

FIGHT RACISMS

FIGHT IMPERIALISMS

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South African raid into Lesotho kills 42 people

STOP BRITISH SUPPORT FOR APARTHEID TERROR

On 9 December airborne South African troops attacked Maseru, capital of Lesotho, murdering 42 people. The attack is part of a huge increase in South Africa's aggression against neighbouring black states and in their murders of members of the African National Congress (ANC). Their aim is to both destabilise these countries and, through pure terror, undermine the ever growing support for the ANC and SWAPO – the leading forces in the struggle against apartheid. These murders will not terrify the people into submission, but increase their determination to bring about the downfall of the fascist regime. Indeed, only 6 days later the ANC attacked and destroyed a power station in the Transvaal in South Africa.

At 1 am on 9 December, using 5 British made helicopters, 100 South African commandos struck in Maseru murdering 42 people in their sleep. Of those killed 30 were South African exiles, including ANC and SACTU members and 12 were Lesotho citizens including children. South African troops ransacked and burned houses and butchered their inhabitants. One man was taken from his home, wrapped in a blanket and then set on fire. A woman, seven months pregnant, was shot in the abdomen. In another house troops killed the husband and wife and then, finding a four year old child in bed, shot and killed him. This brutal massacre follows attacks on the ANC in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and in this country, and the murder of Joe Gqabi, William Khanyile, Ruth First and other leading ANC and SACTU members.

The attack coincided with a less publicised, but equally serious attack on the Beira oil depot in Mozambique by the South African-backed MNR. This depot stores the fuel for Zimbabwe and the attack will have the effect of forcing Zimbabwe to negotiate with South Africa for oil. South Africa meanwhile has established 4 military camps on its border with Zimbabwe. At the same time South Africa is massing its troops on the border with Mozambique, preparing possibly for an invasion on the scale of that into Angola in 1981. South Africa continues to occupy the southern part of Angola and the whole of Namibia with 100,000 troops.

South Africa is drawing the whole of Southern Africa into its quagmire of war. Its repression at home and attempts at economic destabilisation and political domination of surrounding countries are carried out for the interests of the capitalists and imperialists who will stop at nothing to hold on to and increase their wealth and profit. As the ANC (UK mission) pointed out in response to the raid in Lesotho:

'It is clear that the US and UK policy on Southern Africa has encouraged the racist regime to carry out its murderous acts with impunity. We demand that these governments intervene immediately to prevent their ally from carrying out further terroristic crimes.'

Following the massacre Britain once again swiftly acted to protect the apartheid regime from international outrage. Britain, along with the USA voted against a UN resolution calling for sanctions. Britain also voted against a UN motion seeking to stop nuclear and military collaboration with apartheid and another motion calling for an oil embargo. So finally the UN passed a toothless resolution condemning the raid but excluding sanctions. It is such British collaboration with apartheid that allows the regime to continue along its murderous path.

The support Britain and the US give to South Africa is for the protection of

their interests in the whole of Southern Africa. The people of Southern Africa recognise that South Africa's aggression means that they cannot achieve true freedom without the liberation of Namibia and South Africa itself. Thus, when the leaders of the frontline states together with SWAPO and the ANC met in Maputo in March 1982, they pledged to intensify their material and diplomatic support for SWAPO and the ANC. The ANC in turn has shown that the crimes against the people of Southern Africa will be ended. As they stated after the massacre in Maseru

'The supreme sacrifice that the peoples of Southern Africa paid this morning will spur the African National Congress, and its entire ranks to redouble the offensive for the destruction of the brigand apartheid regime.'

Umkhonto we Sizwe gave proof to this: on the 15th December bombing the power station in Vereeniging, Transvaal, and on Sunday 19 December hitting the top security Koeberg nuclear power station, near Cape Town.

Victory to the ANC!



GREENHAM COMMON

The women of Greenham Common have fought for 15 months to prevent the siting of US Cruise Missiles there. No genuine socialist can fail to have been impressed by the determination which has taken them through bitter winter conditions without shelter, and prison sentences because of their principled refusal to be bound over by the courts. The fruit of their efforts was seen on 12 December when 30,000 women ringed the base in an impressive demonstration for peace.

full story on page 5



INSIDE BUILDING AN IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT Conference Report: centre pages

Terror Act BAN ON SINN FEIN

On Wednesday 8 December 1982 3 leading members of Sinn Fein, Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness – were served orders excluding them from Britain under Section 4(1) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The purpose of the ban was to prevent Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison from coming to London for discussions with GLC councillors and to address a public meeting. Once again the true purpose of the PTA was exposed: it is an instrument of censorship and intimidation directed against the Irish people in general, and supporters of Irish self-determination in particular.

After their victories in the Assembly elections on 20 October Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison had been invited to come to London by Steve Bundred. 26 GLC Labour councillors, including GLC leader Ken Livingstone, supported the invitation. As soon as the invitation was made public a muck-raking hysterical propaganda campaign was launched by the media against the Labour councillors in order to intimidate them into withdrawing the invitation. The so-called 'free' press was revealed in its true light: the bought-and-paid-for mouthpiece of British imperialist terror in Ireland.

The Tory government, appalled by the thought of the truth about British terror in Ireland being told in London, condemned and denounced the invitation. They were immediately joined by the infamous pro-loyalist leader of the Labour Party, Michael Foot. He wrote to Ken Livingstone disowning the invitation and urged him to show a copy of Labour's pro-loyalist Northern Ireland policy document to the Sinn Fein delegation, saying:

'It properly emphasises why we insist so strongly that our policy must be carried out by consent, and not by force.'

The unrestrained hypocrisy and cant of this statement is clear to those who remember that Michael Foot was a leading member of the Labour Cabinet which imposed a regime of terror and torture on the Six Counties from 1976-79.

On Monday 6 December INLA bombed a pub – The Droppin Well Bar in Ballykelly – known to be regularly used by the British army of occupation. This action has so far resulted in the

death of 11 British soldiers and 6 civilians. The sole responsibility for these deaths, as with all the deaths and tragedies arising from the present war, lies with British imperialism and its occupation forces in the Six Counties. This fact, however, did not prevent the British ruling class, its Labour Party allies and its media from cynically exploiting these deaths in a renewed effort to pressurise Ken Livingstone and the other GLC councillors into withdrawing their invitation to the Sinn Fein delegation.

To their credit, Ken Livingstone, Steve Bundred and most of the other GLC councillors involved, stood their ground and refused to submit to this renewed campaign. Then, having failed to get the results it wanted through political pressure and media hysteria, the British ruling class and its backers resorted, as always, to coercion. The racist

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EDITORIAL

THE ROAD TO SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

A crisis is today sweeping the British middle class socialist left. All their highest hopes have been dashed. The famous 'left victories' in the Labour Party of yesterday have become the tawdry right-wing witch hunt of today. Their revered 'vanguard' miners have refused to fight. The TUC has destroyed the health workers strike. Unemployment mounts, living standards fall, services vital to the working class are destroyed, the police grow in confidence, manpower and weaponry. And there is no fightback from the organised Labour and trade union movement. In the face of all this the middle class left crouches shivering in paralysed fascination – like a rabbit caught in the headlights of an oncoming car.

The SWP perfectly catches the spirit of the middle class left today. 'It's been a grim week for socialists' (*Socialist Worker* 6 November 1982). The same issue declares that 'this *Socialist Worker* is largely devoted to analysing what has gone wrong and why'. Their analysis amounts to no more than declaring that the working class is suffering defeats because it is not fighting, because it is not willing to risk the jobs that remain. In short the working class is being defeated because it is being defeated. Their solution? First consolation: 'Periods of defeat and demoralisation like the present do not last for ever' and, they say, an expansion of the economy, a 'catastrophic political mistake by the government' and/or 'a spontaneous growth of militancy' could change things. In the meantime they call for 'daily argument with smallish groups of workers'.

The reason for this paralysis is clear. The British middle class left has always argued that the forces of revolution in Britain are to be found in the organised trade union movement and its political expression the Labour Party. They have therefore devoted themselves to building an alliance with these forces. Yet these very forces that the middle class left has pinned its hopes on are refusing to fight. And the reason for this is also clear. They are dominated by a leadership which derives its material, social and political privileges from the super-profits gained through imperialist exploitation and oppression. This leadership's whole status in life depends on imperialism. Thus it has always supported imperialism. For 13 years it has either implemented or supported British

imperialist terror against the Irish people. Racist to the core it has either implemented or supported British imperialism's attacks on black workers in this country. Far from fighting back, this leadership is, right now, sabotaging and destroying any fightback which does take place in this country. The British middle class left which has always worked within a political tradition acceptable to this leadership, claiming to do so as 'the rope supports a hanging man', find, to their horror, that it is they who have been strung up and left dangling in the air. They have never accepted that the domination of this leadership can only be broken by destroying the basis of its existence, British imperialism. And that the attack against British imperialism can only be led by those forces which have no ties to imperialism.

Precisely because the Irish struggle is the key to the British revolution it is on this question that the most acute expression of the crisis of the British middle class socialist left is to be found. And again it is the SWP which gives the clearest expression of this.

In a full-page article in *Socialist Worker* (4 December 1982), the leader of the SWP, Tony Cliff, takes the path that all the 'English-would-be-liberators' of the Irish people have taken before, the path of social-imperialism: socialism in words, imperialism in deeds. Lenin once wrote of the opportunists of his own time that 'the theoretical victory of Marxism compelled its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists'. Today we have Tony Cliff disguising himself as a supporter of James

Connolly only to attack every principle Connolly lived and died for. And this is done to justify both the consistent attacks of the SWP on the Republican Movement and the SWP's abandonment of any consistent work in support of the revolutionary national struggle to free Ireland from British rule.

Cliff's article is an attack on the revolutionary challenge to British imperialism led by the Provisional Republican Movement. To substantiate this attack he has to distort Connolly. And he does this in such a way as to reach a conclusion which is the exact opposite of Connolly's real position. Cliff writes

'Connolly wrote in 1897, "The Irish working class must emancipate itself and in emancipating itself it must perforce free its country."

The working class must emancipate itself and in the act of the class struggle they emancipate the nation. *Not the other way round.*'

This single sentence from Connolly is taken out of its context, which was an attack on Home Rule and its bourgeois supporters, and is used by Cliff to deny the fundamental political principle which Connolly argued for in 1897 and throughout the rest of his life: that national liberation and socialism were not separate but complementary struggles.

In 1897 Connolly set out to establish the essential leading role which the Irish working class had to play in the national struggle if it was to emancipate itself. He argued against both those 'nationalists' who denied the class struggle and those 'socialists' (like Cliff) who denied the centrality of the national struggle. He wrote in 1897:

'We are resolved upon national independence as the *indispensable groundwork* of industrial emancipation, but we are equally resolved to have done with the leadership of a class whose social charter is derived from oppression.' (August 1897, emphasis added)

For the rest of his life, in the light of his concrete political experience, particularly the experience of the Dublin lock-out 1913/14, Connolly clarified his central principle until, on 8 April 1916, he put it forward in a way which only the ignorant or deliberately dishonest could deny:

'The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be severed ...

... is it not well and fitting that we of the working class should fight for the freedom of the nation from foreign rule, as the *first requisite* for the free development of the national powers needed for our class? It is so fitting.' (Emphasis added).

Cliff's Connolly in short never existed. Cliff says the Irish working class will emancipate itself and then the nation. Connolly says, as all revolutionaries since Connolly have said, that the Irish working class must emancipate Ireland in order to emancipate itself: political freedom is a precondition for social freedom.

Cliff has to distort Connolly's central argument in the vain attempt to argue a position on the Protestant working class which Connolly had in fact described in 1913 as 'a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity'. Cliff argues

'The class struggle is the key to unity between Protestant and Catholic ... There is no way of liberating Ireland without unity.'

Cliff refuses to give significance to the fact that the Protestant workers are a privileged section of the working class and the maintenance of their privileges (higher wages, jobs, housing etc)

depends on British imperialist domination of Ireland. For this reason they are the most implacable enemies of a united Ireland. What prevents basic class interests uniting Catholic and Protestant workers is precisely the Union with Britain. This is why Connolly argued that it was the 'loss of its privileged position', resulting from the separation from Britain, which would mean for Protestant workers 'the possibility of an immense spiritual uplifting, and the emergence into a knowledge of its kinship with its brothers and sisters of different creeds'. In other words the precondition for the unity of the Irish working class is the defeat of British imperialism, that is the national liberation of the Irish people.

Having rejected Connolly's two central positions he can now abuse Connolly's name in order to attack the revolutionary national struggle led by the Provisional Republican Movement. First he insults the Provisionals by equating them with the reactionary pro-imperialist Workers Party – 'They are two sides of the same coin'. Then he claims, on the basis of a rejection of Connolly's position on the Protestant workers, that the Provisionals 'cannot unite the workers north and south in struggle'. Therefore it follows from this 'screamingly funny' doctrine that a 'revolutionary socialist organisation' must be built 'separate from the Republican Movement' (our emphasis). And surprise, surprise, the SWP's tiny irrelevant puppet organisation in Ireland, the Socialist Workers Movement is the 'revolutionary socialist organisation in Ireland' to which we must give support. What Cliff is really doing is subordinating the aspirations and the revolutionary struggle of the Irish people to the political interests and methods of struggle of the SWP, a British organisation. This is social imperialism. Under the guise of abstract, absurd, so-called 'socialist' arguments about the class struggle, Cliff in fact opposes the real revolutionary challenge to British imperialism in Ireland led by the Provisional Republican Movement.

Finally, once again, standing the truth on its head, Cliff blames the Republican Movement for the failure of the SWP to build any movement of solidarity with the Irish people's struggle. According to Cliff

'until a movement develops to break the impasse in Ireland itself, it will be very difficult to mobilise significant numbers of people ... in Britain.'

Thus Cliff provides the SWP with an excuse for refusing to fight on the one issue which above all others threatens British imperialism and destroys any illusions still held about the real character of the organised Labour and trade union movement in Britain.

While the SWP bemoans the absence of a fightback in Britain it has to denounce the actual fightback which is taking place in Ireland. Not to do so would force the SWP to break from those political traditions and methods of work acceptable to its respectable allies in the organised Labour and trade union movement. This is why the SWP has to deny, and seek to obliterate, the political significance of the revolutionary national struggle led by the Provisional Republican Movement to free Ireland from British imperialist rule.

Communists on the other hand are clear. The real solution to the problem facing the British working class is to 'make common cause' with the Irish people against British imperialism and its allies in the organised Labour and trade union movement. Socialists in the SWP now have a choice: take the road of social imperialism with Tony Cliff, or join with anti-imperialists to build an Irish Solidarity movement in Britain.

SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

● Seychelles Journalists Face Prosecution

The two *Sunday Times* journalists Simon Freeman and Barry Penrose who, in October, informed Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Squad of a plot being discussed in a Knightsbridge hotel to overthrow the left-wing Seychelles government, now face possible prosecution. The tape recordings they made of the telephone conversations between the plotters, exposed the extent of South African involvement in this latest coup attempt. The invasion force was to be made up of 300 mercenaries recruited, trained, equipped and financed in South Africa.

The journalists may be charged under the Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1949, for intercepting the conversations without the consent of the Postmaster-General. British collaboration with the fascist apartheid regime means that South African spies, murderers and arms dealers can enter Britain without any difficulties, while those who have again exposed the apartheid regime's treacherous attempts to destabilise the front line states, and topple democratically elected governments face prosecution by the police.

● Black South Africans hanged

Last month the news that a white British born woman, Maureen Smith, had been sentenced to death in South Africa for murdering her husband was received with great consternation and outrage by the British press. The Labour MP Mr Kilroy-Silk who immediately championed her cause vehemently condemned such a barbaric practice in a 'civilised' country like South Africa and personally urged Francis Pym to pressurise the South African government to commute the death sentence. This is a disgusting display of racism and hypocrisy, as no such efforts were made on behalf of the 2 black men Jack Ramogale and David Mnguni who were sentenced to death, together with Maureen Smith. Consequently the fascist apartheid regime has executed the two black men, confident that their deaths would not attract the same front page coverage. We would like to draw to the attention of Mr Kilroy-Silk that over 100 black people are executed every year in South Africa.

● Unity in Action

A Photographic History of the ANC South Africa 1912-1982. This book consists of more than 150 photographs and documents, including many that are rare and previously unpublished. It depicts with clarity and drama the inspiring story of the struggle for national liberation relentlessly waged by the oppressed people of South Africa.

£5. Available from: Publications Department, IDAF, 104 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AP.

● Attack on trade unions

In the last 18 months in order to crush the growing militancy and power of the independent black trade unions, the fascist South African police have detained without trial 20 trade union leaders along with hundreds of trade union activists. However they have failed to secure convictions under security legislation, against any of them. The Terrorism Act charges against SAAWU leaders Thozamile Gqweta and Sisa Njikelana were withdrawn last month, following the acquittal of Alan Fine, an official of a catering union, who was also charged under this act.

Charges against SAAWU General Secretary, Sam Kikine, were dropped in August. It was the sixth period in detention for Thozamile Gqweta, who was so severely tortured whilst in police custody earlier this year, that he had to be admitted into psychiatric care.

The repression of black trade unions has intensified with the introduction of the new Intimidation Act. The members of the Metal & Allied Workers Union have suffered particularly under its enforcement. Hundreds of trade unionists are being kept in detention, many like 73-year old Oscar Mpetha. Many are also serving long terms of imprisonment; others have been banned.

RK

£500 NEEDED BY 15 JANUARY

KEEP FRFI PRICE AT 20p

You have seen the Winter Fund Drive to keep the price of FRFI down. Some of you have responded but this has still not been enough.

For 3 years now we have kept the price of FRFI at 20 pence. Since 1979 our running costs have constantly been rising. Rent, electricity, gas – all have gone up. As a result we have accumulated a deficit which we cannot cover unless we receive an extra £500 by 15 January over and above our regular Fund Drive. Otherwise the February issue of FRFI must go up to 30 pence.

As a reader of FRFI you know what is at stake: many readers will no longer be able to afford to buy the paper. FRFI defends the rights of the poor, the unemployed, the most oppressed, and aims to involve more people in this fight back. FRFI cannot succeed if its message no longer reaches those who stand up for their rights and want to organise against injustice and oppression.

The prostitute bourgeois press is paid off by the ruling class to tell their lies – FRFI needs your help to expose those lies and tell of the real struggles. Subsidise the paper which tells the truth.

Use your initiative – show FRFI to your friends and get them to contribute as well. Whatever you do, send off your donation now!

Fill in this slip and return to: FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX. Make cheques/postal orders out to 'Larkin Publications'.

I/We donate £ _____ to the Special Fund Appeal.

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Don't publish my name/organisation alongside my/our contribution.

SOUTH AFRICA



NAMIBIA APARTHEID TERROR

1983 is the seventeenth year of South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia, and it is now eighteen months since they began the invasion of Southern Angola. This armed occupation constitutes a reign of terror against the peoples Namibia and neighbouring Angola. The apartheid regime is determined to protect its economic interests in uranium- and mineral-rich Namibia, but above all the occupation of Namibia and the invasion of Angola are fundamental to the political stability of the apartheid regime.

If a democratic election took place in Namibia, SWAPO would be overwhelmingly elected. This is why South Africa and its western imperialist allies in the Contact Group have tried every means to prevent such an outcome. Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO, talked about the history of the negotiations to an EEC meeting in September:

By 1980, South Africa had come up with something else, ie the so-called UN lack of impartiality. Today, the excuse is the presence of the Cubans in Angola. This endless fabrication of excuses testifies to our conviction that the apartheid state is not yet ready to allow the Namibian people to exercise their democratic and national right to independence and self-determination.'

It is this latest impasse - the attempted linkage of South African troops in Namibia with the presence of Cuban troops in Angola - which represents a significant turn in events. Cuban troops were invited into Angola by the MPLA in 1975, on the eve of independence, to help repel the threatened South African invasion. Their presence is in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. The presence of South African troops in Namibia is in contravention of UN Resolution 2145 which

revoked South Africa's mandate over Namibia in 1966.

There is no parallel between the South African forces in Namibia, and Cubans in Angola. One is an occupying army in Namibia, the other an invited army to aid the defence of Angolan independence. But the inspiration for, and the insistence on, linkage comes above all from the Americans and not the South Africans. President Reagan is insisting to the frontline states that the issue of linkage will not be dropped. In a letter to Julius Nyerere, Chairman of the Frontline States, he said:

I believe you will agree with me that the positive climate so painstakingly built through your efforts and ours would not survive if lack of concrete progress with the Angolans prevented us from being able to bring the Namibian package to the Security Council. At the same time, *I must underscore that we cannot and will not put aside the Cuban issue.*' (our emphasis)

The issues are clear. Reagan, as part of the US anti-communist policy, is trying to force the frontline states to pressure Angola into accepting the withdrawal of Cuban troops. Meanwhile, this stance gives sanction to South Africa's refusal to withdraw from Namibia and to their



Edinburgh 24 hour demonstration in support of South African political prisoners

invasion of Angola.

It is South Africa's intention to destabilise and terrorise the Frontline States in order to regain political control of Southern Africa and ensure its own internal stability. In Namibia the people are daily terrorised, tortured and murdered. Innocent villagers are massacred on the grounds that they are terrorists. In Angola 500 people are known to have died since the South African invasion - the real figure is undoubtedly more. A recent report from the Angolan News Agency (ANGOP) stated:

The eye witnesses add that murder is a daily occurrence in the occupied area. Rape, torture and theft by the mercenaries and their Angolan henchmen happen there all the time. The most basic living conditions have virtually ceased to exist there, resulting in disease, under-nourishment, starvation and utter misery. Summary executions have become the daily norm of the occupying troops. South Africa hopes in this way to subject the Angolan people to slavery and neocolonialism, seeking to deflect them from their chosen path.'

South Africa, with the aid of imperialism, is determined to deflect the whole of free, independent Southern Africa from its chosen path of democracy by the use of terror and military might. The recent attacks on Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho (see page 1) are all part of this strategy. It will only be the steadfastness of the frontline states, and the militancy of the liberation movements which will defeat apartheid terror, and free South Africa itself.

