

# FIGHT RACISMS! FIGHT IMPERIALISMS!

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## PLO WILL FIGHT ON

After ten weeks of heroic resistance in Zionist besieged West Beirut, the PLO began its evacuation on 21 August. The evacuation of the PLO is a bitter setback for the national aspirations of the Palestinian people and for the revolutionary masses of Lebanon. The PLO newspaper, *Filistin Al Thawra* said:

'We have taken the decision for military withdrawal because the destruction of Beirut over the heads of half a million Moslems is not a mere possibility but has become a reality.'

The PLO was faced with the overwhelming military might of the Zionist state backed by US and British imperialism. It was forced to stand virtually alone as the Arab governments of the region abandoned the Palestinian people and as the working class movements in the imperialist countries remained silent and passive.



## FREE DAVID KITSON!

The 24 hours-a-day non-stop picket outside the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Square, London, demanding the release of David Kitson from prison in South Africa achieved its first victory after three days of non-stop picketing. A doctor has been sent into Pretoria gaol to examine David Kitson. The publicity has forced the racist South African authorities to take steps to prevent a further deterioration in David's health.

This is the second time they have been forced to do this. The first occurred after publicity following the successful Free Steven Kitson Campaign (see FRFI 16) and the widespread interest and concern about David Kitson and South African political prisoners generated by a film on the Kitson family made by the CBS '60 Minutes' programme for US

television. At that time they sent David Kitson for a 'check-up' to a clinic - no doubt in case they had to produce him before the public.

However, the concern and interest died down. And once again the conditions under which he is being held are giving rise to great concern. David Kitson and the other political prisoners are

The scale and savagery of the Zionist atrocity in the Lebanon is unprecedented. The incessant bombardment of West Beirut reduced it to rubble. 30% of all buildings were destroyed including hospitals, schools, clinics, houses and apartment blocks. In one day alone, 11 August, 44,000 bombs were dropped in an eleven hour bombardment which destroyed 700 houses. Even the Canadian Ambassador was forced to state that it made the bombing of 'Berlin in 1944 look like a tea-party'.

The human toll is incalculable. Thousands are dead and tens of thousands

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being held in the temporary holding wing for the criminally insane at the notorious Pretoria Central hanging gaol. There is no heating, hot water or reasonable exercise facilities, and David Kitson suffered severe bronchitis last winter and again this winter. The weather in Pretoria is now extremely cold.

Since 1979 the South African authorities have said they would move the political prisoners to a prison with long-term facilities 'in a few months', 'in three months', and they have continued to promise it ever since. Their communication to the British Foreign Office on 18 June 1982 said the prisoners would be moved on 1 August. *To date they have*

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## STOP PRESS

On Monday, the sixth day of the picket, the police stepped up their harassment again. At 10.10am they arrested Steven Kitson for 'obstructing the highway'. He was sitting where picketers have been sitting for five days - in no way obstructing anyone. The police then demanded two sureties of £250 to release him - an unprecedented demand given the charge. Eventually, on being questioned about this they reduced the sureties to two of £50. Steven will appear in Bow Street Magistrates Court on Tuesday. The family says they will not be intimidated by these vindictive actions of the police. The picket will go on until its demands are met.

## LEEDS POLICE ATTACK ANTI-RACISTS

A concerted and vicious police attack on black and anti-racist white youth in Leeds culminated on 21 August with the violent assault and arrest of three youths - Garvey Harris, Mohan Pipal and Les Haw. The arrests took place after the third in a series of militant demonstrations against police harassment and police inactivity in the face of mounting fascist attacks. This brings to ten the number of arrests suffered by Leeds anti-racists in the past five weeks. Most of those arrested are FRFI supporters and activists in the local Precinct Defence Campaign.

The three arrests took place when some of those who had attended the earlier demonstration went to the Precinct to hand out leaflets and sell FRFI. They

Scotland. The police, taken aback at this response, immediately issued a press statement saying that the arrests were not connected with the earlier



had not even begun to do this when suddenly the police came and grabbed 17 year old Mohan Pipal, four of them dragging him to a police van. They then singled out their other two victims, both prominent in the campaign against police harassment. Garvey Harris, a black FRFI supporter, was slammed into the side of a police van, handcuffed and once in the police van was slapped. This slap perforated his eardrum. An even more violent scene accompanied Les Haw's arrest. He is well known locally because he is a skinhead with strong anti-racist views. Police jumped on Les pushing him to the ground. This caused Les, currently receiving treatment for epilepsy, to have an epileptic fit and in the midst of a fit he was handcuffed and dragged to a police van. Horrified onlookers protested to the police in vain.

All three were charged with threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace and Garvey, additionally with criminal damage to a police van. Immediately word of the arrests spread a noisy demonstration gathered outside the police station and picketers were sent to the police station. Also, Bob Cryer MP phoned the police as did numerous councillors, journalists and anti-racist from as far afield as Newcastle and

march against police harassment. But to Bob Cryer they said they would be opposing bail for all three because otherwise they would go and organise more protests!

If the police were hoping to crush the spirit of the three, they were very much

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# EDITORIAL

# IRA BOMBS IN LONDON

The renewed IRA military action in Britain, with the IRA bombing on 20 July against military personnel in Central London, has predictably brought forth the usual reactionary and hypocritical attacks on the Irish people's struggle.

From the ruling class hypocrites to middle class socialists there was a torrent of abuse, slander and lies directed at the IRA. British imperialism has no scruple about murdering unarmed Republicans in cold-blood, blowing out the brains of children with plastic bullets and brutally torturing prisoners in interrogation centres and specially-built concentration camps in the Six Counties of Ireland. Yet when the IRA retaliates by attacking military targets in Britain, the ruling class and its friends do not hesitate to cry out 'This is foul and cowardly murder!' As communists the RCG unequivocally condemns the hypocrisy of British imperialism. The IRA is fighting a legitimate national liberation struggle with the mass support of the Irish people. Communists in Britain support that struggle and therefore defend the right of the Irish

people to use whatever tactics they choose in pursuit of their democratic right to national self-determination. All the deaths, injuries and suffering arising from the war of national liberation are directly the responsibility of British imperialism, its agents within the working class, and all those who refuse to give unconditional support to the Irish people's struggle.

Most disgusting amongst these allies of imperialism are the British middle class socialists. Every military action in Britain by the Republican movement since the first in 1972 has been condemned by these middle class socialists. The latest bombings are no exception.

CPGB

'The outrageous bombings carried out in central London yesterday by the Provisional IRA must be totally condemned.' *Morning Star* 21.7.82

WRP

'We denounce these bombings in the strongest possible terms...'

*Newsline* 21.7.82

SWP

'If Margaret Thatcher had thrown the London bombs herself she would have been hard pressed to improve on the timing of the Provisional IRA.'

*Socialist Worker* 24.7.82

The SWP led the chorus of reaction by attacking the IRA in four consecutive issues of its newspaper *Socialist Worker*. It spread the ridiculous slander and lie that the IRA had allowed 'newspaper editors the perfect chance to drop the real Tory crime - unemployment - from their front pages'. So according to *Socialist Worker*, the murder, torture and brutalisation of Irish people is not at 'real' crime at all. In the same vein *Socialist Worker* whines on:

On the very day when the depths of the Government's callousness, hypocrisy and incompetence were laid

bare, Thatcher was presented with the perfect distraction.'

How low can *Socialist Worker* sink?

The government's callousness and hypocrisy, like the Labour government's before it, has been clear for a long period of time - in Ireland! None are so blind as those who will not see. The IRA bombs have not distracted British workers from fighting back against the reactionary policies of this government or the Labour government before it. The fact is that there has simply been no fightback. The British labour movement, its leaders and official organisations, long corrupted through their support for British imperialist oppression of the Irish people, have proved incapable of fighting back. Marx said long ago that the British working class will never accomplish anything until it has separated its policy from that of the ruling class on Ireland and made common cause with the Irish. It has not done so - neither has *Socialist Worker*. This is what explains the political inability of the British working class to fight back, not IRA military operations in Britain.

**Victory to the Irish People!  
Troops Out Now!  
Hands Off Ireland!**

# SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

## ● Playing football with apartheid

Jimmy Hill and his collection of soccer mercenaries were kicked out of South Africa when black footballers refused to play them. They were met by large protest demonstrations and the games that were played were boycotted by black football fans. Their so-called 'concern' for black youngsters was exposed for the sham it was. Their only concern was how much money they were being paid. The footballers were mostly over the hill, has-beens, including Dave Watson ex-England international. Dave Watson was one of the sports personalities who sponsored the Anti-Nazi League. Opposing fascists in Britain when you are an England international is OK it seems, but when you are an ex-England international and South African fascists dangle a large pay cheque in front of you, principles go out of the window. This tour also caused a headache for the SWP, who founded the ANL. The SWP is opposed to the campaign to isolate South Africa but it did not have the nerve to spell this out in relation to this reactionary tour. So in an article headed 'Is football in South Africa progressive?' it suggests that a boycott is an 'easy option' since football is a mainly black sport in South Africa. One thing is certain: that black footballers and spectators in South Africa are more progressive than the SWP - they don't hesitate to boycott tours by white football mercenaries, backed by South African capital.

Bob Shepherd

## ● Murder in apartheid prison

Ernest Moabi Dupale, a 21 year old black student, was found hanged in his cell at the notorious John Vorster Square Police Headquarters in Johannesburg on 8 August. Ernest Dupale was the 47th known detainee to be murdered in apartheid prisons. And like many previous murders, the regime tried to pass this one off too as 'suicide'. Ernest was due to face charges under the Internal Security Act on the day after his murder. Like many other South African militants he had been detained for 4 months by security police last year. Because of the newly amended Internal Security Act hurriedly changed after the mass political demonstration at Neil Aggett's funeral, a similar hero's burial could not be given to Ernest Dupale. The latest additions to the Act prohibits any declaration of support for political organisations at funerals, forbids posters, banners and even a funeral procession. The coffin must be carried along a heavily-policed pre-defined route. Nevertheless, at the funeral a priest was jeered for referring to the message of Christian forgiveness and was answered with chants of 'An injury to one is an injury to all!' by the 300 mourners.

Susan Davidson

## ● South African war against Namibia and Angola

Whilst the major imperialist powers - USA, Britain, France, West Germany - are manoeuvring to force the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) to accept imperialist terms for a settlement to the Namibian liberation war, the apartheid regime is stepping up its military war against SWAPO's army, the Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the people of Angola whose revolutionary government provides refuge and bases for the Namibian liberation movement. Throughout the summer South African troops continued to attack Angolan territory. A major attack occurred on 19 July but was only admitted three weeks later. Then on Tuesday 10 August, in another attack, South African troops killed 113 people. As the Israelis are doing in Lebanon, the apartheid regime is seeking to achieve a so-called 'peaceful political settlement' by the use of the most vicious military means.

Sue Davidson

# PLO WILL FIGHT ON!

continued from page 1

mained. The Zionists sealed off West Beirut, starving the people of food, water, electricity and medicine. Then they pounded it day after day with missiles, phosphorous bombs, cluster bombs and the devastating implosion bomb. One implosion bomb literally flattened an eight storey building in a few seconds. The effect of the phosphorous bombs was deadly, an Oxfam volunteer aid of one victim,

'The burns were right through his skin and subcutaneous tissue down to the charred muscles in his arms and chest. His left leg dangled off the operating table. His foot was burned off and the exposed cartilage was still smouldering. When his nose was pinched, puffs of smoke appeared from his lungs. He was burning inside for six hours. He will not survive.'

The real face of Zionism is now revealed for all the world to see - a fascist, genocidal war machine. And this war machine is supplied, equipped and backed by US and British imperialism.

Whilst thousands were being massacred by the Zionists, US President Reagan sent birthday greetings to the butcher Begin. Nor could the Zionists have wreaked such havoc in Beirut but for the fact that in the month prior to the invasion the USA supplied them with \$217 million of arms. This was ten times more than in the equivalent period for 1980. That is proof enough that the US imperialists knew of and blessed the invasion of Lebanon. And whilst Israel was bombing, the US imperialists engaged in mock diplomacy. Every time US errand-boy Habib said he was on the verge of a 'peace settlement', the



Old woman in despair in Beirut

Zionists renewed their bombardment whilst US imperialism looked on. British imperialism, founder of the Zionist state, raised no objection to Zionist terror. The atrocity in the Lebanon was carried out by the Zionists but it is the hands of imperialism which drip with blood.

## Zionist plans in Lebanon

Having forced the PLO out of Beirut the Zionists' aim is to transform Lebanon into a puppet state. On 23 August Zionist-backed Phalange leader Gemayel was 'elected' President of Lebanon. The fascist Phalange co-operated with the Zionists in their war against the PLO and are now being rewarded for their services. Gemayel will be the instrument used to suppress the revolutionary masses of Lebanon and Palestine.

The Israelis clearly aim to annex parts of South Lebanese territory. They have bulldozed all refugee camps and thousands of people have been dispersed, many others have been detained in concentration camps. Already Israel has set up direct telephone links with South Lebanon and opened tourist offices and banks. These are the first steps towards annexation.

On the West Bank too Zionist expansionism has moved forward. Nearly all elected Palestinian councillors have been expelled, four new Zionist settlements established and control of all water supplies passed to the Israeli Water Board. Whilst imprisoning the real leaders of the Palestinian people, Israel is grooming a puppet organisation - the Village Leagues - to act as a collaborationist force.

## The struggle continues

The Israeli victory in Beirut has strengthened the forces of reaction - the Lebanese fascists, the Zionists and imperialism. Imperialism will now be actively encouraged in its aim of suppressing all progressive movements in the Middle East. However, the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination has not been crushed under the rubble of Beirut. The struggle will go on on the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon and in Israel itself.

The PLO demonstrated its fighting ability and courage in West Beirut. The PLO fighters now leaving Beirut carry with them a fierce determination to carry on the battle on other fronts.

Roy Spring, Maxine Williams

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# SOUTH AFRICA

## APARTHEID MURDERS

On Tuesday 18 August Ruth First, leading member of the African National Congress, was murdered by the South African Secret Service. She died instantly from a powerful parcel bomb that exploded in her offices in the Centre for African Studies in Maputo, Mozambique.

Her murder is the latest in a series of murders carried out by the South African fascist state, designed to eliminate the leaders of the ANC and intimidate and demoralise the liberation movement and its supporters. Many of the most recent attacks have taken place in the frontline states with the specific intention of discouraging aid to the ANC. The South African barbarians will not succeed.

The South African government's most recent atrocities and murders include the murder of twelve ANC members in Matola, Mozambique, Joe Gqabi ANC representative in Zimbabwe, Cde Nzima and his wife in Swaziland, Dr Neil Aggett and Griffiths Mxenge, and Moabi Dipale who was murdered in detention a few weeks ago, the 47th person to die in this way. Earlier this year the ANC offices in London were bombed. This campaign of apartheid terror has not deterred the ANC who, true to their slogan *Don't mourn, mobilise!*, have intensified their struggle against the apartheid regime.

Ruth First gave a lifetime of struggle to the cause of liberation in Southern Africa. She was one of the 156 defendants in the notorious Treason Trial in the 1950s, and she was detained and tortured at the time of the Rivonia trial when Nelson Mandela and other ANC leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment. During her exile from South Africa she remained a dedicated fighter against apartheid. Her work in Mozambique was of vital importance to the anti-imperialist liberation struggle, with practical application to the problems facing Mozambique's transition to socialism.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!



Ruth First

salutes the memory of Ruth First. In a letter of condolence to the ANC, FRFI wrote:

'Recognising the role of British imperialism in supporting and sustaining barbaric apartheid, FRFI strongly denounces and condemns British imperialism which furnishes the racist regime with the means - political, military, economic and diplomatic - for carrying out such bloody acts. We note that the letter bomb which killed Ruth First was posted from London!

Her memory will be an inspiration and the struggle will continue until victory!

Susan Davidson



## BLACK MINERS STRIKE BACK

In the first week of July 30,000 black miners in South Africa went on strike against South African, British and US owned mining companies to demand pay increases to take them above starvation level. It was part of a wave of strikes in South Africa by black workers which, in the past 18 months, have exceeded the number of strikes in Britain (which has a far larger, more organised workforce). As is usual in South Africa, the police were used to break up the strike, but in this case the police were particularly vicious.

