the press conference it emerged that Whitelaw had personally received members of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) inner council in a meeting held at their request. The men had arrived at Stormont Castle, hooded and masked, and wearing sun glasses. So Whitelaw was prepared to meet leaders of the UDA, a loyalist paramilitary organisation, which was directly responsible for the campaign of sectarian murders of Catholics which had begun in the Spring of 1972 (see below). It appeared that he was not prepared to meet the legitimate leaders of the nationalist minority.

After the failure of this public approach, two SDLP members, John Hume and Paddy Devlin, suggested to the IRA that they should approach Whitelaw and make it clear to him that the IRA were serious about a truce. This was agreed.

They came back saying that Whitelaw would like a meeting with the Provisional leadership but this was 'not possible immediately'. However, a preliminary meeting held in secret with members of Whitelaw's staff was suggested. In reply, the IRA laid down four conditions if there was to be a meeting to discuss a truce. The first was the

granting of political status for Republican prisoners in the Six Counties, some of whom had been on hunger strike now for nearly five weeks. Second, there were to be no restrictions on the choice of Republican representatives – the British to accept those nominated. Third, Stormont Castle was not an acceptable venue. Finally, the meeting was to be confined to the British representatives and the Provisional IRA (the SDLP had tried to get in on the act) with a mutually acceptable third party, who would not be a politician, to act as a witness. David O'Connell and Gerry Adams were nominated as representatives – the latter being at that time under detention in Long Kesh. John Hume took the terms back to Whitelaw and he accepted them all. As Mac Stiofain later said, 'within hours of publicly refusing to treat with terrorists, the British were secretly agreeing to discuss a truce with us'.

Gerry Adams was released from Long Kesh and an announcement was made that the political prisoners would be given political status – called 'Special Category' status. This included the right of political prisoners to wear their own clothes, the right to abstain from penal labour, the right to free association, the right to educational and recreational activities and the restoration of lost remission resulting from the prison protest. The hunger strike ended. The Special Category status was also given to UVF and other loyalist prisoners.

On 20 June David O'Connell and Gerry Adams met Whitelaw's two representatives Philip Woodfield and Frank Steele at a secret meeting place outside Derry. There they agreed to a bilateral truce with hostilities ceasing on both sides. The IRA were to enjoy freedom of movement on the streets and the right to bear arms, as were the British. There were to be no arrests, raids, searches of persons, homes and vehicles. After ten clear days of the truce being effective, a secret meeting between the Provisional IRA and Whitelaw would take place to discuss the IRA's conditions for ending operations altogether.

A statement was issued on Thursday 22 June announcing that the Provisional IRA would suspend offensive operations from midnight Monday 26 June provided that a public reciprocal response was forthcoming from the Armed Forces of the British Crown. Whitelaw announced that the British forces would reciprocate.

Republican intelligence – including that from a highly effective telephone tapping operation – had reported that high-ranking RUC officers and senior British army personnel had been saying that the IRA had agreed to talks because they were on their last legs. The IRA leadership decided to make it abundantly clear to all concerned that they were not negotiating from a position of weakness. All IRA units were instructed to continue in action up to the final minute of the agreed truce. In the period leading up to the truce, four British soldiers and an RUC man were killed, the last soldier being shot at 23.55 hours on Monday, five minutes before the truce was to begin. At midnight Monday 26 June 1972, all IRA operations ceased and the truce began.

A week after the truce started, the British had still not informed the Provisional IRA of the arrangements for the meeting with Whitelaw. The IRA then contacted the British representatives by telephone, using agreed numbers, and after some haggling by the British, a meeting was arranged for Friday 7 July in London.

On that date the Provisional IRA leaders Sean Mac Stiofain, David O'Connell, Seamus Twomey, Martin McGuinness, Gerry Adams and Ivor Bell were flown to London for the secret meeting with William Whitelaw and other British government officials. Two of the Provisional IRA delegation carried arms. Myles Shelvin, a Dublin lawyer, joined the meeting acting as secretary to the IRA delegation.

They met Whitelaw in a private house in Chelsea belonging to Paul Channon, heir to the Guinness fortunes and one of Whitelaw's junior ministers. This was the first time that representatives of the IRA had fought their way to a conference with the British for over fifty years. This fact alone confirms that the imperialist propaganda about 'isolated gunmen' was, and is, a straightforward lie. The fact that the British felt obliged to negotiate with the IRA was proof that the IRA had the volunteers, the equipment and the mass support to wage war for as long as necessary.

At the meeting, the Provisional IRA delegation placed a number of demands before the British government for negotiation. They were that:

1. The British government recognise publicly that it

to decide the future of Ireland.

2. The British declare its intention to withdraw all British forces from Irish soil, such withdrawal to be completed on or before the first day of January 1975. Pending such withdrawal, the British forces must be withdrawn immediately from sensitive areas.

3. A call for a general amnesty for all political prisoners in Irish and British jails, for all internees and detainees and for all persons on the wanted list. In this regard, dissatisfaction was expressed that internment had not ended in response to the IRA initiative in declaring a suspension of offensive operations.

There were two clashes between the two sides at the meeting. The first was when Whitelaw had the effrontery to say that British troops would never open fire on unarmed civilians. He was promptly and forcefully reminded of Bloody Sunday, and told of several other occasions when this had occurred. The second concerned all-Ireland elections to decide the future of Ireland. Whitelaw brought up the 'constitutional guarantees to the majority in Northern Ireland'. He was told that it was the Government of Ireland Act 1949, passed in the British House of Commons, which guaranteed the constitutional position. And any Act of Parliament could be set aside by another through a simple majority in the same House of Commons.

Whitelaw was given a week to raise the demands with the Tory Cabinet and give an answer to them at a meeting planned for 14 July. The truce was now open-ended with each side to give 24 hours' notice of intention to break it. Whitelaw agreed. He was told that the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) had already violated the truce agreement by setting up roadblocks and searches. He agreed to do something about this. Whitelaw also said that the sectarian assassinations and intimidation of Catholics by loyalist paramilitary organisations – there were to be 18 sectarian murders by loyalist organisations during the fourteen days of the truce – would be brought to an end and Catholics in UDA 'no-go' areas would be protected by the British army. Finally, further contact was to be made through his officials and the meeting was to remain secret.

An off the cuff remark by one of Whitelaw's officials on the flight back to Belfast exposed the attitude of the British ruling class to the lives of British soldiers. Frank Steele, when discussing a possible resumption of the war, said 'Don't think you're worrying us with the casualties you're causing our troops at the moment... we lose more men through road accidents in Germany in any one year than the losses you fellows are inflicting on us'. That twenty British soldiers had been killed and many injured in the last three weeks was of little concern to him and the ruling class he represented.

British imperialism breaks the truce

The truce was to last only two more days. The British did nothing about the sectarian assassinations and allowed the UDA to put up barricades in parts of Belfast while bulldozing nationalist ones down in Portadown. Two British army captains who had been detained by IRA volunteers after penetrating Free Derry the night before the London meeting, had been released the next day. However, two IRA volunteers from Belfast who had been arrested, in spite of telephone calls to the British representatives, were still detained two days later. The matter finally came to a head on the Lenadoon housing estate in West Belfast.

A few Catholic families who had lost their homes or had been forced to move through intimidation were allocated empty houses on the Lenadoon estate – a mixed estate. The UDA brought reinforcements into Lenadoon from outside areas and informed the British army that if Catholics moved into the houses, they would be burned out. The British army commander gave into UDA threats not allowing any more Catholic families to take up the homes allocated and so overriding the civilian authority – the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The British army then barricaded the area. People and cars in the area were stopped and roughly searched while UDA men, some carrying arms, stood behind the British troops and looked on and jeered. When on Sunday 9 July a ten-ton British armoured car rammed a lorry containing the furniture of some of the families – the incident was televised – an angry crowd of Catholics gathered. They were attacked by troops who fired rubber bullets, water-cannon and CS gas at them. Shots were soon fired. The truce had been broken by the actions of the British army.

Efforts were made throughout the weekend to contact the British representatives and finally Whitelaw himself. When Whitelaw was eventually contacted early on Sunday evening, he said he would look into the crisis. Nothing further was heard from him. The Provisional IRA had no choice. That evening, they announced the termination of the truce and instructions were sent out to all areas to resume operations at once.

An attempt was made by Harold Wilson, then leader of the Labour opposition, to try and get the truce going again. Three representatives of the Provisionals including Joe Cahill, flew to a private air field near Wilson's home in Buckinghamshire in a chartered plane on 18 July 1972. The talks came to nothing when it became clear that Wilson was not speaking on behalf of Whitelaw or the British government. Wilson never made any attempt to negotiate with the Provisionals again. No doubt when he had the power and authority to do so, his real intentions would have easily been exposed.

An imperialist government will not negotiate with representatives of a revolutionary movement without being under enormous pressure to do so. The IRA had been inflicting serious casualties on the British army and substantial damage to the Six Counties economy. Until the truce, the British had been using the people's desire for peace for their own propaganda campaign against the IRA. When this was exposed with a serious offer of a truce and peace negotiations by the Provisional IRA, the British had little choice but to go through the motions of acting on it. The Provisional IRA had also distributed their democratic programme *Eire Nua* just after the truce began. They had nearly 300,000 copies printed in English and Irish. This programme included religious and political guarantees and rights for the Protestant minority in a United Ireland and proposed four regional Parliaments including one for the nine counties of Ulster. It amounted to a serious peace proposal which could not simply be ignored.

The ending of the truce by the British government was deliberate. They needed only some pretext to do so. The dispute at the Lenadoon housing estate served their purpose. The British government built up the hopes of the nationalist minority only to smash them down again. The nationalist people wanted peace. The British wanted only to destroy the IRA – the only force to challenge their rule over the whole of Ireland. The British refused to take on the UDA and curb the loyalist assassination squads because it served their purpose not to do so.

Within a day of the truce ending, the British shot six civilians dead. In Ballymurphy this included a boy and a girl of thirteen. As the boy lay dying in the road, an elderly priest went out to him and was also shot dead. The UDA and other armed loyalists joined behind British troops in attacking nationalist areas. Many Catholic women and children fled to the South as refugees. And all the while the loyalist assassination squads continued their brutal work murdering another 13 Catholics before the end of July.

The IRA hit back hard and the British paid very dearly for destroying the truce. In the first eight days after the truce ended, the British lost at least 15 soldiers killed and over a hundred injured. In the next two weeks, they lost another ten dead. The sabotage offensive was renewed. One of its principal aims was to tie down as many British troops as possible on guard duties in the cities and towns, keeping them off the backs of the nationalist population and from being used against IRA units in rural areas. On Friday 21 July a major bombing offensive took place with 22 operations in Belfast in a period of 45 minutes within a one-mile radius of the city centre. There were 13 operations elsewhere in the Six Counties. In all cases warnings were given. But in two places in Belfast, Cavehill Road and Oxford Street, they were ignored. Nine people were killed – two were British soldiers, of the other seven one was a RUC reserve policeman, another a member of a militant loyalist organisation and five were civilians. Many people were injured.

Statements were immediately put out by the Belfast Brigade IRA accepting responsibility for the bombs, saying that warnings had been given in all cases, and that responsibility for loss of life rested with the British who failed to pass the warnings on. At first the British put out a statement, and Whitelaw stated on television, that in the two cases no warnings were given. Later this was retracted when undeniable evidence to the contrary was produced. The Samaritans, the Public Protection Agency and the Press were informed of the bomb positions at least 30 minutes before the explosions.



The *Irish News* later said that they had confirmed with the agencies concerned that the warning of a bomb in Cavehill Road was given an hour and 13 minutes before the blast, and in Oxford Street 30 minutes before it happened. In both cases, the information had been immediately passed on to the security forces. The Republican Movement was convinced that the British had deliberately disregarded these two warnings in order to weaken support for the IRA among the nationalist population. In a pamphlet 'Friday – the Facts' put out by Sinn Fein a week after the bombings, after explaining what had happened they then reminded the nationalist minority,

'The Republican Movement, unlike the British, always admits the truth whether it is distasteful or not. We do not cloud the issue by false reports based on half-truths. For years now, English politicians have told lie after lie about events in Northern Ireland. These run in a long list – the Widgery report, the Compton report and now "the Whitelaw Report", a report of events as distorted as all the others.

No one who has studied the situation in the last three years, can deny that the British are liars, with the intention of splitting the people. When has the Republican Movement lied to the people? Why should they lie to the people? The people are the Republican Movement. We extend sincere sympathy to the relatives of those who died so needlessly.'

Over the next few days, British troops launched attacks on five nationalist areas in Belfast and gun battles took place. On 27 July an increase in the number of British troops in the Six Counties of 4,000 to 21,000 was announced. On the 30 July, Whitelaw issued a statement that there would be 'substantial activity' by security forces in various parts of the Six Counties and he advised people to keep off the streets.

There had been a great deal of British and Unionist propaganda about the unacceptability of the no-go areas in Derry and Belfast over recent weeks. It was clear that the aftermath of the tragedy of the bombings in Belfast was going to be used by the British as an opportunity to launch an attack on these areas. No doubt the British hoped that the Provisional IRA would come out into the open to defend them.