Carol Brown

EDINBURGH & DUNDEE HOLD 24 HOUR PICKETS

FRFI supporters in Dundee and Edinburgh have recently been in the forefront of staging 24 hour pickets in support of political prisoners in South Africa. Taking their inspiration from the nationally publicised non-stop picket outside South Africa House which continued for 86 days, both pickets in Dundee and Edinburgh were tremendous successes.

FRFI supporters in Dundee contacted all the progressive organisations in their areas asking them to support or sponsor the picket. On the day of the picket, 27/28 November, it was supported by FRFI, El Salvador Solidarity Committee, the Latin American society, Dundee AAM, Dundee University Labour Club and the YCL.

FRFI supporters worked hard for the picket, building support, leafletting factories, colleges, dole queues, issuing press statements and arranging all the practical details. Not everyone wanted to support it. The local SWP and WRP would not support it because FRFI supporters were central in organising the picket.

But on the day the general public responded magnificently. 1,000 people signed the petition to release Nelson Mandela and donated £40 for the AAM. Local people brought soup and drinks to sustain the picketers. Many people gave their names and addresses because they were interested in anti-apartheid activities and local radio broadcast reports of the event. FRFI supporters in Dundee want to thank all those who supported the picket and helped make it a great success.

The Edinburgh picket on 3/4 December was built by FRFI supporters with the help of Edinburgh University AAM, Young Scottish Republicans and individual young CND members. The picket opened with shouts of Victory to the ANC! Free Nelson Mandela! Free All South African Political Prisoners. Gavin Strang MP was present, together with Ron Brown MP and May Brown, his wife. The picket collected 1100 signatures to the AAM petition and £70 collected for the ANC.

In Edinburgh the picketers had some trouble with the police who were determined to obstruct their democratic right to picket by limiting the numbers to six. Although the picketers were harassed by police for most of the 24 hours, they were determined to continue. The picketers would like to thank Gavin Strang and Regional Councillor Alistair Darling for their helpful intervention with the police.

The message from both Scottish pickets is that 24 hour pickets are a great way of talking to thousands of people about the anti-apartheid and anti imperialist movements. Get out onto the streets and build the movement against apartheid and against imperialism!

CLOSE THE EMBASSY

Even a British court has now been forced to expose the spying and terrorist activities organised by the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square!

The court case revealed that South African agent Peter Caselton recruited a burglar Edward Aspinall to break into the offices of the ANC, SWAPO and the PAC. Aspinall was also going to burgle offices in Oslo and had been used to get personal details of at least one anti-apartheid activist. Both were convicted and received gaol sentences.

Behind them were two bigger South African spies, Warrant Officer Klue of the Embassy and senior BOSS agent Craig Williamson. Klue recruited Aspinall and fled from Britain earlier in December after the Foreign Office complained about his activities. These two had set up a fake company to finance the spying operation and it is almost certain that this spy-ring was connected

with the bombing of the London offices of the ANC. Calling on the British government to act promptly to expel Marais Steyn, South African Ambassador, Mike Terry, Secretary of the AAM said: 'It is impossible to have this ambassador stay any longer in Trafalgar Square. His staff have been involved in serious criminal activities. The place is a nest of spies.' The exposure of its apartheid allies' crimes is very embarrassing for the British government. Even more embarrassing are the regime's shameless statements saying that such acts are justified. How much longer will British governments harbour and protect this nest of spies and thieves? All anti-apartheid activists must demand:

Close down the embassy!



STOP THE HANGINGS

Six young ANC freedom fighters now face murder by hanging in South Africa's notorious Pretoria Central gaol. The Moroka 3, Mosololi, Mogoerane and Motaung, did not appeal against sentence, but made a direct plea for clemency to the state president. David Moise, Anthony Tsotsobe and Johannes Shabangu appealed against sentence to the South African Supreme Court on 3 September. After an unprecedented delay, their appeals have now been turned down. All of these six freedom fighters could be hanged at any moment.

The charges against the six include attacks on police stations, government offices and on the SASOL oil-from-coal plant. None of the six have denied membership of the ANC, but all of them were convicted on the basis of 'confessions' extracted under torture - there was no other evidence of any substance presented at their trials.

In FRFI 23 we reported the details of torture suffered by the Moroka 3. The other three, Shabangu, Moise and Tsotsobe, were charged with separate offences and were subjected to similar barbarity. David Moise was held in solitary confinement for 166 days, Anthony Tsotsobe for 141 days, and Johannes Shabangu 252 days, before their trial. They had no access to friends, families

or lawyers, and it was during this period that they were tortured into making statements.

The trials of all six ANC members have been marked by blatant prejudice by the judges, and intimidation and torture of state witnesses. The six are all committed to the struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa and because of this they face murder by the fascist state.

The campaign against the hangings must be built with urgency. FRFI calls on its supporters to support any activities called to build the campaign to prevent these murders and to destroy the apartheid regime which perpetrates such barbarity.

Carol Brown



POLICE OBSTRUCT HIGHWAY IN BRIXTON

This photograph shows police obstructing the highway whilst harassing an AAM City of London Group street meeting in Brixton on 4 December. 45 people attended the meeting and sang, chanted, petitioned and sold AA News. The local response was very enthusiastic and grew even more so when the police moved in. Having threatened to arrest the whole meeting (for highway obstruction!) the police eventually skulked away.



NEW POLICE BILL legal repression

- The power to detain people for 96 hours without charge. For the first 48 hours the detainee has no right to legal representation. Only after 48 hours do the police have to produce the detainee before a Magistrate to apply for a further 48 hours detention. 48 hours is ample time for the police to isolate, threaten and intimidate (if not beat) someone into signing a false confession.
- Increased powers of stop and search. They can search anyone who they 'reasonably suspect' of having drugs, stolen goods, firearms, 'items connected with terrorism', tools for burglary and offensive weapons. That is they can search anyone, any time, anywhere.
- New powers of arrest. The police will now be able to arrest without warrant anyone 'reasonably suspected' of committing an arrestable offence or an

The British state's response to the 1981 Uprisings led by black youth has been swift preparation for greater repression. Police now have CS gas, plastic bullets and armoured vans. They have established the Immediate Response Units which rampaged through Brixton in November wearing numberless overalls and visored helmets. Alongside this go new laws giving the police licence to put down opposition. Thus the new 'Police and Criminal Evidence Bill' now going through Parliament gives the police sweeping new powers.

imprisonable offence. And a non-imprisonable offence if the police choose to disbelieve the name and address given to them or if they say arrest is necessary to prevent obstruction or damage to property. That is they can arrest anyone, any time, anywhere. Having repealed SUS due to public outcry they now intend to replace it with a vengeance.

- The power to set up roadblocks for up to 7 days and search all passing vehicles if a policeman believes that the

'pattern of crime' in an area makes it likely that a serious offence will be committed within the 7 days of the roadblock.

- The power to search homes and premises to find a 'suspect' plus a new power for a Judge to authorise the search for and seizure of confidential documents from lawyers, journalists, priests, doctors.
- The power to forcibly remove clothes and make intimate body searches of

people in custody.

- The power to forcibly fingerprint anybody in custody over the age of 10. The police no longer have to apply to a Magistrate for permission to do this.

The Bill is based on the recommendations of a Royal Commission set up by the last Labour Government in the wake of public outcry about the false confessions obtained in the Confait case. It is claimed by the ruling class that it merely 'clarifies' 'codifies' and even 'liberalises' existing procedures. What classic ruling class hypocrisy and deception. While apparently merely 'making sense' of existing law they are *in fact* giving the police the legal basis for increased repression against the working class and oppressed. Proof of this lies in the fact that the Bill excludes even the few cosmetic reforms recommended by the Royal Commission. For example the compulsory tape recording of interrogations. When tried in Scotland this drastically reduced the length of interrogations. The police had to cut out their normal abusive and threatening questioning. Such a practice being made compulsory is, of course, unthinkable for the police and their supporters.

In practice the police already do what the new Bill will legally allow them to do. They will therefore undoubtedly now go even further than the Bill does. And those people beaten, falsely arrested and detained for 96 hours will have little hope of successfully complaining or getting compensation. After all, bruises and broken bones will be the result of 'reasonable force being used to take fingerprints'. False arrest will be based on 'reasonable suspicion' etc etc.

The Labour Party's opposition to the Bill has been pathetically timid. In the face of this onslaught on democratic rights Labour has limited its criticism to issuing warnings that greater repression will lead to greater resistance, undermine the police and so on. Thus Roy Hattersley:

...the Bill proposes extensions of police powers that will alienate the police from the public whom they serve, thus making the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals more, rather than less, difficult.'

Or Robert Kilroy-Silk:

'It is possible daily to get away with the alienation of young people. They are not as articulate as others, are not well organised and do not have the

political clout to get their grievances redressed. If the police are given the powers they will use them and will set up road blocks indiscriminately. Once they interfere in the ordinary lives of middle class, law-abiding and articulate people the confidence of that group in the police will be destroyed. That will lead to a massive and radical overhaul of police public relations.'

How disgusting! If the police start treating middle class people the way they treat working class youth, warns Mr Kilroy-Silk, there will be an outcry. And he goes on to issue another warning, this time about stop and search:

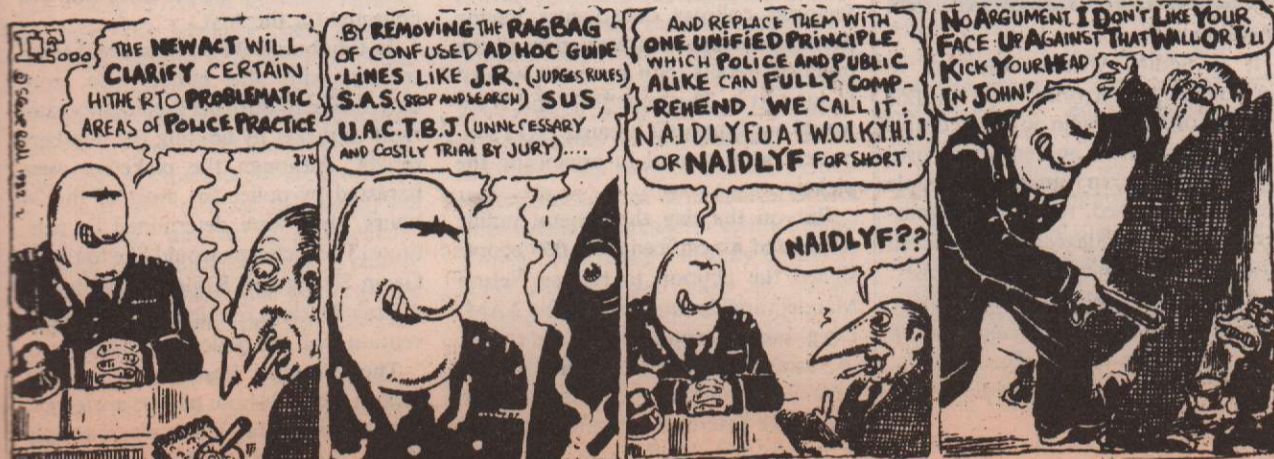
'...many of the people stopped and searched in that fashion developed a hatred of the police and resentment which were expressed not in robberies but in riots.'

Labour is not concerned with the attack on the oppressed and on democratic rights but is only worried lest this attack goes so far that it leads to a fightback on the streets. That is why the Labour Party pleads that the police must be seen to be less repressive. And that is why Labour seeks to hide the true anti-working class and racist character of the police behind claptrap about 'democratic police control', and 'community policing'. It is British imperialism, its state and police which the Labour Party is seeking to defend.

In the face of increasing poverty, unemployment and racism the ruling class is well aware that massive opposition will develop. Last year's uprisings showed where this opposition is coming from. Not from the official labour movement but from the poor and oppressed, the black and white unemployed youth. Imperialism offers them no future and responds to their fightback by ever greater repression. That is why Newman, former head of the RUC in the six counties of Ireland, has now been made head of the Metropolitan Police. The ruling class want his experience of torture and repression against the Irish people for use against those who challenge imperialism here in Britain. And that is also why the new Police Bill is going through Parliament.

All socialists, democrats and anti-racists must mobilise in defence of democratic rights and say:

No to Police Repression!
Maxine Williams/Chris Fraser



This cartoon is reproduced with the kind permission of Steve Bell

POLICE ESSAYS trainee racists

'England is traditionally a white country, and that is how it should stay, the blacks must accept that if they are to live in this country they must fall under white British dictators and not try to run the country themselves from back-street slums.'

This is a quote from one of the revealing essays written earlier this year by police cadets at Hendon Police College. The theme was 'Black people in Britain'. The resulting essays give a clear picture of the police force as a whole and their feelings about black people.

The essays were riddled with blatant racist remarks and derogatory terminologies. They showed the attitude of the cadets (80% of them soon to be released into the Metropolitan area) have towards black people in this country. They view us as 'troublemakers', 'scroungers' and 'loudmouths' who should be sent home and have no right to live in this country.

This shows the police up for what they really are... ignorant, bigoted and out of touch with reality. Either they are ignorant of the fact that most black people in this country - 60% - were born here. This is our home. Or what they are really saying is that black people here have no rights, that the only rights we have are in the West Indies or in Africa. (But this doesn't stop with just the police. Many times during conversation with a newly-introduced white person I'm asked where I come from. Do they mean in London or where my parents come from? And then they have the cheek to add 'Well we're all the same aren't we?' Obviously not or the question wouldn't have been asked in the first place.)

The police cadets are bigoted and on a par with the National Front. Who else would generalise people into categories

such as trouble makers simply on the basis of skin colour? And definitely out of touch with reality. Otherwise they would be aware that black people have always had difficulties getting jobs suited to our ability. This has nothing to do with our intelligence but prejudice among employers. Now that the economy in this imperialist society is in a depression we black people are, as usual, being made the scapegoats.

But are the contents of the essays such a surprise anyway? This is a racist society. The Government, a major supporter of the apartheid regime in South Africa, passes racist Nationality laws and PTA laws. There is also a new Police Bill, soon to come into effect, which is many times worse than the old Sus law it replaces. All are brought about by the Government. The police who are employed by them and serve them only reflect this attitude in their job.

The essays written earlier this summer only became public knowledge after Whitelaw stated that being a racist is not grounds for being discharged from the police force. Clearly a statement that admits the police force is made up of racist elements, for it is these elements that are readily attracted to this type of

job, like pins to a magnet. It also shows that the Government is not prepared to do anything about it. This gives the cadets the courage to show their true colours in statements like:

'Do black people burn better with oil or petrol?'

'Blacks in Britain are a pest... I don't have any liking for nignogs and pakis... they are unintelligent (authors spelling not mine) and can't be educated sufficiently to live in a civilised world.'

The lecturer who taught the cadets, Mr Fernandes, was loaned to Hendon by Kilburn Polytechnic. On reading the essays he decided to change the course to examine the cadets' racism, from a political and ideological viewpoint. But the head of Hendon, Commander Wells, like Whitelaw decided that racism is not a crime or anything to be ashamed of. So he took Mr Fernandes off the course and put a Police instructor in charge of it. Finally the course was dropped altogether and Mr Fernandes has been banned from Hendon.

Two black policemen were interviewed about the essays. They admitted that they knew about the essays but had accepted their 'friends' explanations that they were written for a laugh. The fact that their friends joke about racism so openly makes a mockery of Lord Scarman's 'multi-racial' police force. Racism is so openly accepted in the police force that it can be joked about. And still the police wonder why black people get the idea they are racists.

Dawn Trent

MRS ROYAL WINS HER APPEAL

Readers of FRFI will remember the report of a Bristol family charged with assault and obstruction against the police after they had been attacked in their own home by those police. (FRFI No 21). In November the case went to appeal and this time the judge dismissed Mrs Royal's convictions and that of her 16-year-old son.

The police filed once more through the witness box claiming to have behaved like angels throughout. But this time the judge had one more witness to hear. The family's barrister had subpoenaed PC Marsh, the community policeman who had accompanied Detective Inspector Barry to the house - the same PC Marsh who had tried to restrain Barry when he hit Mrs Royal over the head with his radio. Strangely enough, Marsh had not appeared as a witness at the original trial. The Sergeant had said he wasn't

needed, he told the court. So it had been a case of Barry's word against Mrs Royal, and magistrates know policemen cannot tell a lie!

PC Marsh's evidence about the sudden appearance of a bruise on Mrs Royal's face could not be ignored. The judge also read the medical reports concerning the injury to her back, when she was brutally thrown into the police van. Reports which the previous magistrate had found irrelevant.

Once the true story of police violence had unfolded, the judge also reduced the second son Trevor's fine for assault from £200 to £100 (plus £50 costs).

On the day of the arrests, all over St Pauls, black youths were being taken in for the attempted murder of a policeman and interrogated intensively. To arrest David Royal in the family home that day they brought along 15 policemen - only to release him later without any charge. When asked why he had taken PC Marsh along, Barry said 'I attempted to find somebody who knew the family and would ensure the arrest took place quickly and with no trouble.' So much for the true role of 'Community policemen': to get the heavy mob's foot in the door by first showing a friendly face!

Sheila Marston

NO ETHNIC MONITORING

On 4 January 1983 the state will extend its racist attacks on black people in Britain. On that date a system of race checks will be introduced at dole offices. From 4 January onwards the ethnic category of a person will be held on Department of Employment computers. The information will be initially collected by dole office staff, who will visually assess claimants when they come to sign or make a claim. There will be four race categories on the racist check-sheet: West Indian/African; Asian; European/others; Refusals. However there will be only three categories in use for the computers. These will cover West Indian/African, Asian and Refusal categories. This shows that the state is interested only in black claimants and secondly the state presumes white people will not refuse to be monitored.

The consequences of such a system are incredibly far-reaching. Along with the Nationality Act, immigration controls, NHS race checks, DHSS fraud squads, increased police surveillance and the attack on civil liberties, the state will now cover every area of life to gain information on and control the black population of the United Kingdom. The information collected in the dole offices will be freely available to other government departments through the continual linking of computers.

In the dole offices themselves there is considerable opposition to the scheme. Most people who are opposed to the race checks are members of the CPSA. But the CPSA is not fully opposed to race checks, even though it is bringing out about a dozen offices on indefinite strike. The Department of Employment Section Conference considered that a system of voluntary monitoring is preferable to the system which the government wishes to introduce. What are the reasons for this position?

The CPSA is controlled by the Broad left which is dominated by the Communist Party and the Militant Tendency.

Both these factions are uninterested in the issue of 'Ethnic Monitoring', as they consider their sole duty is to organise an effective pay campaign in 1983, other issues are mere side issues! At the recent CPSA Broad Left national conference Kevin Roddy, the CPSA president and supporter of the Militant Tendency, hoped to have the issue of race checks in the dole offices dropped completely. Fortunately there were enough non-aligned members to defend the proposal.

In spite of this disgusting attitude on the part of the CPSA leadership, the Branches in the Department of Employment are taking measures to inform CPSA members and the public of the issues involved. Public meetings are taking place all over the country; CPSA shop stewards are meeting representatives from other organisations to gain support. Most Branches are fully opposed to race checks of any sort, and are conducting their campaigns under the slogan, **No Racism - No Ethnic Monitoring!**

Nigel Doyle



This photograph shows the mass 48-hour fast which took place in Manchester on 15 November to protest against immigration rules which have kept families divided for years on end. Because of the British state's racist immigration laws families are split up, deportations are mounting and internal passport checks at hospitals and social security offices are becoming systematic.

Yet even this is not enough for the racist British state. On 1 January 1983 the new Nationality Act will become law. The Act will mean that only 'patrials' (ie mainly whites) can become full British citizens. Black people who have entered the country since 1973 will not automatically become British citizens but must register and prove to the Home Office that they will be 'good' citizens. Moreover, for the first time ever, children born here in Britain will not necessarily become citizens - their status will depend on their parents' status. A layer of officially second-class citizens is being created who will be liable to deportation, refusal of re-entry after visits abroad, have no rights to vote or serve on juries.

The position of black women is doubly difficult. Britain's existing immigration rules make it impossible for 'non-patrial' British women to bring their husbands and fiancés into Britain. Britain is facing censure about this at the European Commission of Human Rights. Hence the Tory government was forced to attempt to slightly change these rules so that women with British citizenship could bring their spouses to join them here. (Women who are not citizens but are resident here would still not have this right.) In addition, a 'marriage test' is proposed in which couples have to prove that their marriage is genuine and if the marriage breaks down within two years the husband would be deported. Even so, over 50 Tories found this too 'liberal' and refused to vote for it. The new laws make it ever more essential that anti-racists demand End All Immigration Controls!

Bradford attacks

In Bradford the police are waging a terror campaign against the black community. Their victims include:

● **The Dacres** - 14 police invaded their home and beat them up. Their 3 sons were subsequently charged with assault on

police and other charges.

● **Donald Ely and Lorin Walker**. Assaulted on the street by PC Saxby (who summoned 3 vans to help him); arrested and charged with police assault.

● **David Hutchinson**. Dragged from his bedroom by 12 police. Held then released without charge.

The Bradford community is outraged by these attacks. Defence committees have been formed. Write c/o Checkpoint, 45 Westgate, Bradford, Yorks.

GREENHAM COMMON

continued from page 1

A serious social movement is under way as sections of the middle classes, horrified by the prospect of nuclear war, mobilise against it. And as the most determined of them, such as the Greenham women, struggle for peace they have begun to confront the British state and its repressive forces. The government and the press have tried to scare them with anti-communist propaganda. The local council has been trying to evict them, removing their shelters and tipping tons of boulders on the site they occupy. The police have abused and arrested them and the prisons have already incarcerated some of their number for short periods.

Out of such an experience there will be many lessons drawn. We hope that more and more of those who seriously desire peace will come to agree that (to quote FRFI) 'If you want peace you must fight imperialism'. The horror of nuclear war is but one of the horrors of imperialism. That the imperialists can contemplate destroying humanity is merely the logic of this bestial system. Imperialism has never hesitated, in its drive for profit and loot, to oppress, torture, massacre and slaughter the oppressed. It is doing so today in Ireland, Central America, South Africa, and Palestine - the list is endless. To secure an end to war, poverty, exploitation and oppression requires the destruction of imperialism.