The Chamber of Mines, which represents all the major mining houses in South Africa announced the lowest pay increase (12%) for black workers for many years: a pay increase far below the rate of inflation. Miners responded by refusing to go underground on at least eight mines. Racist police were then brought in, and, using armoured cars, machine guns, CS gas and rifles, they broke the strike and forced the workers underground. At least 10 workers were killed, hundreds injured and over 2,000 forced to flee to the bantustans.

Black miners, whose struggles are suppressed so viciously, earn as little as £60 a month. White miners, on the other hand, earn on average £500 per month. They occupy all the senior positions, and their unions are thoroughly racist.

When the black workers went on strike, the leader of the white trade unionists, Arrie Paulus, stated that white miners were against black miners and if black miners did not like the jobs they were given they should go and look for jobs 'in their own homelands'. When the black workers voiced their grievances, they were shot; they were given an ultimatum - you work or you go home. When the white workers threatened to strike over pay, the Chamber of Mines immediately settled their demands stating that the settlement had averted a 'threatened strike which could have proved catastrophic to the national economy and to the mining industry'. This statement came only days after the slaying of the black workers: their lives are irrelevant to the 'national economy'

**JOIN THE NON-STOP PICKET**  
Free David Kitson!  
South Africa House  
Trafalgar Square, London

There are now two picket secretaries. Food is brought to the picket by those on the picket and members of the public. Lawyers have offered to help and have come at night to ensure the picket is safe. Nearly 5,000 people have signed the petition calling for the release of Dave Kitson and all South African political prisoners. The picketers sing freedom songs they have learnt in both English and African languages. There is a lively atmosphere and a feeling of solidarity. Political groups volunteered and have ensured the security of the picket overnight. Four security guards are on duty each night. Hundreds have joined the picket - some stay an hour, some a day, some have not left since the start. With this spirit and fight the picket is sure to score victories.

Pledges of support and donations to the picket are urgently needed. They should be sent to City Branch, Anti-Apartheid Movement, c/o 22 Brownlow Mews, London WC1. The Kitson family are available to speak at meetings in support of the picket. Organise them.

FRFI calls on all its readers to support the picket. Join it!

**Free David Kitson**  
**Release all South Africa Political Prisoners**  
**Victory to the ANC**  
David Reed



of South Africa and the filthy business men.

The mines, and particularly the gold mines, are central to the South African economy producing 51% of the total world output of gold - 1/3 of South Africa's exports. In 1980 this meant 18% of South Africa's Gross Domestic Product, although with the fall in the price of gold, this fell to 13% in 1981. In 1980 the assets of the 7 leading mining houses was estimated at 3.5bn, 50% of which was owned by British and US imperialism. It is part of the very base of the South African economy, achieved at the expense of the black people of South Africa: it is estimated, for example, that between 1973 and 1976 3,000 miners died in accidents in South African mines whilst in the same period 178 black strikers died, 1,043 were injured.

South Africa's mineworkers have a history of militancy of which July's strike is a part. Previous strikes have always been at important moments in the development of the liberation movement of South Africa, and this is no exception. The increasing militancy of the black South African working class together with the increasing strength and audacity of their guerilla movement Umkhonto we Sizwe are developing a volcano which South Africa cannot stop.

Chris Fraser

## STOP THE HANGINGS

On 6 August three more members of the African National Congress were sentenced to death for fighting against the racist system in South Africa. They left court with raised fists singing freedom songs. They need massive international support to force South Africa to commute these death sentences.

Thelle Simon Mogoerane, Jerry Semano Mosololi and Marcus Thabo Motaung were charged with a number of highly successful military operations against the apartheid regime. Using Soviet made AK47 sub-machine guns, RPG7 bazookas, hand grenades and limpet mines, these operations included three attacks on police stations (in which four policemen died), sabotage of railway lines and an attack on the Capital Park power sub-station between 1979 and 1981.

In court the three told of the torture dealt out to them by the police after their arrest. Thelle Mogoerane had rope tied around his neck and linked to a tree so that he was forced to stand on tip-toes to avoid strangulation. Jerry Mosololi had a wet plastic bag placed over his head while a dog was made to bite him. Both were later given electric shocks. Thelle Mogoerane had a wooden pole inserted between his legs whereupon he was suspended between a table and chair and then interrogated. He also had a pistol placed in his mouth by one policeman as another banged the table simulating the sound of a shot being fired. He explained in his statement that he had been a member of the Students Representative Council in Soweto in 1976 when he was

17. He had been forced to leave after the uprising of that year and the ensuing mass murder of black students and children. His experience had shown him that the racist system of apartheid could only be overthrown by armed force, and he had returned three years later as a trained guerilla soldier.

The guerilla operations are a part of the increasingly strong military campaign of the ANC, and the death sentences against the three are part of South Africa's increasingly vicious yet vain attempt to stem the tide of this movement of the oppressed. Earlier this year Petrus Lubisi, Neimbithi Mashigo and Naphtali Manana had their death sentences commuted owing to the massive international support which they won. Three more ANC members, Anthony Tsotsobe, Johannes Shabangu and David Moise have their appeals against their death sentences heard on September 3. The need for solidarity with the ANC, particularly from within Britain which gives so much support to racist South Africa has never been more important. Loud and clear we must say that Thelle Mogoerane, Jerry Mosololi and Marcus Motaung must not hang for they are not criminals, they are heroes!  
Chris Fraser

## FREE DAVID KITSON!

not been moved. Because of this the Kitson family decided that this campaign was necessary.

The indefinite picket began on 25 August 1982 - David Kitson's 63rd birthday and he will soon begin his 19th year of a 20-year sentence in South African prisons. The demands of the picket are ● David Kitson's removal from Pretoria Central gaol; ● to secure his release - there has never been remission for political prisoners ● to highlight the position of all South African political prisoners.

The picket has attracted widespread support from many organisations and trade unions, including that from the whole parliamentary Labour Party. It is an impressive picket which occupies the whole area outside the South African embassy. This had to be won against consistent police harassment. First no chairs were allowed - the picket insisted and the picket won. Then no camp beds and sleeping bags. The picket made a stand. Two on the picket were arrested and charged with obstruction on the first night. But again the picket stood its ground and a camp bed and sleeping bags can now be put up at night. The area occupied by the picket has increased. The majority on the picket are young - some joined permanently after

passing by. There are also many comrades of David Kitson and members of different political organisations. The picketers write their stories in a picket book which records each day's participants and activities

'My friend had come to London for the day and she had seen what was going on. Steven Kitson had explained to her and she told me about this and we both came up (and stayed) Karen I was thinking it was a bit of a giggle. After a while I got genuinely interested and decided I would go back and learn a bit more. Now I can't keep away - I'm doing something right and useful Yvonne, 15 years old

After banging my head against the brick-wall of apathy in Epsom for 15 months, after trying to mobilise without success interest in the heroic struggles in South Africa, Namibia, Lebanon, Ireland... imagine my feelings when I came to Trafalgar Square and found people prepared to continue this into an all out continual demonstration of solidarity. We need to put action behind our slogans! Dave

The picket carries out its work with determined discipline. Many young people have taken on responsibilities.

# FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

## ● British banks' veto on black bourgeoisie

In his famous report, Lord Scarman stated that 'the encouragement of black people to secure a real stake in their own community through business and the professions, is of great importance if further social stability is to be secured'. In short, Lord Scarman wanted some black capitalists to exploit and control the black working class on behalf of the imperialists. Yet the banks seem determined to prevent this!

A recent study by the London Borough of Lambeth showed that while 6 per cent of whites who wanted to open a business were refused a start-up loan by the banks, 74 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans had been refused. For those blacks able to get a loan, the banks demanded higher security than from whites.

## ● Home Office rakes it in as it kicks you out

Not content with inflicting misery and hardship on millions of people with its new Nationality Act, the Home Office is planning to make a fat profit out of it at the same time. Applications for citizenship either by registration or naturalisation will cost £200. Now newly published figures show that between now and next April, the Home Office expects to spend £5.7m on processing applications, but to collect £6.9m - a profit of £1.2m. Everywhere imperialism has to have its pound of flesh.

## ● Home Office sentences Iranians to death

Britain is the only Imperialist country which still deports people to Iran, despite the evidence of the thousands tortured and executed there. Two students studying in Yorkshire, Araf Egbal and Muhammad Ardestany, are known to have been executed shortly after arriving in Iran. There are some 30,000 Iranians in Britain, many of whom are students, who can be deported as soon as their courses have finished. Last year, the British government deported 59 Iranians while 289 who had applied for refugee status were turned down. When Timothy Raison, the minister at the Home Office, was visited by a delegation, he refused to make any exception in the immigration rules, although he admitted these had been bent for Poles and Afghans. This government is truly an ally of counter-revolution throughout the world and trims its immigration policy to match.

SP

## ● Walthamstow

The Sadiq family in Walthamstow has had paraffin poured through their letter box twice within a week. The family, including their six children, have been lucky so far that they have not been hurt. On one occasion a mob of teenagers screamed insults outside the family home and a group of 100 people watched as a woman from the group poured the paraffin through the letter box and set it alight. Meanwhile, as Mr Sadiq said 'the police did not move them away'. Victimisation of Asian families by racist thugs is rife in Walthamstow. The police are doing nothing to stop these terror tactics.

AG

## ● Harassment on Merseyside

Barry Coy, 20, a professional ice hockey player who is black, has given up using his high performance Ford Escort car because of constant racist harassment by the police. Since January he has been stopped more than 100 times by the police. He has been stopped up to five times in one evening, and has even been arrested on suspicion of stealing his own car! 'It gets to the point', he said, 'where I can never guarantee to be anywhere on time because I know I will be held up by the police at least once.'

SP

# PHIL ROBINS HARASSED IN JAIL

**Phil Robins, the black footballer framed after being shot by the Liverpool police with CS gas shells, is now in the fifth month of his eighteen-months prison sentence. But the Liverpool police and the Preston Prison authorities are not satisfied with depriving him of his liberty and are now subjecting him to added harassment.**

Phil is still troubled by the wounds he received 14 months ago in July 1981. But as a result of demanding a proper medical examination he lost 14 days remission, was kept in solitary for 14 days, and was denied other privileges.

He has also been threatened by the police in an attempt to intimidate him into withdrawing a complaint. FRFI readers may remember that when Phil went to court last January charged with burglary, he was seized by policemen just as he was about to step into the courtroom, arresting him on a second trumped-up burglary charge. They manhandled him to the cells, refusing to allow him to appear in court, and refusing him access to his solicitor. A complaint was lodged with the police, and Phil and various witnesses to the incident gave statements to his solicitor. Now Phil has been visited at the prison by a police officer, demanding that he

make another statement there and then, with the threat that the police would otherwise not pursue the complaint. Phil refused to do this, telling them to contact his solicitor. He has since written to Chief Constable Oxford, complaining about this policeman. The Free Phil Robins Campaign has written to MPs asking them to protest about these instances of harassment.

Two MPs, Bob Parry and Dafydd Wigley had earlier posed written questions concerning Phil to Home Secretary Whitelaw in the House of Commons. And in answer to one of these, Whitelaw was forced to admit that he has also received letters from 10 MPs about the campaign. Despite his earlier categorical statement that no shots were fired directly at people in Liverpool last year, the campaign has now forced him to ask Oxford for a report on claims that Phil was hit with direct shots. Whitelaw also

revealed that he has instituted inquiries to see whether there is any evidence now available which would 'justify' his intervention. But to the questions from Bob Parry as to whether he would set up public inquiries into Phil's conviction or into the use of CS gas projectiles in Toxteth in 1981, Mr Whitelaw had a single word answer to show his contempt: 'No'.

The campaign has continued to organise street events in Liverpool 8 and in the city centre, with displays of photographs of Phil's horrific injuries attracting the attention of shoppers and prompting them to sign the petition. The campaign supported a picket on the Town Hall on 28 July, the anniversary of the murder of David Moore, and on 26 August a successful picket was held outside Preston Prison. At the start of the new football season, the campaign will be petitioning outside Southport Football ground, the club where Phil used to be a player. Leafletting has already started in the Southport area.

Letters of support and donations have been coming in from various parts of the country. One FRFI reader sent £40, another sent £10. FRFI urges all its readers to follow this example, and to turn their solidarity for Phil Robins into concrete support for the campaign in whatever way they are able.

**Information, leaflets, petitions from: Free Phil Robins Campaign, PO Box 52, Liverpool L69 8AT. (Cheques/POs payable to 'Free Phil Robins Campaign').**

Jennifer Tait

# AHMED KHAN IS INNOCENT

**The black community in Sheffield have been the target of several serious racist attacks, which have predictably been covered up by the police. There have been 23 attacks on people leaving prayers at the local mosque, and in one incident a pig's head was left outside the Makki Mosque. A taxi driver lost an eye in one attack, and restaurant workers have been abused and attacked by racists.**

In a recent incident 15 white racists attacked the Shizan Restaurant. When the police eventually arrived after numerous phone calls, they arrested one of the victims of the attack, Ahmed Khan, and charged him with 'malicious wounding'.

In anger at this police frame-up and intensifying police harassment, Asian youth in Sheffield organised a protest march of over 300 people. Chanting 'Self-Defence - No Offence!' and 'Ahmed Khan is innocent - Stop Police Harassment!', the march ended in a rally in the city centre. Supporters of the Precinct 4 Defence Campaign in Leeds attended the march to show their solidarity with the fight of the Sheffield youth against police harassment and police frame-ups.

Bill Hughes

# DEFEND LEEDS ANTI RACISTS

*continued from page 1*

mistaken. Placed in a cell with other prisoners also being held until Monday, all the prisoners promptly formed themselves into the 'Monday Club' and spent most of one night talking about Malcolm X and George Jackson!

But the police are determined to crush the growing movement, and with the vindictiveness of a wounded scorpion they opposed bail for the three. Garvey Harris, however, got bail as did Les Haw, the latter with the condition that he does not go into the city centre. But Mohan Pipial was denied bail in a clearly racist and politically motivated decision by the Court. It is an extraordinary decision given the relatively minor charges he faces. The refusal of bail is being fought but if it continues to be refused then he faces imprisonment until October!

## Fascists attack - police arrest anti-fascists!

The series of 10 arrests in Leeds began when local youth supported by FRFI began to organise to fight for their rights, especially the right to walk the streets of Leeds free from fascist attacks and police harassment. In fact the dividing line between fascist and police attacks has all but disappeared in Leeds and a frequent chant on marches is 'Stop Police Harassment! Fascists Off The Streets! Stop Police Harassment! Coppers Off the Streets!' The fightback began when a series of fascist attacks occurred. In late June the Precinct pub was besieged by fascists threatening to burn it down. On 3 July dozens of fascists roamed around Leeds attacking people and chanting 'Sieg Heil'. A black child was slashed across the face and a white woman also slashed for going out with a black boyfriend. Five people were stabbed. Black people literally ran for

their lives, pursued through streets and shops by fascists. The police present watched these events but did nothing to stop them. A security guard at a big store grabbed hold of some fascists who were attacking a black youth and presented them to a policeman demanding 'Arrest them'. The policeman refused. Over the past years black people have learnt that the police will not defend them from fascist attacks. On the contrary, police and fascists cooperate in their racist attacks.

**17 July** - Black and white anti-racist youth walking in a group in the city centre were told to split up and Mohan Pipial and Les Haw were arrested. The Precinct 2 Defence Campaign was formed.

**24 July** - A march called by the Precinct 2 Defence Campaign. Police told those assembled that they would be arrested if they marched, despite the police having been informed that the march was to take place.

**31 July** - Another march called. 60 people took part. This time local protests about police behaviour on the last march forced the police to allow it to go ahead.

**7 August** - After a second demonstration of 80 people, members of the campaign returned to the Precinct to sell FRFI and hand out leaflets. Police arrested three of them including Les Haw again.

**17 August** - Mohan Pipial and another black youth arrested after being attacked by a drunk. Charged with breach of the peace and flyposting.

**21 August** - The latest three arrests with the police singling out Les Haw and Mohan Pipial once again.

The fight is now on to get Mohan Pipial released from prison and to defeat police attempts to suppress a growing movement of black and white youth against police and fascist racism in Leeds.