The Provisional IRA had no intention of a static defence of these areas against what would be a strong armoured British force. As Mac Stiofain later made clear, it 'would have been completely contrary to all the principles of guerrilla warfare'. So that when 'Operation Motorman' began and thousands of extra troops and many hundreds of armoured vehicles moved at 4.30am on 31 July into Free Derry and the Belfast no-go areas, they met with no resistance from the IRA. In fact, the troops were often sitting targets as their huge heavy tanks and other vehicles got stuck in the tiny streets and British officers ran up and down shouting at the drivers. But, given the troop concentrations to start a shooting match could only have led to serious casualties among the civilian population. As it was, the British killed two young men as they came into Derry and showed typical imperialist arrogance by commandeering schools and community centres and using them as barracks. The no-go areas were down but the IRA remained intact.

The same day, three car bombs exploded in the village of Claudy, Co Derry, killing six local people and injuring many more. The IRA were, of course, blamed but they completely disclaimed responsibility. In a statement on the bombings the IRA pointed out that 'such actions can only suit the British Military to divert attention away from their mass invasion of nationalist Derry, Belfast and other towns'. Later, information which came out concerning the undercover activities of the Littlejohn brothers for the British security forces, showed only too clearly how the British were using *agents provocateurs* and other freelance groups for their own propaganda ends.

The events since the truce ended – the casualties inflicted in Belfast when the bomb warnings were not passed on – allowed the British to go on the offensive. From now on there would be no discussions with the IRA.

The British government now began a period of politi



COLMAN DOYLE

in Spring 1973. The Green Paper contained the usual and fundamental commitment to maintaining the existence of the sectarian statelet:

'The guarantee to the people of Northern Ireland that the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom will not be changed without their consent is an absolute: this pledge cannot and will not be set aside.'

But the Green Paper warned with a cynical frankness that

'... there is no hope of binding the minority to the support of new political arrangements in Northern Ireland unless they are admitted to active participation in any new structures.'

At last, this offered the 'carrot' the SDLP had been longing to bite. For the Green Paper went on to say that there were

'... strong arguments that the objective of real participation should be achieved by giving minority interests a share in the exercise of executive power.'

The Dublin government was also given a cover for its collaboration with British imperialism. The Green Paper, with typical imperialist arrogance, made a gesture towards recognising the 'Irish dimension' in the Six Counties problem:

'A settlement must also recognise Northern Ireland's position within Ireland as a whole... It is therefore clearly desirable that any new arrangements for Northern Ireland should, whilst meeting the wishes of Northern Ireland and Great Britain, be so far as possible, acceptable to and accepted by the Republic of Ireland.'

For, as the Green Paper went on to say, and in this it expressed a fundamental interest which British imperialism, the Dublin government and the SDLP shared in common, such a settlement would

'provide a firm basis for concerted governmental and community action against those terrorist organisations which represent a threat to free democratic institutions in Ireland as a whole.'

This was the key factor in the whole strategy. The Green Paper recognised that the political and military struggle of the Provisional IRA not only threatened the stability of the neo-colonial and colonial regimes in the 26 Counties and Six Counties respectively, and therefore British imperialist rule over Ireland, but also the capitalist system - 'free democratic institutions' - in Ireland as a whole.

The aim of British imperialism was to destroy the IRA. In an attempt to isolate the IRA, British imperialism was prepared to offer a share of political power, status and privilege to the Catholic middle class through its political mouthpiece, the SDLP. While less immediate, the IRA also represented the only serious threat to the neo-colonial government in the 26 Counties. The Green Paper allowed the Dublin government to put across its collaboration with British imperialism as a realistic step towards reunification of Ireland. On 24 November Lynch met Heath in London and spoke of a 'closer meeting of minds than he had ever experienced before', clearly indicating his agreement with the Green Paper. The next day the SDLP annual conference voted overwhelmingly to enter into talks with William Whitelaw on the future of the Six Counties - so breaking their pledge not to talk until internment was ended. The stage was now set to implement this latest phase of British policy.

Towards the end of September 1972 there were a number of petrol bomb attacks by unknown men on Gardai (police) stations in the 26 Counties near the border. A large bomb was also found in Dundalk Town Hall and defused amidst a barrage of publicity. There were also a series of bank robberies. All these activities were immediately blamed on the IRA and intensive police and Special Branch activity against Republicans followed. In early October a group of armed men raided a branch of Allied Irish Banks in Grafton Street, Dublin. They got away with £67,000. At their trial in July 1973, the Littlejohn brothers claimed they had committed the robbery to bring about legislation in the 26 Counties against subversive movements. They also later claimed that all their work, including the bomb attacks, had been carried out with the full consent of the Ministry of Defence. They had been acting as *agents provocateurs* for British intelligence. Other British agents were also at work in the 26 Counties and one of them, John Wyman, was later tried in an Irish court in February 1973

Lynch's Fianna Fail government was all too ready to play a central role in 'governmental and community action against those terrorist organisations' considered a threat to it. The background of bombings and bank raids offered the excuse. Already on 6 October, the Dublin government had closed down without warning the Provisional Sinn Fein headquarters in Kevin Street, Dublin and another building in Blessington Street housing northern refugees.

On 5 November Maire Drumm, Vice-President of Sinn Fein, was arrested and given a short prison sentence. On 19 November Sean Mac Stiofain was arrested and charged with being a member of an illegal organisation. He immediately went on hunger and thirst strike demanding his release. After a farcical trial, during which a Radio Telefis Eireann (RTE) journalist was sentenced to three months imprisonment for refusing to identify Sean Mac Stiofain's voice on a tape being used as evidence, Sean Mac Stiofain was sentenced to six months imprisonment. During his arrest, trial and subsequent imprisonment, there were massive demonstrations and one attempt to free him. After ten days and very close to death he gave up his thirst strike to avoid the inevitable bloody conflicts in the 26 Counties which would follow his death. In a message sent out he argued that the fight is centred in the Six Counties and must be kept there. After 59 days he gave up his hunger strike having been ordered off by the leadership of the IRA and in Spring 1973 he was released. Seamus Twomey replaced him as Chief of Staff of the IRA.

On 24 November the Dublin government dismissed the entire governing body of RTE for broadcasting the interview with Mac Stiofain. Another bomb went off in the centre of Dublin on 25 November causing serious damage and injuring 40 people. The Provisional IRA denied responsibility for the explosion. On 27 November the Dublin government announced details of a new draconian amendment to the Offences Against the State Act under which the evidence of a Garda Superintendent that he believed someone to be a member of the IRA or any illegal organisation would be sufficient to convict. There was widespread opposition to the Bill even from Labour and Fine Gael. It looked as if the Bill would not be passed when two huge bombs exploded in the centre of Dublin on Friday 1 December killing two men and injuring nearly 100. In a wave of anti-IRA hysteria, the Bill was passed on Saturday morning 2 December at 4am by 70 votes to 23. Fine Gael deputies voted in favour.

The Provisional IRA categorically denied responsibility for the explosions and it was widely thought that the bombs were planted by Loyalists or British agents to influence the vote in the Dail. With a system of judicial internment now in force, the gaols in the 26 Counties rapidly filled up with revolutionary Republicans, including Ruairi O'Bradaigh and Martin McGuinness.

The Provisional IRA and their supporters were hard hit by repression and arrests both sides of the border. In the Six Counties sectarian assassinations increased with the vast majority of them carried out by Loyalist paramilitary organisations such as the UDA and various offshoots of that same organisation. These loyalist groups instituted a campaign of random and brutal terror directed at Catholics, involving particularly ghastly murders after the sadistic torture of the victims. There were 40 sectarian killings in the last four months of 1972 and 31 of the victims were Catholics. A number of these killings were later found to have been carried out by the British army. Hardly any of the Catholics murdered in this way had any connections with the Republican Movement.

It was only after Operation Motorman was over and the British government was trying to create a political settlement acceptable both to the Catholic middle class in the Six Counties and the Dublin government, that the British showed a little less toleration of the activities of loyalist paramilitary organisations. A gun battle between the British army and the UDA took place in September 1972 and a UDA gunman - who was also a member of the UDR - was killed. Other clashes took place in October. In February 1973, after more brutal murders of Catholics - 5 in two days - 2 Loyalists were arrested and interned. They were the first loyalist internees for 50 years. The UDA reacted with fury and a number of heavy gun battles with the army took place. However, in spite of all this, the UDA was never banned by the British government. The number of loyalist internees in Long Kesh did, however, increase to 60 by mid-1974, compared with 600 Republicans. All were released by April 1975 when there were still over 350

Republicans interned, some having been there since 1971.

The nationalist population in the Six Counties was becoming more and more divided along class lines. The Catholic middle class desperately wanted peace and clutched at the Green Paper as offering real prospects for progress - their progress. The working class in the nationalist areas, still at the receiving end of internment, British army brutality and loyalist terror squads, knew that progress for them was not possible until loyalist supremacy, and therefore British rule in Ireland, was ended. They supported the Provisional IRA. So, despite the harassment and arrests on both sides of the border, the Provisional IRA had the support necessary to continue their campaign.

In the four months since Operation Motorman British government statistics said there had been 393 explosions and 2,833 shooting incidents. In December 1972, there were 48 explosions and 50 shooting incidents including rocket and mortar attacks. At the end of November, the IRA had begun using new Soviet RPG 7 rocket launchers with devastating effect. All this was happening in spite of army claims to have arrested 500 people including '200 Provisional IRA officers' since Operation Motorman at the end of July 1972.

On Monday 25 September 1972, the day of the Darlington Conference, the Provisional IRA blew up Belfast's newest luxury hotel, the Russell Court, causing over £2 million damage. On 2 October, at the Twinbrook Estate in Belfast, an IRA unit executed three members of a British army undercover squad, who were operating in Republican districts disguised as laundry service employees travelling in a Four Square laundry van. Two others were killed in a flat on the Antrim Road massage parlour used by the 'laundry men' as their HQ. The British only admitted one of their agents had been killed on that day. These squads were a practical application of Brigadier Kitson's theory of counter-insurgency operations. It was already known that SAS type undercover squads had been in operation in the Six Counties for some time. Their operations were stepped up in September 1972, and using unmarked cars, they were involved in attempts to assassinate not only Republicans, but a 'hit-list' but Catholic civilians as well. They often carried guns likely to be used by IRA units, so that having killed someone they could lay the blame on the IRA. No doubt they saw this as a means to create inter-Republican clashes and sectarian feuds. These Military Reconnaissance Force (MRF) squads hit problems early in 1974 when a RUC patrol shot two MRF men dead in an old village in South Armagh because they were acting suspiciously.

The Provisional IRA called a Christmas truce and ceased all but defensive actions for three days. The year 1972 had seen 10,628 shootings, 1,400 explosions, 103 British soldiers killed, 43 RUC men killed and 321 civilians killed. Since December 1969, the Provisional IRA had lost 75 volunteers killed while thousands had suffered torture and imprisonment. The New Year Statement from the IRA pledged that the struggle would continue 'as long as the British government persists in its policy of military repression'.

The British government had another weapon in its armoury of repression. On 20 December 1972 the Report of the Diplock Commission was published and its recommendations accepted by the British government. It was set up in October 1972 to consider

'... what arrangements for the administration of justice in Northern Ireland could be made in order to deal more effectively with terrorist organisations by bringing to book, other than by internment by the Executive, individuals involved in terrorist activities, particularly those who plan and direct, but do not necessarily take part in, terrorist acts; and to make recommendations.'

Diplock's recommendations were a fundamental assault on basic civil liberties. They removed the right to trial by jury for scheduled offences - ie those associated with 'terrorist' activities, a very broad category in the Six Counties. These would be heard by a judge sitting without a jury. Most judges in the Six Counties were openly associated with the Unionist party. The onus of proof as to the possession of firearms and explosives was changed so that the accused had to prove he/she was innocent. A confession made by the accused should be admissible as evidence provided the court was satisfied that on balance of probability they were not obtained by torture or inhuman or degrading

continued over

manoeuvring to isolate the IRA and undermine its support in the nationalist minority. But to do this, it needed to offer the anti-IRA sections of the minority a viable alternative. However, such an alternative, promising once again to reform the Six Counties statelet, would meet the inevitable opposition from the organised loyalist forces which were determined to defend the privileges and status of the Protestant majority.

The rise and fall of power-sharing

The SDLP had been pushed off the political stage ever since they were forced to leave Stormont in July 1971 (see FRFI 15). Since the fall of Stormont they had been using every opportunity to worm their way back again. On the 25 May 1972, an 'Advisory Commission' was announced consisting of 11 persons 'fully representative of opinion' in Northern Ireland (ie middle class opinion) to assist the Secretary of State in his duties. Next day, the SDLP offered a 'positive response' to what Mac Stiofain aptly termed 'Whitelaw's latest colonial reform stunt'. The SDLP urged those who had withdrawn their support from public bodies after internment to return to their positions 'to demonstrate their determination to bring about community reconciliation'. However, conditions were still not ripe for the SDLP to have formal negotiations with William Whitelaw and the British imperialist administration. Some more bait would be necessary and some move on internment before the craven opportunists of the SDLP would feel safe to conduct their betrayal of the nationalist minority more publicly.

On 15 July, two days after the Provisionals' press conference in Free Derry offering a truce, Whitelaw announced he proposed to hold a 'conference of the people of Northern Ireland' on the future of the province and further that local government elections would be held on the basis of proportional representation. The imperialists were dangling their bait. After the truce was over, and after the effects of the tragic deaths in Belfast on 21 July, the SDLP began to bite.

On 7 August after consultations with Dublin, the SDLP held their first meeting with Whitelaw. Internment, security, army searches, and the occupation by troops of schools in nationalist areas were some of the topics raised. After the meeting, the SDLP issued a statement saying that the release that day of another 47 men from Long Kesh camp was not adequate and they called for a complete end to internment. There were still 283 men interned. In the meantime they urged their constituents to continue with their 'admirable restraint in the present situation'. Two days later, during demonstrations and protests on the first anniversary of the introduction of internment, effigies of SDLP members Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin were burned on the Falls Road.