When the Greenham women imprisoned in Holloway were released they showed great concern for the prisoners they had met inside. Most were, they said, black, Irish or poor. Such is the reality of the British state's prisons. One

of the Greenham women, Gill Booth, served her sentence in Drake Hall and Cookham Wood prisons. She told FRFI of the appalling conditions in the prisons and of the solidarity of the prisoners.

The women's supporters had set up a peace camp at the prison gates and rumours were started by the screws that all visits would be stopped as a result. This was an attempt to make the prisoners hostile to the Greenham women. One prisoner did get upset and angry but a black prisoner told her:

'Look if they stop our visits we should be angry at them, the authorities.'

Gill Booth heard the stories of the other prisoners:

'The first thing that struck me was that all of them were in for "political crimes", crimes against property and institutions. They had done things to get more money for their children. One woman forged a cheque for £250 and got six months. She has a baby which she hasn't seen for 6 months now. Another woman got 28 days for shoplifting £6 worth of food with another 14 days added because she swore at the judge.

The food was dreadful, not enough and badly cooked. There was one doctor for 200 women - without gynaecological qualifications. There were 5 miscarriages in 3 months. One woman was left locked up while she miscarried at 4½ months. She is now suing them for negligence. Every night about a quarter of the women were given valium and other drugs.

With the peace camp outside with drums beating and us inside, the screws were going crazy and so was the Governor. The spirit of the prisoners rose and they started to cheer the peace camp.'

The other Greenham women had refused to do prison work and were put in solitary. Gill Booth decided to work so that she could mix with the other prisoners. One of the facts which made spirits rise was that nobody else could be put in solitary while the Greenham women were there - it was full up. So more women started to be put on report but they couldn't be put in solitary! But Gill Booth was put on punishment for being found with 30 pence too much money. The pay for prison work was £1.37 for a forty hour week. Gill was taken for a disciplinary hearing for her 'offence'.

'There sits the Governor, the Board and 2 screws. It was a total farce and I simply refused to participate. I just walked out.'

The Governor clearly wanted the Greenham women moved. She knew they would expose what was going on in the prison and also that they were lifting the morale of other prisoners. So they were moved to Cookham Wood. There Gill saw a prisoner called Debbie Costyn who, after a fight with a screw, had been put in solitary. She had been on hunger strike for 3 weeks and lost two stone in weight. She had also tried to cut her wrists twice and once they sewed her up without anaesthetic. On another occasion they slammed her hand in the cell door, crushing four of her fingers. Gill was asked by other prisoners to raise Debbie Costyn's plight and Gill wants everyone to send cards to her and letters about her to the Home Secretary.

Finally, how would Gill sum up her experience:

'Prisons, the bomb, the state, the police are all part of the people in power. They have no respect for human life. The real criminals are in power.'

Maxine Williams

KNIGHT FAMILY FACE RETRIAL

Mrs Nellie Knight, 19 year old Jennifer Knight and 13 year old Janice were dragged out of their flat to Stoke Newington Police Station. They were brutalised and racially abused. Mrs Knight sustained injuries to her face, head, arms, thigh and back. She had to have a sling for her arm. All this police violence because the Knights had complained about a burglary on their home.

Not the police, but the Knight family had to appear in court. On 10 September an all white jury found Mrs Knight and Jennifer not guilty on four Grievous Bodily Harm charges and could not agree on two lesser counts of Actual Bodily Harm. The prosecution have succeeded in getting a retrial on the ABH charges to pursue their attempted frame-up of the Knight family. The Knights have held public meetings and pickets of Stoke Newington Police Station to widen their campaign and for an end to all police violence against black people. The retrial, which is from 13 December at Snaresbrook Crown Court, is a focus of resistance to the hated Stoke Newington police.

AG

Stop Press

At the trial of Nellie and Jennifer Knight the jury could not reach a verdict. The police frame-up failed and the Knight family won another victory.

FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

● McArthur Family Fight Deportation

Mrs McArthur and her 6 year old son Eola are fighting a deportation which threatens to separate her from her three teenage daughters who are legally entitled to stay in Britain. Erla McArthur came in 1960 and had to go to Guyana in 1972 to care for her ill mother. She and the family returned to Hackney in 1980 and they are all determined to stay.

Minister for Nationality and Immigration Timothy Raison said in September that Mrs McArthur's case did not present sufficiently exceptional compassionate circumstances to justify allowing her to remain in the UK. The McArthurs are fighting for their family life together. Help them. Send letters of protest to the Home Office urging them to exercise their discretion, get your MP to take up the campaign and write to Hackney MP Stanley Clinton-Davis urging him to make further representations.

Petitions and further details from: McArthur Family Campaign, Family Centre, 50 Rectory Road, London N16

● No Justice for First Avenue 11

On 20 February eight SPG vans drove down First Avenue in Manor Park, London, with their sirens blaring and lights flashing. They were chasing Tony Ramsay and his friend. Tony's family went to their aid. His sister Judith - 3 months pregnant at the time - was knocked to the ground by four police. 12 members of the family were arrested that night. Then on 17 May the Ramsay's house was shaken by a deafening noise. It was a police helicopter hovering directly over their home. Mrs Ramsay ran outside to see her son David in a police van being beaten by three police. In the courts Tony was found not guilty on the original theft charge, yet the Newham West Stipendiary Magistrate Ronald Moss convicted 10 of the family for assaulting the police, using threatening behaviour and bad behaviour in a police station. Moss said that he had difficulty in accepting that the SPG officers had lied, conspired to lie or committed perjury, as two of the police involved in the 20 February raid were local officers!

AG

● Asian Family faces £7000 hospital bill

The consequences of scandalous racist health care charges for 'visitors' to Britain have become clear. An Asian family in Bradford have been sent a £7476 bill for the hospital treatment their brother received whilst in Bradford on a visit from India. He tripped and broke his leg. On arrival at the hospital his sister Mrs Joshi was asked to sign a statement that she would pay for his treatment. Having no idea that this would mean paying £89 per day, she signed.

Mrs Joshi's husband is a bus driver and now he and his family must find over £7000 from their meagre earnings. Already in the USA poor people are turned away from hospitals no matter how desperately ill or injured they are. No money equals no treatment. The same prospect now looms for the victims of racist health care charges. That or a crippling burden of debt for themselves and their families.

MW

● Asian Seamen Fight Racism

The National Union of Seamen is ruffled by the publicity given to its dirty deals with the shipowners (see FRFI 24). The NUS now promises that the £30 annual levy for each black or Asian seaman employed will be redirected from union funds to the seamen concerned. That this tampering with its apartheid wages policy can be seen as a progressive move is beyond belief except to the labour imperialists of the NUS. It will mean, for example, the seamen from Sierra Leone can hope for another 60p to add to their wage of less than £25 a week. British ratings doing the same job get £174 weekly.

AG



● **On the Job Part I**

PC Bill Stewart of the Metropolitan police is an over zealous individual and to be avoided at all costs. According to 'The Job', the aptly titled newspaper of the corrupt London force, PC Stewart has made a record 100 arrests this year, reported 3,000 traffic offences and given 5,000 warnings. After consulting the *Police File* calculator we find this averages 2 arrests per week, 8.2 reports of traffic offences per day, and no less than 13.7 warnings to motorists per day. PC Stewart sounds like one of those policemen with the miraculous ability of being in at least three places at once. He puts his success down to a 'system' of stopping motorists with no road fund licence, and says, 'When I talk to them I expect them to tell me lies, so I don't believe what they say and keep at them'. With which part of his anatomy PC Stewart 'keeps at them' he leaves to the imagination.

● **On the Job Part II**

On the opposite side of 'law and order', three policemen set a record to compare with PC Stewart's when they were charged with a total of 10 offences concerning the thefts of lorryloads of whisky and clothing. Det Insp John Griffin, 39, and Det Sgt Barry Thomas, 36, both from Kent, and Det Sgt Christopher Forder, 40, of West Yorkshire, were bailed to appear at Leeds Magistrates Court on 20 January on charges which include false claims for insurance awards. The trio suffered the iron-hand of British justice following a speedy enquiry by Scotland Yard Complaints Bureau, which took only 2½ years to complete.

● **Nasty members of the public**

The Dornoch Sheriff (Scottish magistrate) praised three policemen on 4 November, accused of beating two students who had committed no offence. The Sheriff dismissed the case against the police and told the students they were 'Stupid, truculent boys'.

The story began on 13 July, when the students were on a camping holiday; they were arrested after water bailiffs saw them fishing with worms(!). Considering they had done nothing wrong (fishing with worms, remember), the two refused to give names, addresses or submit to a search, and, they alleged, were then grabbed by the throat, pushed and punched by the police.

Sheriff Ewan Stewart, who it appears has never heard of the suspect's right to silence, but does have a very fertile imagination, said: 'You were found in a strange position(!) and refused to identify yourselves. Suppose you had absconded from a borstal and picked up a pistol'. 'Don't you know that it happens in this country that policemen get shot?'

For the Sheriff, it appears, the escape from borstal and the pistol had now taken on stark reality, and any action by the police would be justified to stop these two desperadoes... fishing with worms.

Perhaps at this point someone pointed out to the Sheriff that the police were denying striking the students, and his advocacy of summary beatings was not helping their case. Sheriff Stewart, in dismissing the case against the police, made a quick change of tack. 'It doesn't matter how much trial I hold and say they are not guilty, there will always be some nasty member of the public who will say there is no smoke without fire. They will say that the police probably did do something to these boys'. Need we say more?

NOTES & COMMENTS

■ **Ron Smith's fight for truth**

Friday 10 December saw the jury in the Helen Smith inquest return an open verdict. For Ron Smith, Helen's father, it marked a victory and the end of a stage in his 3½ year campaign to prove firstly, that Helen was murdered and secondly, that this was being covered up by the Foreign Office in order to protect an individual or individuals known to have been present at the illegal drinking party in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where Helen had died.

Ron Smith's campaign to expose the cover-up brought him smack up against the lies and obstruction which exist at every level of the British state when its interests are being threatened - from the Foreign Office, to the Home Secretary, Parliament, the courts and coroners. As in the inquests of the New Cross 13, Richard Campbell, Blair Peach and Barry Prosser, the British state will try every devious trick to cover up for itself. In all these cases, the coroner has played a particularly important role in the cover-up. An ex-policeman, Ron Smith now has nothing but contempt and hatred for the system he once supported.

Cover-ups have included the halting of a West Yorkshire police investigation into Helen's death by William Whitelaw and the use of the Parliamentary Procedural Block (normally only used when the 'security of the state' is at risk) in order to prevent questions on this in the House of Commons. Three years ago, the then West Yorkshire Coroner, Coverdale, instructed a pathologist to omit from his report details of injuries showing that Helen had been sexually attacked. The succeeding West Yorkshire Coroner, Phillip Gill, continued to block an inquest until ordered to hold one by the High Court over 3 years after Helen's death. Gill then refused to disclose details of witnesses and even kept the venue secret until just before the inquest. Finally, at the inquest itself, Gill in his summing up told the jury to ignore the evidence of two eminent pathologists who both said that Helen's injuries were consistent with her being raped and beaten up. 'Experts can be wrong' he said. Fortunately, the jury ignored this blatant interference and returned an open verdict, ie they did not accept the official version that Helen's death had been an accident. Meanwhile Ron Smith has said this is 'only the beginning'.

Olivia Adamson □

■ **Government lies over unemployment**

The latest unemployment figure of 3,063,026 for November 1982, provides yet another example of the Thatcher government's arrogant contempt for the working class. For reasons of 'efficiency', beginning with the November figures, it has been decided that from now on the number of unemployed people is to be calculated from those actually claiming benefit, instead of, as before, from those registered as unemployed or looking for work. 'Efficient' this new method certainly is from the government's point of view: it removes at a stroke ¼m people from the number of unemployed. (October's figure, calculated on the old basis was 3,295,100.)

A major part of those suddenly discounted are married women, who, because of the sort of jobs they are generally forced to take - low paid, part-time, temporary and casual jobs - usually have never paid enough national insurance contributions to claim unemployment benefit. These married women workers - part of what Karl Marx called the 'industrial reserve army' even in times of high employment - just don't exist as far as the government is concerned - they are simply omitted from the records. Also, schemes such as the YOP programme keep nearly ½m young people out of the unemployment figures. The TUC estimates that unemployment

stands at 4m while a recent *Labour Research* survey stated that it was nearer 5m. No amount of tinkering around with figures by the government can now disguise the terrible effects of mass unemployment. As long as the capitalist system exists, as long as production is purely for profit, millions of workers will be forced to endure life on capitalism's scrapheap.

Olivia Adamson □

■ **CPSA spurns unemployed**

The 200,000 strong Civil and Public Services Association, which represents clerical grades in the Civil Service, has recently taken two decisions which illustrate the utter contempt the official Labour movement has for the oppressed. At its special conference on 8 December held in London, overwhelming support was given to a motion of the left wing dominated Executive Committee calling for all out strike action in pursuit of its 1983 pay claim. Special emphasis was placed on the need to involve DEUBOs at DHSS Local Offices. The net result of this step will be to throw millions of claimants into absolute destitution as they will not receive money due to them. This, however, was of little concern to the delegates at the Conference; there was no wish to discuss making special concessions to claimants, since the attitude of the delegates was that hitting the unemployed in this way would make the government concede to the union's demands. However one motion, passed by DE Runcorn HQ Branch called for all out action excluding those working in DEUBOs and DHSS local offices. Instead they were to be called upon to donate their pay to a strike fund, and for the duration of the action to make all payments claimed without any investigation. Unfortunately this arrived 2 hours after the deadline for motions and so was not included on the agenda. The CPSA organises in state institutions which directly and indirectly oppress the unemployed and claimants. The course of industrial action that was voted on, despite the apparent militancy that motivated it, in no way confronts that oppressive role, and reinforces the division between employed and unemployed.

This special conference was due to have been opened by Ken Livingstone as leader of the GLC, on the invitation of the National Executive of the CPSA. However, the week beforehand news had broken of the invitation to Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison soon followed by the Ballykelly operation. The CPSA NEC, consisting of members of the CPGB, Militant, and other Labour left wingers, showed its true colours by withdrawing the invitation to Livingstone. Excusing themselves by saying that they did not want any external issues to become confused with the plight of low-paid workers, they deserted their erstwhile political ally. Such craven abject cowardice was a fitting introduction to the disgraceful attitude they were to show at the conference towards the unemployed.

CPSA Correspondent □

■ **Arlington House strike continues**

The Arlington House strike has been going on since September when 34 TGWU workers struck against the low pay and poor working conditions of Rowton Hotels Ltd who own Arlington House. Rowton Hotels last year made a net profit of £280,000 from Arlington House. In order to break the strike, the management took action in the County Court to evict the strikers who were occupying their rooms. On 25 November Bailiffs turned up to carry out the evictions but were unable to do so as four strikers had barricaded themselves in on the 5th floor. However, on 30 November the Bailiffs returned, supported by 300 policemen, to smash the barricades and evict the strikers. The spirit of the strikers remains strong

despite having to exist on a mere £12 per week strike pay. Camden Council has provided accommodation for them and the Council is also seeking to buy Arlington House for 'Socially Responsible Ownership'. There has been a great deal of support for the strike from local trade unions and the Camden Labour Party and the pickets on Arlington House are still turning away deliveries. In response the management have employed a security company 'Centuryon' at £40 per hour to intimidate the strikers. £40 per hour is much more than the strikers were asking for! Jim Cronin, Convenor, when asked how long they were prepared to stick it out said 'until we win our just demands'.

Messages of solidarity and donations should be sent to Arlington House Strike Fund, Labour Party Room 8, Camden Road, London NW1.

Joe Foley, TGWU member □

■ **TUC betray NHS strike**

On 14 December 1982, the 8 month long health workers struggle was called off by the TUC Health Services Committee. Throughout the 8 months the TUC refused to conduct a determined battle on behalf of the health workers. They chose a series of demoralising one-day strikes, which failed to have any impact, rather than call an all-out strike. The NHS workers' readiness for an all-out strike pointed to the possibility of a confrontation that would not only have shaken the peaceful co-existence between the TUC and the government, but also have challenged the positions of the many TUC scab leaders.

This betrayal means that the ruling class onslaught against the NHS will proceed more savagely, with the Tories confident that the TUC will do next to nothing to defend the interests of the working class.

John Roberts □

■ **Ron Brown convicted**

The Ron Brown Support Committee (RBSC) organised a successful demonstration outside Glasgow Sheriff Court on Thursday 25 November, the day of Ron Brown's trial for breach of the peace in September.

The charge arose from Thatcher's visit to Glasgow and MP Ron Brown's protest to her that she was not welcome in Scotland. In finding Ron Brown guilty, the Sheriff ignored the fact that 500 trade unionists were also showing their anger and hatred of the government's reactionary policies. The sheriff fined Ron Brown £50 and described his protest as being that of 'an enemy of free speech'. In a press statement afterwards the RBSC denounced the verdict and pointed out that the government were the real enemy and threat to free speech. The committee said that 'the verdict represents a set-back for democratic rights and Ron Brown's guilt means we are all guilty in the eyes of the police and courts when we protest.'

The campaign gained the support of 3 Labour MPs - Joan Maynard, Dennis Skinner and Robin Cook, Ron Brown's own Leith Labour Party branch and a local Edinburgh one, the AUEW Shop Stewards Committee (Weir Pumps). Glasgow District NUPE, the No 13 branch of NUR (Glasgow), the Campaign for Restoration of Democratic Rights in Pakistan, Plaid Cymru; the John Maclean Society, the Scottish Republican Socialist Party, North and South London Irish Solidarity Committees, and the RCG and FRFI supporters. Many individuals also wrote giving their support. On the day, GIFAC supporters were present with a banner, as were FRFI and the Edinburgh Building Workers Banner and the NUR branch. The Committee received enough financial support to pay Ron Brown's fine and thus to ensure that the burden of his conviction is the responsibility of all those who have shown their support for the campaign. Ron Brown told FRFI afterwards that 'all along I have

maintained that what was at stake was the democratic rights of protest! He also thanked FRFI for its support and participation in the work. As expected, the press chose to trivialise the trial and concentrated on Ron Brown to the exclusion of any mention of working class rights. The Scottish Council for Civil Liberties attacked the verdict and the breach of the peace charge, calling it a 'police crime' in view of the fact that the verdict now means that breach of the peace is anything the police want it to be. Being rushed by the police, thrown over a wall and held for six hours without charge (Ron Brown's experience) is now the police's way of keeping the peace.

Gary Cameron □

■ **Conspiracy laws against hospital workers**

On 29 November the trial began of 12 hospital technicians, members of ASTMS, whose peaceful work-in was brutally attacked by police on 25 September. The police, backed by vans and dogs, used sledge-hammers to smash down the front door of the laboratory and dragged out the workers involved in the protest over suspension of a colleague. They are facing charges under the 1875 Conspiracy Act and have refused to recognise the relevancy of this charge.

Fife Federation of Trades Councils organised a silent protest outside the court and plan a campaign to oppose the charges. The twelve reappear on 20 December. The British state, its corrupt police, courts and judges have used such methods and laws to frame up black, Asian and Irish people with no protests from the official trade union movement. As a result the state is now turning its attention to trades unionists and workers who take action to defend their conditions of work.

The Bradford 12 showed how these frame-ups can be defeated and they won a great victory for all oppressed and working people. The shameful case of the Shrewsbury Two, Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson, jailed for conspiracy during an industrial dispute, shows that much more than silent protests are needed to defend and secure democratic rights. A NUPE branch and a COHSE branch have both passed resolutions condemning the police attack on the hospital workers.

FRFI calls on all its readers in the area to support any protests organised in support of these workers.

Mike T □

■ **The Black and the Pink**

There's an Irish rebel song the refrain of which goes:

Coming down the Falls Road, wi'
bayonets, guns and gas
Terrorising women as they're coming out
of Mass
A shower of Scottish bastards the like
we've never met
Thank God we know the IRA isn't
finished yet.

This song is about the infamous Black Watch Regiment, a Scottish regiment raised by the English after the 1745 rebellion to suppress the resistance of Scottish clans. More recently their tours of duty in the occupied North of Ireland have meant murder and savage beatings for the nationalist working class and they are deservedly hated for this.

To readers of FRFI and to the Irish people it will come as no surprise to learn that the darling of the middle-class left, Tony Benn, proudly unveiled a plaque in the renovated drinking lounge of the Black Watch Social Club in Dundee. While the members sup their pints peacefully I'm sure the Republican social clubs in the Falls Road have not forgotten the many unwelcome visits from the Black Watch.

Mike T □

BRAZILIAN TIME-BOMB TICKS AWAY

Brazil has now toppled Mexico from the top of the world debt league. With US banks holding 60% of its \$85bn debt, Brazil might as well be the fifty-first state of the USA. Emperor Reagan is certainly deciding its foreign policy – or more precisely, buying it – as his recent Latin American tour showed. Only hours after jetting in, the Yankee Emperor was delivering his commandments: Brazil shall not trade with socialist countries, nor support the PLO or the Arab states, but must provide military cooperation with Yankee oppression in Central America and help Uncle Sam put the rest of the South American empire back in place after the shake-up it received during the South Atlantic war. The price for all this was a \$1.2bn US credit to ease Brazil's balance of payments crisis. The bucks bought a rapid agreement from Brazil's President Figueiredo.

This was only the latest step in the advancing collusion between the Brazilian rulers and the US imperialists brought about by the Mexican debt crisis. After years of propaganda dismissing the appeals for help from oppressed nations and praising 'market forces', the Mexican crisis shocked the US imperialists into realising that if a handful of Third World debtors were to default, the US banking system would collapse. Now the world's biggest debtor, Brazil has had to pay out \$17bn to service its debt this year. Yet its trade surplus with other countries this year amounts to a pathetic \$800m. The debt has only been financed by further massive borrowing and a drastic run down of foreign exchange reserves. Brazil, and with it the world banking system, is on course for disaster.

And so when President Figueiredo visited Washington at the end of September, a secret deal was negotiated by US Secretary of State George Schultz – who just happens to be a member of Brazil's leading merchant bank Brasilinvest. The agreement is that the US will help with the debt problem, provided that Brazil freezes its long-term debt and curbs its short-term debt. One of the first signs of the deal was a chorus from US ambassadors, bankers and journalists explaining how creditworthy Brazil was, and how different its debt problems were from Argentina or Poland. This was followed by offers of major loans from US banks, guaranteed by the US Federal Reserve.