## New allies - old enemies

The determined struggle of black youth against police harassment is winning allies, particularly amongst white working class youth. A new anti-fascist, anti-racist movement based on black and white working class youth who know that their enemy is the British state, is being forged in struggles like that going on in Leeds. When asked why he, a skinhead, supports the struggle against racism, Les Haw said:

'The people of today have to fight for their rights to walk the streets free from being picked up by the police. Most of all the white youth should go against fascist attacks on black youths... get in there and help them fight the war against the fascists. The fascists say there is a margin between black and white - we have to cross that margin out, we have to get together against the indecent and stupid laws that this country has. We are all humans and we all have a heart and the same colour blood.'

But this new movement also faces many enemies - not all of them as obvious as the police and the courts. For instance, when Garvey, Les and Mohan were arrested, other supporters phoned the press. Most of the ruling class press was not interested. But what of the left press? When *Socialist Worker* was phoned by one of the black supporters of the campaign, he was told there was 'nobody here to take details'. Who said this? None other than Peter Goodwin, a long-standing leading member of the SWP and Editorial member of their journal *International Socialist*. *Socialist Challenge* also showed this total lack of interest. In their case Bob Pennington answered the phone (he too is a leading member of the organisation concerned)

and said the paper was 'full' (no doubt full of attacks on the PLO, IRA etc) and hung up the phone. The left in Leeds has also refused to support the campaign. When the local SWP were asked if they would attend court pickets, local member Brian Parkin said 'We have our political differences with you'.

Genuine anti-racists, anti-imperialists and communists will respond differently. Nationwide support is needed for the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign. You can help by:

- **Sending a donation and solidarity message to the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign, c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. Make cheques and postal orders payable to 'Precinct 6 Defence Campaign'.**
- **Sending a letter of protest to the Chief Constable Ronald Gregory, West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police, Police HQ, Laburnham Rd, Wakefield, Yorkshire.**
- **Sending a letter of protest to the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, The Home Office.**
- **Send solidarity messages, cards and books to Mohan Pipial, on remand in HM Prison. Thorpe Arch, Wetherby, Yorkshire.**
- **Support the following activities.**

**Demonstration**  
Defend the Precinct 6  
11 September 2pm  
Assemble Eastgate  
(Near NCP car park)

**Public Meeting: Leeds**  
Defend the Precinct 6!  
Stop Police Harassment  
Thursday 23 September 8pm  
Leeds Trades Club

**Precinct 6 Defence Committee**  
meets every Wednesday in Leeds Trades Club at 7.30pm. All welcome.

Maxine Williams

# NO DEPORTATIONS! Defend the Bradford 18

So soon after the successful freeing of the Bradford 12, the state has mounted a further serious attack on the Bradford black community. In Bradford there are now 8 separate families and individuals under threat of removal or deportation. In total this amounts to 18 people who are now fighting for the right to remain in this country. The Bradford 18 are:

- Mahmud Khan, his wife, child and mother, who are continuing their two-year fight against deportation. As already reported in FRFI, Mahmud Khan was the victim of police harassment and brutality as the Home Office attempted to deport him. He has spent four months in prison and is now having to report daily to the police.
- Bahadur Singh and Mohinder Singh, and their families, who have also been the target of police persecution to secure their removal. The Singh's infant children are also threatened with removal. Bahadur and Mohinder were aged 13 and 16 when they entered the UK, yet they are accused of practising a deception on the authorities. The now widespread practice of removal gives no right of appeal.
- Mr Patel, who applied to remain in

the UK as a priest at the Browning Street Mosque. His application and appeal were rejected, and before representations could be made on his behalf, Mr Patel was arrested by the police. He has now been released from custody, although his fate is undecided.

- A Pakistani woman and her child who do not wish to be named (Mrs A). Mrs A was served with a notice of removal earlier this year, but has not discovered the reasons behind it. Mrs A suffers from a serious mental condition, which has been controlled by supervised medical treatment for over a year. Mrs A needs supervision for her condition which would end if she is removed, causing danger to herself and her son.

- Aurang Zeb, his wife and child, are also threatened with removal. Aurang Zeb was only 13 when he entered the UK, yet he too is charged with 'deception'.

- Mohammed Aboobaker Mundiya, who has been accused of being an 'illegal immigrant' by the racist Home Office.

To ensure a united fight to defend the Bradford 18, campaigns already working in defence of those under threat have merged to form the Joint Committee Against Deportations. A public meeting of over 100 people has been held, and a national demonstration is to be held on 18 September. A massive organised fight must be built now to defend all the victims of Britain's racist immigration controls, which increasingly are meaning forced repatriation on a massive scale.

**Bill Hughes**  
Send messages of support, donations and requests for information to:  
**Joint Anti-Deportation Committee**  
c/o Bradford Law Centre  
Sedgfield Terrace  
Westgate  
Bradford BD1 2RU



## END POLICE CENSORSHIP ON IRELAND

Readers of FRFI already know of the police attack on FRFI supporters and Irish solidarity activity in the May Day 2, Tooting and Roundwood Park cases (see FRFI 20/21). Since then the Tooting police have stepped up their attack with six more arrests of FRFI supporters on a South London Irish Solidarity Committee street meeting.

### TOOTING POLICE STRIKE AGAIN

On Saturday 24 July the Tooting police broke up a SLISC street meeting arresting six FRFI supporters: Gerald Denver, Ace Kelly, Terry O'Halloran (May Day 2), Seamus O'Mahoney, Chris Procter (May Day 2) and Adrian Pyke (Tooting 3). The fact that this meeting was just four days after the IRA bomb attacks in London clearly enraged the Tooting police. Now more than ever they wanted to suppress the truth about the war in Ireland.

Two police, a sergeant and a PC, arrived just before the meeting ended demanding immediate dispersal under threat of arrest. Informed that the meeting was in fact about to end they departed around a corner. Within about one minute, before the meeting had time to disperse, the police returned - a van, car and 8-10 officers - and immediately arrested the six. A seventh comrade, on the other side of the road, was missed by the police who searched the area for him.

The six were manhandled into the van. A black comrade, Ace Kelly, was particularly roughly handled. In Tooting Police Station Inspector Newark, who arrested the Tooting 3, appeared and called the arresting officers out of the charge room for a 'conference'. From this point on Inspector Newark supervised every aspect of the police operation reconfirming his intense political prejudice against SLISC.

Inside the station Ace Kelly was again singled out. His jacket and shoes were forcibly removed. He was dragged away to a separate cell by two police. He was also denied medical treatment which he needed. The racist mentality of the British police is clear to see.

Underlining the political nature of this attack the police have seized and are still holding the SLISC banner and all copies of FRFI, leaflets and petitions in the comrades' possession. The six were held from approximately 4pm to midnight - eight hours! Inspector Newark announced to the six before their release that he would apply for a bail condition forbidding the six from taking part in any political activity in the Balham/Tooting area.

### POLITICAL BAIL CONDITION DEFEATED

Defeating this outrageous political bail condition was the main aim of the six when they appeared in South West Magistrates Court on Monday 26 July. MPs and others had already been contacted about this issue and had promised to raise the matter if the condition was imposed. Other FRFI and SLISC supporters as well as a comrade from SLTOM attended the court to give their support.

Inspector Newark defended his demand for a political ban on the six claiming that the SLISC had organised a meeting in support of the Irish Republican Army and further political activity by them in the Balham/Tooting area would lead to 'a serious breach of peace' (carried out by the Tooting police no doubt!). The defence solicitor attacked the bail condition as an attack on basic political rights. The magistrates were obliged to agree, rejecting Newark's demand and granting unconditional bail. This important victory was a major setback for Newark's vendetta against SLISC.

### DEFEND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS NOW!

Twelve arrests of FRFI and SLISC supporters on SLISC activities since 1 May shows the gravity of the present police campaign of political censorship. The police are trying to abolish, in effect, the rights of public assembly and free speech for anti-imperialists. We will fight all these attacks but we need your support to do so.

Every court case will have a picket. Support the pickets! SLISC will be holding a street meeting at Tooting Broadway tube on Saturday 9 October at 1.45pm. We need your support to defend the meeting. Tom Cox MP has agreed to act as an observer at the meeting.

Money, money and more money urgently needed to fight this campaign. The police have unlimited financial and material resources to mount their attacks. We have only your support. Send as much as possible as quickly as possible! Collect signatures for the petition of protest against the arrests and get resolutions of support passed wherever you can!

Support is coming in. An AUE branch in Bristol have sent in £10. More heartening of all, prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs sent the following message:

'...we all heard about the blatant attack by the police on the six SLISC members, all of us here are unanimous in our support for, and solidarity with the "six" and wish for this to be conveyed to them (Political censorship = First they burn the book then they burn the people!!)'

Support the arrested comrades! Defend democratic rights!

Information, petitions, leaflets from, and donations (cheques/PC payable to May Day 2/Tooting Defence Campaign) to: Defence Campaign, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

Terry O'Halloran

## HEALTH WORKERS FIGHT ON

The picket line at St Thomas's Hospital, South London, remains strong, with a determined workforce backing the action. Many picketers are black or immigrant workers; all are resolute and are holding the strike firm.

The strike committee soon put paid to a disgusting attempt by the hospital consultants to alienate sympathy and support for the strike. On 13 August, the consultants had put up a notice board to publicise daily their version of the effects of the strike on the patients. It came down the same day when the workers' leaders demanded an end to it.

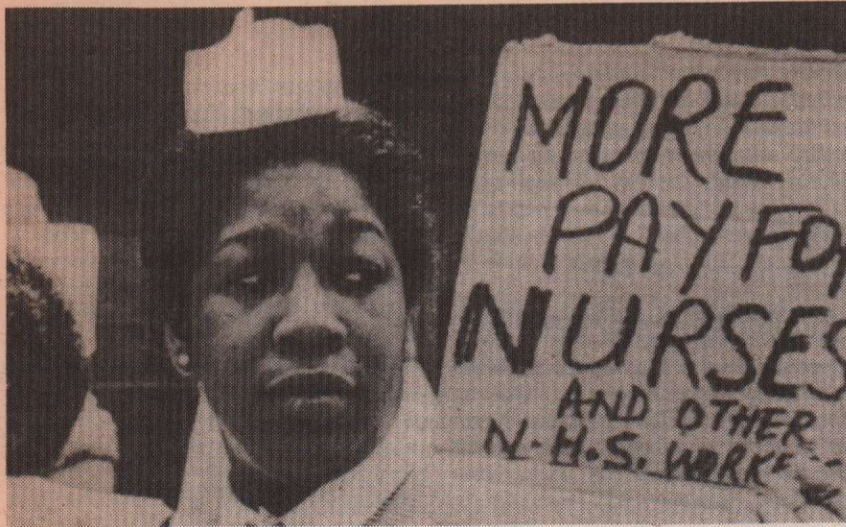
hospital altogether and send out dismissal notices to ancillary staff. They demanded that certain supplies key to the success of the strike be allowed in unrestricted. It is known that this provocative ultimatum came from the highest quarters, probably Norman Fowler himself. Although a mass meeting immediately rejected this threat, the strike committee have now been forced

to concede on the flow of linen supplies. However the reduced patient level will still be restricted by the strike action to a maximum of 695 out of the 1,018 available beds. The workforce have shown their concern for the sick and elderly throughout the strike and exclude from the action all emergencies, children, maternity and elderly patients.

The workers are reducing hardship to a minimum and have clearly shown who are the ones who care about the patients. Yet it is clear that victory for the NHS workers can only come through solidarity action from the rest of the trade union movement: this struggle hinges on whether the trade union leadership will betray again, as they betrayed the ASLEF train drivers - or be forcibly shamed by the massive anger and resentment of growing numbers of workers, and prevented from selling out the strike. Albert Spanswick (head of COHSE and chief negotiator) has already stabbed the Fleet Street electricians in the back when he attacked their decision to defy the court order banning strike action in sympathy with the health workers. The electricians succeeded in stopping the Fleet Street production of anti-working class dailies on August 11, in a heartening act of solidarity. Their secretary, Sean Geraghty has since been fined £350 for 'contempt of court', and faces thousands of pounds in costs. You might well ask what about the contempt Spanswick clearly has for the NHS workers and anyone who comes out in their support?

The NHS workers can only win if such actions as the electricians' and the miners' in Yorkshire become widespread and a big enough threat to the government to force it to climb down. The government has made its anti-working class position very clear: it does not care how many workers have their health care disrupted by the refusal to pay NHS staff a living wage. With four million people out of work, do Thatcher or Fowler give a damn however many workers die or suffer? The present government is also driving hard towards scrapping the NHS and returning to private medicine for the well-off, the poor law for the rest. This long-drawn out dispute is a useful experiment for the government: will the demands of the middle classes lead them in even greater numbers to private medicine (where the ruling class have always gone)? Already some unions have joined private health schemes. The vicious cynicism of the government is so blatant: 18.6% for the judges - that's an increase of more than the total wage of, for example, a domestic assistant in St Thomas's. From Monday 23 August the strike switched focus from workers in sterile supplies. Now, porters in several key departments are out, their strike pay, as before, being paid by levies from the rest of the hospital staff. The picket remains strong and successful.

John Roberts



The notice would not have publicised that consultants are paid (before any increase) up to £21,060 plus London weighting plus their private practice income: many times the pay of other hospital staff. A domestic assistant currently gets £59 weekly basic. The official government poverty wage is £82 per week. Neither would the notice have explained that the surgical waiting list before the strike action was 3,500. (A management statement claims that surgeons have toiled through 1980-82 to reduce the list from 4,000!) Such waiting lists channel into private medicine those who can afford to jump the NHS queue. It is the non-medical NHS staff who have worked to reduce waiting lists, who have fought to abolish private treatment in NHS hospitals, and who are now fighting for a decent living wage, so that they can go on caring for the sick.

On 7 August, management at St Thomas's threatened to close down the

## POLICE FILE



### ● Corruption at the Yard

In August 1982 the best press in the world at last 'discovered' that the best police in the world were not quite the perfect little boys they pretend to be. Three major scandals bubbled up from the bog of corruption at Scotland Yard. First, it was reported in FRFI 21 Chief Inspector Cuthbertson went down for three years after he revealed in the Old Bailey (a very public place) that corruption and organised police crime were controlled from the very top. However, those at the top of the tree will not have to face any charges. Cuthbertson did the decent thing in court, retracting the allegations on the tape against his superior officers. For this discretion Cuthbertson received his own little 'drink', a light sentence in an open prison.

The sentencing of Cuthbertson comprised the total pickings of the £4m Operation Countryman. The publicity from this case prompted more skeletons to fall from the lockers at Scotland Yard. The man originally in charge of Operation Countryman, Mr Arthur Hambleton, attacked the Home Office, Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), the Attorney-General, and the Deputy Commissioner of Scotland Yard. These very big bad apples, had, according to Hambleton, conspired to obstruct Countryman's investigations into a flood of allegations about London Detectives planning robberies, extorting money, and stealing reward money. Hambleton claims that witnesses have been threatened, officers warned to lie low, evidence 'removed'. Hambleton said that the DPP and Scotland Yard had agreed to remove the head of the Flying Squad, Commander Donald Neeshan, who had been obstructing the inquiry, but only if Hambleton made a public statement that the inquiry was not being obstructed.

Further allegations were made that Sir Thomas Hetherington, the DPP, initiated and approved a new story in the Observer newspaper, which said that Countryman would be an expensive and embarrassing failure. A series of statements were made by Hetherington denying these allegations, firstly a flat denial, then finally an admission that Hetherington had visited the Observer in 1979.

Previous investigations into Scotland Yard's corrupt 'firm within the firm' have met with similar obstruction and sabotage. In 1969, Constabulary Inspector Williamson was assigned to investigate a flurry of claims about the firm's work. He resigned in frustration after ten months. Before he did so, he wrote a confidential thirty-page report of his preliminary findings. He submitted it to the then Home Secretary, who returned it to him without comment within an hour. It has never been published. On the Williamson inquiry, witnesses were intimidated, documents such as notebooks and diaries disappeared, officers themselves accused of corruption were allowed to work on the inquiry, officers were warned they were under investigation, senior Yard officers refused access to the inquiry team to interview crucial witnesses.

Williamson now says there are only three types of officers at Scotland Yard: those who are corrupt and cover it up, those who are not and cover it up, and those too stupid to

# NOTES and COMMENTS

### ■ New attacks on the unemployed

The Government is quietly introducing a new programme of attacks on the unemployed.