On 3 August Whitelaw had had talks in London with the Irish Foreign Minister. On 4 September Lynch met Heath at the Munich Olympic Games. During the talks, Heath raised the matter of 'IRA bases' in the 26 Counties 'from which raids into Northern Ireland could be mounted'. It would not be long before Fianna Fail would comply with their colonial masters' demands to remove them. On 12 September the SDLP met Heath and Whitelaw in London and during discussions they informed him that they could not attend the planned 'Conference of the People of Northern Ireland', scheduled for 25 September in Darlington, Co Durham, as no agreement had been reached on the ending of internment. The conference took place and predictably produced nothing since the SDLP did not attend. The British government would need to offer a tiny bit more before the SDLP would feel able to do its bidding. More secret meetings between the collaborating parties took place and negotiating positions were laid down. On 20 September, the SDLP produced a policy document *Towards a New Ireland* which called for dual British-Irish sovereignty over the Six Counties and a British declaration in favour of eventual unity of Ireland.

On 30 October 1972 the British government produced a Green Paper - *The Future of Northern Ireland*, a paper for discussion. They also announced that the border poll -

COMMUNIST TRADITION PART TEN

treatment. Bail for scheduled offences should not be granted except by the High Court and only then if stringent requirements were met.

The recommendations were incorporated in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1973 which became law on 25 July 1973 and came into force on 8 August 1973. They became the basis of judicial internment – the 'conveyor belt' system that was designed to give internment a thin veneer of 'respectability' – systematic torture in police cells to obtain 'voluntary' confessions, long remands, Diplock courts, imprisonment in the H-Blocks and Armagh Prison. With the Gardiner Report 1975 removing 'Special Category' status, the basis was laid for the 'criminalisation' policy administered by the Labour government. But all that was to come later.

The British government pushed ahead with its plans. On 8 March 1973 the referendum on the border was held. It was boycotted by all anti-Unionist groups including the SDLP. The boycott was remarkably effective; 41% of the electorate abstained. The result of the poll was a foregone conclusion. 591,820 votes or 57% of the electorate voted to remain part of the UK and only 6,463 voted for the alternative of unity with the 26 Counties. The IRA reinforced its attitude to the border poll when it carried its campaign to England. Car bombs went off outside that symbol of imperialist justice, the Old Bailey, and outside Great Scotland Yard. One person died and 180 people were injured. Poll or no poll, the Republican movement wanted a united Ireland. The political impact of the explosions was dramatic in that they, together with the successful boycott campaign, destroyed the propaganda value of the Border poll for British imperialism.

On 20 March 1973 the British government published a White Paper on the Constitutional Proposals for governing the Six Counties. They were based on the criteria laid out in the earlier Green Paper of October 1972. The Stormont parliament and government were to be replaced by an Assembly to consist of about 80 members elected by proportional representation. The Assembly would have committees whose chairmen formed the Executive. The Executive was not to be drawn from a single party but would embody the idea of power-sharing. There would continue to be a Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at Westminster and control of security matters would remain with the British government. A Charter of Human Rights was proposed in the White Paper.

There would be a Council of Ireland for North/South discussion on relevant matters and its form and function would be decided at a conference between London, Dublin and the Northern parties after the election. The White Paper is typically vague and empty on the purpose of the Council of Ireland and the most it offers is a repetition about forms of practical economic cooperation such as tourism, regional development, electricity and transport. But it is very precise on two other aspects of the 'Irish dimension'. That is the acceptance of all parties, and particularly the Dublin government, of 'the present status of Northern Ireland' and 'the provision of a firm basis for concerted governmental and community action against terrorist organisations'. The last all-Ireland dimension of repression was *the* one vital element in the Irish dimension which the British government wanted to secure. As the White Paper put it, 'the Government has no higher priority than to defeat terrorism'. The Catholic middle class had been offered a share in power, the Dublin government given an 'Irish dimension' in return for support in the campaign against the IRA and the acceptance of the present constitutional position of the Six Counties as part of the United Kingdom. The IRA put out a statement which summed up the White Paper as

'... a skillful application of Britain's age old policy of "divide and conquer". Having failed by military means to break the will of the northern people to be free citizens in a free country, Britain now presents a set of political proposals which is designed to confuse and fragment the nationally-minded community and insult and provoke those who believed in maintaining the connection with England.'

The White Paper led to a split in the loyalist camp. The Grand Orange Lodge condemned the White Paper at the end of April. Craig rejected it as well,

new party, the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party (VUPP) backed by the UDA and the Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW). This party would fight the Assembly elections in alliance with Paisley's DUP and in opposition to the White Paper.

The Assembly election took place on 28 June 1973. The Provisional IRA called for a boycott but with little effect. The SDLP put up 28 candidates and got 159,773 votes and nineteen seats, making it the largest anti-Unionist parliamentary group in the history of the sectarian statelet. The anti-White Paper Unionists got 28 seats with Vanguard getting seven seats, the DUP eight seats, the West-Taylor group of Unionists ten seats, and other independent Loyalists three seats. The Faulkner Official Unionists obtained only 22 seats and the Faulkner group itself was very unstable. The anti-White Paper Loyalists had a majority and were totally committed to pressing their case home.

The 'centre' of the Six Counties politics almost collapsed. The NILP with 18 candidates won one seat and the Alliance Party – a moderate pro-British Unionist party committed to reforming the Northern state – got only eight seats with Westminster backing.

The Assembly met for the first time on 31 July and after heated wrangles and numerous procedural motions most of the members except the followers of Paisley and Craig walked out. The latter remained to carry out impromptu business and ended proceedings by singing 'God Save the Queen'.

Meanwhile the Provisional IRA campaign went on with repeated rocket and mortar attacks on British positions and camps. In the first six months of 1973, Provisional IRA operations had expended 48,000 pounds of explosives. In July and August, there were 167 bombs detonated and sniping, cross-border raids, ambushes and other operations continued into the autumn. In August and September 1973, the English bombing campaign took off again with a more extensive use of incendiary devices and small bombs. 1973 saw 58 British soldiers and 22 RUC/UDR men killed.

Repression in the Six Counties continued with the number of Republican internees climbing back towards the pre-direct rule figures. In December 1973 662 men were detained in Long Kesh. In January 1973 women were interned for the first time. Between Operation Motorman, 31 July 1972, and August 1973, the British government claimed that 1,456 people had been charged with 'terrorist type' offences, 925 since 1 January 1973. There were now nearly 1,000 sentenced political prisoners in Six Counties gaols. Assassination figures in October 1973 showed 71 had taken place, the vast majority would have been carried out by Loyalists.

In the 26 Counties a new coalition government of Fine Gael and Labour had come to power after Fianna Fail lost the General Election in February 1973. Repression and harassment of Republicans continued. In March 1973, the Provisionals lost five tons of arms that had come from President Ghadaffi's Libya. The ship *Claudia* with Joe Cahill aboard was picked up in Irish territorial waters and six men were arrested and charged with smuggling arms. There were some victories. On 3 October, the sixty Republican prisoners won 'special status' after a hunger strike of 20 days. On 31 October a spectacular prison escape took place when a hijacked helicopter landed in the exercise yard of Mountjoy gaol and rescued three leading Provisionals, including Seamus Twomey.

After the June Assembly elections in the Six Counties, Whitelaw and the British spent months trying to persuade the Unionists around Faulkner and the SDLP to share power in a coalition government. But the middle ground was inevitably slipping away. Heath came to Belfast at the end of August and warned the party leaders to form an Executive very quickly. In September Whitelaw had separate talks with the three parties who broadly supported the White Paper – SDLP, Faulkner Unionists and the Alliance. Heath also met the new 26 Counties Taoiseach Cosgrave and urged the Dublin government to put pressure on the SDLP to reach an agreement.

On 5 October 1973 an agreement in principle was made by the three parties to form an Executive. The SDLP accepted that there would be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a further border poll in ten years' time. On 20 November, an anti-power sharing motion was narrowly defeated by only ten votes at the 750-strong Ulster Unionist Council. Things didn't look very promising. Yet on 22 November 1973 a definite agreement to form an Executive was made. Faulkner was to be Chief

Unionists, four SDLP and one Alliance in the 11 person Executive. There would also be a London-Dublin-Belfast conference as soon as possible to settle details for a Council of Ireland.

The anti-White Paper Loyalists were furious with these developments and they broke up the Assembly session on 28 November shouting at the Faulknerites 'Traitors; Traitors, Out, Out'. On 6 December, DUP and VUPP members of the Assembly attacked the Faulknerites and the RUC had to be called to eject DUP and VUPP members from the Chamber. That evening, the DUP, VUPP and the West-Taylor Unionists united to form the United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC) to bring down the Executive.

On 6 December the London-Dublin-Belfast Conference began at Sunningdale in England and lasted four days. A two-tier Council of Ireland and a fourteen-men Council of Ministers, seven from each side, was set up with unspecified executive powers, and a 60-member Consultative Assembly elected half by the Dail and half by the Northern Assembly. The Council's functions would be mainly in the field of economic and social cooperation. To make the RUC more acceptable to the nationalist minority in the Six Counties, the Council of Ministers was to be consulted on appointments to the Northern and Southern police authorities. In return for all this, the Dublin government agreed to accept the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, and to step up the offensive against the IRA, increasing the cooperation between the Gardaí and RUC. It was clear that the Sunningdale agreement was designed to hold the Northern Ireland Executive together and increase repression of Republicans. It was in no sense designed to take steps to unite Ireland, but on the contrary, to make sure it remained divided.

The new Executive took office on 1 January 1974. Three days earlier, the SDLP had called for an end to the rent and rates strike against internment. The SDLP was ready and willing to play the role allotted to it by British imperialism. They were prepared to serve in government while internment continued and under the very man who introduced it – Brian Faulkner. And Austin Currie (SDLP) was responsible for one of the first acts of the Executive – legislation for deductions from benefit payments to people on rent and rates strike with a punitive 25p a week collection charge. The SDLP had supported and helped to organise the rent and rates strike. Now, as part of the Executive, they turned against the strikers.

As the Executive took office, Faulkner's following was steadily disintegrating. On 4 January 1974 a motion rejecting the Sunningdale agreement was carried by a majority of 80 at the Ulster Unionist Council. Faulkner resigned as Unionist leader to be replaced by Harry West, but he remained head of the Assembly group – effectively a new party. Faulkner's days were numbered and with them the whole power-sharing arrangement.

On 28 February there was a Westminster election. It had the effect of driving home what was already clear. The Protestant population and particularly the working class would not support power-sharing. The election result was a disaster for Faulkner. The United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC) won 366,703 votes and eleven seats. The Faulknerites won none with 94,331 votes. The SDLP won one. The Labour Party won the election and Harold Wilson became Prime Minister, and Merlyn Rees Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

On 23 April 1974 the UUUC held a conference at Portrush Co Antrim to work out an agreed policy. It was attended by representatives of the UDA and also by Enoch Powell – showing the support of a section of the British ruling class. The conference called for the scrapping of Sunningdale, the Executive and the 1973 Northern Ireland Constitution Act based on the White Paper 1973. It demanded a return of Stormont with full security powers and a new election.

The Ulster Workers Council Strike

After the collapse of the Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW) in 1973, a new body, the Ulster Workers Council (UWC) was set up by some LAW members. This new organisation concentrated on recruiting loyalist workers, in particular shop stewards and other key workers especially in the power stations. Loyalists had a firm grip on shop stewards' and works committees in the power stations and throughout the engineering industry. LAW had been campaigning since 1971 to oust communists, Catholics and even Labour supporters from union positions in the industry.

On 14 May the Assembly was faced with a

announced if the motion was defeated they would call a general strike. The call was backed by the Ulster Army Council which coordinated Loyalist paramilitary organisations. The motion was defeated by 48 votes to 28 and that evening, the UWC strike began. Although intimidation was used by supporters of the UWC, the fundamental reason for the strike's dramatic success was the mass support it had amongst the loyalist working class. The key weapon was control of the power stations and the UWC were able to reduce power output to a couple of hours a day. Industry was unable to operate and if workers turned up they were soon sent away. Shops and businesses closed down everywhere. UDA road blocks were set up all over Belfast and the RUC and British army made attempt to intervene. By Monday 20 May the shutdown was almost total.

On Friday 17 May car bombs exploded during the evening rush hour in Dublin and Monaghan in the Republic. There were no warnings given and people were killed with over a hundred injured. The bombs were planted by the UVF. The UVF press officer, Sammy Smyth, said 'I am very happy about the bombings in Dublin'.

On 19 May, Rees declared a state of emergency taking power to use troops to maintain essential services. But the troops did nothing where it mattered on the ground.

There were pathetic attempts made by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions on 21 May to lead workers back to work. One was a march led by L. Murray, TUC leader, which had less than 100 marchers – many not workers – who were attacked and jeered at by Loyalists and had to be protected by the British army throughout. The ICTU represented no-one but themselves.

The next day, the UWC banned petrol supplies to all but essential users – the latter being determined by the UWC. The economy was in chaos and the Executive was desperate.

The Provisional IRA set up emergency committees to distribute food, fuel and cash throughout the nationalist areas, ignoring the massive British army presence still being maintained in those areas.