Further evidence of the deal surfaced at the GATT trade conference in November. The Brazilians were approaching the IMF for \$6.7bn – the largest loan in the Fund's history, taking a quarter of its usable resources. The Yankees promised to support the application in exchange for Brazilian backing for the US demand for free trade in services like banking and insurance. Objections to Brazilian subsidies on exports to the US, which had been under heavy attack from Washington for two years, were also withdrawn. Yet this change in US tactics will not solve Brazil's problems or save the US banks.

In the first place, there are already problems with the Yankee banking plans. The US banks, committed to picking up Brazil's bills, are furious with European and Japanese bankers' reluctance to risk more money in Brazil. Nor is extra IMF finance going to be easily forthcoming – it may be 18 months before the IMF can enlarge its quotas to cope with the increased demands being placed on its resources by crisis-ridden countries like Brazil. And the bankers may have to dig even deeper – Brazil seems to be concealing several billion dollars' worth of short term debt (to be repaid within a year), pushing up its borrowing requirements next year, derailing the complicated

plans of the US imperialists, and perhaps precipitating the very crisis they are hoping to avoid.

Secondly, the Brazilian ruling class is both divided and unpopular. The military who have held power since the 1964 coup were split over whether to hold the recent elections – the first that were remotely free for nineteen years. The government did everything in its power to sabotage the election – prohibiting the appearance of opposition politicians on television; distributing millions of forged ballot forms to confuse and deceive; and falsifying the actual count of votes. Despite all this the opposition parties won control of the southern Brazilian states with the majority of the country's population and production. Yet although the government party received only about 30% of the votes, it is still in control of a majority of states and the Senate – a result which only advertises its unpopular character. The divisions within the ruling class were emphasised by an attempted military coup just two days before Reagan arrived. Although it failed, it served notice of the way sections of the military are thinking.

Finally, and most importantly, Brazil's poor and oppressed are seething with discontent. In the impoverished North-East, where 1% of the population owns 40% of the land and there are millions without land or work, the peasants are struggling against the landowners and the state. They have the support of the radical church, and priests have been jailed, tortured and executed for supporting the people against the state. In the cities, the torrent of foreign investment, attracted by the 1964 coup, has doubled the size of the industrial working class, drawing them into huge factories – Volkswagen employs 38,000; Fords 25,000. But wages have been halved in the last ten years and it takes nearly twice as many hours of work to earn the subsistence minimum as it did in 1964. A new trade union movement has been born out of this exploitation. Millions live in shanty towns in utter poverty without sanitation. The poorer half of the population receive about 13% of total income, while the richest 10% get more than half.

And now the IMF, as a condition of the loan to Brazil, is demanding an austerity package which will cut wages and increase unemployment. The 'Justice' Minister himself has said that the 'capital cities and their areas are today socially explosive'. The IMF may well detonate this explosion of the oppressed – an explosion which will rock the capitals of the imperialist world.

**Victory to the Brazilian
revolution!
Death to imperialism!**
Steve Palmer

Central America counter-revolution mobilises

When President Reagan visited Central America in December 1982, one of US imperialism's main concerns was to speed up the regional co-ordination of its puppet regimes in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. This has become an urgent necessity for imperialism as the comprador ruling classes in El Salvador and Guatemala, despite immense US assistance, have failed to destroy the popular anti-imperialist revolution in these countries. In addition, US imperialism is intensifying its efforts to destroy the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and to do so it requires the active assistance of Honduras.

Honduras and the Honduran government are the lynchpin in current US efforts to regionalise the counter-revolutionary war in Central America. Reactionary Honduran governments have



been willing servants of US imperialism ever since 1954 when the country was used as a springboard for the US organised invasion that overthrew Guatemala's democratically elected Arbenz government. Today, Honduras under President Suazo Cordova, is playing the same role, particularly against the Nicaraguan revolution and the FMLN in El Salvador. In imperialist propaganda Honduras, with its elected President, is presented as a democracy. But in fact, it is the army, under General Alvarez, which exercises absolute power. Alvarez, a virulent anti-communist, has already begun what he terms a 'preventive war' against the workers and peasants of Honduras. Death squads operate freely, detention and torture are daily increasing and workers' strikes are suppressed by violence. Alvarez is attempting to crush the workers', peasants' and democratic movement in order to make the country safe for US sponsored counter-revolution against Nicaragua and the FMLN. The Honduran army,

already equipped with US, Israeli and British weapons, has received \$31m of US aid in 1982. Part of this aid is being used to construct airfields capable of taking US Air Force planes in anticipation of direct US involvement in Central America. In January 1983, the US and Honduran military forces plan joint exercises on the border with Nicaragua as a pre-run of a possible Honduran armed invasion of Nicaragua.

Meanwhile, the CIA is using Honduras as a training camp for ex-Somoza national guards. Under the direction of 150 CIA advisers and with millions of CIA dollars 3,500 national guards are being armed and trained to undertake sabotage and murderous raids into Nicaragua. In 1982 alone, over 300 Nicaraguans were murdered by these CIA trained bandits and US imperialism is planning to increase their activities.

US imperialism is also seeking to improve the level of co-ordination between the Honduran and El Salvadoran army. In November 1982, a meeting between the General Staffs of Honduras and El Salvador with leaders of the US Rapid Deployment Force discussed further co-ordination. This was deemed necessary because, despite the over \$300m in US military aid in 1982, despite the four US trained battalions and the 50 US advisers in El Salvador, the regime has failed to defeat or even weaken the FMLN.

US imperialism's belief that Honduras can be a peaceful and safe haven for counter-revolution will soon shatter as the armed revolutionary movement in Honduras grows stronger. As Nicaragua's Minister of the Interior said of Reagan's visit:

'He flies into Central America like some kind of vulture. It will be difficult for him, though, to satisfy his appetite around here.'

Eddie Abrahams

ARGENTINA

On Thursday 16 December, a massive demonstration of between 100,000 and 300,000 Argentinians crowded into Buenos Aires Plaza de Mayo to protest against continued military rule. Calling for elections, the crowd chanted 'End the military dictatorship' and 'Up against the wall, all the brass who sold the country'. Police attacked the demonstrators who fought back with cries of 'Why didn't you fight like this against the English?' One man was shot dead by the police, dozens injured and scores arrested.

This was only the latest action in the growing popular opposition to the military regime. On 6 December, 90% of the country's workers took part in a 24 hour general strike in support of wage rises and unemployment relief – inflation is running at over 250% while more than 1m of the country's 8.5m workers are unemployed. The struggle is not limited to economic demands but includes calls for an explanation of the part played by the military in the case of the 'disappeared'. These are the 30,000 people tortured, killed and secretly buried in mass graves by the army since 1976.

The Argentinian re-occupation of the Falklands/Malvinas was a manoeuvre by the junta to divert popular opposition. That manoeuvre rebounded when

the costly defeat exposed the weakness and incompetence of the military dictatorship. War veterans have since interrupted honour parades, chanting against the military dictatorship.

It is not only the Argentinian military who are worried about what the future has in store: Argentina has a \$40bn debt it is incapable of servicing and the imperialists have been scurrying round trying to raise loans to prevent a default which would rock the world financial system. One banker commented: 'We don't know who's going to be in power, and we don't know if future governments will honour commitments made now. Everyone is keeping their fingers crossed'.

Stephen Palmer

● France: attacks on the poor

On 1 January the French Socialist government will abandon all its facade of 'caring' for the poor and impose massive cuts in unemployment pay.

● At present someone who has worked for 3 months is entitled to the dole. In next year they will have to work for 6 months first. The Unions estimate this will leave 200,000 young people with neither jobs nor dole.

● 8 years ago it was agreed that anyone sacked for economic reasons, eg factory closure, would receive 90% of his pay for a year. Now this will become 70% for 6 months.

● The government has given much encouragement to those wanting early retirement at 55, in order to give more young people jobs. Now they are reversing their attitude. Those who retire early will receive only 50-65% of their salary as pension, instead of 70%.

Why this brutal swing in policy? Because the employers refused to operate their side of the employment insurance system which is costing them too much money as the French economy plunges into crisis. The Socialist government, wedded as it is to the maintenance of capitalism, will not force the ruling class to pay for unemployment. So always it is the working class, and particularly the unemployed, who are sacrificed to the interests of profitability.

Will the French experience be a lesson to those who listen eagerly to the fine promises of the Labour Party, preferring not to face that Party's firm adherence to capitalism? Mitterrand is showing for a while who he really is. He is a man who wants to see that capitalism never has a human face for long. It is a system that destroys people by the thousand through poverty, disease, starvation and whatever the hopes of those who try to administer it.

Sheila Marston

● US crime

Following the lacing of Tylenol pain killers with cyanide in Chicago the USA has shown the way to even more ingenious and warped crime. Every Halloween it is custom among US children to visit neighbouring homes and ask for 'trick or treat'. They are not given some treat, usually food, they perform some mischievous 'trick'. Halloween this year was marked by hundreds of reports from across the country of apples and sweets being sabotaged with pins, needles and razor blades. Parents flocked to hospitals with drugged children and sweets to be taken for X-Rays. 'This year has been unbelievable' said one employee of a 'candy clearing house'. 'We've had candy bars with metal objects tacked inside them, glue, cat food. One child got a little trick-or-treat bag with razor blades in the bottom.'

Capitalism is everywhere a crime against the working class. It breeds a morality of selfish competition, the violence and deception. Its state is an organ of armed robbery through which the rich systematically loot the poor. Gangsters sit in their counting houses and own the banks, hoodlums patrol its corridors of power while connen draft the laws. I wonder then that the FBI produces figures to show that in the USA a crime is committed every 2 seconds, assault and robbery every 8 seconds, women are attacked every 15 seconds and raped every 15 minutes, and a murder takes place every 15 minutes. During the next 5 years the government intends to spend \$1.7 trillion on weapons in order to export its industry of plunder and death. Meanwhile, as tears are shed for ET and the film multinational pocket millions of dollars, child immunisation programmes have been slashed a billion dollars, leaving many children open to disease. This is the horrific reality of capitalism in what the ex-film gangster President Reagan calls US capitalism, 'a shining mansion on a hill'. For his uncivilised class it is, but for the American people it is haunted house roaming with madmen and it must be pulled down.

Trevor Rayne

Building an Irish solidarity

The conference was opened with a reading of some of the messages of solidarity sent by the 20 Irish Prisoners of War in English gaols who sponsored One, from John McCluskey, stated:

"We appeal to all those political groups and individuals who claim to support the right of self-determination for the Irish people to come together and help form an Irish Solidarity Movement. By showing full support with the Irish struggle you will also be helping the British working class; we are fighting the same enemy as you, ie 'the British ruling class'".

The vigorous applause which greeted these messages showed that the audience shared the view of Irish POWs that the Irish people and the British working class face a single enemy in British imperialism. The internationalist spirit of the day revealed itself by the particularly warm response to the message of Patrick Guilfoyle who wrote:

"We are all in this together, it's not just Ireland versus England. As you know it is a big big world. Imperialism is a world problem. Nations of people must work together to crush it."

The Irish POWs' revolutionary, anti-imperialist declarations set the background to the main speech on 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement' delivered by David Reed of the Revolutionary Communist Group and author of the Communist Tradition on Ireland published in FRFI.

David Reed explained why British imperialism cannot play a progressive role in Ireland, demonstrating this point by a careful analysis of the history of British rule in Ireland. In a very precise statement on the nature of imperialism he said:

"Imperialism will never voluntarily relinquish political control over an oppressed nation because such control enormously strengthens its ability to economically exploit that nation. Any movement by British imperialism to make concessions to the demands of the Irish people has, therefore, only been brought about by revolutionary force. On a number of occasions it took an insurrection or direct threat to the stability of British rule over Ireland to force the British ruling class to move. Peaceful and constitutional methods of protest have always been ignored. Time and again British imperialism has resorted to outright terror to retain its domination over Ireland."

Self-determination for the Irish people can therefore only be won by a bitter struggle against British imperialism, a struggle which is being led by the Republican movement. The speech went on to show that the Irish revolution, by being the most sustained challenge to British imperialism, was also the key to the British revolution. The Irish revolution has always challenged the political foundations of British imperialism. In the 1860s the Fenian movement challenged the alliance of the landed aristocracy and bourgeoisie whose unity was the basis of predatory and oppressive British capitalism. Today, once again, the Republican movement's struggle is a direct challenge to British imperialism. Throughout the last 13 years, at crucial moments of rising revolutionary mag-

gle against British imperialism in Ireland, the Labour Party and official trade union movement have come forward as the best defenders of British imperialist rule. Further, during these 13 years the Labour Party, backed by the official trade union movement, has played a direct role in oppressing and terrorising the nationalist people. Without this alliance between the imperialist ruling class and the labour aristocracy, British oppression of the Irish people would have been destroyed and the British working class would be in an infinitely better position to successfully challenge the British ruling class. A solidarity movement in Britain, therefore, had to be based on clear anti-imperialist principles calling for 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'



Alastair Logan

Such a movement cannot, however, be based upon the Labour Party and official trade union movement. As David Reed explained:

"Far from being potential allies of the Irish people, the British Labour Party and official trade union movement have proved to be their most treacherous enemies."

In participating in the oppression of the Irish people they show their ties to British imperialism whose superprofits are the basis of their privileges. The evidence for this is overwhelming. The Labour government sent troops into Ireland in 1969; in 1974 it introduced the racist anti-Irish Prevention of Terrorism Act, and between 1976-1979 the Labour government administered a regime of terror and torture directed against the nationalist people. Whilst in opposition in 1981, the Labour Party collaborated in the brutal murder of 10 Irish POWs on hunger strike.

"I and my comrades, Brian and Eddie, send greetings to you and to all comrades, we also wish you success at your conference. However, if you, or a committee, should ever call on the IRA to lay down its arms and surrender, then we would condemn you as being counter-revolutionaries" Brendan Dowd

A movement of anti-imperialist solidarity could not be based on such forces. David Reed stated that:

"It can only be based on those forces whose interests lie in the overthrow of British imperialism."

In answer to his own question 'Do such forces exist in Britain at the present time?' David Reed pointed to the black and white youth who rose up in 1981 throughout Britain against the British imperialist state. Of these youth he said:

"They have no illusions in the institutions of British imperialist democracy. They, like the Irish, have been forced to take the revolutionary and insurrectionary road."

The Uprisings conclusively demonstrated that forces exist in Britain which are capable of the dedication and sacrifice that is necessary in the struggle against British imperialism here at home.'

Having established these two fundamental points, David Reed concluded by emphasising that a solidarity movement built on the basis of the demands 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!' must reject all sectarianism and seek joint work and unity with any individual or organisation helping to take the movement forward. Ending his speech he said:

"This conference represents a new beginning. It is a call for real unity - unity based on the common interests of the Irish people and the British working class in the defeat of British imperialism."

Solidarity greetings and debate

This keynote speech was followed by statements and greetings of solidarity from various sponsoring organisations including the Wolfe Tone and Connolly/Keegan Cummain of Sinn Fein, South London TOM, the Revolutionary Communist League (Britain) and a number of Irish Solidarity Committees. An international dimension was provided by messages from 10 German committees working on Ireland, the International Solidarity Front - Iran and the Bangladesh Workers Association. The chairperson, Maxine Williams, then read some more messages from Irish POWs and opened the conference floor to debate.

"I am writing this letter to let you know that I and my comrades in Gartree are in total agreement with and wholly endorse, the one day conference... on the building of an Irish Solidarity Movement" Liam Baker

The main points of debate, which emerged throughout the day, centred on the question: amongst which sections of the working class can a solidarity movement be built today. Could it be built primarily within the organised Labour movement or must it be built first amongst the most revolutionary sections of the oppressed working class - the black, Irish, and unemployed youth? While the majority of delegates clearly believed that a solidarity movement could be primarily built amongst the latter, a number of comrades expressed concern that emphasis on the most oppressed working class might mean a complete rejection of the organised Labour movement. These concerns were easily resolved as speaker after speaker repeated that whilst building amongst the most oppressed sections, an Irish solidarity movement would as a matter of urgency ensure that solidarity work was undertaken in trade union branches and Labour Party bodies in the broadest possible way. Such work done in a principled manner, on the basis of clear anti-imperialist positions would undoubtedly bring fruits, as it had done during the PAC campaign in 1978.

In his summing up David Reed addressed himself to this question when he said:

"I am not saying that whole sections of the British working class cannot be

CONFERENCE REPORT

On Saturday 20 November, 250 delegates packed the main hall of Caxton House in north London to attend a one-day conference on 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement'. Organised by the North London Irish Solidarity Committee, the conference was a tremendous success and an impressive display of unity. Delegates came from all parts of the country - from London, Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds, from Bradford, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling, from Colchester, Luton, St Albans, Birmingham and Cambridge, from Ipswich, Dorset, Somerset, Surrey and from many other places. The conference brought together representatives of a wide variety of political and trade union organisations to discuss the building of an Irish solidarity movement. Included were Sinn Fein, the Revolutionary Communist Group/Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!, the Revolutionary Communist League (Britain), Islington Central and Brentford Labour Parties, South London and East London Troops Out Movement, Essex University Troops Out Society, Race Today, Bangladeshi Youth Organisation and of course representatives of Irish solidarity committees in North and South London, Bradford, Glasgow, Newcastle. Trade union members present included members of TGWU, UCATT, NUPE, ASTMS, CPSA, NUT and NUJ. And this list is by no means exhaustive!

We have devoted our centre pages to a report of this important conference - Building an Irish Solidarity Movement.

won to supporting an Irish solidarity movement. In order to win them, we have to confront them with an Irish solidarity movement that struggles on an anti-imperialist basis.'

Such a movement today could be built first and foremost amongst that section of the working class which had no interest in maintaining British imperialism. It would be reactionary to turn to:

'... forces which at this stage of time have a vested interest in the continuation of British imperialism.'

But once a real anti-imperialist movement has been built amongst the revolutionary forces of the working class, then the possibility exists for drawing in important sections of the organised Labour movement

In order to build amongst the revolutionary forces, speaker after speaker stressed the need to take the Irish solidarity committees into working class communities, onto the streets, into estates and wherever else revolutionary forces are gathered. In making these points, the speakers were reflecting their already considerable experience of successful solidarity work on the streets and estates of the major cities in Britain.

All these points led to a day-long lively and often humorous discussion ranging over the work of the solidarity committees, the condition and struggle of Irish POWs in English gaols, the defence of democratic rights and the need to establish a co-ordinating committee from the conference. This committee would take forward the work of the conference, encourage the development of new Irish solidarity committees and build for a demonstration on Saturday 12 March 1983.



Michael Holden

"Remember comrades, the three giants of socialist theory, Marx, Engels and Lenin, valiantly supported the Irish people's struggle for national liberation. Therefore, we feel it is the duty of all true socialists and democrats to work strenuously for the achievement of this aim" Irish POWs Albany

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The conference ended by passing a motion to set up a co-ordinating committee of all organisations which support the demands 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'. Charged with, amongst other things, co-ordinating national activity, the committee's main tasks will centre on organising a national demonstration on Saturday 12 March 1983.

Since the conference, many who attended have been inspired to build local Irish Solidarity Committees in their areas. Committees have been set up in Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and West London!

If you agree with the demands 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!' and want to help build an Irish Solidarity Movement by joining an ISC or forming one in your area you can contact the Co-ordinating Committee at c-c BISM, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

PAUL MATTSOON

ity movement

IRISH POWS IN ENGLISH GAOLS

emerged as the leading force defending the rights of all prisoners. They have fought and died for these rights and will carry on fighting until they win. Any movement in this country must take these facts into account, he said, and continually speak out on the barbaric treatment of POWs in British gaols.

In asking you to build a solidarity movement, we believe that any political group... calling themselves socialist, has a duty to build that movement in order to promote socialism in Ireland and Britain Irish POWs Hull

Alastair Logan was followed by Helen O'Brien, sister of an Irish POW, whose compelling speech made a call on the audience:

'...of all political beliefs to come together and find out what the Republicans are fighting for because their fight is our fight.'



Helen O'Brien

Helen O'Brien showed that the Irish POWs were today more committed to the struggle than when they were first imprisoned. She told how they are seeking to build links with all other prisoners. Such has their success been that the prison authorities are attempting to isolate the prison population from the revolutionary influence of Irish POWs. John McCluskey for example was kept in solitary because the prisons could not control his influence over other prisoners. In concluding her speech she reported the prisoners' determination that the armed struggle must go on and that there should be no compromise with British imperialism. Her moving speech was given a lengthy standing ovation as the conference indicated its complete support for the prisoners' struggle.

This was demonstrated during the discussion when a contributor stated that an Irish solidarity movement was obliged to take up the case of Irish POWs, but only after the prisoners themselves had made clear what they wanted. This view was overwhelmingly endorsed when the conference passed a motion instructing a co-ordinating committee to 'support any campaign backed by the Irish prisoners in support of Irish POWs in English prisons'. As a demonstration of solidarity a raffle of an Easter Lily, donated by an Irish POW, raised £50 for An Cumann Cabhrach.

A session devoted to Irish POWs in British gaols began with a message of solidarity from Gerry MacLochlainn (Irish POW). In it he said:

'As unemployed and poorly paid youth in Britain (particularly black youth) begin to tread the same path as we did 14 years ago opportunities open up to demonstrate that our struggles are, in fact, one struggle and our enemy - British imperialism - is one enemy. I call on you therefore to go out from this conference committed to the building of an Irish solidarity movement which will educate British working people using films, meetings and visits to the occupied territory. A movement which will agitate among British people by street meetings, marches and demonstrations and most of all organise them into a movement which stands with its Irish brothers and sisters and against British imperialism. In so doing you will encourage them to fight for their own rights and freedoms with no illusions in the self-styled "mother of parliaments".'

Alastair Logan then rose to speak about the conditions and struggles of Irish POWs in British gaols. He began by emphasising that:

'You cannot build a solidarity movement if in supporting the aims of the nationalist people in Ireland you place preconditions on what kind of state or what kind of country they are going to have. This is what the Brits do.'