● In October registration at Job Centres will be made voluntary. People will only have to register a claim at the dole office where they will be subject to a new 'availability for work test'. Each claimant will be asked, 'Are you willing to accept any full time job which you can do?' If a person refuses to accept any job regardless of its wages or conditions, then benefit could be withheld or suspended. As the unemployed become more and more desperate for work this will immeasurably strengthen the hold of the bosses who will be able to pick and choose the labour they want. In the cases of single parents and women this test will be particularly repressive as they will have to prove that they have already made arrangements for the care of their children before they can even be considered as 'available for work' and therefore eligible for benefit.

● After April 1983 the new Employers Statutory Sick Pay Scheme will come into effect: the State will no longer pay sickness benefit for the first eight weeks of illness; instead employers will pay those first eight weeks at a rate of £37 per week (taxable if you earn more than £60 per week) and a rate of £25 per week if you earn less than £60. The employers won't have to make this up to your full wage unless your union has negotiated a special topping up agreement. Also if you have worked for your employer for less than a year you will have no legal protection against dismissal due to illness.

● In November the Government plans to introduce a new form, to be issued by the dole office, on which to claim Supplementary Benefit. It will be called a BIPC and after sending it by post to the Social Security, claimants will receive their benefit 'in due course'. Although people will no longer have to queue up for appointments at the DHSS, this new scheme means that claimants will have to fill in an 8 page document consisting of 109 questions and will have to send it off with wages slips, rent book, savings evidence etc. There will be longer delays in getting benefit because all correspondence will be by post. Also these horrendous BIPCs are likely to be incorrectly filled in so they will have to be sent back to claimants for corrections and thus cause even longer delays. (In a recent trial only 1 in 20 forms were completed correctly.)

● From October Ethnic Monitoring of the Unemployed will be brought in. When new claimants arrive at the dole office they will be asked their 'place of origin' or they will be 'visually assessed'. This racist procedure will only be applied to those who appear as if they have West Indian, African or Asian origins. These race checks are clearly a further harassment of black people.

The aims of these four new schemes are to cut down benefits, drive down wages, discourage people from claiming, create an even cheaper labour force and thus help stem the declining rate of capitalist profits. These schemes follow on from the 5% cut in unemployment benefit, the abolition of Earnings Related Supplement and the taxation of benefit, and together comprise another massive attack on the most oppressed sections of the working class. In the face of this ruling class offensive the official Trade Union movement does nothing and thus exposes its wilful collusion with the capitalist oppressors.

Gerald Johnson

### ■ Industrial murder in the 'third world'

The two recent television documentaries on BBC TV have highlighted the skeleton in the cupboard of the profit makers in Britain. The industrial killer dusts from asbestos

caused untold suffering and illness to British workers. Yet this is an international problem because the industrialists are but a part of the multi-national organisations.

To understand fully the murderous basis of capitalist production we must look at those countries where the imperialists can pursue profit unchecked by any political or social considerations. A few of the ghastly facts tell the tale:

- In the textile mills of Bombay 12% of the workers suffer from byssinosis
- In the tin mines of Bolivia life expectancy is 35 years owing to the threats of silicosis and tuberculosis
- Throughout SE Asia young women are ruining their eyesight by working long hours with microscopes to produce the minute electronic components of the micro chip revolution
- In India asbestos is dumped in open areas in shanty towns and slum dwellings have been built out of boards of asbestos scrap.

Yet the greatest single industrial killer in the underdeveloped world today is the widespread use of toxic pesticide. British, European and American companies export vast amounts of these substances the use of which is severely restricted by health care regulations in their country of origin. Yet these toxic pesticides are applied without protective clothing or other precautions in countries where an oppressed labour force has no right to organise trade unions, where there is a vast reserve pool of labour, and where there is an almost total dependence on foreign investment.

375,000 people are accidentally poisoned by such toxic pesticides every year, 10,000 of them fatally. In addition there is the vast catalogue of long term effects, including cancers, birth defects, sterility and others.

British workers cannot fight alone. Only by uniting with their fellow sufferers in the rest of the exploited world will they win justice.

Sylvia Burns

### ■ British imperialism and its Gurkha battalions

During its war of colonial repossession over the Malvinas/Falklands Britain once again used the notorious Gurkhas - mercenaries recruited cheaply from an oppressed nation, Nepal.

Nepalese mercenaries were first recruited into the British army in 1816 after the defeat of the Nepalese army by the troops of the British East India Company. After World War II the majority were dismissed, the remainder divided between Britain and India. Of the seven battalions left with Britain, five are stationed in Hong Kong and one each in Brunei and Aldershot. It was the Aldershot battalion that Britain sent to the Malvinas.

Britain has a long history of using Gurkhas to uphold imperialist rule - and die for it: 12,000 Gurkhas helped to quell the 1857 Rising in India against colonial rule. During the conquest of Delhi 327 of a 490-strong Gurkha battalion died. During World War I 200,000 fought on the side of British imperialism: in Flanders, Mesopotamia, Persia, Palestine, at the Suez Canal and in Greece; almost ¼ million fought in World War II: against the Japanese in Burma, against the Germans in Africa at Tubruq and elsewhere. During the two 'Great' wars 45,000 Gurkhas died; about 1,000 have died for British imperialism since. In the 1960s they helped put down the Brunei revolt and protect British interests in Malaysia. In 1974 Gurkha regiments were stationed in Cyprus. Currently they are used in Hong Kong to guard the border with the Peoples' Republic of China and in Brunei to 'protect' the oil wells of the Sultan (and British imperialist interests). In the Malvinas it was the Gurkha regiment which brought down the

ing a strategically important hill outside the town.

To British imperialism the Gurkhas have been and still are cheap recruits. Only the 7th Battalion at Aldershot get paid the same as British soldiers. The battalions stationed at Hong Kong and Brunei get the miserable pay of £25 per month plus a living allowance of half a soldier's pay. Most Gurkhas send about half their pay home to support their families. On leaving the British army they receive an annual pension of about £100-120 sent to Nepal. The Nepalese government collect altogether roughly £12.5 million per annum in foreign exchange for hiring out the sons of poor mountain tribes to do British imperialism's dirty work. After tourism this constitutes Nepal's second largest foreign exchange earner. It is an important source of income in a country where over 50% of investment comes from foreign 'aid' and 40% of the population live below subsistence level. In the late sixties students in Nepal went on strike to have recruiting offices for Gurkha mercenaries closed down but to no avail. The grip of British imperialism will have to be smashed before their brothers can be freed from the humiliation of fighting imperialism's dirty wars to keep their own families from starvation.

Ulla May

### ■ 'Liberty, equality, fraternity' - the American constitution, the biggest fraud in history

For generations the American Constitution has been held up as the most democratic in the world. Yet it does not grant equal rights to 50% of the population. Women do not have the same Constitutional rights as men.

An Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution was first put forward and mobilised on 59 years ago. In a very straightforward 24 word paragraph ERA would grant 'equal rights for both sexes'.

In 1972 the Amendment was approved by the United States Congress in response to the broad upsurge of struggle around the women's movement ten years ago. However, for its 'ratification' and full incorporation into the US Constitution, it had to be passed by two thirds of the States, that is by 38 states. The final date was June 30 1982.

On that date the Equal Rights Amendment was defeated. June 30 must go down in history as another step in the ruling class assault on the American working class. The Constitutional freedom to discriminate against women in regard to wages, working conditions, educational and social rights was upheld. This will mean more poverty and oppression for women and profits for the capitalists.

Recent findings show that in the USA women receive only 60 cents for every one dollar that men earn for doing the same work. Only 17% of families in America today survive on one income - in the vast majority of cases the women's wages are as essential to the survival of the family as the man's.

In a period where the rate of poverty is rapidly increasing, being officially now at 14%, it is women and children who bear the brunt. About one in five children in the USA are now officially classified as poor. Black women and children are especially oppressed in the racist USA with 35% of the black population officially living in poverty.

Even in terms of bourgeois equality, the claim that America is a meritocracy where 'ability' is rewarded is rubbish. Women college graduates - those with further education - have average earnings equivalent to men who have no college qualifications. And in a country notorious for its media presentation of women as glamorous go-getters, only 4% of all elected political offices are held by women. Yet despite the fact that the last stages of the ERA ratification

Reagan and the recession, support for the amendment has continued to grow. The struggles of the last few months have shown a determination and militancy sharpened by the haunting spectre of poverty.

In a last effort to win over the Senators of Illinois, Florida and Oklahoma the people took to the streets in their thousands. On June 6, 10,000 ERA supporters marched and rallied outside the Illinois State Senate House, 11,000 did the same in Oklahoma and 15,000 in Florida. In Springfield, Illinois, seventeen women chained themselves to the door of the State Senate Chamber where they remained over the weekend until dragged away by the police.

But the rich and powerful Senators had more pressing concerns to take into account than the demands of the people. As a member of the National Organisation for Women (NOW) said after the defeat of ERA by Congress, 'Corporations had the most to lose with the passing of the Equal Rights Amendment which would have banned job bias against women and discriminating pay rates'. The vastly rich insurance companies would also have had to cut into their massive profits if the amendment had been passed. The friends of these capitalists were also the enemies of the amendment, including right-wing groups such as the Moral Majority, the Mormon Church and the John Birch Society.

This is the end of the road for the Constitutional fight for women's rights. The simple democratic demand of Equal Rights must become a militant struggle against the racist, imperialist American state if it is to be won. The most militant and determined organisations recognise this. In the words of the New York NOW organiser, 'The system would go into crisis if women stopped working outside the home. On the other hand, women are a source of cheap labour. It takes no brains to see... the system runs on the backs of women.'

Sue Davidson

### ● Imperialists fleece Mexicans

When vast oil reserves were discovered off the Mexican coast in 1976, the imperialist banks fell over each other in the scramble to lend Mexico huge sums of money in expectation of fat profits from oil revenues. Mexico has become the biggest borrower in the world, owing over \$90bn. Naturally, British banks have a finger in the pie, having lent some \$8,000m - £80 for every man, woman and child in this country.

The news that Mexico was on the edge of bankruptcy quickly wiped the smiles off the bankers' faces. Inflation of 65% and the collapse of oil prices have meant that Mexico can no longer pay for all her imports and continue to service the foreign borrowing. This year Mexico has to find \$25bn to service her debts, yet will receive only \$14bn from oil sales - and this is before paying for imports of food and other essentials.

Yet the imperialists cannot let Mexico default: some profits are better than no profits at all. The International Monetary Fund, the Bank of International Settlements and the US government have cooked up a 'rescue' plan which extends the loans and defers payments. Needless to say the plan is intended to rescue the imperialist investments, not to save the Mexican people from the capitalist crisis.

This rescue plan will have to be paid for by the Mexican people. These arrangements also give the US increased control over Mexican policy. US assistance was only agreed after Mexico made concessions over oil price and production policy. A confidential State Department briefing paper says that 'with the wind out of its sails, Mexico is likely to be less adventurous in its foreign policy and less critical of ours.' In the past Mexico has distanced itself from US policy towards El Salvador and Cuba.

Alan James

# THE PRISON STRUGGLE

## POLITICAL FORCES PREPARE FOR CONFRONTATION

That the Irish liberation struggle cannot be won if confined to the Six Counties alone was forcefully stated in the Bodenstown oration given by Jimmy Drumm in June 1977:

'We find that a successful war of liberation cannot be fought on the backs of the oppressed in the Six Counties, nor around the physical presence of the British army.

Hatred and resentment of this army cannot sustain the war; and the isolation of the socialist Republicans around the armed struggle is dangerous and has produced, at least in some circles, the reformist notion that "Ulster" is the issue, without the mobilisation of the working class in the 26 Counties...

The forging of strong links between the Republican Movement and the workers of Ireland and radical trade unionists will create an irrepresible mass movement and will ensure mass support for the continuing armed struggle in the North and will make for a competent force in the event of serious conflict...

A recent article by Peter Dowling in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* (AP/RN) after British imperialism's war to retake the Malvinas/Falkland Islands further reinforced this important point:

'No guerrilla war of national liberation anywhere has ever been, nor ever will be, won on the basis of military success alone. It is a question of favourably changing the balance of *political forces*, not just in Ireland, North and South, but also in Britain.

The IRA can never hope to militarily beat the British army. What it must eventually do is break the will of the British - their army, people and government - to remain in Ireland. A necessary part of this process will, of course, be *military successes*, but that is far from being sufficient.' (8 July 1982)

The war of national liberation in early 1979 had reached a crucial stage. After a major reorganisation, the IRA had returned to the military offensive in the Six Counties, and the defeat of British imperialism's 'criminalisation' strategy now centred on the prisons. The conditions in the prisons were rapidly deteriorating as the political prisoners were forced to escalate their protest against the barbaric prison regime. Although massive demonstrations in support of the prisoners regularly took place they were having little impact on the British government's determination to deny Irish political prisoners political status.

The Republican Movement and its supporters were now to face a decisive test. Could the balance of political forces in Ireland, North and South, and also in Britain be favourably changed to break the will of the British government and force it to give the political prisoners political status? What forces in Ireland and Britain could be relied upon to follow the courageous lead of the political prisoners and fight a determined struggle to force Britain to recognise their legitimate political demands? How could these forces be organised and on what political basis?

### POLITICAL FORCES IN THE SOUTH

The only all-Ireland dimension which the British government was determined to secure was the cooperation of the 26 Counties government in joint action to defeat and isolate the IRA. Fianna Fail and Fine Gael were only too willing to oblige. Both these collaborationist parties are far more opposed to an Ireland united under the banner of revolutionary nationalism than they are to a divided Ireland under the domination of British imperialism.

**The history of the Irish national liberation struggle since the Civil War 1922-23 has demonstrated, time and again, that the neo-colonial state in the 26 Counties is a fundamental barrier to a united independent Irish Republic. The political parties of the Irish capitalist class, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, have lost no opportunity in their efforts to crush and destroy the IRA. Just like the loyalist state in the Six Counties, the 26 Counties neo-colonial state will have to be destroyed if British imperialism is to be defeated in Ireland.**

During the 1970s both these collaborationist parties took measures to curb the activities of Sinn Fein and the IRA introducing increasingly more repressive legislation to imprison Republicans. In 1972 the Lynch Fianna Fail government reintroduced the Special Criminal (non-jury) Courts and passed draconian legislation which allowed for conviction on a charge of membership of an illegal organisation on the basis of a statement of a Chief Superintendent of the Gardai. Many leading Republicans were arrested and imprisoned in 1972 and the Radio Telefis Eireann Authority were dismissed after allowing an interview with Sean Mac Stiofain to be broadcast (see FRFI 17). Republican prisoners were kept under the most appalling conditions in prison. In May 1972 the Lynch government introduced new prison legislation allowing the military detention of prisoners after Republican prisoners had taken over the inner section of Mountjoy prison in a protest against prison conditions.

The Fine Gael-Irish Labour Party Coalition government 1973-1977 carried on where the Lynch government left off. After the dramatic escape in August 1973 of Seamus Twomey (IRA Chief of Staff), T O'Hagan and Kevin Mallon from Mountjoy prison using a hijacked helicopter, Republican political prisoners were transferred to Portlaoise prison. In November 1973 there was a mass sit-down strike in Portlaoise's recreation hall in protest against conditions there. In August 1974 food parcels were banned and association severely restricted after 19 prisoners escaped from the prison using 25 pounds of explosives. In December the same year there was a major prison protest during which 27 warders were taken hostage. The Gardai and Army were called in and rubber bullets and water cannon were used to suppress the protest. In July 1976 the political prisoners attempted to burn down the security block at Portlaoise and as a result association was withdrawn and security was tightened. Strip searches and restricted visits with screens erected in the visiting area followed. No education classes were available in Portlaoise 'for security reasons' and there were frequent cell searches and regular punishments of long periods in solitary confinement and other losses of 'privileges' for the most trivial offences. In 1977 in protest against these appalling conditions twenty Republican prisoners went on hunger strike. There were protest marches in the 26 Counties. One demonstration outside the prison was brutally attacked by Gardai liberally using their batons. The strike lasted 47 days ending on 22 April 1977 in apparent failure after the intervention of a Catholic bishop. However it later emerged that a number of concessions had been made. And the hunger strike was one of the factors which led to the downfall of the Coalition government in the general election of June 1977.