On 23 May Faulkner, Fitt and Napier, the leader of the Alliance Party, flew to London and begged Wilson to use his troops. On 25 May Wilson was on television and in a vitriolic speech called the strike leaders thugs and bullies and referred to them as 'people who spend their lives sponging Westminster and British democracy...'. There was still no action.

The SDLP, having lost almost all credibility among the nationalist minority, threatened to resign by 27 May if Wilson did not use troops. On 27 May the troops moved in and occupied petrol stations throughout the Six Counties to supply essential workers like doctors and nurses. It was an empty gesture. The Loyalists threatened to close power stations down completely if troops were near, together with water and sewage plants.

The Faulknerites came to terms with reality. They called on Rees to negotiate with the UWC. They refused and they resigned on 28 May 1974, bringing the Executive down with them. The UWC called off its stoppage and the Assembly was suspended for four months and then indefinitely. That was the end of power-sharing.

A British army officer writing in the *Monarch Club* magazine – *Monday World* – in Summer 1974 claimed that the Labour government had actually decided to use troops to end the stoppage on 24 May, but the Army refused. The writer said 'For the first time, the Army decided that it was right and that it knew best and the politicians better toe the line'. The Labour-imperialist government did toe the line just as the Liberal-imperialist government had done in March 1913 during Curragh mutiny (see FRFI 9). Again, it was clear that real power lies outside parliament.

Power-sharing could only have worked if some improvement in the social position of the Catholic working class could be achieved. This was possible in the context of the Six Counties sectarian statelet based on loyalist privilege and loyalist supremacy. The Loyalists understood that the Executive could only work if it offered something tangible to Catholic workers. And it was precisely their fear that it might which led them to bring it down.

The British state now recognised that there was no longer any other way than outright repression to defeat the real threat to its interests in Northern Ireland – that from the nationalist masses led by the vanguard, the IRA.

David Reed
February 1982

El Salvador

FMLN Advances

With the beginning of 1982, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) rapidly intensified its military offensive against imperialism's US backed fascist junta. On 27 January, FMLN units attacked the junta's main military airport at Ilopango and destroyed most of its airforce. A week later, other revolutionary units engaged the junta's army garrisons in fierce fighting and temporarily captured the towns of Corinto and Nueva Trinidad inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy, and killing Nueva Trinidad's military commander. The cities of San Miguel, Gotera and Usulután have been left without electricity for extended periods and in the capital, San Salvador, over 40 school buses have been burnt in the continuing campaign of revolutionary sabotage against economic and military targets.

In response to these developments, representatives of US imperialism have been forced to publicly reveal the reasons behind the US Government's backing for the bloody regime of General Duque. Speaking at a press conference on 1 February, Mr Thomas Enders, US Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, said:

The decisive battle for Central America is underway in El Salvador. If after Nicaragua, El Salvador is captured by a violent minority, who in Central America would not live in fear? How long would it be before major strategic interests – the Panama Canal, sea lanes, oil supplies – were at risk?

Some few would argue... that we should cut off aid. But that would defeat the goals both Congress and the Administration are pursuing... The Americans and Cubans would have a new opening to expand their power on the American mainland.

The real issue at stake for imperialism in Central America is neither democracy nor the elimination of oppression. No! What imperialism is really concerned about is the defence of imperialist 'strategic interests', the trade routes and sea lanes through which flow the profits of American multinationals from the oppressed peoples of Central and Latin America, the oil supplies which run the engines of American capitalism and the dreaded spectre of communism gaining a foothold on the American mainland.

Whilst Enders speaks of 'violent minorities' (!) referring to the mass popular uprising in Nicaragua and the popular war led by the FMLN in El Salvador, the US Administration is pumping in further military and economic aid to the sadistic junta in El Salvador. Immediately following the revolutionary destruction of the junta's airforce, President Reagan moved to give the junta \$55m to replace the losses. In addition the US Administration is planning to increase military and economic aid to El Salvador by \$100m in 1982. In order to push through the first instalment of this, President Reagan certified to Congress that the junta is making concerted and significant efforts to respect human rights. This depraved lie followed revelations that the junta's troops had quite cold bloodedly murdered over 600 unarmed men, women and children in the village of El Mozote. It came at the very time that 19 people in the suburbs of San Salvador were murdered, during which incident 4 girls in their early teens were raped by junta sadists.

As US imperialism is slowly, but surely, being pushed into a corner by the FMLN, its utterly reactionary character is being revealed for all to see. The democracy and self-determination which imperialism is after is seen to be no more than a democracy and self-determination for imperialism's 'strategic interests' along-

democratic aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the El Salvadorean people. An official of the Roman Catholic Church in El Salvador commenting on US support for the El Salvador junta, asked:

'Why does Reagan light candles for

Poland's nine dead and complain about Poland living two months under martial law? In El Salvador 30,000 people have been killed and we have been under martial law for two years. Why does he light the candles for Poland and not for us?

Thomas Enders has given imperialism's reply to this question. Martial law in Poland stalled imperialist plots against socialist Poland and was therefore

opposed to US 'strategic interests'. Communists therefore do not ask why no candles for El Salvador, they declare:

**Victory to the FMLN!
No to US Intervention in El Salvador!
Death to Imperialism!**

Eddie Abrahams



Britain aids junta

British imperialism is directly involved in sustaining the fascist junta in El Salvador. Last year the Inter-American Development Bank granted a \$45m loan to El Salvador. The British Government is one of the major donors to the Bank, and supported the granting of the loan. Yet the British Foreign Office Minister for Latin American Affairs, Mr Richard Luce, has repeatedly lied about British support for El Salvador's regime. He said

'Since 1980 Britain has abstained in the efforts that have been made... we have not supported any efforts to provide loans, on the grounds that money could not be used productively at the present time.'

This lie was nailed in a letter sent by John Pilger to the *Guardian* on 9 February. Commenting on Britain's role in the \$45m loan, John Pilger wrote:

'... Richard Luce has a silly habit of saying that the British representative abstained. This is not true; the Europeans as a group could not agree and abstained: inside the group Britain voted "yes".'

The Foreign Office it appears proclaims (although falsely) its opposition to loans to the murderous El Salvador junta, not because the regime sanctions massacres, rape, pillage and suffering, but because the 'money could not be used productively'. In other words because it would not earn a profit for British imperialism. That is the sum total of British imperialism's concern for money going to El Salvador's butchers.

It should be pointed out that the \$45m loan which Britain *did* support went to finance the so-called 'land reform programme' in El Salvador. This 'reform' has been denounced even by the Salvadoran Communal Union – a participant and supporter of the 'reform programme' – as being an utter failure as a result of 'military terror', 'forced evacuations' and a 'frequently hostile bureaucracy'. In its report it states that at least 90 UCS officials have been killed by ex-landlords and their junta allies and that, 'with the assistance of security forces', 25,000 former sharecroppers or tenants have been forcibly evicted before they could file ownership claims under the 'reform programme'.

British imperialism has in fact been a consistent supporter of US imperialist policy in Central America and El Salvador. It is the hope that a defeat for the

revolution would allow British capital to be 'used productively' to exploit and rob the people of El Salvador without any opposition. Indeed last February, on a visit to Washington Mrs Thatcher told Reagan:

'The responsibility for freedom is ours to share. In Britain you will find an ally, valiant, staunch and true.'

Three months later, in March 1981, Nicholas Ridley, then Minister of State at the British Foreign Office said of US policy on El Salvador:

'Their interest in countering Soviet and Cuban subversion in Central America is one which we share.'

This stand, despite superficial disagreements, remains that of British imperialism today. And it could not be otherwise. Both US and British imperialism are engaged throughout the world in jointly supporting reactionary and fascist dictatorships in Turkey, South Africa, Chile, Korea and elsewhere. In Ireland, British imperialism is waging war against the Irish people with the full support of US imperialism. Britain is reciprocating by giving its support to the US assault against the revolution in El Salvador.

Communists in Britain recognise that international imperialist co-operation against the world wide struggle for democracy and socialism must be met by the unity of all anti-imperialist and communist forces. Communists therefore declare:

**British Hands Off El Salvador!
Victory to the FMLN!
Death to Imperialism!**

Eddie Abrahams

Grenada

On 13 March, the people of the Caribbean island of Grenada celebrate the third anniversary of their revolution. Led by the New Jewel Movement they overthrew 200 years of British colonial and neo-colonial rule, and began the task of solving the problems which black people have faced for centuries in the Caribbean and USA.

The response of the British and US imperialists was inevitable. The USA along with Britain as its most trusted ally, immediately launched a trade and aid boycott. Within a week of the revolution, the US State Department had drawn up plans for a blockade of the island. British imperialism, using Barbados as a base, started to form a joint Eastern Caribbean Defence Force aimed at policing the islands for imperialism. Royal Navy frigates and officers form the backbone of this force and train local coast guards of client states and colonies. British banks have made substantial loans for arms purchases by right wing regimes as part of the blockade strategy. The US imperialists have multiplied their aid to favoured states in the region 16 fold since 1979, much of it in arms and last year held Caribbean manoeuvres, code named 'Ocean Venture', which were the biggest such exercises since World War 2 and included a dummy-run invasion of Grenada.

On formal independence in 1974 the people of Grenada faced the typical legacy of British colonial rule in the Caribbean. A corrupt imperialist puppet regime under Eric Gairy; unemployment up to 50% forcing Grenadians to seek work in the USA and Britain; an education system where Britain had left only 1 secondary school in the whole of its administration resulting in only 14% of the population gaining secondary education; and a health service priced beyond the means of most of the people. Like other colonies Grenada's economy was forced into the production and export of a few raw agricultural products: cocoa, nutmeg and bananas. These were bought cheap and sold for exorbitant profits by British multinationals such as the Geest Company. Imperialism had provided little or no industry

CENTRAL AMERICA IN BRIEF

● Revolutionaries Unite

The revolution in Guatemala is now set to achieve greater successes. In early February, the four main revolutionary organisations announced the formation of a new unified organisation – the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union. United into one organisation are the Guerilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Revolutionary Organisation of the People in Arms (ORPA), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) and the Guatemalan Labour Party (PGT) which is what the Communist Party is called. After a lengthy period of co-operation, the unity of the revolutionary organisations will make for more effective battle against the fascist Garcia regime and speed up its final collapse. FRFI hails the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union, the vanguard of the anti-imperialist and democratic revolution in Guatemala.

● Guerilla Offensive

Since November 1981 there has been a tremendous increase in military actions taken by the revolutionary movements of Guatemala, with massive co-ordinated attacks on police stations, government installations and military bases, often simultaneously in different towns and regions. These have involved up to 500 guerillas in single operations. The military junta has replied by indiscriminately murdering peasants and workers – an estimated 11,000 were murdered in 1981.

One of the most spectacular revolutionary operations took place on 26 November. The Guerilla Army of the Poor (EGP) launched offensives in the countryside, thus enticing troops from the capital – Guatemala City. Simultaneously units of the EGP based in the capital raided the main military barracks and released Emeterio Toj Medrano – a co-founder of the mass peasant movement, the Committee of Peasant Unity.

electricity, roads or running water and no airport. Although its land was fertile and seas teeming with fish Grenada had to import processed foods and fish to survive under Gairy.

Since the revolution, the Grenadian people with the slogan 'Idle land for idle hands' have taken over the land and put it to use for their needs. Spending on agricultural improvements is 54 times what it was before 1979, crops and livestock are being diversified and food processing plants developed to end dependence on imperialist multinationals. Capital expenditure has risen 9 times and the People's Revolutionary Government has introduced free secondary education, free health care, free school milk, books and uniforms, free adult education run by young and old together, opened an eye clinic, and has introduced controls on prices of staple foods in accordance with the people's wishes.

Imperialism is therefore stepping up preparations to attack the Grenada revolution. Even while unemployment in the USA is increasing by 500,000 a month, US imperialism is planning a record \$220b arms budget for the coming year. The US State Department has repeated its threats to the revolutionary people of Grenada and Central America. They have 'not ruled out the possibility of military action' in the region and are 'studying the viability' of a strike against Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada. The Grenadian people have responded like their brothers and sisters in Cuba and Nicaragua by forming mass organisations and an armed people's militia. In the words of their revolution and the millions of revolutionary people in the Caribbean and Central America they declare:

Forward Ever, Backward Never!

Trevor Bayne

POLAND: TOUCHSTONE FOR REVOLUTIONARIES

The imposition of martial law in Poland has drawn the sharpest possible line of division between international anti-imperialist movements on the one side and the pro-imperialist CPGB, Labour Party and their trotskyst acolytes of the IMG, SWP et al on the other. The pro-Solidarity and pro-imperialist stand taken by British opportunists and middle class socialists has once again revealed their complete isolation from and opposition to the real international forces of revolution and progress.

On 3 February, Nhan Dan, the official newspaper of the Vietnamese government said:

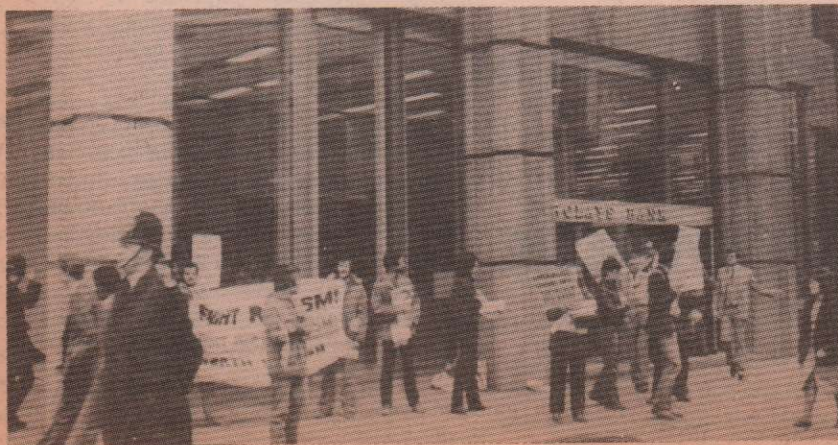
'The new American propaganda campaign is directed not only against the Polish People's Republic and other countries in the socialist community but also against international peace and security. The attitude towards the Polish situation has become the touchstone for all revolutionaries and progressive people.'