Despite the repressive and barbaric conditions in which they are held, British imperialism has not succeeded in breaking their resistance. These prisoners who have brought the war to the heartland of British imperialism, are subjected to psychological torture, in the form of extended solitary confinement. John McCluskey for example has spent 3 years in solitary. They are denied contact visits, their reading material is censored and every obstacle is placed to prevent relatives visiting them. Alastair Logan quoted Bobby Sands who said pigs are treated better than POWs. Despite such treatment, Irish prisoners have



The audience at the conference

possible police protection. Needless to say, all these police attacks were fought.

The question of defending democratic rights and the right to speak out on Ireland was therefore seen to be an important part of building a solidarity movement. This point was brought out in a speech on the PTA by Michael Holden, shop steward and Sinn Fein member. Speaking of the urgent need 'to defend the right to protest, to picket and to march in streets and towns' he said 'The PTA helps prevent you and me from doing just that'. Noting that over 5,000 people had been arrested and detained under this 'brutal, vicious, oppressive piece of legislation' he exposed the hypocrisy of the British press, who claim love of democracy but remain silent on the PTA. A speaker from Islington Central Labour Party emphasised the point made by Michael Holden that the PTA exists to frighten, harass, arrest and detain those who engage in Irish solidarity activity and in particular those in the Irish community.

Despite the scale and extent of police attacks on the democratic right to speak

out on Ireland, conference was given evidence of the real possibility of organising a fight back against such attacks. The SLISC had mounted a vigorous campaign to defend its right to work on the streets of South London. By using every form of protest, from public meetings, pickets, street meetings to engaging the support of Labour MPs and councillors, it had now won its right to hold street meetings, and those arrested in Balham for participating in street activity had charges against them dismissed! In an even more significant victory the NLISC, as a result of its campaign to win the right to do solidarity work in Wood Green, has forced the local Labour Council to open a free speech area in Wood Green.

Inevitably any Irish solidarity movement would have to take the question of defending democratic rights very seriously. The co-ordinating committee formed by the conference is charged, amongst other things, with the task of 'receiving and distributing all information on all cases of police harassment of Irish solidarity work.'

a number of demonstrations, public meetings and film shows. Similar reports of encouraging progress were given by delegates from the South London Irish Solidarity Committee, Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee, the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee and the Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland.

After defeating police attempts to drive them off the streets, SLISC has attracted many new supporters to carry out the work of building street meetings, demonstrations, public meetings and mass leafleting. The Tyneside Action Committee, one of the newest organisations, in its short existence has organised pickets at Durham gaol in support of the Gillespie sisters and held a social to raise funds which were used to send unemployed youth to the Six Counties where they can see the true face of British imperialism.

The last report in this session was from a comrade speaking on behalf of the Essex University Troops Out Society. In a speech punctuated by applause he told of the work being done in Colchester which is a garrison town. Des-

pite the difficulties they face, which include attacks upon them by so-called socialists, they have won a lot of support in the university. In concluding his speech, the comrade urged the conference to take example from the selfless struggle of revolutionaries in Ireland and despite all difficulties persevere in the struggle to build a solidarity movement.

The clear evidence of progress from around the country inspired a number of comrades from Liverpool to announce to the conference that they would set up an Irish Solidarity Committee when they returned home! Many of the delegates signed up to work with Irish Solidarity Committees or help found new ones. The results are very encouraging. We have since the conference been informed that ISCs have been established in Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and West London whilst comrades in Bristol are meeting to discuss the formation of a local Irish Solidarity Committee. It is facts such as these that highlight the success of the conference!

Eddie Abrahams/Alan James

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

Throughout the day many speakers told of constant police attacks on activists attempting to build an Irish solidarity movement. In this context it was evident that there was a close connection between the question of democratic rights in Britain and the Irish revolution. The British ruling class, fearful of a mass movement opposing British imperialist oppression of the Irish people, is determined to use its police, its courts and its legislative powers against Irish solidarity activists. The conference heard how the South London Irish Solidarity Committee (SLISC) activities had been repeatedly attacked and 11 of their comrades arrested for speaking out against British rule and barbarity in Ireland. Similar reports were given from Bradford, where the local press had weighed in on the side of the police and mounted a witch hunt against the Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee. Scottish comrades related how demonstrations in support of the Irish freedom struggle were banned whilst those of Orange bigots received all

MOTION

The Following motion was passed at 20 November 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement' Conference:

1. Conference agrees to set up a co-ordinating committee consisting of representatives of all groups and local bodies which support the two demands 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!'. This co-ordinating committee will receive and distribute all information on local activities; co-ordinate national work; support any campaign backed by the Irish prisoners in support of Irish POWs in English prisons; receive and distribute all information on all cases of police harassment of Irish solidarity work.

2. Conference agrees to launch a national petition as follows:

We, the undersigned, recognising the right of the Irish people to self-determination, call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

3. This conference agrees to set up a trade union sub-committee to look into how to co-ordinate a national policy in support of the Irish people's struggle for national liberation.

4. Conference empowers the co-ordinating committee to call a national demonstration in London on Saturday 12 March 1983 calling for Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! The co-ordinating committee will invite all groups active on the Irish question to support and take part in the building of this demonstration.



FRFI pamphlet 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement' by David Reed:

25p plus 13p p&p single copies; orders of 10 copies £2.20 post free. Make all cheques/postal orders payable to Larkin Publications. Send order to: Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

Overseas orders: Please pay in £ Sterling or add 60p for bank charges. Why not try and take some extra copies to sell or put in your local newsagent/bookshop? Please write to us stating how many copies you want us to send.

LOCAL REPORTS

The afternoon session opened with further messages from Irish POWs. A poem by a revolutionary prisoner, written especially for the conference, was read out to vigorous applause. Delegates from sponsoring organisations then reported on the work carried out in their areas.

We heard from the North London Irish Solidarity Committee how their committee began with only two or three people meeting in a smoky back room. Since then it has grown to 15-20 regular attenders. The committee has collected over 10,000 signatures for its petition demanding self-determination for the Irish people and troops out now. It has organised scores of street meetings, and

The Boys from the Blackstuff

It is very rare for any serious TV production to be a talking point for any length of time, and even rarer for a character in a TV drama to become a part of modern folklore. Yet this has happened with Yosser Hughes of *Boys from the Blackstuff*; say 'Gis a job' or 'I could do that', and many people will know to whom you refer. It is worth looking at the reasons for this. They can be summarised by saying that the series of five plays was an enormous artistic achievement, because together they gave a completely accurate and realistic portrayal of life for millions of people in Britain today. And this truthfulness made them emotionally utterly compelling. Who could not be horrified by Snowy Malone's death as he tries to escape the Department of Employment snoopers? Or sickened at the web of corruption in which Dixie is caught as he tries to escape the poverty of the dole? Or find the quarrelling between Chrissie and his wife Angie almost unbearable to watch in its bitter intensity? Or rejoice at every resistance Yosser gives to those who would seek to destroy his world? Or be moved to tears as George recalls a lost world on his last ride? Only great drama can engage the emotions in this way, and it can only be great if it gives a convincing picture of the reality with which it deals.

How has the author, Alan Bleasdale, managed to do this? Essentially, by so choosing his characters and plots that they can represent all the significant attitudes people can take towards their life on the dole today. Now, of course in real life, there are as many different attitudes as there are people on the dole. But it would be naturally impossible to express these in the course of five short plays. In any case, these different attitudes are composed in varying degrees of three contrasting outlooks. One is to play the system, another is to submit to it, whilst the last is to fight it. Bleasdale gives us characters and situations which portray these three outlooks. Dixie is the one who plays the system, Chrissie the one who submits, whilst Yosser is the fighter. In the middle three plays of the series of five, we see how these three characters react to the situations they are forced into.

The first play is necessary by way of introduction



Chrissie and his wife Angie

to the three that follow. Snowy, Chrissie, Yosser, Dixie and Loggo are on the dole after a period of working on the blackstuff (tarmac). Right from the outset, there is an implicit assumption that life on the dole is a life of institutionalised poverty – poverty because the social security does not provide anything like enough for a family to live on, institutionalised because there exists a coercive and oppressive network – the DE/DHSS – which ensures that this is the case. Hence, for trying to moonlight to supplement their meagre benefit, they all become subject to investigation by the DE. In the course of the play we are introduced to Chrissie's slavishness as he begs and pleads with the cowboy building contractor for a permanent job, and to Yosser, who lays him out flat when he dares to criticise his hopelessly crooked wall. But the real drama comes when the DE investigators raid the site: this is the true face of the welfare state, of petty bureaucrats whose only concern is that nobody should escape the poverty that has been decreed for them. As Snowy tries to escape, he tragically falls to his death – another life has been claimed by the system.

This sets the scene for the next three plays. Dixie's is first. He has decided to play the system by moonlighting for a security firm. But the DE harass him relentlessly, and we see how life is ruined for him and his family as a consequence. His wife is turned into a nervous wreck, terrified to even answer the door or the phone because she is expecting the DE to pounce. His elder son, Kevin, who has never had a job, has become estranged from him because of the domestic pressures, whilst the other two children are completely alienated as they can see no future for themselves. Dixie himself is being bribed to turn a blind eye to the looting of the ships he is supposed to be guarding – and he finds it is a superior who is responsible. He is in an impossible situation. He must co-operate if he is to keep his job, but it is a matter of time before the police are onto him; meanwhile he is being persecuted by the DE. Yet he is forced to risk everything just to ensure his family can get by. And the price is terrible, for we see the relationships within the family disintegrate before us, life for each of its members becoming a misery.

Chrissie follows a path of submission. He is the one who has the ready quip, the humour that is supposed to be the best way to cope with adversity. But such humour, the view that if you don't laugh, you'll cry, is little more than hollow bluster. Life for Chrissie consists of ceaseless bitter rows with Angie. His only relief lies outside normal human

REVIEWS

relationships – either with his pets, which he eventually destroys, or in drink. Even if we don't get the message that keeping your head down, far from being an answer, creates its own hell, Angie does when she screams at him 'It's not funny. It is not friggin' funny. I've had enough of that "if you don't laugh you'll cry"'. I've heard it for years. This stupid soddin' city's full of it. Why don't yeh cry? Why don't yeh scream? Why don't yeh fight back, yeh bastard, fight back! They're knockin' the shite and stuffin' out of you, Chrissie, and if you haven't had enough I have!'

Yosser is a complete contrast to Chrissie and Dixie, a fact emphasised by his madness. His madness, however, is the only way his will to resist can express itself, given that he is entirely alone. Whilst the two apparently normal people are crushed by the oppression they suffer, Yosser is an undaunted survivor. Even more, whilst both Dixie's and Chrissie's families are emotionally torn apart, Yosser's can only be physically destroyed. The emotional bond between him and his children remains unbroken; the children struggle to escape the social workers who have come to take them away, and in one glorious scene, his daughter, with a disarming smile, butts one of them in the face. Yosser cannot but fight – to retain his identity, fight to keep his children. The point is not that he loses – something that is inevitable, given that he is on his own, confronted by an apparatus of oppression with enormous resources – but that he never gives up. His resistance is incomprehensible to everybody else, especially to the social workers, who, though appalled at the battering he gets from the police, cannot accept that they themselves are responsible for the police intervention. It is this heroic quality which means that Yosser stands apart from Dixie and Chrissie, a separation emphasised by their hostility towards him. In the two previous episodes, Chrissie and Dixie are forced to become the accomplices to their own destruction because they have not the will to resist. No force can destroy Yosser, least of all himself, when at the end of the play, his attempt at suicide is a failure. And this must be so from the dramatic standpoint, for his death would have implied the futility of resistance. And the central point of the plays is that only through resistance can human integrity be preserved.

The last episode draws the series together. Up to this point, the only characters with a job have been either the direct or indirect oppressors of the unemployed – the police, the DE/DHSS, the social workers. Indeed, the fact that there is no room in the plays until now for an ordinary trade unionist highlights in dramatic form the division in reality between the employed and the unemployed. The comments made by the trade unionist – George's son – tell their own story: 'I tell yeh, dah, honest to God I look around sometimes at some of the fellahs I'm supposed to be fighting for and they don't seem to care or understand about anything that hasn't got tits or come out of a barrel'. George's wife condemns this defeatist view, but this cannot blind us to the truth in it – that for most trade unionists, the time at present is one for laughing, rather than crying and fighting. But there is a further point here. For those organisations which are supposed to defend the working class, the trade unions and the Labour Party, are excluded from the plays altogether. Their irrelevance as far as the plays are concerned reflects their irrelevance in reality to the lives of the unemployed. The trade unions after all have not only been powerless to resist the growth of unemployment, they have in fact turned their backs on those who have been forced out of their ranks onto the dole. Yosser has to fight alone – there is simply no organisation or movement he can relate to. The Labour Party and trade unions have just stood aside.

George Malone is the living embodiment of the orthodox socialist tradition which regards the trade unions and the Labour Party as the organisations through which fundamental social change can be achieved. He is indeed the finest possible representative of that tradition – personally incorruptible, a fighter who in his dying words refuses to believe that there is no hope. Yet despite his absolute faith in his class, he cannot help or influence the others, although they have unbounded respect and love for him. It is impossible for him to bridge the gulf between his traditional socialist beliefs, and the reality which proves them meaningless. How can his views about the trade unions and the Labour Party have any relevance for the unemployed and the problems they face? George's death is therefore the death of this tradition, because in today's conditions it has no basis whatsoever.

In the pub after the funeral wake, the main theme of the plays comes over with great power. In their desperation to keep laughing, it is the 'normal' people who take on the semblance of insanity. The party which comes in to blow £1,000 redundancy money is just another group whom the trade unions have failed; now they are going to have a final fling before they too descend into poverty and misery. Their hilarity has a hysterical ring – it is clearly just a facade for their despair and hopelessness. But

the grim reality from which they are fleeing is inescapable, epitomised as it is by Shake 'Hands and his vice-like grip, which reduces all and sundry to quivering wrecks. Enter now the indomitable Yosser – hardly 'mad' if compared with the rest, and Shake Hands is laid out on the floor. The scene is a simple but effective conclusion to the series.

It can be seen that the overwhelming dramatic power of the plays follows from their extremely accurate portrayal of contemporary reality. They may have been about a desperate situation, but their message was not one of despair. It could not have been. For to portray oppression accurately, the resistance to that oppression must be presented at the same time. In the absence of that resistance, the plays would have lacked any serious artistic merit, because they would have devalued human life. The plays show what exists today, and also what is irrelevant. To be able to present in a purely dramatic form the irrelevance of the Labour Party and the trade unions for the oppressed is to provide a powerful confirmation of the experience of communists and revolutionaries. It establishes that the source of resistance lies within the ranks of the oppressed. That resistance has already expressed itself on a national scale with the uprisings of July 1981. It now remains for that resistance to take on an organised form.

Robert Clough



The Sunflower of Hope: Poems from the Mozambican Revolution Chris Searle (ed). Alison & Busby, 148pp. £3.50

Mozambique gained its independence in 1975 after eleven years of armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism. *The Sunflower of Hope* is a collection of poetry written by thirteen Mozambican poets reflecting life in a twenty year period before, during and after the armed struggle.

The Portuguese, like other European colonialists in Africa, were brutally violent towards the African people, and this violence is starkly captured in several of the poems. Jose Craveirinha's *Maconde* Epistle vividly expresses the pain, the anger, the torment felt by Mozambicans when six hundred of their compatriots were bloodily massacred by the Portuguese army while on a peaceful demonstration in Mueda in 1960.

Colonialism needed workers. 'Us, volunteers all contracted by force' was how a 'debased civilisation' could 'persuade' people to work. Craveirinha explains. And what work could they do? They could dig coal. They could be contracted out to South Africa – at a profit to the Portuguese of course – and dig, dig hard for coal. But in the land of apartheid death came just as easily in a coalmine as it did on a peaceful protest in Mueda. Kalungano's poem 'The Earth Shakes' says it all:

Deep in the mine
death didn't find you
calm and serene.
It was a convulsion of pain
like your entire life.

Misery, pain, death were such regular features in the lives of Mozambican contract miners that many knew, like Ganhao's *Chope* man, that once they left their country to work in apartheid's pits of hell they would not be returning.

If you were to meet Raafkambala you would probably ask him the same question that everybody else who meets him asks, and he would tell you of his childhood. He grew up in a town called Pemba which was an important Portuguese army base. That should be enough to make you understand why, in his words, 'WHY I AM LIKE THIS, LIKE THIS'. If it isn't he will tell you of 'the prowling soldiers... of cries of the women of my neighbourhood raped right in front of me... of the horrific screams that will penetrate your guts... of babies and children dead, putrefied...'. If by then you didn't understand why he is as he is maybe you never will.

But the poems are not solely about the pain and terror of Portuguese misrule. More importantly they express the comradeship, love, patriotism, awareness and all the other essential qualities needed not only to gain victory in the armed

struggle but to go on to construct a new society of freedom and justice for all the people of Mozambique. The best lines of the book sum up so well the revolutionary aims and intentions of the people as reflected by the poets:

We are the conscious builders
of History and Progress,
we are the destroyers of imperialism,
we are the people.

Shujaa Moshesh

Shujaa Moshesh is a black prisoner serving 18 years in British prisons.

Detained Ngugi wa Thiongo. Heinemann. Pb. 232pp. £2.25

Recently Ngugi was one of a group of demonstrators outside the Kenyan High Commission in London, who protested against the increasing repression in Kenya. The group, who are known as the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya, made their feelings known in a statement, which amongst other things, deplored 'the Kenyan government's campaign of arrests, detentions and harassment of university lecturers, students, writers, lawyers, peasants and members of parliament and the systematic attacks on intellectual, political and cultural life'.

Ngugi knows much about the Kenyan government's repressive tendencies as he himself was held in detention as a political prisoner for the whole of 1978. *Detained* is an account of the year he spent in detention. The book is not just about the day-to-day monotony of prison, although Ngugi does give some detailed insights of life as a political detainee. More than this, the book looks at the historical background of political detention in Kenya in the days of British colonial rule in relation to the struggle of the Kenyan people against that rule.

From the time Britain colonised the country in 1895 its people struggled relentlessly against foreign occupation. As in their other colonies, the British made liberal use of the gun, the whip and other implements of physical violence to maintain control – what they prefer to call 'law and order' in Kenya. This produced 'a culture of legalised brutality, a ruling class culture of fear, the culture of an oppressing minority desperately trying to impose total silence on a restive majority'. This culture surpassed itself in brutality between 1952 and 1962. Even some British people were horrified by its excesses. Barbara Castle, Labour MP, wrote in 1955 'in the heart of the British Empire there is a police state where the rule of law has broken down, where the murder of and torture of Africans by Europeans goes unpunished and where authorities pledged to enforce justice regularly connive at its violation.' Ngugi correctly points out that Castle was wrong about the law breaking down '... this was the rule of law.' But oppression breeds resistance and the Kenyan people's resistance was expressed in the Mau Mau war for national independence in which many men and women gave their lives.



When Kenya attained independence in 1963 it was led by Jomo Kenyatta. His faction inherited the colonial state machinery intact and with the eager help of British imperialism put it to use. The irony is not lost on Ngugi, who tells a prison guard 'The British jailed an innocent Kenyatta. Thus Kenyatta learnt to jail innocent Kenyans.' Ngugi shows just how dependent 'independence' is as the Kenyan people now have to struggle against colonialism/imperialism and its allies, the Kenyan ruling class.

The event of Kenyatta's death while Ngugi was in detention prompted him to write a short piece on Kenyatta's class position. First and foremost Kenyatta was always petit-bourgeois but during the days of British rule he gained the support of the Kenyan people by assuming an anti-imperialist position. For him this meant removing the racist barriers which prevented his class from accumulating property. On independence, with these barriers removed, he could betray the mass of Kenyans who had bravely fought for freedom, become an ally of western imperialism, and defend his petty-bourgeois class interests. It can be clearly seen that there is much to be learned from this betrayal as similar events occurred in other countries which appeared to become independent but in fact became neo-colonies.

Ngugi's book goes some way to showing just how deeply imperialism has pervaded every aspect of life in Kenya. It seeks to dominate economically, politically, socially and culturally. Every act of resistance in these spheres is in effect an act of overall liberation for the country. With this and his other books Ngugi makes a significant contribution.

Shujaa Moshesh

Available from Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX. £2.25 + 42p p&p.

FRANCE

Immigrant workers fight racist government

Events are revealing the real racist and imperialist nature of the 'Socialist' Party/Communist' Party coalition government of Mitterrand in France.

In France immigrant workers have come mainly, but not exclusively, from former French colonies in the Third World. Hundreds of thousands of these immigrants are living and working in France 'illegally', ie without proper work or residence permits. This situation makes it next to impossible for these workers to lead anything approximating to a normal life. As in Britain or West Germany, the immigrant workers of France do the worst jobs, for the worst pay, and live in the worst housing. In particular the 'workers without papers' in France are at the mercy of every sweatshop boss and slum landlord.

ELECTION PROMISES

One of the election promises of the 'Socialist' Party was the regularisation of the status of these workers. However, in the classic fashion of social democracy – posing to the left whilst in 'opposition', and carrying out the policies of the right whilst in office – Mitterrand's deeds have not matched his words. As one immigrant worker explained in a Paris interview with the writer,

'I'm from Morocco and have been here 4 years, working secretly, and not in possession of any papers. Like everybody, when the socialists came to power and announced that all those working in secret in France would have their situation regularised, I had confidence in the socialists headed by Mitterrand and we were ready to denounce the boss for whom we worked secretly, and in some cases to identify ourselves to the authorities, giving our addresses, places of work ...

But what happened is that the offices for regularisation were opened, we were about 300,000 secret immigrants in France, we presented ourselves to obtain our permits to work temporarily ...

However it turned out that among the 300,000 only about 140,000 were able to file a claim. And that of these 140,000, 20,000 were rejected.'

In other words the whole affair had been a cynical exercise to gather information on the most oppressed sections of the working class, and to hold over them yet another threat to prevent them from fighting back: that of mass deportation back to destitution in the oppressed nations! A very real threat since the government deadline of 31 October.

THE FIGHTBACK

In the hostels where the immigrant workers live, a fightback got underway, around the question of four demands:

that the status of all who have submitted their papers be regularised, that discussions be started concerning the others and that there be no deportations or loss of national insurance benefits.