1976 was the year when the Coalition government significantly increased repression and harass-

ment of Republicans and Republican supporters. In February 1976 after the murder of hunger striker Frank Stagg in Wakefield Prison (see FRFI 19), the coalition government refused to allow him a Republican funeral. The plane carrying his body from England was diverted from Dublin to Shannon airport and the Gardai buried him in a grave prepared on the government's instructions. The grave was concreted over to a depth of eighteen inches and guarded round the clock by armed Gardai. Nine months later, after the guard had been withdrawn, Frank Stagg's remains were removed by Republicans in the presence of a priest and reburied in a Republican plot.

On 31 March 1976 at Sallins in County Kildare the Cork-Dublin train was robbed of registered packets worth nearly a quarter of a million pounds. The government used the robbery as an excuse to launch a vicious political attack on the IRSP. About 40 people were arrested - mainly members of the IRSP - and many reported that they were tortured, being deprived of sleep and food and brutally kicked and beaten. Doctors later confirmed their injuries. Six IRSP members were eventually charged and three sentenced to long terms of imprisonment by the Special Criminal Court in December 1978 (under a Fianna Fail government). Two, Osgur Breathnach and Bernard McNally, were subsequently released in 1980 after an appeal on the grounds of illegal detention, assault and battery. The third, Nick Kelly, has recently had his appeal turned down. All three had been framed. The Provisional IRA say they carried out the train robbery.

1976 saw the introduction of new emergency legislation designed to curb the activities of Republicans. The *Criminal Law Act* (introduced September 1976) increased the sentences which the Special Criminal Court could impose for membership of an 'unlawful organisation' from 2 to 7 years. It increased the penalties for other offences covered by the Offences Against the State Act. It gave the Army the right to arrest and detain suspects. The *Emergency Powers Act* (October 1976) allowed the Gardai to detain suspects without charge or reference to a court for 7 days on the word of a Gardai Chief Superintendent. The *Broadcasting Authority (Amendment) Act* allowed a minister to prevent broadcasts that might incite crime or undermine the state. It was under this authority that interviews with members of proscribed organisations were forbidden - this included Sinn Fein even though it is not a proscribed organisation. Finally in May 1976 the *Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act* had underlined the Coalition government's determination to collaborate with Britain. It allowed for the trial in the 26 Counties for offences allegedly committed in 'Northern Ireland'. This was further extended, in the case of 'Irish citizens', to offences committed 'outside the state' if they involved explosive substances. It is this legislation which has led in the recent period to six political prisoners being sen-

tenced to 10 years imprisonment in the 26 Counties for escaping from Crumlin Road prison in June 1981. And more recently the unprecedented imprisonment of Gerard Tuite for 10 years (under a Fianna Fail government) for actions which took place in London.

The torture of IRSP members in 1976 highlighted the existence under the Coalition government of what was known as the 'Heavy Gang' - a flying squad of Gardai who conducted interrogations of Republicans. There were many reports of brutal and torture at the hands of these thugs in this period. The new legislation must have given the police thugs great encouragement to pursue their activities more vigorously.

In June 1977 the viciously anti-Republican activities of the Coalition government, its disregard for civil rights, its treatment of Republican prisoners and the freedom given to the 'Heavy Gang', led to its downfall. Fianna Fail won a landslide victory after opportunistically mouthing 'Republican' sentiments. It received 84 seats to Fine Gael and Labour's 59. However the collaboration with British imperialism continued unabated involving the use of all the emergency legislation, increased cooperation with the British over border security, radio contact between the British and Irish 'security forces', an air corridor so British and Irish helicopters could fly into each other's territory (news of this forced Lynch's resignation), RU interrogations of suspects in the 26 Counties and so on.

The neo-colonial governments in the 26 Counties, whether Fianna Fail or a Fine Gael-Labour coalition, are a barrier to any progress in the struggle for a united Ireland. No reliance whatsoever can be placed on them in the struggle against British imperialism. Their primary concern is sabotage such a struggle. Only the defeat and isolation of such collaborationist forces could change the balance of political forces in the South.

### Irish Labour Movement

Neither can the official Irish Labour movement be regarded as a potential ally in the struggle against British imperialism. Immediately after the Easter Rising 1916 and the murder of James Connolly, the official Irish trade union movement distanced itself from the national struggle and adopted a 'facile both ways' stance which it has maintained ever since. By 1921-22, after previously passing resolutions against the partition of Ireland, it accepted partition and remained 'neutral' in the civil war. A neutral that is between imperialist domination and national liberation (see FRFI 10 and 11). The logical consequence of accepting partition was the establishment of a Northern Ireland Committee (NIC) of the Irish TUC in 1944. This arose out of a subcommittee of the ITUC set up in 1942 to deal with Northern Ireland affairs. Although formally a subsidiary body of the ITUC, during the 1950s the NIC/ITUC became totally autonomous in relation to matters in the Six Counties.

In 1945 a number of Irish-based unions broke away from the Irish TUC because of the growing influence of British-based unions (British unions with branches in Ireland) on the national executive of the ITUC. In 1944 the British-based unions had a majority on the national executive. The ITGWU and ten other Irish-based unions left the ITUC and formed the Congress of Irish Unions (CIU) in 1945. They argued that the Irish trade union movement had to be reorganised on national lines with only those unions having their headquarters in Ireland being eligible for membership. Nevertheless

*continued overleaf*

ge to restore the institutional unity of the union movement in Ireland led to the merger of the ITUC and CIU in 1959 with the formation of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). To have that 'unity' and maintain the allegiance of the trade unionists the ICTU, like the ITUC and CIU, has recognised the partition of Ireland by giving complete autonomy to its Northern Ireland branch. The NIC/ICTU was recognised in 1968 by the Unionist government under O'Neill as a programme of attracting new investment to the Six Counties (see FRFI 13). Until that time the British governments had refused to recognise the trade union congresses and their Northern Ireland committees. However recognising the NIC/ICTU was from undermining the sectarian character of the Six Counties statelet was in fact acknowledging the fact of accepting a partitionist division of the Irish trade union movement. The NIC/ICTU is a loyalist-dominated trade union committee. 78% of its affiliated trade unionists are in British-based unions, 14% in unions based in the Six Counties and only 8% based in the 26 Counties.

The official Irish trade union movement is therefore organised along partitionist lines and is limited in the fight for basic trade union principles such as equality in employment and housing) by its concern to preserve the formal 'unity' of the loyalist and loyalist trade unionists. It cannot seriously fight against the partition and terror directed at the nationalist movement by British imperialism in the Six Counties. Even when a trade unionist, Brian O'Connell of AUEW/TASS, was found hanging in a cell after interrogation at Castlereagh in 1978 (see FRFI 20), it was not the official trade union movement which led the protests but a small group of trade unionists in TUCAR - the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression. TUCAR is organised as a Republican front organisation by the official trade union movement. Similarly in 1980 an unofficial strike of NUPE members protesting British army presence and surveillance in the Victoria Hospital, Belfast, was condemned by NUPE officials and the NIC/ICTU as being motivated by sectarianism! Finally none other than Roy Mason, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, recognised the vital collaborationist role of the ICTU when he wrote to the ICTU annual conference in 1977 that he was

fully conscious that we [British imperialism] have been well served by the trade union leadership at all levels'.

British imperialism and the collaborationist 26 Counties trade union class have succeeded in creating an official trade union movement in Ireland whose material and political conditions of existence depend on the continuation of partition. This trend was further consolidated by the massive influx of British investment in the 26 Counties in the 1960s and early 1970s which provided a temporary respite to wages and employment for organised labour. At the same time the official trade union movement was doing nothing for the inevitable disastrous consequences that growing imperialist domination of the Six Counties would have. These consequences are being driven home to the Irish working class as a world-wide crisis of imperialism deepens and as redundancies and wage cuts are forced on workers. The mass of Irish workers under the impact of this crisis will be driven into opposition to imperialism. But whilst individual trade unionists may be forced to fight, the official trade union movement, which has been nourished and sustained by its collaboration with imperialism, will never be won to the revolutionary national struggle to free Ireland from imperialist domination.

The record of the Irish Labour Party in coalition governments since 1973 further demonstrates the collaborationist character of the official Irish Labour Party. And it is no surprise that today, as support for the Irish Labour Party declines, it is the pro-imperialist, pro-imperialist Workers Party (formerly Sinn Fein - The Workers Party, formerly the official IRA) which is gaining influence in the official trade union movement and now holds leadership positions in the once revolutionary ITGWU. The Irish working class will only be won to an anti-imperialist standpoint in opposition to, and out of, the structures of the official Irish trade union movement.

A survey by the Economic and Social Research Institute of Ireland published in October 1979 indicated that a majority of Irish people in the 26 Counties wanted a united Ireland. Further, 42% of the IRA's motivation and 21% sup-

ported the IRA's activities. A poll carried out by *Aspect* magazine at the beginning of 1982 showed that no less than 23% of unemployed youth in Dublin between 16 and 24 thought the IRA a good organisation - the figure was 16% for the 26 Counties overall. These figures show that a significant reservoir of political support for the struggle of the Republican Movement does exist in the Irish working class. It can be built upon as the crisis of imperialism and Irish capitalism deepens. But only if a resolute stand against the pro-imperialist forces of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and the official Irish Labour movement is taken by the Republican Movement.

### THE POLITICAL FORCES IN THE SIX COUNTIES

By Easter 1979 the Labour government's 'criminalisation' policy was in disarray - destroyed by the prisoners' courage and determination, the massive street protests resulting from the painstaking work of the Relatives Action Committees and the IRA's successful military and propaganda offensive (see FRFI 21). Mason was to quietly resign shortly before the 3 May General Election. Newman and Creasey were to be removed by the end of the year. The IRA with some justification could state in its Easter statement

'Roy Mason who came here with so much confidence and so many boasts departs very soon as a defeated man, and we will grind the next British War-Lord into the ground as we have done with Mason! It matters little who rules at Westminster; they'll still send their gunmen and tanks and SAS murderers to repress the Irish people. But by a combination of political work, street resistance and uncompromising revolutionary guerrilla warfare we will inflict a political defeat on the British government's will to stay in Ireland...' (AP/RN 21 April 1979)

However the political prisoners' struggle for political status was still to be resolved. The prisoners were putting pressure on the Republican Movement to step up its protest to force the British government to restore political status. By mid-1979 the prisoners were beginning to argue for a hunger strike to force the British government's hand. The IRA leadership was strongly opposed to a hunger strike and although it could not persuade the prisoners to abandon the idea it urged them not to set a date for a hunger strike unless it all looked hopeless - that is if it became clear that the protest outside the prison had failed to bring about the necessary change. The Republican Movement on the outside promised a better organised protest campaign.

### The IRA offensive

At the beginning of 1979 the IRA had significantly stepped up its military offensive against commercial and military targets. In March Omagh and Dungannon town centres were blasted by car bombs. Kinawley, Co Fermanagh and Newtonhamilton, South Armagh British army/RUC barracks were destroyed by IRA bomb attacks killing one British soldier and injuring 4 British soldiers and 2 RUC men. On 22 March 19 towns across the Six Counties were hit within one hour, 9.30pm-10.30pm, in a coordinated IRA bomb blitz. Prime targets were banks - 'symbols of the economic oppression of the nationalist people'.

On 22 March 1979 outside the British embassy at the Hague the IRA shot and killed the British ambassador to the Netherlands, Sir Richard Sykes. He had been in charge of the investigation of the assassination of Ewart-Biggs the British ambassador to Dublin, who had been killed by the IRA in July 1976 when a road-mine blew up his car. The General Election campaign in Britain had the issue of Ireland dramatically imposed on it when Airey Neave was assassinated on 30 March by INLA after a bomb which had been planted in his car went off in the precincts of the House of Commons. Airey Neave was the Conservative spokesman on Northern Ireland affairs and would almost certainly have become the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland after the Conservative election victory. He was an extreme right-wing reactionary and had called for the strengthening of the SAS and UDR and for the reintroduction of hanging and internment in the Six Counties. INLA, the military wing of the IRSP, was to become more active over the next period (see FRFI 18 for origins of INLA). INLA/IRSP had about 40 members in prison by early 1980, who supported the blanket protest.

In April the IRA shot and killed seven members of the 'security forces' in seven days. Senior officers obviously shaken by the dramatic increase in IRA

military activities (Mason had been boasting for nearly two years that the IRA was 'reeling') began to consider the reintroduction of internment. Reports of British soldiers beginning to break down under the pressure of the war began to circulate. At the end of February Trooper Edward Maggs had gone berserk in Woodburn Barracks, West Belfast and shot dead a corporal and seriously injured an officer in his regiment the Blues and Royals, Household Cavalry. He was killed by other soldiers. A Corporal Schofield of the Royal Green Jackets deserted - his girlfriend stated after his recapture that 'he cracked under the pressure of the war'. There was a report of another soldier going berserk and killing his wife at his base at Aldergrove, north of West Belfast. That same month Dickie Elder one of the three top prison officers at Crumlin Road gaol resigned and notified the IRA of his resignation.

In May 1979 the IRA achieved a dramatic propaganda victory against British imperialism. Extracts of a secret British army document, which had been captured in the mail by IRA intelligence a few months earlier, were published in *AP/RN*. The document, prepared by Brigadier JM Glover of British Defence Intelligence Staff, totally contradicted the picture of the IRA projected by British government and army officials and faithfully reproduced in the servile British media. Whilst Mason and other British spokesmen were publicly proclaiming the imminent defeat of the IRA the document said

'The Provisional IRA (PIRA) has the dedication and the sinews of war to raise violence intermittently to at least the level of early 1978, certainly for the foreseeable future. Even if "peace" is restored, the motivation for politically inspired violence will remain. Arms will be readily available and there will be many who are able and willing to use them. Any peace will be superficial and brittle. A new campaign may well erupt in the years ahead.'

Far from the IRA being the 'mindless criminals' and 'hoodlums' of British government spokesmen and slavish accounts of the war in the British media, the document states

- (a) LEADERSHIP - PIRA is essentially a working-class organisation based in the ghetto areas of the cities and in the poorer rural areas. Thus if members of the middle class and graduates become more deeply involved, they have to forfeit their lifestyle... Nevertheless, there is a stratum of intelligent, astute and experienced terrorists who provide the backbone of the organisation...
- (b) TECHNICAL EXPERTISE - PIRA has an adequate supply of members who are skilled in the production of explosive devices...
- (c) RANK AND FILE TERRORISTS - Our evidence of the calibre of rank and file terrorists does not support the view that they are mindless hooligans drawn from the unemployed and unemployable...
- (d) TREND IN CALIBRE - The mature terrorists, including for instance the leading bomb makers, are sufficiently cunning to avoid arrest. They are continually learning from mistakes and developing their expertise...

The document concluded that the 'Provisional campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland'. It could not see any prospect of a 'political development' which would seriously undermine the Provisionals' position

'PIRA will probably continue to recruit the men it needs. They will still be able to attract enough people with leadership talent, good education and manual skills to continue to enhance their all round professionalism. The Movement will retain popular support sufficient to maintain secure bases in the traditional Republican areas.' (All extracts from document from *AP/RN* 12 May 1979)

British lies and propaganda might suffice for British politicians and the British public but the British army had to conduct a war against the Provisional IRA and it could not do this unless it had a reasonably accurate assessment of the liberation movement it was fighting.

On 11 May 1979 Kieran Nugent, the first man to go 'on the blanket' was freed. John Deery had been released two weeks earlier - the first prisoner on the 'no wash - no slop out protest' to be released. They had both successfully defied the British government's attempt to 'criminalise' Republican political prisoners.



Mass demonstration in support of H-Block and Armagh prisoners

In June Alan Wright, leader of the Northern Ireland Police Federation, argued that 'if we are not to lose what small gains we have made, then the army must play a more active role in the security field'. The IRA's renewed military offensive was clearly delivering another major blow to that other element in British imperialism's 'Ulsterisation' strategy - the 'primacy of the police' in maintaining 'security' in the Six Counties.