The Cuban Vice-Premier Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, speaking in Havana on 9

February said that martial law was:

'The least serious thing that could have happened... (was) aimed at normalising the situation within a socialist framework... refusing to accept it would mean simply taking up sides with those who want to destroy the foundations of socialism in Poland.'

Meanwhile, Barricada, the newspaper of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua supported martial law saying it was:



FRFI's 12 February day of solidarity with socialist Poland was marked by pickets of Lloyds and Barclays banks in Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds and London. In London the chosen site of the pickets was right in the nerve centre of British capitalism - Lombard Street in the City.

FRFI supporters distributed hundreds of leaflets exposing the imperialists' hypocritical attacks on socialist Poland and explaining the way in which the banks have tried to strangle socialism in Poland. The normal tranquility of these institutions was disturbed by loud chants of 'Imperialist hands off socialist Poland', 'Cancel all Polish debts to British banks'.

Wealthy people displayed their outrage, such as one city gent in London who expressed a wish to hang the picketers. However, working class people were interested and sympathetic: for example four young working class black women said 'It's right what you're saying about these banks' - they were employees of the bank. In Manchester an Asian man said 'The problems in Poland are due to America and England'.

It was noticeable that these successful pickets - the only practical activities in support of socialist Poland yet mounted on the streets of Britain - received no support from the self-proclaimed defenders of socialism in Poland, such as the NCP.

Who runs Solidarity?

Anyone who believes that Solidarity was an authentic revolutionary workers' movement should look at the report by the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF) on Solidarity. It shows that this organisation was run by white-collar workers and petit bourgeois. The IMF can hardly be accused of sympathy with communism - its British affiliate is racist Bill Sirs' Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

The IMF representative reports that Solidarity is organised on a regional basis. The regional committees

'seemed to me to be dominated by representatives from the technically well qualified jobs - civil engineers, school teachers or lawyers'.

At Cracow, where the huge Lenin steel works employs 40,000 people, the deputy president is a civil engineer, and there

'are five steelworkers in a presidium of 20 people. They claimed that efforts had been made to push forward manual workers... but workers are still nominating better qualified people in the plants.'

At Wroclaw

'The influence of academics and lawyers is strong in Wroclaw Solidarity. There is a permanent team of

meetings, advising on elections and drafting statements'.

Their deputy chairman is the historian Krzysztof Turkowski. At a local electrical plant, the Solidarity chairman is Radoslaw Obst, a computer data supervisor who:

'was in an extremely well-paid post, earning 15,000 zlotys, three times the monthly average... He would like to know about the West German system of industrial democracy... They said they listen to foreign radio stations, especially Radio Free Europe'.

Radio Free Europe is the CIA backed radio station in Munich which broadcasts anti-communist propaganda into the socialist countries.

At the same factory 'although three-fourths of the workforce is female... there are only three women on the Inter-

'...a policy to preserve socialism (against) conspiratorial plans of Solidarity.'

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine wrote in the January 1982 edition of its English language PFLP Bulletin:

'The Polish crisis is an internal struggle between pro- and anti-socialist forces... Imperialism knows very well that the crisis provoked by Solidarity is a support to its anti-communist crusade. It behoves all anti-imperialist forces to be equally aware of the importance of supporting the PUWP... it its efforts to end the crisis in the interests of the Polish working class and advancing socialist construction.'

These revolutionary movements, unlike Britain's middle class socialists, have fully recognised and exposed imperialism's hypocritical talk about 'democracy'. Sam Nujoma leader of the South West African People's Organisation denouncing President Reagan for imposing sanctions against the USSR and Poland while refusing to do so against South Africa, said:

'What Reagan does is a hypocritical deceptive exercise. We are not impressed with what Reagan does. To us, he is just a hypocrite.'

The hypocritical deceptive exercise, which has been joined by Britain's cringing and cowardly trotskysts and opportunists, has also been exposed by communists in Poland. Tribuna Ludu responding to US and British imperialist propaganda declared:

'We will not be taught democracy either by the wardens of Northern Irish prisons, the protectors of Central American murderers or people who are happy to see their trade union activists in handcuffs.'

The stand taken by anti-imperialist and communist movements reveals that between them and the so-called 'socialists' of the Labour Party, CPGB, IMG, SWP et al, there is a deep and unbridgeable abyss. On the one side are the revolutionaries on the other the reactionaries.

Roy Spring

Radom, the secretary was an archaeologist!

Back in the Polish capital, Warsaw:

'Perhaps even more so than in provincial cities, one sees fewer workers in the Solidarity office in Warsaw by comparison with the large number of professionally qualified people or those connected with the universities.'

When the regional spokesman, Janusz Onyskiewicz, a university mathematics lecturer, was asked about the absence of workers in this 'trade union' headquarters, he explained 'they hate paperwork'.

The IMF report is confirmed by the *Observer's* Polish correspondent:

'Industrial workers will not come forward to stand for office. The first sessions of the Warsaw regional conference meeting... were mostly composed of well-educated young people, some in factory white-collar jobs but many intellectuals and jobless activists working as full-time union organisers... Poland's industrial workers who began this great 'self-limiting revolution' are now losing its leadership... The next generation of Solidarity leaders will be mostly white-collar experts and intellectuals of various categories.'

IRAN: THE DEATH OF A HERO

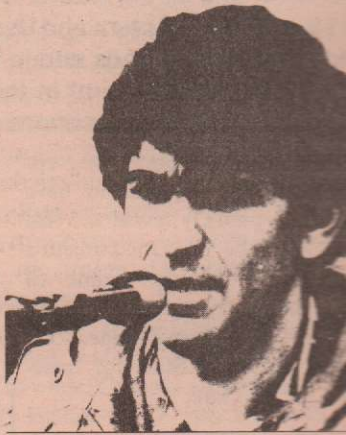
On 8 February, the Iranian anti-imperialist revolution lost one of its most brilliant, dedicated and courageous leaders. After a 4 hour battle, agents of the reactionary Khomeini regime murdered Moossa Khiabani, military Commander-in-Chief of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran and acting political leader of the PMOI in the whilst Massoud Rajavi carries out international duties abroad. In the same incident, the Khomeini agents also murdered Moossa's Mojahed Sister Azar Rezaii and Mojahed Sister Ashraf Rabi'i, was the wife of Massoud Rajavi.

Moossa Khiabani, aged 33, was one of the most experienced members of the PMOI. He joined the organisation in early 1967 just over a year after it was founded. Prior to 1971, he held important responsibilities and when the PMOI was organised into three divisions, Moossa was appointed to the Central Committee of one of the divisions. In 1971, following extensive raids by the Shah's secret police SAVAK on PMOI members, Moossa was arrested with 33 other members of the PMOI. He was subjected to such severe torture that he had to be transferred to hospital. In 1972, a military tribunal sentenced him to death. However, the outcry which greeted the execution of 5 other Central Committee members of the PMOI forced the Shah to commute Moossa's sentence and that of other Mojaheds to life imprisonment.

Inside the Shah's prisons Moossa Khiabani played a crucial role in the organisation and leadership of imprisoned revolutionaries. His outstanding revolutionary determination is testified to in the remarks by Massoud Rajavi who said:

'...in the Shah's prisons, every time we were under pressure, and faced problems we would rely on him. Not only us but all the prisoners relied on him as he was firm, determined and uncompromising. If Moossa did not exist our Organisation would not have existed and today our revolution would lack many things. In short if it wasn't for the firm and determined men like Moossa, the enemy would have destroyed us all.'

Together with Massoud Rajavi, Moossa Khiabani was one of the renowned political prisoners whose release formed a



Moossa Khiabani

constant demand of the Iranian people's demonstrations throughout the years of 1978-9. He was released from prison in January 1979, received a hero's welcome in his native town of Tabriz where he played a great role in liberating that city from the clutches of the Shah's troops.

Following the victory of the Iranian uprising in February 1979, Moossa Khiabani had a crucial role in the adoption of the PMOI's policies and strategies. On the occasion of his loss, Massoud Rajavi declared:

'I am incapable of describing his distinguished ideological, political and military position and rank. But I could not have matched Moossa's firmness and mountains could have equalled him in his steadfastness.'

Azar Rezaii, murdered along with Moossa Khiabani had also suffered under the Shah when she witnessed the death of her 3 brothers and sister hands of the Shah's mercenaries. Ashraf Rabi'i spent many years in the Shah's prisons, first condemned to death and then to life imprisonment.

The Khomeini regime by its campaign of murder and torture against the revolutionary organisations of the Iranian people is trying to finish the unfinished task of the Shah. By trying to destroy the revolutionary movement and crush the people's resistance to fascist dictatorship, Khomeini is paving the way for imperialism to return to Iran. Khomeini and his friends regret the death of Moossa Khiabani and the revolutionaries in Iran are grieving his loss and continue to be undaunted. Concluding his message to the Iranian people on the occasion of Moossa's death, Massoud Rajavi

'Rest assured that the martyrdom of Moossa and such heroic Mojaheds Ashraf Rabi'i, Azar Rezaii and other sisters and brothers who rushed to the help of Moossa will eventually form one more step towards our final and inevitable victory and the achievement of freedom and prosperity. Rest assured that Khomeini's rejoicing will be short-lived and that our people will triumph.'

The people's rage at the spilt blood of these martyrs will only strengthen their determination to resist and annihilate Khomeini's reactionary role in the dustbins of history.



London Rally

On Friday 5 February London RCG organised a rally in defence of democratic rights under the title of Democracy for the Rich! Repression for the Poor! The rally was an outstanding political event. The platform, which joined together Amandla Kitson, daughter of imprisoned South African revolutionary Dave Kitson and sister of Steve Kitson, arrested and tortured by the apartheid regime; Maxine Williams, speaking for Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!; Gordon John, representing the New Jewel Movement, leaders of the revolution in Grenada; Alistair Logan, well known for his consistent defence of Irish political prisoners; and Patrick Hill, chairman of the South London Irish Solidarity Committee and brother of Irish POW Paul Hill. The audience of nearly 100 overwhelmingly working class black, Irish, Iranian and British people showed their enthusiasm for the speakers by frequent loud applause throughout the meeting. It is a long time since London has seen such a meeting.

Speaker after speaker condemned British imperialism for propping up the racist South African regime, for its murderous repression in Ireland, for its counter-revolutionary designs on Grenada and for its racist police repression against the youth who rose up against the British state last summer.

Amandla Kitson, speaking about the ANC-led struggle in South Africa, ended to warm applause saying 'I call upon you all to join with the oppressed and smash the apartheid state'. The audience revealed its revolutionary opposition to imperialism when they interrupted Maxine Williams' speech to applaud her remark 'When Thatcher and Reagan and indeed the Labour Party take up the call for "freedom", we say Beware!... They want to "free" Poland... to "free" Poland from socialism!' She ended her speech urging people to 'Act Now! Join the Fight-back!'

The revolutionary unity of anti-imperialists was highlighted when Gordon John speaking for the London support group of the New Jewel Move-

ment declared 'We stand with all people struggling for liberation from imperialism, colonialism and fascism.' In a speech acclaimed with a standing ovation, Alistair Logan spoke of the importance of organising against repression, and said Irish prisoners have more chance now because of groups like the RCG and because the black community have taken a stand. Patrick Hill, speaking last, told of the brutality and murder in British prisons and ended his speech with the apt remark 'If we fail to support them - Irish POWs and black and white prisoners - we cannot call ourselves socialists, democrats, communists, least of all revolutionaries.'

The rally was a real inspiration for all present. It was a demonstration of solidarity for all those fighting imperialism and an uncompromising condemnation of imperialism whether it be in Ireland, South Africa, Grenada or here in Britain itself. A collection of £57 was further evidence of the revolutionary sentiments of the meeting.

JM

NORTH LONDON PETITION

The North London Irish Solidarity Committee has launched a petition calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. It states: 'We the undersigned recognising the right of the Irish people to self-determination call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland'.

STOP PRESS

News has just reached us that in the last week of February the Khomeini regime in Iran arrested 40 members of the organisation of Peykar (Struggle). Some are members of the Central Committee, who have a long record of struggle first against the Shah and now against the reactionary Khomeini regime. The arrested revolutionaries of Peykar are now, like all other revolutionaries in Khomeini's prisons, under severe torture and their lives are at risk. Amongst the over 4,000 revolutionaries executed by Khomeini agents have been many members and supporters of Peykar. FRFI condemns these executions and demands the immediate release of all revolutionaries imprisoned by the reactionary regime.

Since its launch the petition has already proved great success. At Kilburn in 1½ hours over 150 signatures were collected from Irish, black and English workers - who also gave generously to the committee funds. Ordinary workers are more than willing to sign and show their opposition to British imperialist rule in Ireland. Already 800 have signed in London alone. The petition is now being used throughout the country. Signatories include: Richard Balfe (MEP), Matt Merrigan (District Secretary ATGWU, in a personal capacity), George Davies (National Organiser NCP, in a personal capacity).