The campaign has taken the form of petitions, public meetings, demonstrations and there have even been hunger strikes in Paris and Nice which lasted for 29 and 15 days respectively. The hunger strike in Nice achieved a significant victory in lifting the threat of deportation from the 19 hunger strikers. The government has also agreed to begin negotiations on the status of other workers threatened with deportation.

To support the Paris hunger strike, 71 organisations joined together to form a Support Committee. They included some small left-wing groups and progressive Christians, but the real strength of the Committee came from the oppressed themselves, with 21 Hostel Committees and organisations of workers from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Mali, Haiti, Senegal, Turkey and other third world countries in the forefront. Only 3 trade union branches gave any support whatsoever. The leadership of the CFDT (a trade union federation linked to the Socialist Party) cancelled a hall booking for a hunger strike support rally forcing it to be held in the open air. The major left groups could not even stir themselves into giving verbal support. *L'Humanite*, daily paper of the 'Communist' Party of France did not mention the hunger strikers once. Hardly surprising when one considers the history of this organisation that degrades the name of communism by attacking and bulldozing an immigrant workers' hostel in Vitry in 1980, and by supporting the post World War II bombing of the freedom fighters in Algeria and Vietnam. Indeed as far back as 1924, Comrade Ho Chi Minh bemoaned the lack of internationalist spirit in the French Communist Party.

Nor should the attitude of Mitterrand come as any surprise. This life-long defender of French imperialism said in 1954,

'Algeria is part of France and, from Flanders to the Congo, there is only one law, one nation and one parliament ... The only negotiation possible is war.'

LESSONS

Despite the lack of support from the French left or trade unions, a formidable campaign has been built that has seen demonstrations of over 3,000, mainly black workers. Already the government has been forced to make concessions, for example in agreeing to open negotiations that they had previously refused.

Keith Anderson



PALESTINE

While Princess Anne was recently being photographed hugging babies in Beirut, the imperialist system, of which she is a figurehead, and its Zionist allies continued their war and counter-revolution against the Palestinian and Lebanese people. In December Prime Minister Thatcher added a diplomatic contribution to the imperialist offensive by refusing to meet an Arab League Delegation because it included a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Zionism and its imperialist allies are determined to destroy the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Taking advantage of the havoc wreaked upon the progressive forces in the Middle East by the Israeli invasion, Zionism is using imperialist donations to accelerate its plans to subjugate Lebanon and permanently annex the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Whilst Israeli politicians talk of withdrawal from Lebanon, Israeli troops are digging in for the winter; constructing underground bunkers, erecting depots and reinforcing supply routes to the Bekaa Valley and the Syrian border. Already the Israeli army has been issuing hints that it intends to remain in Lebanon throughout 1983. Under a shield of Israeli armour, Zionism's local Phalangist allies are continuing to wreak terror among the defenceless Palestinian population. They have been encouraged to infiltrate the central Chuf mountains to attack Muslim communities in the hope of driving them out of the area. Meanwhile Israeli troops continue to seal off Lebanese towns and villages and make hundreds of arrests of able-bodied Pal-

estinian and Lebanese men. The Ansar concentration camp in Southern Lebanon under Israeli occupation is being expanded to allow an increase of prisoners – it already holds 12,000 captives.

In Beirut itself, under the joint command of the Lebanese state and the US, French and Italian military contingents, the drive to force the Palestinian people out of the area continues. Terror, intimidation and random arrests continue unabated. And once inside the prisons of the Lebanese fascist government, Palestinian and Lebanese progressive prisoners are subjected to deadly torture and murder. The recently revealed fact that 5 prisoners have died is merely the tip of the iceberg. Meanwhile, the imperialist armed contingents leave the

Phalange forces untouched while they tighten their grip on Palestinian and Lebanese working class districts.

On the West Bank and Gaza strip Zionist attempts to isolate the 1.3m Palestinians from any contact with the PLO are being accelerated. Palestinian schools and universities have been closed to prevent students organising resistance, and teachers have been expelled for refusing to sign documents renouncing the PLO. Alongside the repression is the speeding up of Zionist settlement in the West Bank. The Israeli government plans to double the number of settlers on the West Bank to 50,000 in three months, and to 100,000 by 1986, thereby achieving de-facto annexation. Luxury air-conditioned houses, at subsidised prices, are being used to entice Israeli people onto the West Bank, while the local Palestinian population lives in ever more deteriorating poverty and drudgery.

Imperialism is well pleased with the results of the June invasion of Lebanon. The US and Israeli governments have signed an agreement to make a joint study of the US and British made weapons tested out on the Palestinian and Lebanese people this summer. The US Senate, as if in gratitude, has voted an increase of almost \$500m on the proposed \$2.5bn aid for 1983, totalling one third of US world aid. An Israeli Foreign Ministry official noted that such US generosity was in return for:

'the enormous contribution Israel makes to the standing and influence of the United States in the Middle East.'

Despite the fierce repression and all the savagery of Israel's summer invasion, the Palestinian people have not been subdued. PLO guerrillas are filtering back from Tunisia, the Sudan and other places remote from the battlefields in Lebanon. These young fighters returning to Lebanon were described by a PLO official as 'a volcano waiting to explode'.

Trevor Rayne

thieves fall out

Evidence of the mounting tension between the imperialist nations was exposed at the GATT international trade conference in Geneva at the end of November. A bitter row between Europe and the United States over agricultural trade nearly destroyed the entire conference. The US bullied many oppressed nations into supporting its call for liberal trade in 'services' – banking, investment, insurance and shipping. Thanks to the sales of such 'services', the US plundered the rest of the world to the tune of \$80bn last year. Thanks to the US-EEC shootout, Japan avoided criticism at the conference. However, the US and the EEC still want cuts in imports of Japanese cars, electronics and machine tools. The real losers, predictably, were the oppressed nations who will be the first and most serious victims of the increasing protectionism which will follow the conference.

The reason for the growing inter-imperialist trade rivalry and its accompanying protectionism is the steadily declining growth rate of world trade since the mid '70s. Last year, the world market hardly grew at all. Therefore, the only way that the imperialist countries can expand their exports, defend their home market and protect their profits is at someone else's expense. This explains the growing call from the imperialists for import controls and their almost daily tirades against dumping. The main area where the imperialists are slugging it out are:

- **Steel** – the EEC is now excluding steel produced by oppressed nations which will now be diverted to the US.
- **Sanctions** against socialist countries – the US is calling for trade and credit curbs while greedy European imperialists eye \$1bn worth of con-

tracts on offer for a new pipeline.

- **Agriculture** – the US denounces EEC subsidies to agriculture, which cheapen European exports to markets outside Europe and the USA.
- **Textiles** – the oppressed nations' largest export after oil – are under attack from the EEC.
- **Cars and machine tools** – US and European imperialists are attacking Japanese imports to their countries.
- **Shipping** – recent US measures threaten to squeeze out 'cross trading' – ships from one country carrying between two others – threatening British shipping which gets two thirds of its revenue from cross trading.
- **DISC** – a tax concession enabling US exporters to defer taxes. Worth \$2bn a year, it has been condemned by the EEC as an illegal subsidy.

In short, the stage is being set for an international trade war of gigantic proportions.

The growing rivalry is splitting the imperialist world into three main camps – Japan, the US and EEC. Everywhere the labour aristocracy supports protectionism by 'their' imperialism – even running ahead in some cases. In Britain, the racist seamen's union is demanding government protection for British shipping; the steel union – which sat idly by as tens of thousands of its members lost their jobs – is now picketing imports of steel; the TGWU has threatened to stop imports of Spanish built cars. In the United States it is just the same – unions are collaborating with the bosses to limit imports of steel, TVs, bicycles, footwear and cars. In France the 'socialist' government recently unveiled sweeping protectionist measures.

While protectionism might well save

the jobs of a few thousands of privileged workers in the imperialist countries, it will be at the expense of the millions of oppressed workers, mainly in oppressed nations whose steel, textiles and chemicals are about to be shut out of imperialist markets.

It is the so-called 'Newly Industrialising Countries' (NICs) like Brazil and South Korea, who produce these commodities, who are most vulnerable. The imperialists have been making increasingly menacing noises towards the NICs, calling for 'reciprocity' and 'fair trade' – meaning cuts in imports from them and greater access to their markets. But these NICs already buy \$36bn more than they sell. Imperialist protectionism will only make the situation worse by cutting these countries' income from exports. And this will only backfire on the imperialists – expansion of trade will be minimal, while repayment of international debt will be made even more difficult. This factor transforms the imperialists' import controls into a boomerang with a sharpened edge.

Since the NICs are the biggest borrowers from the international financial system, holding more than 70% of the total Third World debt, they also hold the future of imperialism in their hands. Already finding difficulty in paying off their loans, protectionism will make their burden even heavier. Unable to service their debt, they will be forced into default, bankrupting entire imperialist banks, and destroying the international banking system.

These thieves, who try to grow rich by stealing one another's swag, are so blinded by their own greed that they will end up dragging one another into the grave being dug for them by the world's exploited and oppressed peoples!

Steve Palmer

THE ORIGINS AND NATURE OF THE 26 COUNTY STATE IN IRELAND

The following article was written by Sean Mac Stiofain, ex-Chief-of-Staff of the IRA. In the light of the recent 26 County general elections, the article is a timely reminder of the reactionary nature of the 26 County state and its subordination to British imperialism. The article exposes the pro-imperialist nature of the political parties in the 26 County state who, by recognising that state, sustain Ireland's servility to British imperialism.

The neo-colonial, semi-fascist 26 County State is an illegal state that owes its existence to British Acts of Parliament and the Treaty of 1921. This treaty of surrender, which contained the provisions of the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, was signed by Irishmen in violation of their oath of allegiance to the Republic, in contravention of their instructions; not to sign without consulting the Republican Government. It was signed under duress, the threat of immediate and terrible war. As such it was not a treaty, which must be freely negotiated and signed between two governments, but an act of aggression forced on the Irish people by the British and accepted by reactionary compromisers, who were prepared to implement the British plan for protecting imperial interests in Ireland.

The last lawful government and parliament to exist in Ireland, functioning as a 32 County Government and Parliament, was the second *Dail* elected in the last all Ireland election of May 1921. The revolutionary *Dail Eireann* (Irish Parliament) was suppressed by a combination of British cunning and the counter-revolutionaries of the Free State. *An Dail* and its Republican Government was replaced by two puppet parliaments – one, Stormont, for the Colonial Counties, still occupied by British troops and openly completely subordinate to London. Stormont was abolished in March '72 when direct rule was established. The other, the Dublin Government, while having the appearance of an independent parliament was, and still is, an illegal neo-colonial parliament for an illegal neo-colonial state. A state that was created to fool the people into believing that they are free and genuinely in control of their destinies, so that British interests in Ireland would be protected with a minimum of British lives. The illegality of the 26 County State is, despite its democratic trappings, beyond question. It was a British creation; it never had acceptance by the entire people who in 1918, 1920 and 1921 at local and national all-Ireland elections overwhelmingly supported the concept of a 32 County Republic as proclaimed in Easter 1916.

It was necessary for the British to create Europe's first fascist state so that colonialism, both the old, for the 6 Counties, and the new (neo-colonialism) might succeed, and for 60 years the British-created Free State succeeded in protecting the interests of its creators and masters, British and (in later years) international capitalists. It should be noted that although neo-colonial states existed in Central and South America in the US interest, the British 1920 'Government of Ireland Act' has been used as a blueprint by both British and major European powers in various parts of the world, particularly in Africa and especially since the last world war.

The British government has always worked within that act; any subsequent Act consolidated the 1920 Act. This was illustrated clearly in the Sunningdale Agreement which was accepted by all Free State parties and upheld in the Free

State courts. Before examining the neo-colonialist nature of the Free State it is necessary to analyse the way that State came into being, how the lawful second *Dail* was suppressed and how the Free State counter-revolutionaries overthrew *Poblacht na h Eireann* (Irish Republic) that had been proclaimed in arms in 1916, ratified by the majority of the Irish people in the general election of 1918 which brought *Dail Eireann* into existence. *An Dail* functioned as the de jure and de facto government of the Republic, establishing an underground administration, a Republican judicial system and a Republican police service. This revolutionary state was spearheaded by its army: *Oglaigh na h Eireann* (Irish Republican Army), the army of the people.

It was because the imperialists could not crush the revolutionary state or defeat its army that the British ruling classes devised other means to maintain the British conquest in Ireland.

First Lloyd George proposed a conference and truce. (After the General Election of May 1921 demonstrated that the vast majority of the Irish people stood for the Republic of Irish week.) A protracted truce had enormous advantages for the imperialists, who knew that some members of the Republican Government were not true revolutionaries and would compromise if an offer that they could claim was too good to turn down, but in essence maintained the conquest came out of the negotiations. The British also knew that the Irish hierarchy in May 1921, after the second *Dail* elections, had refused to recognise *Dail Eireann* as the lawful parliament of Ireland. They also knew that the Bishops would oppose the resumption of the war and would support a compromise settlement as long as the church was not affected. The middle class would also compromise for its own gain. The truce relieved the enormous pressures on the British government from the Labour/Trade union movement in Britain and from all over the world. The truce and the negotiations were in fact the first step towards the dismembering of the Irish Republic.

The appointment of Arthur Griffith, a reactionary, as Chairman of the Irish delegation ensured that the British plan



Traitors taking over from British administration Dublin Castle, January 1922

would succeed. Right from the beginning of the negotiations Griffith conspired with Lloyd George in dividing the Irish delegation and, in a long series of private meetings, carried out the negotiations on his own or with Collins, but never with the whole delegation. In spite of protests from E Childers, the secretary, and two of the Irish delegation, Gaven Duffy and Richard Barton, De Valera refused to intervene! In the end, after making private commitments to the British, Griffith declared that he would sign the treaty alone, thus giving Lloyd George the opportunity to present his ultimatum: sign or war! The delegation signed without authority, without consulting the Republican Government and thus another step, a major one towards the dismembering of the Irish Republic, had been taken.

The Republic could have been saved if the *Dail* had refused to discuss the articles of the treaty, these being illegal proposals designed to foster division and create a counter-revolutionary base against the *Dail* itself.

At once the imperialist propaganda machine, including the *Irish Independent*, waged a massive campaign in favour of the treaty and against its opponents. The treaty was published in the newspapers, and before *Dail Eireann* had time to meet and discuss what had been done illegally. The same Irish Bishops – who a few months before refused to recognise *An Dail* as the lawful government of Ireland – now publicly and privately urged acceptance of the treaty of surrender! Under these pressures and due to the treasonable actions of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the illegal treaty was approved by *An Dail* by a majority of 7 votes. In so approving such a treaty *An Dail* acted illegally for its mandate was to maintain the Republic of 1916. The *Dail* had no authority to transfer its functions to another governmental authority due to be organised by Griffith and Collins under the terms of the treaty (Article 17).

That government was known as the Provisional Government. It was financed and armed by the British and was an illegal body even in British law, and a special Bill had to be rushed through the

British parliament to give legal recognition (in British terms) to an illegal body that was brought into existence by the cunning of British diplomacy and the treason of Irish counter-revolutionaries. A general election was called for June 1922. A pact was made between De Valera and Collins for a coalition in a third *Dail* but no such pact could save the Republic! The pro-treaty counter-revolutionaries broke the pact on British orders and conducted the election on an outdated, unrevised election register. In any event the election was confined to the 26 Counties, thus disenfranchising 1,000,000 people. The counter-revolutionaries claimed that this election ratified the treaty. Acting as the Provisional Government, they convened a new Assembly on 1 July 1922. This Assembly was not summoned as the third *Dail* but as the Assembly of Southern Ireland as provided for in the treaty. The lawful second *Dail* was never formally dissolved. Its members, forced to meet underground, retained de jure powers of government which in 1939 were transferred to the leadership of the Republican movement. The illegal Provisional Government proceeded to dismember the Republican institutions: the Republican courts were suspended, the Supreme Court and its Judges abolished and illegal institutions and laws based on British imperialist traditions were enforced.

Like all counter-revolutionary governments the Provisional Government eliminated civil rights and ruled by terror. Its illegal Free State army, armed by Churchill, its ranks vastly increased by high numbers of ex-British officers and other ranks, waged an all-out war on the Republican forces. The rules of war were completely ignored by the Free State troops who committed untold atrocities. 77 Republican prisoners were executed, 113 men were murdered after arrest, 15,000 Republican prisoners were kept in appalling conditions. The Irish Bishops ignored the Free State atrocities and declared that the neo-colonial 26 County Government was legal and that the Republican Government was illegal. Every effort was made to stampede the people into accepting the Free State as legitimate.

In April 1923 offensive action by the IRA was suspended and the armed fight against the Free State terminated in temporary defeat for the Republican forces.

The treaty and all subsequent events were designed by and used by the English ruling class to stop the liberation of the Irish working class. It set up a new privileged class in the 26 Counties, the Free State middle class Catholics. Their parliament was and still is a middle class parliament for a middle class state. Local economic power in the 26 Counties was gradually transferred to the new agents of imperialism, thus giving them a vested interest in maintaining the status quo in Ireland.

As in all neo-colonial states, the Irish people have far fewer liberties than the people of the controlling power. The Westminster Parliament would never pass for use on the English people the long series of coercion acts which have been, and still are, used to control the 26 Counties for British interests. Those interests are: ● Political – the maintenance of a friendly government in Dublin; ● Military – to suppress the Republican movement and cooperate with the British forces in the 6 Counties; ● Economic – control of Irish resources for British and multi-national interests; ● Social/Cultural – Britain forced her cultural and social system on the Irish people. The imperialists wanted and still want to control the minds of the Irish people. They enforce their social/cultural domination here by maintaining the dominance of the English language and English social values. This they have done and still do by indirect control of the mass media and in this they have the full cooperation of the Free State neo-colonialists, who, of course, never attempted to restore the Irish language and culture to its proper dominant place in Irish society. That of course would lead to decolonisation – a dangerous development for neo-colonial fascists!

The basic neo-colonial nature of the 26 County State does not alter with changes in government: Fianna Fail to Coalition and vice versa. Neither does it alter with changes in personnel: Lynch to Haughey. The 26 County State must, by its nature, act against Irish workers, civil liberties and the Irish language/culture. The present state of the Irish language is an unmistakable sign of the lack of freedom in Ireland. In the free republic of Algeria, Arabic reigns supreme but in neighbouring Morocco, a neo-colony of France, Arabic is in decline and French dominant.

Cultural imperialism is manifest in every neo-colonial society. The 26 County broadcasting service, Radio Telefis Eireann, plays through its radio and television services a leading role in suppressing the national consciousness of the Irish people, by depriving them of their cultural heritage and brain washing them with anti-national programmes that boost the Anglo-American way of life and values. 80% of all programmes shown on Telefis Eireann are from Britain or the US. The slanted presentation of news programmes, one-sided, pro-British, pro-imperialist censorship plus the slave-minded attitude towards everything British, play an important part in maintaining the British conquest in Ireland.

Free trade agreements, first with Britain and then with the EEC, bind Ireland, North and South, to the robbers of the European colonial powers.

The whole object of British policy in Ireland is to prevent the Irish working class from coming to power. For that would mean not only the end of imperialism in Ireland but the beginning of the end of capitalism in Britain and possibly in Western Europe. Knowing this, the British ruling class will use every device known to mankind to maintain their position in Ireland.

Sean Mac Stiofain



TOM CONFERENCE: RESISTING THE BRITISH STATE

On 11 December, the Troops Out Movement (TOM) held a conference entitled 'Anti-Repression Conference: One Year to 1984 - Resisting the British State'. About 180 people attended this event, which in the afternoon was attacked by a band of Union Jack waving fascists. The fascists, with police protection, put a picket on the conference and attempted to assault latecomers. In one such incident the police arrested one such latecomer! The fascists and the police, however, were no more than a minor irritant.

The main aim of the conference was to expose the British state's growing repression and censorship resulting from its war in Ireland. It was clearly directed at influencing members of the Labour Party and official trade union movement. To make its point, the conference included a film on the Mau Mau's armed struggle against British imperialism in Kenya, sessions on the media, the technology of repression and the law. In one workshop a number of ex-soldiers spoke of their experiences in the British army.

In spite of the obvious relation between all the themes of the conference and the war in Ireland, the conference failed to put forward any unifying theme. This was no accident. The only theme which could unify the various strands of opposition to the growing repression, censorship and the erosion of democratic rights in Britain over the last year, would have been a call for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland. And this would have meant supporting the victory of the Irish people in their struggle to free Ireland from British rule.

TOM knows that calling for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland would alienate its supporters and allies in the organised labour movement in Britain. Not prepared to seek support outside these traditional channels, TOM adapts its activities and demands to those acceptable to the organised labour movement in Britain - a movement which has never put up any effective opposition to British terror, torture and repression in Ireland.

Speeches made by those actively involved in a real struggle against the British state showed there is another way. Mary Nellis, from the Creggan Estate, explained how the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation was the only basis for winning freedom, justice

and democracy for the Irish working class. And a representative of the Newham 8 Defence Campaign showed black people's readiness to fight the imperialist British state and expressed full support for the Irish people's struggle. The clock cannot be turned back. The Irish people's struggle has gone beyond civil rights issues, for over 12 years it has been a war against British imperialism. British people who are opposed to the repression of the British state have to take sides - for the Irish people or for British imperialism.

John Andrews

MILITANT BACKS IMPERIALISM

The reactionary pro-loyalist position of the Militant Tendency on Ireland is well known. It is not surprising, therefore, that Militant should join in the hysterical attack on Ken Livingstone and the GLC Labour councillors for inviting a Sinn Fein delegation to London. Militant denounced Ken Livingstone for offering Sinn Fein an 'unopposed public platform' and declared that the Sinn Fein delegation should have been made to 'answer for their sectarianism' to the British working class - that is to say should have been subjected to Militant's own perverted version of imperialist lies and slander.

Behind Militant's slander of Sinn Fein stands an extraordinary fact: the woman civilian who died when the IRA blew up the car of an RUC officer (see p16) was none other than Helen Woodhouse, secretary of Fermanagh Young Socialists and a leading Militant supporter in the Six Counties. What was this 'socialist' doing riding around with an officer of the murderous sectarian loyalist RUC?