IRA attacks continued over the next few months. At the end of August the IRA carried out the most dramatic operations of the ten year war. In the first on Monday 27 August 1979 the IRA assassinated Lord Louis Mountbatten. A 50lb remote controlled bomb was placed on board his boat and was detonated by the IRA when the boat was in Mullaghmore Bay Co Sligo killing Mountbatten and three others. The second took place some five hours later at Narrow Water Castle close to Warrenpoint in South Down. IRA explosives engineers planted a huge bomb and a landmine. A charge of over 1,100lb of explosives in a hay-trailer was parked at the side of the main Warrenpoint to Newry road. A 500lb landmine was also buried nearby beneath the stone gatepost of a derelict lodge. Both were to be detonated by radio-controlled devices. As the third vehicle of an army convoy containing members of the 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment passed the hay lorry the bomb was detonated killing six soldiers and injuring others. The remainder of the force then took cover near the lodge gate where the second bomb had been planted. They radioed for reinforcements. Twenty-five minutes later three Wessex helicopters brought in extra troops from the Queen's Own Highlanders in South Armagh. When they took up position the IRA unit detonated the second bomb killing ten more soldiers from the Parachute Regiment and two Highlanders including Lieutenant Colonel David Blair, the most senior ranking British officer to have been killed in the last ten years of the war.

These operations had a devastating effect on the morale of

Forces of collaboration, Thatcher and Haughey at Dublin







Prisoners, 1980, just before the hunger strike

the British army. Immediately the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher visited the troops and in a show of concern attempted to repair British army confidence. The 'Ulsterisation' strategy had suffered a major blow. Disputes over security arose between British army chiefs and the RUC. In October, Sir Maurice Oldfield, a former head of MI6 (British intelligence service responsible for intelligence gathering etc outside Britain) had to be sent to the Six Counties to try and coordinate overall security—coordinating operations between the British army and the RUC.

## The Prisoner Campaign

The IRA had certainly lived up to its Easter promise of uncompromising revolutionary guerrilla warfare'. The number of British army/UDR/RUC forces killed in 1979 was 62, the highest since 1973. Over 230 members of the security forces had been injured. Yet in spite of this and the growing campaign of street protests and demonstrations the British government had not yet been forced to change its position on political status. The struggle would have to be intensified at all levels if a hunger strike by the political prisoners was to be avoided. It was at this stage towards the end of 1979 that a fundamental change of direction in the prisoner campaign took place. Political forces from outside the Republican Movement and the nationalist working class were increasingly drawn into the campaign. Some had already been involved since the Coalisland Conference, January 1978 (see FRFI 21) but over the next two years they were to exert an ever growing influence over the direction of the campaign.

In June 1979 the Republican Movement and the prisoners called for a boycott of the EEC elections. They regarded the EEC as another force and institution restricting the Irish people from asserting their independence. But Bernadette McAliskey stood as an anti-repression and anti-H-Block

... December 1980



candidate in the EEC elections causing serious divisions among the Relatives Action Committees and in the nationalist community. The Republican Movement wrote at that time

'In the six counties the Republican Movement and the H-Block blanketmen are totally opposed to the opportunism of Bernadette McAliskey who is running on an anti-repression ticket ...

The EEC parliament (and not the H-Block prisoners nor the Irish people) will certainly gain if people vote for the birth of a monster which in the long run is out to strangle us'. (AP/RN 2 June 1979)

A year later Bernadette McAliskey was to be a leading figure in the National H-Block Campaign working on the National H-Block Committee with leading members of Sinn Fein.

At the beginning of 1979 there had been some pressure for a campaign in support of the prisoners based on 'humanitarian' grounds but at this stage the Republican Movement rejected them out of hand. At a march in Loughguile Co Antrim, the Belfast Republican Liam Hannaway made it clear that

'The men in the H-Block and women in Armagh are not protesting for better prison conditions. Their protest is for recognition as political prisoners of war. Let us never forget that point'. (AP/RN 17 March 1979)

Again in April a letter from a prisoner in H-4 Block, Long Kesh, commenting on 'humanitarian appeals to the Brits' for better conditions said

'These calls are understandable coming from our friends and relations, but when they come from anti-Republican sources they take on a more devious meaning.

For this reason we feel it necessary to make our position on the "blanket" struggle clear. Our fight is not concerned with better conditions ...

We are Republican soldiers fighting a national liberation war against British rule.

We demand the right when captured to be recognised and treated as Political Prisoners of War'. (AP/RN 21 April 1979)

The change in direction took some time to develop. The prisoner campaign and support for the armed struggle continued to grow during the second half of 1979. A massive 'Brits Out' demonstration took place in West Belfast on 12 August marking ten years of war between the Irish people and British imperialism. An estimated 10-15,000 people were on this march which had been billed beforehand as an 'act of resistance':

'It is a march in support of our armed comrades, it is a salute to our prisoners everywhere, an especial salute to the courageous blanket men'. (AP/RN 11 August 1979)

The street wide banners on the march declared 'BRITAIN MUST GO', 'VICTORY TO THE BLANKET MEN' and 'VICTORY TO THE IRA'. And when armed IRA volunteers paraded in front of the crowd at the rally in Casement Park, there were ecstatic cheers and chants of 'I... I... IRA'. The nationalist people were saluting their revolutionary vanguard—the IRA. Even the British press were forced to record the significance of this march:

*Daily Express*: 'The rally was one of the strongest displays of support for the Republican campaign in recent years'.

*Daily Mirror*: '... the biggest show of Republican support since the Army began their security duties in 1969.'

*Daily Telegraph*: '... a demonstration which indicated the continuing significant support for the Provisional IRA's terrorist campaign in Northern Ireland.'

*The Guardian*: '... the most dramatic display of strength by the Republican Movement here in recent years.'

The Pope visited Ireland at the end of September. His call for 'peace' and reference to the 'men of violence' was shamelessly exploited by Irish and British politicians not known for their opposition to British imperialism's campaign of repression and terror in the Six Counties. The IRA answered them with a clear reaffirmation of the need for armed struggle to force Britain out of Ireland and so create 'a climate for real peace with justice'.

'... force is by far the only means of removing the evil of British presence in Ireland... Church leaders, politicians and establishments are bankrupt and have also failed to resolve the massive

social and economic problems suffered by our people and created by British interference.'

The IRA statement argued that one should not talk of 'men of violence' and ignore the 33,000 strong armed forces in the Six Counties, the repressive laws, the torture of prisoners and the situation in the H-Blocks. It was, however, the situation in the H-Blocks that was now causing most concern.

## National H-Block Campaign

In September 1979 a conference organised by the Six Counties Coordinating Committee of the RACs was announced for 21 October in Belfast to set up a national 'Smash H-Block' committee. There were to be no preconditions on those attending the conference or on committee members other than support for the 'four main demands' of the blanket men. These were that political prisoners should have no prison work, no prison uniform, free association and the right to organise. The task of the conference was 'to explore the coordination of all those groups and individuals who are opposed to the situation in the H-Blocks for whatever reason'. A week later Sinn Fein had its own conference on the prisoner issue. During this conference the leadership of Sinn Fein made it clear that it was supporting a fundamental change of political direction in the prisoner campaign. Gerry Adams stated that while previously Sinn Fein had generally limited its cooperation on the H-Block issue to those groups and individuals who not only support the blanket men, but also the armed national liberation struggle

'The Smash H-Block conference and committee will be different. Participants are not required to support the IRA'. (AP/RN 29 September 1979)

A major consideration behind this change of direction, besides the general urgency of intensifying the protest outside the prison, appeared to be the need to build the campaign in the 26 Counties:

'A discussion from the floor then centred around how to make people, especially those in the twenty-six counties, more aware of the horrors of H-Block and of how to provide those who are aware, and care, with meaningful lines of political action.

The question was raised that as the H-Blocks are the direct responsibility of the British, and not of the Free State government, perhaps it is difficult for people in the twenty-six counties to focus their anger on a meaningful target'.

More than 600 people attended the 'Smash H-Block' conference on Sunday 21 October held in Belfast's Green Briar Club. Organisations which attended the conference included Sinn Fein, the IRSP, Peoples Democracy, TUCAR, Women Against Imperialism, a variety of left political groups and remarkably the Peace People. AP/RN reported that 'it was hoped to draw a much wider circle of people to the discussion, for example Frank Maguire MP, Father Faul, Mickey Mullen (ITGWU), senior GAA officials and humanitarian groups'. In their absence provision was made for the subsequently elected 'Smash H-Block Committee' to co-opt ten additional members in the interests of 'a broad-based united front'.

In February 1978 after the Coalisland Conference *Republican News* had argued against Peoples Democracy and Bernadette McAliskey attempting to turn the clock back to the Civil Rights type of campaigning. It had said that while not all united fronts on the prisoner campaign had to be on the 'basis of everyone openly supporting the IRA's armed struggle' the 'humanitarian approach of Father Faul and the polite parliamentary-type protests of Frank Maguire... are not enough to win our aims in the short term let alone in the long term' (see FRFI 21). Now these forces, openly criticised in 1978, were being asked to play a central role in the prisoner campaign. These developments did not take place without some protest from Republican activists. Jimmy Drumm wrote angrily to AP/RN (27 October 1979) that he was astounded that a platform had been given to Ciaran McKeown, the 'Peace People's' spokesperson, at the conference. The 'Peace People's' exhortation for people to inform on 'anyone involved in acts of terrorism' had probably resulted in some of the 'blanketmen' finding themselves in the position they are in today. Was this 'not carrying liberalisation and democracy too far?'

The main resolution proposed and passed by the Conference came from the Republican Movement. The resolution called for the election of a 'seventeen person H-Block Committee to spearhead a national campaign... to force the British government to concede political prisoner status'. It said

that the campaign should be oriented towards mobilising national support for the prisoners' demands 'particularly amongst the organised labour movement, community organisations and cultural organisations and also mobilising international support'. It called for a Dublin Conference to elect a 'southern-based committee' to be 'charged with the task of building support in the twenty-six counties.' Should political status not be won then another open conference had to be organised within six months. The message sent to the conference from the 'blanketmen' made it clear they were 'prepared to die for the right to political status'. The Committee members elected included members of Sinn Fein, IRSP, Peoples Democracy, representatives from the RACs (appointed) and others active on the prisoner issue. Kathleen Holden was coopted on to the committee as the mother of a 'blanketman'.

The Dublin Conference took place on 18 December. More than 500 people attended and elected a Southern-based sub-committee to coordinate H-Block activity in the South. Sponsors of the conference included 'a number of leading trade unionists, several solicitors and cultural figures, and notably Donegal politician Neil Blaney' (AP/RN 22 December 1979). There were a number of 'famous personalities in attendance' including actresses and playwrights. Gerry Adams (Vice-President of Sinn Fein) reinforced the new political direction of the prisoner campaign when he said

'... for those who are unable to support the armed struggle in the North there is nothing in the demands put forward by the committee which cannot be supported on humanitarian grounds'.

The demands of the committee were now in the form of 'five demands'

- The prisoners right not to wear prison uniform.
- The right not to do prison work
- Freedom of association amongst political prisoners
- The right to organise recreational and educational facilities, to have weekly visits, letters and parcels
- The entitlement to full remission of sentences

The action the Conference agreed to take included: approaching prominent individuals, seeking sponsors for major advertisements in the national press, launching a national petition, organising days of action, holding indoor public meetings in as many towns as possible, supporting the formation of independent local committees, supporting the march to Long Kesh from Belfast on New Year's Day, and organising a national demonstration in Dublin.

The first National H-Block march took place in West Belfast on 1 January 1980. The well-supported march was banned from going to Long Kesh and was blocked by thousands of troops and RUC men. No attempt was made to breach the blockade and the marchers' conduct was later praised by a spokesman for the National H-Block Committee as 'disciplined in the face of severe provocation by the RUC and British army'.

At the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (conference) over the weekend of 19/20 January 1980 the President of Sinn Fein, Ruairi O'Bradaigh said in his Presidential address

'Sinn Fein is gratified at the establishment of the broad-based National "Smash H-Block" Committee on the simple platform of the five demands made by the prisoners themselves for the restoration of prisoner-of-war status. We urge our members to redouble their efforts with the assistance of non-members on this great issue of human rights'.

But not everyone in Sinn Fein agreed. Doubts were 'vociferously expressed' by some delegates about the efficacy of or the need for the National H-Block Committee in 'one of the most heated debates of the weekend'. In particular delegates were disturbed that the Committee had broken with traditional practice and had filed with (notified) the RUC for the Belfast New Year's Day march. Jimmy Drumm, a member of the Ard Comhairle (Central Committee) of Sinn Fein, was, according to *Magill*, totally opposed to the whole concept of 'broad-based organisation' now central to the prisoner campaign.

In February 1980 the 33 women political prisoners in Armagh prison were forced to step up their 'no work' protest (see FRFI 21). On 7 February the authorities at the prison seriously escalated their harassment of the women prisoners. They

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announced, when the women were out of their cells and lined up for a meal, that they intended to search the women's cells. The women political prisoners were suddenly surrounded by some sixty male and female warders, some of the former drafted in from Long Kesh. Almost immediately about forty male warders moved in on the women and attacked them. Plates were thrown and the women were punched and kicked until 'order' was restored. The women were placed in two association cells and locked up. Their cells were searched and wrecked. Subsequently a number of the women prisoners were dragged before the governor. All the women on protest were then denied washing and toilet facilities and their cells were soon in a filthy state and soaked with urine. The women began to pour the contents of their pots filled with urine and excrement out of the spy holes in their cells and, after these were nailed shut, out of the cell windows. Soon they were put in cells with the windows boarded up. By 12 February a full scale 'dirt strike' was in operation with the women smearing their excrement on the cell walls and refusing all clothing except what they stood up in. The women political prisoners were now faced with the same barbaric inhuman conditions as their comrades in the H-Block (see FRFI 21).

As the prison struggle escalated, the National H-Block Committee continued to organise marches and protests outside, all the time attempting to draw more people into the struggle 'on the basis of common humanity and regard for human rights' (National H-Block committee member Fr Piaras O'Duill). When on 2 March a 'several thousand' strong Belfast march was prevented by a heavy force of British army/RUC from leaving West Belfast for Long Kesh, militant youth repeatedly attacked the 'security forces'. Nine year old Hugh Hamill was seriously injured by a plastic bullet when the British army fired on the H-Block marchers. AP/RN commented at the time:

'The frantic overreaction by certain stewards to the young rioters demonstrates the urgent need in the future for stewards to be fully informed of how to respond in all situations which arise and how - most vitally - to channel the militancy of the young people for the overall good of the march'.

This issue was to be raised time and again as the militant anger of the youth conflicted with the 'disciplined' peaceful protests demanded by the National H-Block campaign.

On 26 March the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Humphrey Atkins made a proposal to allow political prisoners to wear sports gear to exercise, weekly letters and an extra visit per month. This was immediately rejected by the 380 'blanket men' as 'ridiculous'.

'... We could have one visit per week, any amount of letters and daily exercise but only if we accept criminal status and come off the blanket... We are protesting for full political status. We recognise we have a long way to go yet, but we shall not weaken'.

With Atkins' 'concessions' came the announcement that from 1 April even prisoners sentenced for political offences committed before 1 March 1976 would now be denied political status. This conclusively demonstrated the determination of the British government to defeat the prisoners in their legitimate struggle to be regarded as political prisoners. The 'concessions' were simply a British propaganda exercise.

At the beginning of June John Turnly, joint chairman of the Irish Independence Party and H-Block activist, was assassinated by loyalist gunmen. He was the first of the H-Block activists to be murdered. Loyalist gunmen had become much more active towards the end of 1979 after the IRA's dramatic military successes. Between August and December 1979 there were ten known victims of loyalist murder squads.

AP/RN 14 June 1980 carried a statement from the IRA that it was 'resuming hostilities against all prison officials'. The announcement was made in an IRA statement claiming responsibility for the shooting of a prison warden in Belfast the Tuesday before. The IRA statement explained the sudden unannounced halt in attacks on prison officials in March:

'In early March we took a unilateral decision when Cardinal O'Fiaich and Bishop Daly visited

the H-Blocks to cease all hostilities against the prison regime in an attempt to create a climate for a just settlement of the political prisoners' demands'.

The talks that Cardinal O'Fiaich had had with Atkins since March had proved fruitless and at the beginning of June four defenceless prisoners had been viciously beaten up in the H-Blocks. The IRA decided to resume attacks on prison officials. The announcement however indicated the growing importance being attached to the activities of the Catholic hierarchy in the present prisoner campaign.