Among certain prominent 'supporters of the Irish people', however, the petition is not so popular. The list of shame of those who have refused to sign includes: Ernie Roberts MP, Clive Soley MP, Gerry Fitzpatrick (SWP), Don Flynn (LCI), Chris Myant and Tom Durkin (CPGB) and Dave Hallsworth (RCT-P). Readers of FRFI are urged to get petition sheets and circulate them amongst their friends, workmates etc. We want 10,000 signatures as soon as possible! You can get them! Write to NLISC (Petition), BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

IRELAND

Irish Prisoner harassed

The Maidstone prison authorities are now subjecting Irish POW Gerry MacLochlainn to deliberate harassment. Gerry worked in the tailors shop altering jeans. This work ran out and was replaced by a contract to make shorts for the British army. As an Irish POW Gerry refused on principle to do this, or any other work for the Ministry of Defence, but made it clear that he would do any other work.

He was charged with refusing to work and punished with two days in the punishment block and seven days loss of remission. When he went back on the wing he was again put on making the shorts. He again refused and got the same treatment as before.

The harassment had been temporarily halted by the fact that the machinery in the shop has mysteriously 'broken down' and now requires such extensive repairs that the shop has been closed. However, it is expected that when the shop re-opens the harassment will be renewed.

Gerry is also being discriminated against by the prison authorities' refusal to pay for his Open University course. Other prisoners have their courses paid for but this is being denied to Gerry.

It is clear that Maidstone has decided to harass and provoke Gerry MacLochlainn possibly as a prelude to having him recategorised into the notorious Category A.

FRFI sends its greetings and full support to Gerry MacLochlainn who is resisting yet another attack on an Irish POW in a British jail.

Terry Marlowe

DE LOREAN GOES BUST

The De Lorean Motor Company in Dunmurry West Belfast was the result of a deal between a thug and a profiteer. The thug was Roy Mason, who, in August 1978 when the deal was made, faced mounting exposure of the Castlereagh torture system and a growing H-Block campaign and therefore desperately needed to cover his tracks. The profiteer was John Zachary De Lorean whose sports car project was turned down by Puerto Rico and the 26 Counties before Roy Mason agreed to fund it.

At the time it was clear that the car was an extremely risky venture. The market for such cars was shrinking not growing. Previous attempts to launch similar models had foundered. The design of the car with its gull wing doors and stainless steel body produced a series of problems: the doors could not be opened inside an ordinary garage; they leaked in the rain; the stainless steel body was so easily marked that distributors took to painting the cars on delivery in the USA; the car handled badly at speed; numerous safety problems emerged such as nuts undoing themselves whilst the car is in motion and two recalls, one secret, have been carried out. Despite discounts of \$1500 US car dealers have unsold stocks of 2500 cars. None of this matters, or ever mattered, to De Lorean or Mason. Mason got his cheap propaganda about 'job-creation'; De Lorean got his payoff.

The over £80 million put into the company by the government has created 2500 jobs which have lasted some three years at a cost of £30,000+ per job. 1100 of these jobs have already disappeared. The remaining workers are on short-time and some, if not all, of them will lose their jobs. They will return to the dole queue in an area where unemployment is running at 50%. None of this matters to Mason or his successors. The jobs lasted long enough for the British ruling class's purposes. The immediate need to create a 'farce' of 'jobs' in West Belfast has passed. The British ruling class, therefore, cares not a damn about the workers thrown back onto a

lifetime on the dole. Such are the fruits of British, imperialist rule in the Six Counties!

As for De Lorean he remains safe and sound. He 'risked' a total of \$400,000 in the West Belfast company - whilst drawing an annual salary of \$442,000! He lives in extreme luxury, always travels by Concorde, produces personal expenses claims of \$100,000 a year and even had two personal family servants on the payroll of the West Belfast company! Even after the collapse his position is secure. De Lorean controls the US distribution - so if Sir Kenneth Cork, the receiver, succeeds in keeping the company going De Lorean, through his American company, will be the main beneficiary. This international jetset spiv has done very well out of his deal with Mason.

The people who suffer out of all this are 1100 workers in Belfast who have already lost their jobs; 1500 others whose jobs are at risk; 2000-7000 more in the Six Counties and Britain whose jobs could go as a result of the collapse of De Lorean Motor Company and all those workers who, through their tax payments, helped to enrich John Zachary De Lorean and give Mason utterly false lying propaganda about the 'benefits' of imperialist rule in the Six Counties. This is what British imperialism stands for: unemployment and poverty for the oppressed; luxury and richness for the John Zachary De Loreans.

Terry Marlowe

LIVERPOOL RAIDS

continued from page 1

day except Phil. Chris Lavell is charged with burglary as is his brother Tony, whilst Pauline is additionally charged with assault. Of the Alcocks, Debbie faces one charge of assault, Maxine two, Kenny two plus attempted GBH, and Floyd six, whilst their friend Marlene faces one.

All the Alcocks and Marlene received bruising and cuts on the head, arms and body, Floyd's being particularly severe as he was hit repeatedly on the back by truncheons. He also dislocated his thumb badly. Kenny needed stitches on his forehead where he had been hit with the first truncheon blow. Debbie was fortunate not to have had any complications with her pregnancy. The doctor who examined them in the Bridewell made light of their injuries - this was to be expected as he was the same one who found nothing much wrong with Peter Leonard after his terrible beating in the summer (reported in FRFI 15). The sick mentality of the police came out when Chris Lavell's uncle phoned to find out when they would be released; he was told that Chris's bail would be set at

£25,000, and that he would be charged with amongst other things rape and male prostitution.

There was widespread anger in the area at the police attack. That same evening, two policemen were jumped and beaten in the immediate vicinity, the first of several guerrilla attacks that night which spread to Liverpool 8 as a result of which 12 policemen were hospitalised.

The following Wednesday, 150 people attended a meeting organised by the local St James Tenants Committee. The police were there - cruising around outside in two armoured vans, and inside, in the form of the Divisional Commander and liaison officer. They had been invited by the Committee, whose leading member is Roger O'Hara, prominent member of the Communist Party. An attempt to confine discussion only to the incident on Thursday was rejected, as members of the audience recounted incidents of harassment and beatings involving the local 'stop and search' bye-law.

The extent of their use can be gauged

by the fact that Chris Lavell, who is white and not known to the police, has been stopped five or six times in the past twelve months. For those known to the police and for black youths it is much worse. But all O'Hara could suggest was that everybody had to abide by the law and that people should co-operate peacefully and politely with the 'stop and search' procedure. This caused some resentment, for politeness, particularly if you are black, does not prevent a beating.

He also cautioned the meeting against any attempt to bias the case against the families either way - as if justice would be given to the two families without support! His final suggestion was for more community policing. That suggestion comes at a time when the brutal, repressive role of the police is becoming ever more naked and community policing is being exposed as a cover for police brutality.

The final part of the meeting saw the Divisional Commander take to the platform but not before some of the meeting had made their feelings known about his presence by pointedly walking out. The mood of the meeting was one of anger at police racism and brutality and the fact that over the past few months it has clearly got worse. But that one event on 4 February is a graphic illustration of what 'community policing' is all about.

Liverpool correspondent

RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up

Birmingham public meeting on South Africa

Birmingham FRFI held a successful meeting to mobilise for the 14 March AAM demonstration. 25 people attended the meeting called under the slogans Victory to the ANC! Smash Apartheid Now! on 16 February.

The audience heard Amandla Kitson condemn the genocidal apartheid regime propped up by British and US imperialism. Terry Marlowe, speaking for FRFI, explained why British imperialism depends on the brutal exploitation and oppression of the black masses in South Africa and said that the revolutionary struggle led by the ANC must be supported by workers in Britain.

In the discussion representatives of the middle class left showed that their only concern at such meetings is to launch sectarian, racist and slanderous attacks on the ANC. Workers Power declared that the Freedom Charter was bourgeois and the ANC could not win the struggle for socialism in South Africa. After the meeting one of the vociferous Workers Power comrades revealed that she had never read the Freedom Charter! The RCT-Party accused the ANC of being dominated by Stalinism and putting unity above the interests of the struggle. These slanders were ably answered by a comrade from the ANC who forcefully stated that the

Freedom Charter voiced the aspirations of the people as was proved by the people's willingness to fight and die for it. Terry Marlowe challenged Workers Power and the RCT-Party to prove their support for the liberation struggle by their mobilisation for 14 March.

Marie Jay

Defend Ace Kelly

On 25 February, 5pm outside the YOPs lobby of Parliament, a black FRFI supporter Ace Kelly, after a brief exchange of words with the police, was arrested for 'selling without a licence'. As he was being led away to Cannon Row Police Station many youth, in a demonstration of support, shook his hand and further showed their disgust at the police action by sending up a massive roar of condemnation. A group of over 20 mainly black youth followed our comrade to the station. On seeing this the police quickly shut the gates to 'keep that lot out'. Inside the station the sergeant said 'You people ought to go to South Africa or Turkey if you think there's no democracy here' once again showing the racist ignorance of the British police whose imperialist state backs South Africa and Turkey!

After being searched from the hair right down to between the toes, 4 hours later the FRFI supporter was released

having been charged with 'Obstruction of the highway'!

This, yet another racist attack on the right to sell socialist anti-imperialist literature, will be fought. Anyone who witnessed this arrest please contact FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

3rd Anniversary of the overthrow of the Shah of Iran

On 13 February two demonstrations were held to commemorate the third anniversary of the uprising in Iran: both were supported by contingents of FRFI.

A 1000 strong march called by the MSS, supporters of the People's Mojaheddin Organization of Iran, commenced at the Albert Hall. The demonstrators chanted slogans in protest at Khomeini's regime and demanded the freedom of 30,000 political prisoners. A rally at Trafalgar Square was held where speakers condemned the murderous Khomeini regime.

Meanwhile 300 Iranian revolutionaries marched through working class districts of North London chanting militant anti-Khomeini slogans to the applause of some of the local working class in a demonstration organised by the Co-ordinating Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Struggle.

A militant rally at Islington Green

received messages of support, including one from the RCG, and ended with an inspiring rendering of the Internationale.

Grangemouth FRFI

Following the 23 January UDA attack on FRFI sellers in Grangemouth, FRFI sellers returned to the town centre on 13 February to reassert their right to sell the paper. With the backing of some of the local community who agreed to act as stewards, the sale took place successfully as the UDA failed to show their sectarian faces.

Reactionary Anarchist Bookshop bans FRFI

The police and the courts are continually engaged in an attempt to silence FRFI and drive its supporters off the streets. Now, in Glasgow, new agents of imperialist repression have appeared in the form of the Glasgow Anarchists. These people run a bookshop called the 'Glasgow Bookshop Collective' - a supposedly 'alternative, progressive' bookshop. On 20 January this year, these 'progressive' people sent FRFI a letter informing us that they will no longer stock our newspaper, the reasons being:

'... this was a political decision and was taken on the basis of the large and irreconcilable differences in political outlook which exist between yourselves and the majority opinion in the alternative. As a consequence of the attitude which your paper (FRFI) expressed concerning the situation in Poland, we intend to cease stocking it'.

FRFI condemns this reactionary political censorship and calls on readers and supporters of FRFI to boycott this bookshop and send letters of protest demanding a reversal of this reactionary decision.

Write to: The Glasgow Bookshop Collective, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow.

North London Irish Solidarity

Following the successful forum of 21 January the North London Irish Solid-

arity Committee (NLISC) has organised two very successful street meetings in Kilburn. These meetings, through their principled stand, have won new support to help take forward the NLISC's

The Committee has now produced a petition calling for self-determination for the Irish people and Troops Out Now, which is proving very popular. The petition has already gathered hundreds of signatures. Over 150 also collected at the first street meeting. FRFI supporters also sold 13 copies of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

The Committee is now making a major drive to ensure the success of a demonstration which will take place on Saturday 20 March. Many organisations, including Sinn Fein, are supporting the demonstration.

Early in April, the Committee is organising a public showing of the film 'The Patriot Game'.

Anyone seeking further information about the work of the NLISC write to: NLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

South London Irish Solidarity

The South London Irish Solidarity Committee (SLISC) held two very successful street meetings in working class areas of South London on 13 and 20 February. At the second, in Brixton, there was a succession of fifteen speakers! They spoke on different aspects of the struggle against imperialism in Ireland and urged their audience to attend the demonstration in North London on 20 March calling for 'Victory to the Irish People!' and 'Troops Out Now!'. Over 400 leaflets were given and FRFI supporters sold 150 copies of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! (175 copies at the previous street meeting). The police timed their harassment too late, arriving as comrades were dispersing at the end of the meeting. Informing the stewards (unlike other demonstrations that megaphones were not allowed) (owing to the large number present) the pavement was obstructed. Fortunately the police were outnumbered and did not try anything more.

Anyone wanting to join the SLISC should write to: SLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

EVENTS

6-12 MARCH

SOUTH LONDON

Street meeting
Saturday 6 March
Tooting Broadway Tube
1.45pm
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

BRADFORD/LEEDS

Sponsored Run
Sunday 9 March
Leaving the Tyrls,
Bradford at 2pm to
Potternewton Park, Leeds

LEEDS

Public Forum
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid Now!
Thursday 11 March
Leeds Trades Club 7.30pm
Saville Mount Leeds 7

13-19 MARCH

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION CALLED BY ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

Forward to freedom
in South Africa and
Namibia!
Sanctions Now!
London Sunday 14 March
Assemble: Speakers
Corner, Hyde Park 12 am
March to: Rally at

NORTH LONDON

Street meeting
Saturday 13 March
Archway Tube 1.45pm
Called by North London
Irish Solidarity Committee

DUNDEE

Street meeting
Saturday 13 March
Dundee City Square 1.30-3pm
Called by Fight Racism!
Fight Imperialism!