North London petition now national!

The 20 November Conference heard the North London Irish Solidarity Committee speaker announce that its petition (see FRFI 18 and 19) had now passed 10,000 signatures. The same petition launched by the South London Committee now has over 2000 signatures. The Conference called for the petition to be circulated nationally, the immediate aim is 100,000 signatures. Since last reported many local Borough Councillors have supported the petition, Bob Crossman (Islington), N Knowles, Toby Harris, Ernie Large, Angela Greatley (Haringey), members of almost every Constituency Labour Party in North London, Alf Lomas MEP, Owen Carron and Dave Farrell (Sinn Fein), Dafydd Elis Thomas MP, Lord Gifford, Richard Balfe MEP, Matt Merrigan, and most recently the Mayor of Camden Tom Devine. This support reflects the growing pressure for the immediate withdrawal of British Troops from the Six Counties, an end to British state terror in Ireland, and support for the democratic right of self determination for the Irish people. To obtain the new National petition write to NLISC BM Box 4835, London WC1 3XX. PB

Armagh women prisoners

Strip-searching was re-introduced to Armagh women's gaol on 9 November when remand prisoners on their way to court were individually strip-searched in front of 11 prison warders.

A number of the women were menstruating at the time and had the added indignity and embarrassment of not being allowed to keep their underwear on during the search.

The prison administration in a statement added that 'any prisoner who fails to comply with the regulations will be forcibly stripped and searched.'

In addition two republican POWs, Mairead Nugent and Breige Brownlee, are confined to their cells 24 hours a day as a result of being cut off from their comrades in 'A' wing and placed in the loyalist 'B' wing of the gaol by the prison authorities. Michael D

Follow up to election success

Following their recent success in the Assembly elections Sinn Fein have become much more involved in social and economic as well as political issues in the Six Counties.

Sinn Fein Advice Centres manned by voluntary workers are springing up across the country and they've already had much success. Indeed the SDLP have got so worried that on 17 November they announced the opening of an SDLP Advice Centre in West Belfast. Local people are now asking themselves why it took the SDLP over 10 years to set up such a service and, realising that it is merely a result of Sinn Fein's increasing popularity, they are instead attending Sinn Fein Advice Centres with problems.

Indeed Gerry Adams has already taken up the issue of Moyard Flats, Devonshire Housing and intervened to set up negotiations between local West Belfast workers and the management of the Scrap firm.

Is it any wonder that people are now talking about the possibility of Sinn Fein capturing the West Belfast seat in the next Westminster elections and proving once and for all that Gerry Fitt represents no-one other than himself. Michael D

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETS

The co-ordinating committee formed by the 20 November 1982 Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference met on 19 December. Solidarity committee delegates came from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bradford, Manchester, Liverpool, West London, South London, North London, as well as delegates from the RCG and RCL - 18 delegates in all.

The committee agreed to produce a newsletter to carry details of all local and national activities of Irish Solidarity Committees. The work for the 12 March demonstration, in London, was set in motion with a decision to produce a national leaflet and poster. Local solidarity committees were encouraged to begin a campaign of public meetings, street meetings and political debate to build for the demonstration. Mobilising meetings will be open to everyone prepared to build the demonstration.

All structures set up by the committee reflected a political decision that only those actively involved in the work will have the right to decide the policy of the new solidarity movement. For leaflets, posters and other information contact: CC BISM, BM Box 4835, London WC 1N 3XX.

SOLE VOICE OF DISCORD

A sole voice of discord and disunity was raised throughout the 20 November Conference Building an Irish Solidarity Movement. It came from members of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and its front organisation the Irish Freedom Movement (IFM). It was first heard during the debate which raised the question - which sections of the working class can an Irish solidarity movement be based on today?

The RCP began by attacking David Reed for arguing that an Irish solidarity movement in Britain had to be based on the most oppressed sections of the working class - black and Irish workers, black and white unemployed youth and their allies. Being more concerned with dissociating themselves from David Reed's political arguments than with serious debate, the RCP went so far as to deny that blacks, Irish people, unemployed youth were part of the working class! So Phil Murphy, a leading member of the RCP, could argue at the Conference:

'In the list that he [David Reed] gave of the forces to build an Irish solidarity movement he mentioned blacks, Irish people, unemployed youth... but he failed to mention the British working class.'

In response to this deliberate distortion of David Reed's position one contributor to the discussion highlighted the chauvinist and racist implications behind the RCP standpoint when he said that the RCP apparently holds to the view that the working class is composed solely of 'middle-aged, employed, skilled white males' who are members of trade unions. Another contributor to the debate, who emphasised that a solidarity movement must be built by activity on the streets, in the housing estates and working class communities, pointedly demanded to know of the RCP:

'...whether, when working on the streets of London, we are to interrogate people to ascertain whether they are in a trade union before accepting them into a solidarity movement.'

The ridiculous arguments of the RCP were compounded by a hopeless sectarianism.

Despite their arguments for working in the official working class movement, the RCP made it plain that they would only place demands on representatives of the official Labour and trade union movement in order to 'expose them'. Speakers from the RCP/IFM even went so far as to attack Irish Solidarity Committees which asked for assistance from Labour MPs etc in order to obtain some protection and publicity against police harassment of their street activities.

Throughout the Conference the RCP/IFM displayed their contempt for the revolutionary forces fighting imperialism most blatantly when they refused to applaud the revolutionary messages read out at the Conference from Irish POWs. They also refused to join in voting to establish a coordinating committee to take forward the task of unifying all anti-imperialists into an Irish solidarity movement.

Given the very successful conference and the failure of the RCP/IFM to have any influence on it, they have now resorted to lying about it. In their newspaper, the next step, the RCP have to tell their readers that the conference was 'organised by the Revolutionary Communist Group.' To say otherwise would have forced them to acknowledge that the conference was organised by the North London Irish Solidarity Committee which unites within its ranks the RCG, the RCL, Sinn Fein members and many independent forces. They would have had to say that the conference was sponsored by 20 Irish POWs, Labour Party and TOM branches, many other individuals and organisations. They would then have had to explain to their readers why the RCP did not sponsor this broadly based anti-imperialist conference on Ireland. In other words they would have had to expose their own sectarianism as it had been exposed at the conference.

Alan James

LEEDS

National March and Rally
Remember Bloody Sunday!

Sunday 30 January.
Assemble 12.30 Saville Park,
Chapeltown Road, Leeds 7.
Posters, leaflets and more
information from and
donations to
Bloody Sunday Mobilising
Committee
Box BS, 59 Cookridge St,
Leeds 2, West Yorkshire

BAN ON SINN FEIN

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anti-Irish PTA was used to prevent the Sinn Fein delegation from coming to Britain.

BRITISH 'DEMOCRACY'

Once again British 'democracy' has showed its true face. Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness were elected, despite British army/RUC harassment, to the so-called Northern Ireland Assembly in an election set up and supervised by British imperialism. The British ruling class has never, and will never, accept election results in Ireland that undermine its domination of Ireland. As in the 1918 General Election and the election of Bobby Sands in 1981, so today the British ruling class responds to 'unacceptable' consequences of its own sham democracy with force.

It should not be forgotten that Ken Livingstone and the GLC councillors were also elected in an election supervised by the British ruling class. And they too have been denied the right to

hold meetings in London with elected Sinn Fein representatives because those elected representatives are not acceptable to the British ruling class.

In order to justify this open violation of its supposed democratic process, the British ruling class, its Labour Party allies and its media, heaped slander and abuse on the Sinn Fein delegation, particularly Gerry Adams, by labelling them 'supporters of terrorism' if not actually 'terrorists' themselves. This was the justification for the ban under the PTA.

In fact, British imperialism, even under its own rigged laws and in its own rigged juryless Diplock courts, failed, after internment Gerry Adams on remand for many months, to convict him of membership of the IRA. In any case as far as the British ruling class is concerned, anyone and everyone who opposes its tyrannical imperialist rule is a 'terrorist'. Those who are fighting for the legitimate democratic right of the Irish people to self-determination, far from being terrorists, are fighting to destroy the very root of terror today: British imperialism.

This whole episode only confirms, yet again, that it is those who are fighting British imperialism in Ireland, who are the real fighters for freedom, justice and democracy.

David Reed/Terry Marlowe

RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up

■ PLO Meeting in London

On Monday 6 December FRFI supporters attended a 500-strong meeting organised by the PLO. The high point of the meeting was a speech by Doctor Fathi Arafat, brother of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. Amongst the numerous speeches, Doctor Arafat made the shortest one of the evening, some three minutes, for which he received a standing ovation for at least 5 minutes. Dr Arafat's speech followed a film demonstrating the terrible savagery with which the Israeli armed forces laid siege to Beirut. Dr Arafat said the Israelis came into Lebanon claiming to be 'looking for European terrorists'. What they found were 100 European doctors and nurses who remain as witnesses to the barbaric acts and total disregard for life shown by the Israeli army. They were witnesses to the cluster bombs, to the spread of disease caused by lack of proper sanitary facilities resulting from Israeli bombing of the city and the imposition of a complete blockade. These 100 were witness to the mass slaughter of women and children and the destruction of housing and hospitals. Despite the barbarity of the Zionist attack, Dr Arafat made plain that the spirit and morale of the people remains high and they are determined to continue the struggle until the liberation of Palestine.

Ken Hughes

■ Bradford Anti-Apartheid meeting

On Friday 10 December, Bradford FRFI supporters organised a public meeting - Free all South African Political Prisoners! Smash Apartheid Now! The meeting had attracted considerable advance publicity in the local newspapers. The 40-strong audience of anti-imperialists, local black people and students saw the very powerful film 'Six Days in Soweto'. Amandla Kitson then spoke to the meeting about the successes of the non-stop picket of South Africa House, which had achieved the victory of getting her father and other political prisoners moved to another prison. She urged everyone at the meeting to join the Anti-Apartheid Movement - to fight for the release of Nelson Mandela and build the solidarity movement in this country.

The strong anti-imperialist spirit of the meeting was heightened by the singing of some of the songs of the non-stop picket.

Maxine Williams, speaking for FRFI, ended her speech by saying that we call for victory for the ANC, but the important thing was that we must show this in our actions, not just in words.

The success of the meeting was shown by many people in the audience declaring that they wanted

to be involved in future anti-apartheid work in Bradford. Bradford FRFI supporters

■ West London Irish Solidarity Committee

Following the successful 20 November Conference, delegates from West London at a meeting on Thursday 2 December agreed to form the West London Irish Solidarity Committee. The committee met again on Friday 17 December and on the following Saturday held its first street activity at Shepherds Bush. This involved local petitioning which within one hour had already got 100 signatures on the national petition. The response of the local working class community was very inspiring as they donated £10 to WLISC and two people expressed interest in joining the committee.

Anyone wishing to join or know more about WLISC and its activities should write to WLISC, BM Box 4835, WC1N 3XX.

■ ... Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee

A new solidarity committee has been formed in the Edinburgh area open to all who wish to campaign actively for the victory of the Irish people in their struggle for self-determination against British imperialism. A well-attended

founding meeting on 12 December resolved to take the main thrust of this activity out on to the streets where the best support is to be found, while cooperating with all other forces willing to take the struggle forward in any way. Seasons greetings have been sent to Irish POWs in England and a letter also to Ken Livingstone encouraging him to keep inviting Sinn Fein representatives (and keep chipping away at imperialism's democratic facade!) Street meetings are in the offing and support for Bloody Sunday mobilisations at the end of January.

EISC can be contacted at Box 110, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

Paul McKinlay

■ Victory for the SLISC! Balham 6 acquitted!

As readers will remember, the Balham 6 were arrested at a SLISC street meeting on 24 July and charged with obstruction of the highway. Inspector Newark of Tooting Police applied for a bail condition banning the six from doing political work in the area. This was defeated when the six appeared in court to be charged.

On 16/17 November the six appeared for their trial at South Western Magistrates Court. The barrister took pains to emphasise that the arrests had nothing to do with the political activity itself, only with the fact that an obstruction had taken place. The court was then treated to the humorous sight of Inspector Newark and another officer unfurling the SLISC banner for the magistrate's attention!

This was a magnificent start by the police. They then produced six officers to give evidence. One after the other they swore an oath to tell the truth and then delivered a mixture of fantasy and bare-faced lies. First off came PC Bishop. He said the six were confronted by a stationary hostile crowd about 40 strong, which completely blocked the pavement so that no one could get by. This crowd was shouting

abuse at the six defendants, one of whom was shouting back provocative slogans at the crowd while another was selling newspapers to them. An extraordinary feat considering the ugly mood of the crowd! The six were arrested 'in order to prevent a breach of the peace causing an obstruction'.

Then came PC Stubbins. He said a large hostile crowd was totally blocking the footway, totally surrounding the six, two of whom were selling newspapers. He said things were 'getting out of hand' and 'it was getting embarrassing' and so the arrests were made. Next came PC Lee. He said that five were in a line along the wall of Barclays Bank, except for one defendant who was moving about in the middle of the footway obstructing pedestrians! PC Lee had maintained observation out of sight of the defendants from around the corner. Amazingly, the police were able to defy the laws of physics! PC Lee said that a large dense crowd then gathered and the six were all arrested at once: more superhuman acts by the police who can apparently waft at will through dense crowds of people!

After this treat a star performer, PC Hunt, took the witness stand. According to him, the six were strung out across the pavement causing pedestrians to squeeze between them, or walk round them by stepping into the busy high-road. Under cross-examination PC Hunt said a crowd of about 40-50 people gathered after the six had been warned to move on. Also, he couldn't see why the defendants 'should inflict their beliefs on others' and 'prevent people from walking by'. The arrests had been made 'for obstruction likely to cause a breach of the peace'.

Nearly outshining PC Hunt was PC Goldby. He said the six were standing across the pavement and people couldn't get by. Then a small 'floating' group went by shouting at the six. When the police barrister, realising the Goldby had completely forgotten to mention the famous 'crowd',

asked him about a crowd and how big it was. PC Goldby said it numbered four or five people! If it had not been for all this comedy the court would have fallen asleep long ago and missed the last officer, PC Richards, telling the truth. He said the six were standing in a line parallel with the wall of the bank, about 2 feet from it. Suddenly he seemed to remember where he was and started inventing things. He said there was a 'large well-behaved but not happy crowd' blocking the footway.

All this drivel was transparently absurd since Inspector Newark had earlier been called to testify by the defence barrister. The Inspector was quite clear about arresting the Tooting 3 on 15 May and about applying for political bail conditions on the Balham 6.

The magistrate appeared rather embarrassed at the proceedings and tried at first to save the police from humiliation by asking if the six would accept a 'bind over'. They adamantly refused, so the magistrate had little choice but to dismiss the case.

■ Precinct Six Defence Campaign

3 of the Precinct 6 were convicted of obstruction on 29 November for daring to sell FRFI and give out leaflets in Leeds Precinct. Fines and costs were £135. Meanwhile Mohan Pipal is in court on December. He was arrested after a fascist attacked him. The fight for the right of black and white youth to campaign against police and fascist attacks continues.

We need your help: write to Chief Constable Ronald Gregory, West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police, Police HQ, Laburnum Rd, Wakefield, Yorkshire. Write letters to your MP. Help us fight back by sending us the money we urgently need to pay the fines and to appeal against the convictions. All donations and messages of support to: Precinct Six Defence Campaign c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2.

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 12 March 1983

Assemble 1.00pm at Bidborough Street (nearest rail and tube station Kings Cross/St Pancras) Write for leaflets and posters to CC BISM, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX Organised by 20 November 1982 Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference.

EVENTS

8 - 14 JANUARY

ANC Public Meeting Condemn Apartheid Aggression! Saturday 8 January, 7pm Conway Hall Red Lion Square WC1

■ DUNDEE

Street Meeting. **Smash Apartheid!** Saturday 8 January, City Square 12 noon-2pm. Called by FRFI

■ NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting. **Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!** Saturday 8 January, Archway Tube, 11.30am-1.00pm. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee

■ SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting. Mobilise for January 26 and Bloody Sunday Demo. Saturday 8 January, Clapham Junction - meet British Rail Station, 1.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

■ BRADFORD

Public Meeting, Video Film. **Remember Bloody Sunday.** Monday 10 January. Details of venue from BISC, c/o BISC Box LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 7 or from FRFI sellers.

■ NORTH LONDON

Public Forum. **The British Racist State: The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill/The Nationality Act.** Tuesday 11 January, 7.30pm. Camden Labour Club Carol St, London NW1 (nearest tube Camden Town). Called by FRFI.

■ LEEDS

Public Forum. **The British Racist State: The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill/The Nationality Act.** Thursday 13 January, 7.30pm. Chapeltown Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7. Called by Leeds FRFI supporters.

15 - 21 JANUARY

■ SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting. Mobilise for SLISC public meeting 26.1.83 and Bloody Sunday Demo. Saturday 15 January. Meet Prince of Wales Pub, Brixton - opposite Lambeth Town Hall, 1.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting. **Remember Bloody Sunday! Troops Out Now!** Saturday 15 January. Outside Wood Green Library, 2.30pm-4.00pm. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Petitioning/Leafletting for public meeting 26.1.83 and for Bloody Sunday Demonstration. Saturday 15 January. Clapham Junction meet British Rail Station 10.45am. South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ EDINBURGH

Public Forum. **Building an Anti-imperialist Movement.** Friday 21 January 7.00pm. Crosswinds, Tollcross. Called by Edinburgh FRFI.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY EVENING

Recent film of the massacre in Lebanon Slide shows

Revolutionary songs from Iran, Palestine, Ireland and many other countries

Friday 21 January 6pm till late

Reynold Building Room C9 Sackville Street, Manchester Participants include: International Solidarity Front for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Iran Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee Many others expected

■ LEEDS

24 Hour Picket. **Free Nelson Mandela! Free All Political Prisoners in South Africa!** Friday 21 - Saturday 22 January 6pm to 6pm. Dortmund Square, Leeds. Called by Leeds FRFI supporters.

22 - 28 JANUARY

■ HULL

Picket of Prison. Saturday 22 January. Assemble Hull Prison 2pm. Hedon Road, Hull. Called by Bloody Sunday Mobilising Committee.

■ NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting. **Remember Bloody Sunday! Troops Out Now!** Saturday 22 January. Kilburn Square 11.30-1.00. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Petitioning/leafletting for Public Meeting 26.1.83 and for Bloody Sunday Demonstration. Saturday 22 January, Tooting Broadway Tube, 10.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting. Mobilise for SLISC public meeting, and Bloody Sunday Demo. Saturday 22 January, Balham Tube, 1.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ MANCHESTER

Public Meeting on Ireland. For details contact MISC, Box 47, 164-166 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN, or FRFI seller. Tuesday 25 January. Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Public Meeting. **Remember Bloody Sunday!** Wednesday 26 January, 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton. Admission 30p. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ NORTH LONDON

Public Meeting. **Building an Irish Solidarity Movement.** Thursday 27 January, 7.30pm John Barnes Library, Camden Road, N7. Nearest tube Holloway Road. Admission 50p/25p unwaged. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ LEEDS

Public Meeting. **Free All South African Political Prisoners! Smash Apartheid Now!** Thursday 27 January 7.30pm Chapeltown Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7. Called by Leeds FRFI supporters.

■ MANCHESTER

Public Forum. **Remember Bloody Sunday! Victory to the Irish People!** Thursday 27 January. For details contact your FRFI seller. Called by Manchester FRFI.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Public Forum. **Unemployment, Repression and the Crisis.** Tuesday 25 January 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton. Called by FRFI.

29 JAN - 4 FEB

■ SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting. **Remember Bloody Sunday.** Mobilise for National Demo. Saturday 29 January, Tooting Broadway Tube, 1.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ SOUTH LONDON

Leafletting/Petitioning for Bloody Sunday and National Demo. Saturday 29 January. Balham tube - meet Barclays Bank opposite Tube 10.45pm. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

■ LEEDS

National March and Rally. **Remember Bloody Sunday!** Sunday 30 January. Assemble 12.30 Saville Park, Chapeltown Road, Leeds 7. Posters, leaflets and more information from and donations to Bloody Sunday Mobilising Committee, Box BS, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2, West Yorkshire

COMING SOON

■ BRADFORD

Public Forum. **Police and Criminal Evidence Bill.** Tuesday 8 February, Central Library 7.30pm. Called by Bradford FRFI.

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

■ LEEDS FRFI Supporters Group can be contacted at Leeds FRFI c/o LAP 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. Details also from FRFI sellers.

■ DUNDEE FRFI supporters Group meets on Thursday 13 January, 7.9pm Wishart Centre, King Street, Dundee.

■ EDINBURGH meets fortnightly. Details from FRFI sellers or from Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

■ MANCHESTER Details from local FRFI sellers

■ BRADFORD Details from local FRFI sellers

■ LIVERPOOL Details from local FRFI sellers

■ BRISTOL Details from local FRFI sellers

■ BIRMINGHAM Details from local FRFI sellers

■ GLASGOW Details from local FRFI sellers

FOR SALE/HIRE

■ IRISH REPUBLICAN MEMORIAL CALENDAR FOR 1983

Calendar commemorating those who have died in the struggle against British imperialism. Available from Republican Publications, 2a Monagh Crescent, Turf Lodge, Belfast. Price £1.00 + 20p p&p or 10 copies for £7.50 + £1 p&p.

SUPPORT COMMITTEES

■ BRADFORD

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details contact BISC c/o Box BISC, LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 7.

■ GLASGOW

Irish Freedom Action Committee meets weekly. For details write to GIFAC c/o Box 15, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

■ TYNESIDE

Action Committee on Ireland meets weekly. For details write to AS King, c/o Porters Lodge, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

■ NORTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Friday 7 January and Thursday 20 January at Camden Labour Club, Carol St, near Camden Tube at 7.30pm or write to NLISC, BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX

■ SOUTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Fridays 7 and 21 January, 4 February at Lambeth Town Hall, Room 29, Brixton, 7.30pm, or write to SLISC, BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

■ MANCHESTER

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details of meetings and activities contact MISC, Box 47, 164-166 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.