Bishop Daly immediately denounced the resumption of IRA attacks on prison warders as 'extremely unfortunate, regrettable and detestable'. He appealed to the British government for 'an easing of the situation' in the H-Blocks on the grounds this would be a 'considerable setback' to what he called 'IRA propaganda'. The IRA in a strong reply to this criticism pointed out:

'There is no propaganda for the Irish Republican Army in the H-Block situation: if there were, and if it superseded the value of the H-Blocks to the British, then the British government would have resolved the problem long ago and removed such propaganda'.

The IRA statement went on to challenge Bishop Daly to make his position clear on prison brutality given that he had no reservations or qualifications about condemning the IRA for actions he disagreed with. The IRA had continued with its military offensive against commercial and military targets since the formation of the National H-Block Committee and throughout the period when attacks against prison officials had been suspended.

The second National H-Block Conference took place on 15 June 1980. Its task was to assess the progress of the campaign so far. There were various problems and organisational difficulties raised which for example 'had led to the H-Block marches in Armagh and Newry being only partial successes'. It was agreed to appoint a full-time national organiser to establish offices in Dublin and Belfast to overcome this and to set up the necessary fundraising committee. The need to involve the trade union movement in the campaign became a central issue in the debate stressed particularly by left groups such as Peoples Democracy. One group called for immediate strike action - a totally unrealistic demand given the character of the Irish Labour Movement and the amount of campaigning work so far done in the trade unions. Gerry Adams correctly argued that while industrial action might be one aim to work towards, strike calls were premature. He then endorsed the political direction of the campaign and argued

'There is no conflict between "political status" and a "humanitarian" approach: the prisoners are undeniably political, but - outside of the five basic demands of the prisoners - it is up to individuals what approach they take'.

However this was not necessarily the case. A conflict would and did arise between those who saw the continuation of the armed struggle and militant action by youths on the streets as complementary to the campaign of peaceful protest led by the National H-Block Committee and those who quite clearly didn't. A new committee was elected at the Conference - it included Bernadette McAliskey.

On 26 June Miriam Daly, a major figure in the IRSP and a member of the National H-Block Committee, was murdered - bound hand and foot and shot five times in the head. AP/RN argued that there was evidence - the 'professionalism' of the assassins - that pointed to British army involvement and most probably the SAS.

Towards the end of May AP/RN reported that the Ardoyne Republican Martin Meehan had gone on hunger strike in protest against being framed on a kidnapping charge and being gaoled for twelve years. The 12 July issue of AP/RN carried banner headlines 'Don't Let Meehan Die!' and reported a 'well-attended march and rally' to highlight the protest. Martin Meehan had just completed 52 days on hunger strike. The next week there were reports of intensive street fighting between militant youths and the British army/RUC on the Falls Road after a more than 2,000 strong march in support of Martin Meehan had taken place. The fights went on for three further days. Martin Meehan agreed to come off hunger strike after 66 days as 'his case had been highlighted' and 'his appeal hearing would be the focus of public attention' and thus 'some guarantee he would get justice'. AP/RN stated at the time

'... one thing the Brits had better take note of is that a real bond exists between the nationalist people on the streets and the Republican political prisoners and that the militant reaction they saw is just a very small taste of what they'll get should anything untoward happen to any of the blanketmen in the H-Block or the women protesters in Armagh jail' (26 July 1980).

Seamus Mullen, a Derry republican, also went on hunger strike towards the end of May in protest against being framed, this time on a blackmail charge, and sentenced to ten years. He ended his strike after 71 days - he was seriously ill - after the intervention of Bishop Daly and on being given a date for his appeal.

On 23 July 16-year-old Michael McCarten was murdered by the RUC as he painted political slogans on a hoarding. The RUC claimed they thought the paint brush was a gun. The youth responded by openly daubing slogans over walls on the Falls Road showing they would not be intimidated. Militant street protests followed and the stoning of RUC vehicles by youths continued for five nights. Angry women plastered an RUC jeep with a dozen hand made posters declaring - 'RUC murdered Michael McCarten'.

The second Dublin Conference of the National H-Block Committee took place on 14 September. Progress had been made in the setting up of over 30 local groups and resolutions of support for the prisoners from 9 Trades Councils and 4 trade unions were reported. Speeches from the floor showed concern that

'... the establishment of a new twenty-six counties committee was partitionist and that marches to Leinster House and appeals to clergymen were



Hands Off Ireland! election campaign

ignoring the realities of the overall anti-imperialist struggle' (AP/RN 20 September 1980).

Jim Gibney (Sinn Fein and National H-Block Committee) argued against this putting the 'majority view' in support of a 26 Counties committee that

'the different situation North and South meant pressure could be exerted on trade unionists and politicians in the South which was impossible in the North'.

However on 27 September AP/RN carried banner headlines 'H-Block hopes dashed'. The talks between Cardinal O'Fiaich and Bishop Daly and Atkins, which had been renewed after June, finally collapsed for good. The Blanketmen were on the brink of total frustration. The National H-Block Committee's campaign had failed to move the British government. A hunger strike by the prisoners was now inevitable. A statement smuggled out of the H-Blocks on Friday 10 October announced a hunger strike to commence on 27 October 1980.

## POLITICAL FORCES IN BRITAIN

The Labour Party's treacherous record on Ireland is second to none. The flag of the Labour Party is red only because it is stained with the blood of the Irish people and of oppressed peoples who have had to fight British imperialism to obtain their freedom in many parts of the world. However, the Labour Party's record on Ireland says it all:

**1913/14** Betrayed the Dublin workers during the Dublin strikes and lock-out (see FRFI 8)

**1916** Was party to the murder of James Connolly and applauded the suppression of the Easter Rising (see FRFI 10)

**1921/22** Supported the partition of Ireland and the creation of the reactionary neo-colonial 26 Counties 'Free State' (see FRFI 10)

**1939** Supported the anti-Irish Prevention of Violence Act (see FRFI 11)

**1949** Legitimised the loyalist police state in the

Six Counties by introducing a new Government of Ireland Act (see FRFI 11)

**1969** Sent British troops into the Six Counties of Ireland (see FRFI 13 & 14)

**1974** Introduced the racist, anti-Irish Prevention of Terrorism Act (see FRFI 19)

**1974-6** Laid the basis for a regime of terror through British imperialism's 'Ulsterisation' policy (see FRFI 18)

**1976-9** Administered a regime of terror. Withdrew Special Category Status from Irish political prisoners. Built and opened the H-Blocks. Institutionalised torture of Irish political prisoners first in police cells and then in the H-Blocks (see FRFI 20 & 21)

**1978-9** Agreed to give extra seats to the Loyalists to keep the Labour government in power (see FRFI 21)

This totally reactionary Labour Party throughout its history has had the support of the official trade union movement in carrying out its treacherous and barbaric policies. No significant section of the Labour Party has or could take up a consistent fight against these policies without breaking with the Labour Party. For the Labour Party gives political expression to that privileged layer of the working class that has a material interest in the continuation of imperialism - for it is the source of its economic and political privileges (see FRFI 8). In the recent period not one so-called 'Left' Labour MP opposed the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Mr Tony Benn has sat in numerous Labour Cabinets raising no objections to the Labour Party's record of brutality and terror in the Six Counties of Ireland. To argue that an effective alliance could be built with any section of the



PAC demonstration for political status

Labour Party in support of the Irish political prisoners' struggle for political status (or later the 'Five Demands') was at best to spread a cruel deception, at worst to openly betray the Irish cause.

Given the record of the Labour Party, the responsibility for building a movement in solidarity with Irish political prisoners would fall on those organisations which regard themselves as part of the revolutionary socialist left. The omens were not very good. After the massive Bloody Sunday demonstration of 1972 had been broken up by the police and three of the organisers had been arrested, the British left retreated from any confrontation with the British state. The retreat turned into headlong flight after the IRA's military campaign began in Britain (see FRFI 15 & 19).

The relative prosperity in the imperialist nations during the post-war boom - a prosperity based on the rebuilding of the major imperialist powers after the Second World War under the domination of US imperialism - allowed bourgeois 'democracy' a certain lease of life. It gave rise to new privileged sections of the working class - sections of which were able to obtain lucrative positions as trade union officials, journalists, lawyers, politicians, academics, economists, teachers, civil servants and the like. The privileges and status of these layers depend directly on the continuation of imperialism - the attempt to shore up the prosperity of the post-war boom through the super-exploitation of oppressed peoples.

The British socialist groups, on the whole, draw their membership from these new privileged layers of the working class. As the crisis of imperialism deepens these layers are faced with a choice. *Either* to side with the most oppressed sections of the working class in Britain - black and Irish workers, unemployed youth - as well as the liberation movements struggling against imperialism. *Or* to seek relative respectability and security in alliance with other privileged layers in the Labour and trade union movement. There is no middle road. After the election of the Labour government in 1974 the main organisations of the British left made their

choice. Increasingly they sided with those supporting imperialism and attacked those taking up the armed struggle against imperialism. For their opposition to the violence and brutality of imperialism only existed because they recognised that it created a revolutionary opposition to imperialism amongst the oppressed (see FRFI 15 & 19).

The class standpoint of the British left – middle class socialism – is the foundation of its consistent search for a ‘progressive’ side to British imperialism and underlies its attempt to build an alliance with the imperialist Labour Party. As we shall see, the promotion and protection of this alliance at all times took priority and often led to the British left ignoring or openly betraying the Irish peoples’ struggle for freedom. The history of the Troops Out Movement (TOM) bears this out.

TOM was formed in October 1973 on the *formally* principled basis of accepting two demands – Troops Out Now! and Self-determination for the Irish People as a whole. However given TOM replaced the Anti-Internment League (see FRFI 15) its demands, however formally principled, constituted a turning away from the very urgent issue of internment without trial in the Six Counties, which was not to end for another two years. After the election of the Labour government in 1974 TOM ceased campaigning for its formal demands. The first national TOM demonstration in October 1974 dropped its formal position in favour of an alliance with the left-wing of the Labour Party/TU leadership – this time in the form of a CPGB-front organisation, the British Peace Committee. For this demonstration the ‘immediate withdrawal of British troops’ (ie Now!) was pushed aside for the ‘immediate implementation of a policy of political and military withdrawal’ (ie some unspecified time in the future!). The CPGB and the left of the Labour Party were totally opposed to the Troops Out Now! demand. This ‘broad front’ policy brought no new forces into TOM – the British Peace Committee contingent on the demonstration was tiny.

The central thrust of TOM’s strategy – building an alliance with the Labour Party/TU left – was made clear at the November 1974 meeting of the TOM National Co-ordinating Committee when a prominent figure in the early TOM, Sean Reed, argued

‘TOM is not a mass organisation on the Irish question, nor is it intended that it should pose itself as such. TOM is the embryo of a *broad united front* ...’

The question was who was TOM to unite with? It was quickly answered. Sean Reed outlined three main elements of TOM’s work: anti-recruitment work; following up labour movement bodies who supported the 27 October demonstration; and above all, forcing a wedge into the parliamentary Labour Party in an effort to create a group of Labour MPs who would put pressure on the government. In other words the ‘broad united front’ was to be a united front with the left flank of the imperialist Labour Party. Such an alliance required the abandonment of Troops Out Now! as a campaigning slogan. The TOM abandoned it. Its first ‘Labour Movement’ Conference in 1975 gave a platform to right-wing Labour MP Leo Abse who used it to attack the Republican Movement, and had a motion, drafted by TOM, which did not call for Troops Out Now! – this had to be inserted as an amendment from the floor. The subsequent history of TOM has been an endless repetition of the same tactics endlessly producing no results. Its leadership clique has changed, the organisation split in early 1977 (United TOM was formed), it has had good and bad relations with the main organisations of the British left, but its bankrupt strategy has remained. The spectre of Labour MPs leading a ‘broad’ movement against British rule in Ireland continues to haunt TOM despite all the evidence of nine years of failure. At present TOM is just a small group of ‘independents’ (not in left groups).

In July 1977, after a split in TOM, the United TOM was launched on exactly the same principles as the ‘old’ TOM. It declared that its ‘major national focus ... during 1977’ was to be an International Tribunal on Britain’s Crimes against the Irish People. This event, the brainchild of the International Marxist Group (IMG), was aimed at drawing in trade unionists, Labour Party members, MPs, prominent personalities etc. In other words it was to be the vehicle of an alliance of the United TOM and the Labour Party/TU left. In pursuit of this end the title was changed to International Tribunal on Britain’s Presence in Ireland. Concessions after concession was made to try and draw in the Labour Party/TU left even to the extent of holding a ‘preliminary hearing’ in

November 1978 where a ‘panel of judges’ would ‘establish whether or not there is a prima facie case for the Tribunal to investigate’. These legalistic niceties came after Amnesty International itself had conclusively established the existence of torture in Castlereagh and other interrogation centres (see FRFI 20). Instead of using the *Amnesty Report* and other well-known material to mount an exposure of the British government and British rule in Ireland, the United TOM together with its IMG and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) backers mounted a Tribunal to ‘investigate’ whether or not there was a case to investigate! The reason for this refusal to seize the opportunity to expose British torture in Ireland is simple: the government in question was a Labour government.

On 7/8 July 1979 two years after its launch the Tribunal’s final ‘hearing’ was a flop. Only 70 attended the first day and even fewer the second. The Tribunal called on Britain to ‘reconstitute’ its relations with Ireland – no call for immediate withdrawal of troops. Two years’ work ended in a pointless farce – despised by anti-imperialists and, in fact, ignored by the Labour Party/TU left.

In 1978 the failure of TOM to produce any results and the rampant anti-Republicanism of the British middle-class left drove Sinn Fein (Britain) into calling its own Bloody Sunday march under its own leadership. Sinn Fein (Britain) called on United TOM and the British left to support its demonstration. However, United TOM/IMG/SWP decided to go ahead with their own march having in mind their alliance with the Labour Party/TU left – who would never support a march called by Sinn Fein. On 29 January 1978 there were two Bloody Sunday marches: one called by Sinn Fein, supported by the Prisoners Aid Committee (PAC), Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) and supporters of its anti-imperialist Bulletin *Hands Off Ireland!*, and others; the other an anti-Republican alliance of the British middle class left supported by United TOM/IMG/SWP and others. The anti-Republican demonstration had Tony Cliff (SWP), Tariq Ali (then IMG, now Labour Party), Bernadette McAliskey and Eamonn McCann billed as speakers. However the alliance of Republicans and real communists in the Sinn Fein march was to form the basis of the most significant campaign in Britain on Irish prisoners in this latest stage of the Irish war.

This campaign, led by PAC and supported by Sinn Fein (Britain), RCG and supporters of *Hands Off Ireland!* called for POW status for Irish political prisoners and an amnesty for Irish POWs pending complete British withdrawal from Ireland. The campaign organised the two largest demonstrations on Ireland seen in Britain since the February 1972 Bloody Sunday march in London. The first march on 9 July 1978 was 5,000 strong drawing in a large Irish contingent (the biggest since Bloody Sunday 1972); a large *Hands Off Ireland!* contingent, most of the major British left groups including United TOM and ten trade union contingents, including Hackney and Edinburgh Trades Councils, TGWU, ASTMS, NALGO and NUJ. This was already positive proof that a revolutionary campaign could win significant support on the streets and secondly could win support within the trade union movement. The second march on 26 November 1978 was even more successful. 6-7,000 took part with an even larger Irish contingent, a larger *Hands Off Ireland!* contingent and 15 trade union contingents including five Trades Councils and ten TU branches from TGWU, TGWU/ACTSS, ASTMS, AUEW, COHSE, UCATT and NUJ. There were also a number of Labour Party banners. This success proved beyond doubt the potential which exists for an anti-imperialist movement on Ireland.

The British middle class left organisations reacted to this campaign by non-stop hostility and, at times, open sabotage. The SWP had to be picketed by the PAC and RCG to force it to support the 9 July march. In the week before the march the SWP/IMG/United TOM staged diversionary and foolish stunts – horse dung thrown in parliament and sitting down in stores – to launch their ‘own’ prisoner campaign: the Irish Political Prisoners Support Group (IPPSG). In the name of the IPPSG Gerry Fitzpatrick (SWP) tried to draw marchers away from the 9 July march to an alleged picket of Gartree prison. The IPPSG has never been heard of since. Their hostility to the 26 November march went so far that the PAC expelled both the IMG and SWP from the mobilising committee for the march. In short the emergence of a successful anti-imperialist campaign based on an alliance of Republicans and communists was treated to hostile sectarian opposition from the middle class left and United TOM. They recognised that such a cam-

paigned threatened the alliance they were attempting to forge with sections of the Labour Party.