20-26 MARCH

LONDON

DEMONSTRATION
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 20 March
Assemble Archway Tube 2pm
Called by North London
Irish Solidarity Committee

BRADFORD

DEMONSTRATION
Free the Bradford 12!
Saturday 20 March
Assemble Infirmary Fields,
Lumb Lane 1pm
Called by July 11th
Action Committee

EDINBURGH

Street meeting
Saturday 20 March
The Mound
Princes Street 12-2pm

EDINBURGH

Public meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Thursday 25 March 7.30pm
Edinburgh Trades Council

MANCHESTER

FRFI Open Forum
Friday 26 March 7.30pm
Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street
Manchester

27 MARCH-3 APRIL

SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting
Saturday 27 March
Balham Tube 1.45pm
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

LONDON

Public Meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Wednesday 31 March 7.30pm
Camden Centre, Bidborough St
off Euston Road
Nearest Tube: Kings Cross
Price: 30p in advance
50p on door

NORTH LONDON

Street meeting
Saturday 3 April
Kilburn Square 1.45pm
Called by North London
Irish Solidarity Committee

LIVERPOOL

Public Forum: The struggle
against apartheid
Friday 2 April
Stanley House 7.30pm
Upper Parliament Street

SOUTH LONDON

Street meeting
Saturday 10 April
Tooting Broadway Tube 1.45pm
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION FREE THE BRADFORD 12! Saturday 3 April Leeds

COMING SOON

LEEDS

Public Meeting
Stop Police Harassment!
Defend Democratic Rights!
Defend the Leeds 3 and FRFI!
Thursday 6 April
Leeds Trades Club 7.30pm
Saville Mount Leeds 7

NORTH LONDON

Film and Public Meeting
'The Patriot Game'
Wednesday 21 April
For further information contact
North London Irish Solidarity
Committee, Box BM 4835
London WC1N 3XX

SOUTH LONDON

Public Meeting
Mobilise for May 8th Demo
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Friday 30 April 7.30pm
Speakers invited include:
Patrick Hill, Sinn Fein, FRFI
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

DEADLINE FOR FRFI 18: 21.3.82.

LIVERPOOL

Public Meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Friday 30 April 7.30pm
Stanley House
Upper Parliament Street

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION Get Britain Out of Ireland! Self-Determination for the Irish People! Saturday 8 May London Called by May 8th Demonstration Organising Committee

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

NORTH LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays
Next meetings: Thursdays 4 & 18 March, 1 April at 7pm
Camden Labour Club
Carol Street NW1
Open meetings - All Welcome!

SOUTH LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays
Next meetings: Thursdays 11 & 25 March, 8 April 7.30pm
Room 31, Lambeth Town Hall,
Brixton

SPONSORED RUN
FRFI is fielding a runner for the London marathon on 14 March. We want sponsorship for the mile completed over 15 minutes each minute of a complete below 3 hours 11 minutes. Sponsorship forms available from FRFI BCM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

■ LEEDS meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm: 2, 16 & 30 March at Leeds Trades Club Saville Mount, Leeds. Details from FRFI, Box LAP 10, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.
■ LEEDS Park Lane College FRFI meets fortnightly on Wednesdays 3, 17 & 31 March in the Hut.
■ BRADFORD meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm. Next meeting: March, 1 April at Conference Room (Upstairs), Queens Hall, Morley.
■ BIRMINGHAM meets Sundays at 7pm. Birmingham Labour Party, 14 Bristol Street, Birmingham 5.
■ NORTH LONDON meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7pm. Next meeting: March at Camden Labour Club, 100 Street, NW1. For details write to: NLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.
■ SOUTH LONDON meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Next meeting: March, 13 April at Jeffreys Library, Jeffreys Road, Stockwell. For details write to: SLFRFI, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.
■ EDINBURGH meets fortnightly on Sundays at 7.30pm. Next meeting: 18 March at First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.
■ DUNDEE meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 6.30pm. Next meeting: 11 March. For details ask FRFI sellers or write to: Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.
■ ABERDEEN Details of activities from FRFI c/o Boomtown Books, 11 Aberdeen.
■ FALKIRK supporter group meets fortnightly on FRFI sellers or write to: First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.
■ MANCHESTER Details from FRFI sellers.
■ LIVERPOOL Details from FRFI sellers.
■ BRISTOL Details from FRFI sellers.
■ GLASGOW Details from FRFI sellers.

Letters

Police harass FRFI supporter

Dear FRFI,
As a teenager I am always aware of the police and the way they treat sellers of revolutionary and rebellious papers, badges and the way they treat us the youth. I like many of my comrades am always subjected to the police every time we walk the streets. This letter shows the freedom I have and the way I get treated by our so called friendly bobby.

I was asked by a friend if I would like to go to 'A Victory to the Freedom Fighters' march. I said yes as a previous march I had been to I found great. When we reached our destination I started selling FRFI and I managed to sell 5 within a space of 15-20 minutes. When we arrived at the city square there was already a large crowd. I stood at the back of the speakers and went forward to where the stewards were as I could not hear them all that well. I was standing there holding some Hands Off Ireland badges under my arm when two police beckoned me over. I went over to see what they wanted.

The police who by now had my name and address came at 9 o'clock one Tuesday night. I wasn't in but they casually passed a few remarks to my mum. The next time they came I was in but they only wanted to tell my ma that they would be up for me during the week to take me to meet a detective down the station. They never came. This second visit came 2 weeks after the first and it was quite obvious that they just wanted to shake up my family. The third visit came on a Sunday night at 8 o'clock. I wasn't in so they came back at 9pm and stayed till 10. During this time they were trying out my mum by saying such things as I might have to be put in care. They also took away a copy of FRFI. They came back again at 1pm the next Sunday.

They first of all asked me to sign a statement saying that 15 badges were to be destroyed. I was still unsure, then he said that if I did not sign I would be taken down the police station and I would be charged. To avoid the hassle I signed it. I asked if this would go down in my files. He said no, but said it would go down in the police's own files. Now he started pouring out a hoard of questions. What I put down is but a few of the questions he asked.

Police: So you are part of a political organisation?
Me: I might be (he took this down).
Police: Sonny if you don't stop going to political marches, meetings and if you don't stop taking part in political activities you know what is going to happen to you?
Me: No but I am allowed to go to these.
Police: Listen I'll tell you what will happen. First of all we'll have a man following you and although we've not started yet, we'll start tapping your phone. Look at what you're doing to people!
Me: Look at what you're doing to people!
Police: What do you mean?
Me: Look at how you beat up political prisoners and the way you kill them.

Police: Well just look at all the policemen who get killed on duty.

With this he stormed out of my house.

The harassment did not end there. I have been subjected to wild comments by teachers at school and have been told to see an educational psychologist on the grounds that I have a 'mental problem'. When I did see him it turned out that I had to see him not because of a 'mental problem' but because I had 'wrong' political views. I've still to see the psychologists report.

What I've been through is mild treatment compared to what many go through. With your help we can change this. Send in donations to those who have been arrested. Protest and back them up!
DM
Scotland

More on crisis needed

Dear FRFI,

With the deepening crisis of capitalism the bourgeois press has inaugurated a campaign of publicity in support of ailing and collapsing companies. The most recent and the most despicable has been the coverage given to the shining example of capitalist enterprise, Freddie Laker and his so-called 'people's airline'. The other company which has been given much coverage is De Lorean. After Comrade JB's letter in FRFI No 16 Leeds FRFI feels that an article as opposed to something in 'Notes and Comments' would be important as a means of explaining a Marxist analysis of the crisis and rid any illusions about the idea of settling the crisis in the interests of the working class. It is obvious that the present crisis can only be solved through a continued attack on the standard of living of the working class and that this will mean that inefficient companies will be forced to declare themselves bankrupt and will be replaced by larger and more efficient firms, which will then proceed to exploit the working class even more. In the case of Laker just look who a partnership is being set up with, LORHO, a brutal exploiter of the South African people. We hope that this article will be forthcoming.
Yours fraternally,
CM
Leeds

Community police spy

Dear FRFI,

PC Webb was one of the two 'community policemen' beaten up in Bristol last month. Crocodile tears for PC Webb won't wash away the memory of his betrayal of the trust of many people in St Werburgh's and St Paul's.

It was on Webb's evidence, all those friendly chats at the garden gate have their use, that many of the St Paul's 16 were identified and brought to trial. As your paper's headline said the mashing of Webb truly was 'St Paul's Answer to Community Policing'.

Within a week of the St Paul's uprising in April 1980 the police had 800 men on the beat spying on the people. It took 6 months for the foot patrols to get back on the streets in Liverpool 8 after last summers uprising. The police, in whatever guise, are being driven out of black working class areas. PC Webb, perhaps more than anyone else in Britain's racist police force, knows why.
WT
Bristol

Plessey workers and the law

Dear FRFI,

The militant workers at the Plessey electronics factory in Bathgate, Scotland have shown their profiteering bosses that they are not going to be used as a means of quick profit and then thrown on the scrapheap once the profit margin begins to drop.

As soon as their factory was threatened with closure they began an immediate sit-in. As usual the bosses turned to the imperialist courts, who they know will always support them in any workers struggle. True to form the bosses were awarded an interdict ordering the workers out of their workplace. However in this case the anger of the working people had reached breaking point, and they have rightly ignored the bosses' imperialist laws and are continuing their occupation. The senior shop steward summed up the feelings of the workers when he said that 'The law is totally out of step with the needs of working people in this country today'.
JM
Falkirk

IMG and Poland

Dear FRFI,

On 24 January I attended a meeting organised by the International Marxist Group in support of Solidarity. Before it started two members of the Spartacist League were ordered to leave, or the police would be called! Such a 'revolutionary organisation' as the IMG cannot even steward its own meeting without the backup of the police! This was in Brixton. Yet white middle class lefties claiming to be socialists and claiming to support the black struggle have no qualms about phoning for the police in Brixton.

After the two Spartacists left, the IMG delivered its analysis of the Polish crisis. The speaker told us how terrible martial law was, and how all one's rights disappeared, and that we in this country were not fully aware of what this means. He never mentioned the most brutal blood-thirsty imperialism in the world - British imperialism - in his 20 minute speech. He never mentioned how the crisis in Poland was manipulated by imperialist banks - among them Lloyds and Barclays. Nor did he tell us of who financed Solidarity - British, US and German bodies. He also claimed that Solidarity was 'one of the most advanced workers and peasants struggles' in the world. According to him Solidarity was fighting imperialism!

In discussion I reminded him that the 6 Counties of northern Ireland were and have been under martial law since 1970; that the 6 Counties were allegedly part of the UK, so we do know what martial law means. We don't have to go to Poland to see it! I told him that people know about the murder and torture in the H-Blocks a British prison. The speakers reply was that the meeting was on Poland not Ireland (or British imperialism) so could I stick to Poland!

A black FRFI supporter then demanded to know why the IMG supports Solidarity whole heartedly and attacks the ANC in South Africa. They refused to answer that question and insisted that he be quiet or they would call the police!

I can only deduce from this that the IMG are racist. They won't support the Irish nor will they support the ANC. Yet they fanatically support Solidarity.

Such are British middle class socialists. No wonder Irish and black workers are wary of them. Victory to the Irish people!
Victory to the ANC!
C McG
South London

CP in cloud cuckoo land

This letter followed revelations in the bourgeois press that an MI5 agent (Betty Gordon) had been spying from within the highest ranks of the Communist Party for some 20 years.

Dear FRFI,
Please find enclosed a *Morning Star* news cutting from yesterdays issue.

The piece I have boxed in with green ink is direct from the horse's mouth, the horse being Gordon McLennan of the CPGB.

[Far from presenting any threat to the security of Britain, the activities of the Communist Party are directed to ensuring the independence and security of the country and against the threat of its destruction in a nuclear war' Ed.]

All Mr McLennan is prepared to do is to ask Home Secretary Whitelaw for an 'assurance' that 'such anti-democratic activities against our party will cease forthwith'.

Even if Whitelaw does give such an 'assurance', Comrade McLennan is living in cloud cuckoo land if he thinks it will be worth even the paper it is written on.

If these sorts of State activities against democratic organisations and individuals are to be effectively stopped then it will require energy and action to be channelled in a totally different direction to that of protesting to a Home Secretary who has played a major part in repressing the nationalist population of the six county statelet of Ulster.

I am sure most FRFI readers know of the kind of action I have in mind.

Yours
JC
North London



Thanks

Dear FRFI,

We would like to thank you for the coverage you gave to the *Free Steven Kitson Campaign*, the interview on the imprisonment of Dave Kitson, our father, and your support for all South African prisoners of war.

In particular, we appreciate the work done by FRFI supporters in London who actually came in and helped with the groundwork of the *Campaign* from the beginning.

The *Campaign* received a great deal of support from organisations and political groups all of which was very important in securing Steven's release. However, it is the day-to-day work of your supporters in campaigns such as this which actually gets them off the ground and achieves the results.
Amanda and Steven Kitson

Please note our new address is:
FRFI,
BCM Box 5909,
London WC1N 3XX
SEND US YOUR LETTERS
We welcome letters from readers. Please keep them as short as you can

Why does NCP refuse to picket

The following letter was sent to the New Communist Party by JL from Chester. A copy was also sent to FRFI. While the NCP refuses to open up the pages of its newspaper *The New Worker* to debate amongst communists, FRFI is very happy to do so and welcomes contributions on the points raised by JL.