■ WEST LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee. For information and details contact WLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX

■ EDINBURGH

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details contact EISC c/o Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

LETTERS

Prison visitors harassed

Dear FRFI,
I am writing to tell you about an incident that occurred while me and my five year old son were visiting my husband in Walton prison. I travelled from Glasgow to Liverpool, a long journey, and arrived about 1pm. The warder checked our pass at the entrance and while waiting for other visitors' passes to be checked I heard my name being called and turned. Two men were standing and announced themselves as drug squad detectives. They said they were holding me under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and that I was to go to a police station to be searched. I asked them to search me then and there and they replied saying they were men and could not search a woman. From my hands they snatched my bags and my son's school bag. I was told to keep my hands in the air where they could see them. And while in the car to keep my hands on top of the seat in front. We were driven to a police station I don't know where. And there I was put through the most humiliating embarrassing and degrading process of being strip searched and ordered to stand with my legs spread out. My young son was left standing beside the bar in the reception area and then later told to take his coat off to be searched.

Needless to say they found nothing. I have never been in any kind of trouble and know nothing about drugs. We finally got to see my husband. I was quite shaken and most upset. He of course was upset too and so was my son. I have written to MPs, a solicitor, Margaret Simey and NCCL who all agree that this was a dreadful experience and call for an investigation. And it is now in the hands of police complaints and also the Home Secretary.
KS

Letter from Puerto Rico

Dear Comrades,
Saludos! Please accept my warmest greetings (to all who are involved in FRFI). Today, I received the first copy of FRFI since my return to Puerto Rico. I read the newspaper from cover to cover (as I always have) and shall pass it on to other comrades who are interested here in PR. Before leaving London, I was able to hear the welcoming news that the Bradford 12 had been acquitted. I hear occasionally on the radio that the Health Workers are in their fifth month of struggle for a long overdue pay increase. I am eager to hear the outcome since they are up against the

most reactionary troglodites ever. I am also pleased to hear of the growing support for the May Day 2 and the Tooting 3. I shall always look forward to receiving your highly informative and correct newspaper.

As for the news from Puerto Rico, I am sending you a copy of Bandera Roja (Red Flag) which is the newspaper of the MST (Workers Socialist Movement). I was somewhat reluctant to send it (since there are no copies in English) but I decided to anyway. I hope there may be someone among your ranks who knows a bit of Spanish. You can look forward to receiving more copies of the newspaper in the

future. If the worst comes to the worst, I will send translations of the more important articles. The task of the MST is to succeed where the now defunct Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) has failed - that is, in the task of creating strong cadres of workers at the factory level. There is a strong students arm to the MST. It is called the Union of Socialist Youth (UJS) which provided leadership to the ill fated students strike initiated last year when the administration increased tuition 300% at the University of Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras campus). I shouldn't really say ill fated since no one was murdered (a common occurrence at student demos), and the UJS has managed to raise the consciousness of many students on campus. However, tuition was not decreased and the strike leaders were banned

from campus. The squatters at Villa Sin Miedo (Village Without Fear) were evicted but they were given accommodation elsewhere. The housing shortage would create more problems for the colony if it wasn't for the escape valve - the fact that Puerto Ricans have American (US) citizenship which allows them to migrate to the USA. Many are doing just that.

That School [LSE] I shall always remember as a haven for reaction and racism. The only positive experience I had in London was that of working with the highly motivated and competent members of FRFI. My best wishes to all of you! A Luta Continua!! Hasta La Victoria Siempre! Death to ZIONISM-NAZISM! VICTORY TO IRELAND!
D
Puerto Rico

Irish activist harassed

Dear FRFI,
I have recently become involved in Irish solidarity work. Within weeks of the start of this and shortly after I went with a delegation to the North of Ireland, I was visited by the police at my home who asked to come in as he wanted to 'speak to the people who lived here'. As he did not explain what he wanted at the door and insisted on coming in, I let him in unaware that it had anything to do with the work I had become involved with. It wasn't until we were seated in the sitting room that he said that they had received an 'anonymous phone call' stating that there was an 'Irish Terrorist' living here. I was naturally very alarmed and hurriedly tried to explain that I was only involved with legal work, TOM etc. I was so scared that I acted on impulse and my only thought (don't laugh) was to convince the police that I was not a terrorist.

In retrospect I see the visit as a typical act of police harassment of people who speak out on Ireland and the war. Had I been more aware of this situation at the time and had I not been so inexperienced I would not have allowed the police to even enter the house and I would have put up resistance to their attempt to intimidate me.

This demonstrates how the agents of the British ruling class defend imperialism not only through their brutal and repressive activities in the occupied six counties but by the suppression of anti-imperialist tendencies within its own working class. Although my own experience with the state machinery has been thankfully only minor (so far) I will no longer underestimate the formidable nature of the forces acting against the anti-imperialist struggle at home.

TM
Troops Out Movement/North London Irish Solidarity Committee

Serving the ruling class

Dear comrades,
On 8 December two supporters of the South London Irish Solidarity Committee attended an Irish Freedom Movement

(IFM) public meeting in North London. Before it began the IFM displayed its sectarianism by banning three members of the RCG. This they justified by saying that they (the RCP/IFM) 'have been consistently slandered' in FRFI, and that the RCP have been 'violently attacked' on several occasions by the RCG, without giving any examples.

Mike Freeman spoke on behalf of the IFM. At a time when Ken Livingstone's democratic rights of freedom of speech on Ireland and his right to speak to elected representatives of Sinn Fein were being viciously attacked, Freeman too attacked and slandered him. He said that Livingstone was only speaking out on Ireland so as to ensure a seat in Parliament for himself for Brent (North London), where there is a large Irish community.

The IFM's sectarianism was further displayed when they dismissed the work of the North London Irish Solidarity Committee, despite it having over 20 people affiliated to it, representing individuals, Sinn Fein, RCL, RCG and several branches of the Labour Party, all united under the slogan 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Freeman dismissed this committee in the same breath and in the same way as all other 'broad based' campaigns on Ireland. He also was indifferent to the newly formed West London Irish Solidarity Committee, which came about through the work of the NLISC. The IFM also ignored the invitation to work with the NLISC.

Earlier Russell Gray (RCP) had told an Irish man from SLISC that the IFM only supports large demonstrations on Ireland; that was his sole justification for not supporting the small but very significant SLISC demonstrations in South London earlier this year.

Such is the nature of the RCP/IFM that they ban serious discussion from their meetings, do not support anyone's right to freedom of speech on Ireland unless the view expressed agrees with theirs, and refuse to support any small demonstrations on Ireland. This treachery will only serve the people the RCP/IFM is allegedly against - the British ruling class. Once again the RCP/IFM have shown their true colours, those of the arrogant middle class 'lefties'.
SM

The following poem was written by Jimmy Anderson, prisoner in Wormwood Scrubs, in honour of Bobby Sands. It was read out at the 20 November Conference, Building an Irish Solidarity Movement.

ODE TO THE FALLEN WARRIOR: SON OF ERIN

If they are the darkness
Of a starless midnight sky;
Your memory is a candle's flame
One that shall never die.

And if they are the rain clouds
Let them rain their worst.
For your memory is a desert
Burning with endless thirst.

If they are the ice and snow
Of a freezing winter storm
Your memory is that glowing ember
The one that keeps us warm.

And if they are a blazing sun
Burning down harsh and cruel
Your memory is a shaded stream
With waters for ever cool.

And if they are that mighty mountain
Casting shadows across our land
Your memory is the patient wind
That wears all stone to sand.

Never shall they tame an ocean
Time and tide alone control
Nor tarnish what you revealed
From deep within your soul.

Neither shall they catch the wind
And still your songs of liberty
So rest you proudly - brave son of Erin
And know that Ireland shall be free.

Coppers and Yoppers

Dear FRFI,
In Newcastle-upon-Tyne's careers office in College Street there is a poster on the wall saying:

Hello! Hello! Hello!
Have you heard about the new works Skill Course with Northumbria Police? (you can choose the sort of work you want to do) Proper training is provided by the Police!
There are no special qualifications needed! All you need to do is to fill in

an application form!
Then why not ask about the Northumbria Police Force Workskills Course?

Just then my mind clicked and I thought, why not, the police are lovely people really.

However another click of my mind hit me and I remembered Little Towers, Jimmy Kelly and countless others murdered by policemen 'carrying out their duty' and using force deemed necessary by the state.

Ahh, I thought, next time I see a young copper I'll ask them if they are on a Yops-Police Skills Course and if they are, I'll ask if they're enjoying it, but if they aren't, I'll run like hell away before they do a justifiable job on me.
Ex-yopper (age 16)
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Please note our 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

WINTER FUND DRIVE

FRFI NEEDS £500 PER ISSUE

With FRFI 24 we raised £48.30 over and above the £500! Many thanks to all, but especially to unemployed Mr A H H Knott who again sent us 50p and the other individual supporters who donated £27.50.

This time, North London heads the list of FRFI Supporter Groups with £173.18 - keep up the good work - followed by South London £99.33, Edinburgh £88.56, Manchester £69.75, Bradford £35, Leeds £15.30, Dundee £15.06, Bristol £13.82, Liverpool £9.80 and Glasgow 50 pence.

This was good news for the Winter Fund Drive. But unfortunately this is not where it ends.

Unless we raise £500 every month we will be forced to put up the price of the paper. Many FRFI readers could then no longer afford to buy it. Act now by subsidising FRFI! Send us your donations or hand it to your FRFI seller. Organise fund raising events - socials, jumble sales, collections.

We will publish all contributions to the FRFI fund in this column. If you want your name or that of your organisation mentioned alongside the donation please say so.

Make your donation payable to 'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

I/we want to donate £_____ to the FRFI Fund.

Name/Organisation _____

Address _____

I do/do not want you to mention my name/organisation _____

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 grows

IRA HITS BACK

Every escalation of the war of national liberation by the Republican movement brings forth streams of poisonous lies from the hired British media. The paid mouthpieces of British imperialism deceitfully accuse the IRA of 'sectarian attacks', 'tit for tat killings', and so on. At the same time these same liars obscure the reality of loyalist sectarian slaughter and the murders carried out by the 'official' forces of British imperialism. The British media seeks to hide the truth under a flood of crocodile tears.

An objective analysis of the deaths arising from the present war in the period since the Assembly elections on 20 October reveals the following facts: an escalation of terror on the part of the 'official' (British army/RUC) and 'unofficial' (Loyalist paramilitary gangs) forces of British imperialism directed primarily against nationalist civilians; and an escalation of military attacks by the IRA directed primarily against the so-called security forces. The first escalation is aimed at crushing the struggle of the Irish people for self-determination; the second escalation is aimed at crushing British imperialist rule.

The recent spate of Loyalist sectarian killings is closely related to the Sinn Fein success in the Assembly elections. As in the past when the Republican movement gains victories the Loyalists respond with sectarian killings designed to force greater repression from the 'official' forces as well as to intimidate the nationalist population. Since the Assembly elections the Loyalist killer gangs have murdered at least six unarmed

nationalist civilians in indiscriminate sectarian attacks. Peter Corrigan - 47-year-old Sinn Fein election worker - shot dead on 25 October. Patrick Murphy - 64-year-old shop keeper - shot dead on 16 November. Michael Fay - 25-year-old shop keeper - found shot dead in the boot of his car on 20 November. These are just three of the victims of Loyalist terror. Alongside the killings have been a number of savage beatings inflicted on nationalists by Loyalist thugs.

At the same time the real purpose of this Loyalist terror - to extract greater repression from the 'official' forces - is being achieved. The RUC have returned to the 'shoot-to-kill' policy developed under the last Labour government (see FRFI 21). The 'primacy of the police' means that today the RUC do what the British army did yesterday.

On 11 November the RUC ambushed and murdered three IRA Volunteers - Gervais Kerr, Eugene Toman, Sean Burns. The three were trapped in their car and murdered in a hail of RUC bullets. The RUC lie, that they were shot driving through a checkpoint without

stopping, was disproved by the fact that the majority of the bullets went into the side of the car, not the rear. This murder was quickly followed on 24 November with the RUC murder of 17-year-old Michael Tighe and the serious injuring of his companion, 20-year-old Martin McAuley. The two were in a shed, having been asked by the owner to look after the property in her absence. The RUC staked out the shed and then subjected it to a solid 4-minute burst of automatic fire in order to murder the youths inside. The RUC later produced some rifles more than 60 years old to justify their slaughter. In fact, the RUC has clearly taken over the policy of 'shoot-to-kill' from their British army mentors.

On 30 November James Prior made clear that 'Her Majesty's Government' was on the side of the Loyalist murder gangs by conceding increased repression. In a speech to the Loyalist Assembly he announced that the RUC strength would be increased by 1,000; that 60 new armoured Land Rovers would be issued this year; that an extra £37.5m would be spent on the RUC over the next three years. Thus the 'official' forces of British imperialist terror join together with the 'unofficial' forces in a united terror drive against the national-

ist population.

Despite all this terror the IRA has successfully accelerated its military attacks on the 'security forces', with successful attacks on RUC and UDR personnel. In the period since the Assembly elections whilst the Loyalist and RUC anti-civilian terror has increased only 2 civilians have died as a result of IRA attacks. The first was a passenger, in a car driven by an RUC officer, who died as a result of an IRA bomb attack on the car in which the RUC officer was killed. The IRA, in sharp contrast to the imperialists, apologised for the death of the civilian.

The second civilian was the notorious sectarian UVF killer and leader of the Shankill butchers (see FRFI 19), Lennie Murphy. The Belfast Brigade of the IRA executed Murphy on Tuesday 16 November. In a statement, they declared:

'Lennie Murphy ('Master Butcher') has been responsible for the horrific murders of over 20 innocent nationalists in the Belfast area and the murders of a number of Protestants. . . .

The IRA takes this opportunity to restate its policy of non-sectarian attacks, while retaining its right to take unequivocal action against those who direct or motivate sectarian slaughter against the nationalist population.'

Only those who have sold themselves body and soul to the imperialists could describe such an action as 'sectarian' or a 'tit for tat' killing.

So the facts are clear. The British imperialist forces of terror - 'official' and 'unofficial' - have stepped up their terror against the nationalist population in a doomed attempt to undermine popular support for the Republican movement as confirmed in the Assembly election results. They use violence to sustain British rule and the Loyalist Ascendancy. The IRA, for its part, has demonstrated both its resolute refusal to bow to Loyalist sectarian murder and its unbreakable will and capacity to resist any and every escalation of imperialist terror: to reply to imperialist terror with revolutionary violence aimed at achieving self-determination for the Irish people.

Terry Marlowe

After the INLA Ballykelly bombing on 6 December the 'shoot to kill' squad struck again. On Sunday 12 December the RUC ambushed and murdered two INLA volunteers, Seamus Grew and Roddy Carroll. The RUC are clearly carrying out 'official reprisals'. But the RUC killer squads, like the British army squads before them, will fail to break the resistance of the nationalist people.

Free State elections

TREACHERY

In the Free State general election on 25 November Fine Gael won 70 seats and the other main bourgeois parties, Fianna Fail won 75 and the Irish Labour Party 16. The pro-imperialist Workers Party held on to 2 seats while 3 others went to independents. Sinn Fein did not stand. The Irish Labour Party has voted to form a new coalition with Fine Gael which will give these two parties together an absolute majority in Leinster House, and will ensure a full five-year term of office for the Fine Gael/Irish Labour Party coalition.

Over the last 18 months there have been three general elections as the Irish Free State has been shaken by severe economic crises and public scandals reaching right to the top of the ruling class establishment. Under the alternating capitalist governments of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael/Irish Labour Party Coalition, the people of the 26 Counties have suffered rising unemployment, rising inflation, wage freezes and huge public service cuts. 40% of GNP now goes to pay off enormous debts to British and other imperialist banks. In this situation the pro-imperialist Workers Party and the bourgeois Irish Labour Party have competed to win the votes of the working class. In the last election the Workers Party fared better at the expense of Labour who were thoroughly hated for their role in the Coalition government. This time, however, the Labour Party's election campaign presented an 'independent' 'socialist' package to oppose the conservative policies of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. Indeed the Irish Labour Party leader, Dick Spring, called Fine Gael's economic proposals absolutely

disastrous for the country'. Now, after gaining votes from the working class, Labour is conveniently forgetting its promises and forming a Coalition government with Fine Gael.

The parliamentary stability resulting from this treachery will enable the ruling class to unleash further massive assaults on the working class. The Irish Labour Party is now, therefore, the guarantor of bourgeois rule - on the basis of votes it gained by deception.

Neither the bourgeois Irish Labour Party nor the pro-imperialist Workers Party are any alternative to the present system in the 26 Counties whose bourgeois rulers are entirely dependent on British imperialist interests. Those interests determine that both Coalition and Fianna Fail governments have always imprisoned and harassed Republicans fighting for a united Ireland free from British domination. The new Coalition government will step up these attacks as a central part of its overall attack on the Irish working class.

Chris Collins

BRITISH TERROR

During the past few weeks while the RUC have been carrying out summary executions against the nationalist population, the British army have carried out their own harassment of the nationalist people. They have laid siege in nationalist areas, as well as the usual beatings, in an attempt to crush the resistance of the nationalist people to British rule.

■ On 21 November two British soldiers, both members of the Worcestershire and Sherwood Forester Regiment threatened to shoot 18 year old Michael Shaw in the Grosvenor Road area of Belfast. Michael was stopped by a foot patrol and was thrown up against the wall. Then one soldier grabbed Michael by the testicles while another rammed a rifle into Michael's mouth, smashing one of his teeth. The soldier then cocked the rifle, screaming into Michael's face, 'F... you, Father Faul and the papers. Only there's too many cars about we'd shoot you now, but we'll get you some night on your own you can be sure of that.' The soldier was referring to another incident where the same two soldiers, says Michael, 'threw me to the ground and kicked me. I got up and ran away.' The first incident was reported to the press by Father Faul. Michael's father went to make a complaint to the Major commanding the troops. All he got was a great deal of verbal abuse and a display of table thumping. Michael who has since been suffering speech difficulties, is still in a state of shock. He is also frightened to leave the house because he said that the British Army 'said they are going to kill me.'

■ A few days later four RUC thugs, not to be outdone by the Army, attacked Michael McNaught in Derry's city centre and gave him a severe beating, causing injuries to his nose and throat. Not content with beating Michael these thugs then arrested him under Section 12 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and dragged him off to the Strand area RUC barracks, where he was held for the full 7 days.

This is not the first time Michael, who comes from the Bogside, has been on the receiving end of terror tactics of the British army/RUC. Over the past two years they have used the Prevention of Terrorism Act to terrorise Michael no less than six times. On each occasion Michael has been interned for the full seven days.

■ Raymond McGurk, a 19 year old youth from Tyrone was dragged from a

car and beaten up by soldiers of the UDR on a road block on the Pomeroy/Cooktown road. The beating took place on the 13 November after Raymond declined to give his date of birth, as he is entitled to do. Two of Raymond's friends who were also in the car were forced to drive off, leaving Raymond in the hands of the UDR. Raymond was warned that he would be shot if he moved. He was then given a lengthy beating. The UDR, content with their night's work, then drove off leaving Raymond lying in a hedgerow bleeding. Having dragged himself on to the road he was picked up by a passing driver and taken to Dungannon hospital where he was treated for shock, concussion and bruising.

■ On 2 December Gerry Grieve, a 27 year old man, was thrown over a garden hedge, beaten and kicked by a British army foot patrol while he was cleaning his taxi in the Creggan area of Derry. The soldiers threw Gerry over the hedge after they had questioned him about his present and previous addresses. This incident was seen by local people who came to the aid of Gerry. He was later taken to hospital where he was treated for severe bruising and headaches. Incidents like this are an everyday occurrence for the nationalist people in the occupied six counties. Harassment like this will not stop the nationalist people from fighting back against their oppressors.

■ Prisoners' relatives on their way to see relations imprisoned in the H-Blocks and Crumlin Road prisons are faced with the petty harassment of the British army/RUC. Patsy McNulty who drives the Strabane Republican Prisoners Welfare Bus said that the bus is constantly stopped for periods of up to half an hour. During the searches the mainly women and children are herded to the side of the road where they are thoroughly searched. On one occasion the bus was stopped and searched by three foot patrols in the same street, one after the other. The bus is also 'taken apart' in an effort to find fault with it. The driver is also made to report with his licence, tax book and insurance to the local RUC barracks.

■ In the early hours of 9 November, over 200 British army/RUC cordoned off the entire New Lodge area of North Belfast and held it under siege for five hours. During the five hour siege no one was allowed out of the area and people coming into the area were searched and

questioned. The homes of Republican sympathisers were singled out. People were threatened with prosecution if they did not produce receipts for their own furniture and other possessions.

Four men who helped in the election work of Joe Austin were arrested under Section 11 of the Emergency Powers Act and held for the full three days.

The British army/RUC were back in force the next day, searching houses and shops in the area. Joe Austin's words in response to this harassment stand for the nationalist population's response to all such harassment: 'If this curfew is directed at breaking the resolve of the people of New Lodge to resist these heavy-handed tactics, then this exercise of harassing the nationalist population has failed miserably as it has in the past.'

■ 49 year old Gerard Maxwell was recently paid £10,000 in damages in an out-of-court settlement by the Ministry of Defence for the torture he suffered during his period of internment without trial in 1971.

Maxwell was arrested in November 1971 and taken to Musgrave Street RUC barracks and later to the torture chambers of Palace barracks Holywood. During interrogation he was severely beaten causing massive bruising on the lower part of his body. He was made to sit facing the wall for long periods with a paper bag over his head to make him lose track of time and cause disorientation. During one such session a gun was held at his head and several blank rounds were fired.

His health was badly affected by this brutal torture. He spent 15 days in hospital after he was released from the Palace barracks. Over the past 11 years his life has been one of pain and suffering. The sum of £10,000 cannot compensate for his torture at the hands of the British army. Of course no one will face charges for the torture of Gerard Maxwell.

Sarah Begley, the 45 year old mother of six children, has also received 'compensation' for the injuries she received after being hit by a plastic bullet fired at her from point blank range. On 13 June 1981 Sarah was standing outside her home when the RUC charged up the stairs firing the murderous plastic bullets. Sarah lost her left eye and suffered a broken jaw, as well as receiving sixty stitches in her wound.

Alan James