Comrades,

I write to express my regret that you did not accept the recent RCG invitation to picket British imperialist banks in support of Poland. Given that the development of a revolutionary movement in this country requires a correct analysis of the main revolutionary forces in the world, it really is a tragedy that the only two groups which identify the Socialist countries as truly socialist cannot agree on some common action.

Of course Socialist countries do not renege on their debts, but I cannot imagine that the Polish Party or military government would object to it being pointed out that the banks which are attempting to destroy the economy of Socialist Poland are the same as those which back 'the great concentration camp which is the Republic of South Africa' (General Jaruzelski) and the Pinochet regime in Chile.

At the very least you might have taken a fraternal attitude to comrades who hold many opinions of fundamental importance very similar to your own. You might have replied to their letter explaining your position. It is important to analyse the politics of individual 'ultra-left' groups; the RCG is clearly different from the rest. The Trotskyist origins of some of their members should not be held against them. We all have to learn; we are not born Communists. It is their politics now which matters.

I agree that the RCG attitude to the NCP hardly helps matters. The comments in FRFI 15 on the NCP Congress were a model of how not to criticise, but I am sure you ought to be politically mature enough to ignore such things and concentrate on practical policy issues.

The CPSU, through *Pravda* and *Communist*, have denounced the Communist Party of Italy for going over to the side of the counter-revolution. The Communist Party of Chile has admitted that it was mistaken in opposing the use of violent acts against the Pinochet regime, and now supports the 'ultra-left' MIR, as Socialist Cuba has done for many years, in the operation of these politics. Perhaps one day soon you will be able to publish *Pravda* editorials denouncing the CPGB and praising the NCP and RCG. Stranger things have happened comrades. Let us keep an open mind!
Fraternally yours,
JL
Chester

A marvellous paper

Dear FRFI,

What a marvellous paper this time. My mother wrote to a relative in Tasmania, Australia, saying we'd be well rid of Maggie Thatcher. His reply was 'Just getting rid of that pompous dangerous fool Thatcher will not solve the problems of the British people - the whole British system wants dumped, but it is so deeply entrenched I'm afraid it will take much bloodshed to do so'. We are going to start sending him the paper.

I see the Solicitor General of Scotland has hit the headlines; they'll have no difficulty replacing him with the same kind of character, and no doubt they'll just turn their backs on the mess he's made of people's lives under their legal cover.

The *Daily Mirror* gave a list of TV programmes banned from the screen without good reason, mainly anything that might reveal the true situation in Ireland or anything Anti Nuclear.

With regards,
NT
Workington

Depo-Provera

Dear FRFI,

Six million women around the world have had injections of a controversial contraceptive called Depo-Provera, yet this drug is prohibited in America and has not received official approval in Britain. Most of the women given this drug are Third world women, and often they are given it without knowing anything about it, and sometimes without even knowing they've been given it at all. In some cases, women have to accept injections or lose their jobs, we know this is happening in British-owned rubber plantations in Malaysia and there are also reports that it's happening in factories in South Africa. Britain has been supplying Asia, Africa and Latin America with this drug yet is calling for it to be banned here in Britain due to the dangerous side-effects and possible cancer links. 30,000 women have been given Depo-Provera so far in Britain, and it is given by doctors here to women on social grounds, women they consider 'inadequate in some way - immigrant women, poor women and women who are considered 'uneducated' or 'unmiscuous' - in other words the oppressed.

SM
London FRFI Reader

BECOME A FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! SUPPORTER

If you are willing to help the work which FRFI is doing, become an FRFI supporter.

We need more people to sell FRFI and to involve others in the fightback. We need more people writing for FRFI about their local struggles and campaigns.

Fill in your name and address on the form below, and send £5. You will receive a supporter card, a year's subscription to FRFI and details of all our activities in your area and nationally. (Postal orders and cheques payable to Larkin Publications)
Name.....
Address.....

Send this form to Larkin Publications
BCM Box 5909 London WC1N 3XX

HANDS OFF IRELAND

Repression & resistance

The wave of repression launched by the British state against nationalist areas in the six counties continued during February with numerous arrests and the systematic destruction (under the pretext of 'searches') of many homes in nationalist areas. On 22 January Jim Gibney, prominent in the H-block campaign and leading Sinn Fein member, was arrested outside Long Kesh concentration camp. In one week of February alone over 50 arrests were made in nationalist areas. The Association of Legal Justice reports that there have been more detentions under Section 12 in the 3 months since the hunger strike ended than throughout the whole of the hunger strike campaign. Also last month the British Army's policy of summary execution of joy-riders claimed its fifth victim when British soldiers shot dead 19-year-old Martin Kyles after he tried to evade a road-block in the grounds of the Royal Victoria Hospital in West Belfast. The British soldiers knew that Martin was trapped when he drove into the hospital grounds since they had sealed off the only other exit – but they shot him dead anyway.

This wave of terror from the British state, however, has been met with an immediate and effective response from the IRA, who have launched a series of bomb attacks on commercial and communications targets throughout the six counties over the past few weeks. On 8

February co-ordinated bomb attacks within the space of one hour destroyed hotels at Campsie, Co Derry and at Warrenpoint, Co Down and a golf club building at Strabane, Co Tyrone – the latter target being a preserve of loyalist privilege in a predominantly nationalist

area of massive (40%) unemployment. At the same time a car-bomb was left in the centre of Lurgan, Co Armagh – although this was eventually defused by the British Army.

On the following day further bomb attacks were launched on a restaurant at Bellaghy, Co Derry and on holiday cabin cruisers owned by a company at Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh. A few days later, on 12 February, the IRA switched its attention to the railway system. An aqueduct near the border was blown up, once again severing the rail link between Belfast and Dublin. Two days later a bomb left on the line between Belfast and Larne also disrupted train services, and on the same day a bomb totally destroyed Portadown railway station, again on the main Belfast-Dublin line.

In all these attacks warnings were given and there were no civilian casualties. During the same period attacks have also been directed against the loyalist forces of the RUC and UDR, the most recent attack (on 19 February) leaving a former UDR man critically injured after a booby-trap bomb attached to his car exploded in Armagh. The message from the IRA to the British state over the last few weeks, therefore, is as always – increased repression of the nationalist community leads only to greater resistance.

Irish Correspondent



ELECTION DEADLOCK

For the second time in less than a year a general election in the Twenty Six Counties has produced an indecisive result, with neither of the two main parties – Fianna Fail and Fine Gael – achieving an overall majority. At the time of writing it is still not clear which party will form the next government – all depends on the support of the few 'independent' MPs – although Fianna Fail appears to be in a slightly stronger position. What the election results do make clear, however, is the extent of the disillusionment that now exists in the Twenty Six Counties with regard to both the main parties.

This disillusionment is particularly significant in relation to Fianna Fail. Until recently Fianna Fail was regarded as the 'natural party of government' in the Twenty Six Counties, but now at two elections in a row it has failed to achieve an overall majority. The total bankruptcy of the two main parties has never been more clearly demonstrated than during the last election campaign. Neither party could even pretend to offer anything other than an indefinite period of 'economic stringency' due to the massive debts (proportionately greater than those of Poland) owed to foreign (especially British) banks. At the same time both parties remain committed to maintaining the system which has produced this economic crisis – the neo-colonialist position of the Twenty Six Counties in a partitioned Ireland dominated by British imperialism. It is no wonder, therefore, that the people of the Twenty Six Counties should have found it so difficult to choose between the two parties.

The only real alternative to the two main parties in this election was provided by Provisional Sinn Fein which for the first time since the border campaign entered the electoral process in the Twenty Six Counties but on a strictly abstentionist basis – ie that if elected its candidates would not take their seats in parliament. Sinn Fein's election message to the people of the Twenty Six Counties was summarised by *An Phoblacht/Republican News* as follows: 'The basis of Ireland's problems is two-fold: the British occupation of the North, with its resultant partition of our country, and the native capitalist grip on the South, which depends for its survival on collaboration with the imperialist presence'. It is not surprising that the establishment in the Twenty Six Counties did all in its power to prevent this message from getting through to the electorate.

First of all the state broadcasting authorities, after much hesitation, finally agreed to allow Sinn Fein just two minutes to make an election broadcast on TV and radio. Even this proved too much for the government and it immediately issued an order extending section 31 of the Broadcasting Act (which prohibits interviews with members of republican organisations) to cover election broadcasts by Sinn Fein. The High Court,

however, decided that this blatant infringement of the right of free speech was going too far and ruled that the ban on election broadcasts by Sinn Fein was unconstitutional – a decision upheld by the Supreme Court – although the broadcasting authorities decided that this decision came too late to enable Sinn Fein to make a broadcast on this occasion.

In the circumstances, therefore, and especially as both the main parties and the media focussed attention on the budget as the sole issue in the election, the performance of the seven Sinn Fein candidates can be seen as reasonably satisfactory. The seven candidates altogether received almost 17,000 first-preference votes, with the best results achieved significantly in the border constituencies of Cavan/Monaghan and Louth, where awareness of the evils of partition and the part played by the Free State forces in sustaining it is obviously greater than in other parts of the Twenty Six Counties. In both these constituencies the Sinn Fein candidates received nearly 4,000 first-preference votes, the highest vote being attracted by Seamus McElwain, the Sinn Fein candidate in Cavan/Monaghan, who is at present a prisoner on remand in Crumlin Road gaol in Belfast. Bernadette McAliskey standing under the banner of the Trotskyist Peoples Democracy and prepared to take a seat in the neo-colonialist Twenty Six Counties Dail received only 2085 first-preference votes in Dublin North Central.

Contrary to the predictions of the media before the election that the high votes won by the hunger-strike candidates in the previous election would completely disappear in the absence of an immediate emotional issue like the hunger strike, the results from this election show that there is in fact a solid basis of political support for the Republican Movement in the Twenty Six Counties – support that will undoubtedly be increased and strengthened as the working class in the Twenty Six Counties see that only the Republican Movement offers a genuine alternative to the pro-capitalist and pro-British policies pursued by the two major parties.

Irish Correspondent



Glasgow GIFAC March, 20 February

GLASGOW ON THE MARCH

A 200 strong militant 'Irish Freedom' march set off from Roystonhill, Glasgow, on Saturday 20 February.

The third in a series of local working class demonstrations organised by the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee since the ending of the Hunger Strike, this march was the largest and most successful yet. The Bobby Sands Flute Band came all the way from Coatbridge to provide a rousing musical background to loud chants of 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'

Led by the GIFAC 'Irish Freedom' banner, the marchers wound round Royston, Germiston and into Blackhill receiving vocal support from many residents and shoppers. The rally at Blackhill, joined by local people, heard speeches from the GIFAC outlining future work and appealing for new committee members, from the Revolutionary Communist Group pledging continued work to build support for an Irish victory and for the fightback in Britain against racism and imperialism, from supporters of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaii Guerrillas who drew the link between the repression by the pro-imperialist regime of Khomeini and

the repression meted out to the Irish people by British imperialism. The Dundee Irish Solidarity Committee speaker described the successful fight against police harassment in Dundee and appealed for support for two members of the Bobby Sands Flute Band arrested on the November Irish Freedom march in Dundee.

This appeal and the outrageous hostility and harassment local police had meted out to the marchers – arresting one youth for wearing a balaclava, and forcing marchers to take down a flagpole – roused one of the audience to seize the megaphone and recount his own experience of police repression in Glasgow.

It was this successful demonstration, which Clydeside Troops Out Movement, newly emerged from whatever dark hiding place it entered during the hunger strike, had opposed with all its energy. TOM indeed had demanded that the GIFAC cancel the march on the empty grounds that it might be banned and therefore affect a future demonstration organised by TOM on 6 March in Coatbridge. The GIFAC, in response to this made every effort to reach an agreement with TOM and its allies. Despite the GIFAC's firm view that there

should be no surrender to the threat of bans, but rather an energetic fight for the right to march, it offered, in the interests of the Irish solidarity movement to restrict its march to a rally. This was done to allay TOM's fears of a ban. The only condition that was placed on TOM was that TOM in response should allow the GIFAC full participants' rights on the 6 March demonstration. TOM – sectarian to its core and intent on creating disunity and confusion rejected this offer.

The GIFAC's answer to this open hostility could only be to carry on with its plans. Anything less would have only served British imperialism. The fact that TOM should feel it serves their interests to get a march in support of the Irish people called off is testimony to its utter contempt for genuine solidarity work. Despite this the GIFAC march not only went ahead but was a tremendous success.

The demonstration showed as clearly as need be to all serious supporters of the Irish struggle that sustained, principled and public anti-imperialist campaigns in the working class will take root and flourish.

The GIFAC, attacked by the police, by the Loyalists and by the gamut of anti-Irish 'socialists' in the SWP, IMG and Labour Party has nevertheless succeeded in drawing in support and commitment from the working class anti-imperialist population of Glasgow – the only force by which a real campaign can be built. Letters like the following from a 14 year old working class supporter are evidence of what can be done:

'Dear GIFAC,
I was handed a piece of paper telling me about a march and rally. On the bottom of it, it said you were looking for people to organise the work in support of the IRISH FREEDOM STRUGGLE. I am aged 14 and I would preferably hand out leaflets, or sell papers or anything to do with Ireland. Hope you find something for me to do. I will do my best to help...'

Maggie Lindsay