On 30 March 1979, as the campaigning for the General Election had just begun, Airey Neave was assassinated (see above). The British middle-class left responded in a fairly predictable way. The *Morning Star*, paper of the CPGB, expressed, in the language it reserves for the Republican Movement,

‘... its utter and total condemnation of those who brutally and cold-bloodedly murdered Mr Airey Neave ...’

The problems facing the people of Northern Ireland cannot be solved by such acts of barbarism. In fact they can only be made worse ...’ (31 March 1979)

It went on to say that the ‘right-wing lobby’ which had just received a ‘severe blow to its credibility by the exposure of the crimes of torture and brutality in the RUC interrogations centres’ will utilise this ‘latest act of terrorist barbarity’ to ‘wriggle off the hook and justify their own barbarous practices’. The *Morning Star* fails to tell us that it was a Labour government, with Tony Benn in its Cabinet, directing the ‘barbarous practices’. And that the *Morning Star* never actively campaigned, or gave support to those campaigning against such practices in the large demonstrations during 1978.

*Socialist Challenge* (IMG) also saw reactionary consequences following the assassination

‘But whether Neave was killed by a revolutionary nationalist or by a provocateur, the end result will be the same – A wave of repression ...’ (5 April 1979)

*Socialist Worker* (SWP) agreed; ‘It will be grist to the mill of the “law and order” brigade’s campaign for greater police powers ... One thing it will NOT do is to help the cause of the unification of Ireland’. Terrified that the violence of the oppressed would lead to problems for their own ‘so-revolutionary’ organisations they condemned it under the guise of concern for the Irish cause – a cause they had done little to promote in the recent past. All the organisations of the British middle-class left called for a vote for the Labour Party in the General Election. No doubt on the grounds that a Tory government would be worse for them – it could hardly be worse for the Irish.

In the period leading up to the election, the RCG conducted a Boycott campaign under the banner of *Hands Off Ireland!* Supporters of *Hands Off Ireland!* attended over 35 major Labour Party rallies throughout the country, raising the question of torture in Ireland and heckling and disrupting the meetings of Prime Minister James Callaghan and his Cabinet Ministers. In spite of every effort by all political parties to prevent Ireland becoming an election issue this intensive disruption of Labour Party meetings attracted widespread publicity in the media and brought the issue of Ireland into the election. The campaign of disruption was joined by Sinn Fein, PAC, RCT and sections of United TOM, although the latter was opposed to the boycott of the Labour Party. In boycotting the election the RCG gave expression to the stand already taken by thousands of Irish workers and sections of black workers. The *Irish Post* 5 May 1979 reported the results of a poll of the intentions of Irish workers in the general election. 31.5% indicated that they did not intend to vote. The vast majority of these traditional Labour supporters were taking this position because of Labour’s record in the North of Ireland. Labour lost the election. The middle-class left were horrified. The SWP told us that ‘The ruling class is back in office’. *Socialist Challenge* immediately started to campaign; ‘Kick out the Tories for a Labour Government’. The Irish would not notice any difference. British imperialism’s campaign of terror would continue. All that was different was that the British middle-class left could use the issue of Ireland to attack a Conservative government and quickly bury the record of the Labour Party.

By the time of the General Election *Hands Off Ireland!* had increased its circulation to 7,000 copies, and size to 24 pages, from the 2,500 circulation, 16 page first issue in December 1976. *Hands Off Ireland!* had become a major influential journal on the Irish question, had been instrumental in building the prisoner campaign in Britain in 1978 and had made Ireland an election issue. There was a basis for building an anti-imperialist movement on Ireland, and the police and right-wing attacks on *Hands Off Ireland!* street meetings and public events during 1979 indicated that the state was determined to prevent it happening. Other forces were determined also.

The middle-class left in Britain saw the development of a solidarity movement based on an alliance of Republicans and communists as a serious threat. Hence their hostility to the alliance which built the demonstrations in 1978. When the PAC withdrew from public campaigning soon after the General Election, the middle class left and TOM seized the opportunity to reassert their own claims to lead the Irish solidarity movement in Britain. They were fortunate because the new direction that the prisoner campaign was to take could be exploited by them to confine any campaign in Britain to what was acceptable to their allies in the Labour Party. The anti-imperialist Irish solidarity campaign that had begun to be built in 1978 could only flourish on the basis of an alliance of Republicans and communists determined to build an anti-imperialist campaign. However the shift in direction in the prisoner campaign in Ireland now ruled that out. Support had to be won from ‘broad forces’. The influence of communists in Britain was very small. The middle-class left quickly moved in to reassert its claims.

When the Young Liberals called a march for August 1979 the middle-class left saw its opportunity and jumped at it. While the 12 August march in Belfast was a jubilant celebration of the revolutionary national struggle (see above), in Britain, on the same day, a march of an entirely different character took place under the pacifist slogan ‘End the War’. The London march called by Young Liberals was supported by SWP/IMG/TOM in the guise of the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland. The political standpoint of this march was made clear by the East Midlands Young Liberal Federation who declared

‘... its support for the long term ideal of a united Ireland. However, EMYLF rejects and condemns outright the use of violence, as a means to achieving this end’.

The contrast with the Belfast march could not be clearer.

The march itself was about 8,000 strong, led by a handful of Young Liberals and a handful of MPs. These included: Kevin McNamara who, in Parliament, compared IRA/INLA volunteers to ‘rapists, burglars and murderers’ and, in a TV programme on Ireland, refused to appear alongside Sinn Fein President Ruairi O’Bradaigh; Leo Abse who supported the Peace People; and Cyril Smith, Liberal MP, who voted for the death penalty. The organisers of the march forced a Sinn Fein H-Block cage to the back of the march. So this was a march led by anti-Republican reactionaries. It was also by far the largest mobilisation of the middle class left seen since 1972. The very people who, in 1978, refused to give serious support to the prisoner campaign led by PAC and Sinn Fein, now turned out in their thousands for the Young Liberals.

The British middle-class socialist left did next to nothing to aid the heroic ‘blanketmen’ with their four year long prison struggle in the torture chambers of the H-Blocks Long Kesh. In May 1979, significantly after an intensification of the armed struggle by the IRA in the Six Counties, and with the prison struggle in the H-Blocks and Armagh Prison reaching a critical stage they stage-managed what they regarded as a prisoner campaign. It was ‘Charter 80: Human Rights for Irish Political Prisoners’ organised by the SWP and supported by most of the British middle-class left, including the CPGB, and a few left Labour MPs and trade union General Secretaries, such as Tony Benn and Alan Sapper. It used the ‘Five Demands’ of the National H-Block Campaign to plead for more humane treatment of Irish prisoners. There was no opposition to imperialism here, only the request that it be less brutal. The obvious association with the anti-Soviet/pro-imperialist Charter 77 was an insult to Irish revolutionaries who had taken up the armed struggle against British imperialism. But there was a method to all this. Under what other banner could the Labour Party, the CPGB, the SWP, the IMG and even the Young Liberals unite? For ‘Charter 80’ had them all. The interests of the prisoners had to play second fiddle to this unprincipled alliance of the British middle-class left.

The political forces in Ireland, North and South and also in Britain were now lined up. The first hunger strike was soon to begin. Could the balance of political forces be changed to force the British government to grant the prisoners political status. The strategy laid down in Ireland and adopted in Britain was now to face the decisive test.

David Reed  
August 1982

To be continued

## CENTRAL AMERICA IN BRIEF

### ● El Salvador

In a further attempt to shore up El Salvador's fascist regime, the US military mission based in San Salvador is demanding an increase in the number of US military 'advisors' to work with the fascist army. It is, in addition, arguing that these US military personnel should be based at brigade level all around the country, rather than just in the capital, as is the case at present. An official source at the mission estimated that El Salvador's army could survive against the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front for only about a year unless more US military personnel were poured in. Meanwhile in a new escalation of indirect US intervention, the US financed and trained Honduran army, in a joint operation with El Salvador's army, invaded the FMLN controlled province of Morazan in an attempt to destroy this revolutionary stronghold. The offensive was beaten off, but in a statement the FMLN said it was now possible to predict 'the sending of US troops to Central America and the combination of an attack on the Salvadoran people... an invasion of Nicaragua... and [the] transformation of Honduras into a US military base... for the carrying out of actions against Cuba and Grenada.' The statement concluded with the declaration that 'The FMLN is firmly determined to oppose by military means any invader and declares a pact of unity with all those who defend independence and national sovereignty.'

### ● Honduras - base for imperialist counter-revolution

US imperialist designs to transform Honduras into a counter-revolutionary springboard against the Central American revolution is already well under way. This year, US military aid to Honduras was doubled to \$10m and is scheduled to rise to \$15m in 1983. In addition the Reagan administration is planning to spend \$21m modernising three Honduran airfields so that they can handle US transport and fighter planes. At any one time there are nearly 100 US military advisors working with the head of the Honduran Armed Forces, Colonel Alvarez Martinez, who has said he would welcome US combat troops in the country. US-Honduran collaboration against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua took a new turn with joint army exercises in August 25 miles north of the Nicaraguan border. These exercises preceded and followed numerous acts of aggression by Honduran troops against Nicaragua and the constant anti-Sandinista sabotage carried out by ex-Somoza National Guards who are based in Honduras and funded by the CIA to the tune of \$19m.

### ● Nicaragua

Alongside direct military aggression to destroy revolutionary Nicaragua, imperialism is intensifying economic war. A recently leaked World Bank report states that Nicaragua's 'creditworthiness' is 'extremely limited'. To become 'creditworthy' it is demanded that the Sandinistas change their attitude to the 'private sector' and 'raise the level and quality of private investment.' In addition the 'private sector' must be given 'long term assurances' and 'political power'. In other words the Sandinista regime is being told to assist the capitalist exploiters of the people and give the capitalist class political power as a condition for new loans. Thus the World Bank uses economic power to try and reverse the gains of Nicaragua's people's revolution. If the Sandinistas refuse to bow to imperialist demands, the World Bank and private banks threaten to further sabotage the Nicaraguan economy in the hope of inciting the people to rise up against the Sandinista government. In the meantime the World Bank intends to continue making modest level loans, but not for what the people need: the World Bank has forbidden loans to be used for roads, water supply or education.

# KENYA

## IMPERIALIST SHOWPIECE SHATTERS

The 1 August attempted coup in Kenya, led by non-commissioned air-force officers, to overthrow the repressive, corrupt and pro-imperialist government of Daniel Arap Moi was a sudden and violent explosion of the intense class struggle developing in the country. As the coup leaders announced the '1 August Revolution' over Kenya's radio, thousands of poverty stricken slum dwellers poured into the streets of the capital city, Nairobi. To the chants of 'power to the people' and anti-corruption slogans they emptied shops of everything from desperately needed foodstuffs and clothing to commodities reserved for Kenya's new black middle class - stereo, videos and other luxury items. A potential peoples' uprising and the coup attempt were suppressed by the hated British and Israeli trained General Service Unit along with other troops loyal to Moi's government who acted with a ferocity typical of counter-revolution. Over a period of three days of scattered resistance the GSU and loyal troops shot dead 2,000 workers, students, unemployed people and air force men. Thousands more were arrested and homes ransacked as troops sought out oppositionists and lost property. Ex-British colony Kenya was temporarily made safe again for imperialism.

The failure of the coup was a great relief for the major imperialist powers. Kenya had gained a reputation for 'stability and democracy' because since formal independence in 1963 it has been a fertile and profitable field for multinational investment. In alliance with a rising black comprador middle class indulging in extremes of corruption, nepotism and theft, imperialism controls the economy and wealth of Kenya dominating the tea, coffee and cotton plantations. A boom in the tourist industry has enriched the imperialists and the tiny Kenyan middle class. Kenya has also become a strategic military ally of imperialism as the 'independent' Kenyan ruling class hires out the country to US and British military forces. British troops regularly train at the Embakasi and Nanyuki military bases, whilst the US Rapid Deployment Force has been given access to the port town of Mombasa in exchange for £60m which will be used to improve the port and the bases in Nanyuki and Embakasi.

Whilst imperialism and Kenya's middle class have grown immensely



Ngugi wa Thiong'o

wealthy, Kenyan workers and peasants have suffered the extremes of neo-colonial oppression and exploitation. As vast tracts of land have been concentrated into the hands of a few, thousands of peasant families have been forced into smaller and smaller plots, the average today being less than 1 hec-

tare per family. Thousands of others have emigrated to the towns in search of non-existent jobs and live in degrading shanty town slums such as those of Kibera and Mathere Valley in Nairobi. They have no chance of employment. Between 1979 and 1983, 1m new job seekers will enter the market, whilst new jobs will total a mere 200,000. Even these estimates for jobs will not be realised due to the international economic crisis. Last year only 18,500 found jobs. The remainder survive by one means or another.

The Kenyan ruling class has maintained the country's much heralded stability only by the severest repression of all opposition to the ruling Kenyan African National Union (KANU). Trade unionists, workers, peasants, intellectuals, lawyers, writers and radical MPs have been harassed, imprisoned and murdered for exposing and fighting the Kenyan ruling class's alliance with imperialism, its corruption and nepotism and its suppression of the masses' social aspirations. The most famous cases are the murder of radical MP JM Kariuki in 1975 and the detention without trial of Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o whose novels are a searing criticism, from a communist standpoint, of Kenya's comprador ruling class.

However the class struggle cannot be halted by bullets or prisons. Strikes, uprisings, demonstrations and protests in factories, plantations, colleges, schools and settlement schemes have long been daily occurrences. The 1 August coup and the popular movement it threw up so briefly was only the latest expression of the Kenyan workers', peasants' and progressive students' preparations to enter the stage of Kenyan history and regain all that has been robbed from them since their bitter struggle for independence.

Eddie Abrahams

## INTERNATIONAL IN BRIEF

### ■ Imperialist thieves fall out

As capitalist governments see no end to recession and economic crisis, and nations drift towards total financial collapse, capitalists are fighting tooth and nail for world markets, while governments are resorting to protectionism. In recent months the first shots have been fired in what promises to be the most ruthless trade war since the 1930s.

Nothing better illustrates the way in which the imperialist thieves fall out than the decision by the US government to place an embargo on the supply of equipment to the Soviet gas pipeline project. This US move provoked howls of rage from European imperialists who have billions of dollars staked on the project. The West German steel industry could collapse without the contracts it has to supply steel for the project. French, British and German engineering companies are to supply pumping equipment worth \$3.4bn.

The Reagan Administration has two aims. The first is to make its European competitors dependent on the USA for energy supplies; the second is to attack the socialist countries.

But US imperialism will never achieve its aims. The Soviet Union has the technological and economic capacity to complete the pipeline on schedule, despite the embargo. Although the \$10bn pipeline project is the largest East-West commercial transaction in history, it accounts for only 12% of Soviet pipeline construction in the current five year plan, and the scope of Western participation is less than 10%. Further, the Soviet Union has the world's richest natural energy and mineral resources, including gas, oil and timber much in demand in Western Europe.

Despite their hatred of communism, the European imperialists are dependent upon trade with the Soviet Union. The US too has broken its own embargo by maintaining exports of grain, and charges and counter-charges of hypocrisy and self-seeking disloyalty are flying between the imperialist capitals. At stake is the ability of the imperialists to uphold the unity of their anti-communist alliance - NATO. They find this increasingly difficult while squabbling with each other for the biggest share of the plunder of the world.

William Gray

## JAMAICA: IMPERIALISM PREPARES

On his visit to Britain this summer Jamaican Prime Minister Seaga toasted British imperialism and Margaret Thatcher, 'the madonna of the Falklands'. This former governor of the imperialist World Bank is assisting US and British imperialism in equipping Jamaica to be an armed camp, policing the Caribbean and forcing the Jamaican people into the kind of poverty and disease that imperialism inflicts upon the most oppressed Caribbean islands.

Seaga was installed as Prime Minister in the 1980 elections following the concerted efforts of the CIA and International Monetary Fund, assisted by British banks which withdrew export credits to the previous Manley government, in a joint campaign of economic and political sabotage. A CIA 'operations squad' coordinated assaults upon working people by local armed gangs with the Jamaican police and army. Over seven hundred lives were taken. Seaga's victory gave imperialism an opportunity to attack the Jamaican people and the growing revolutionary and democratic movement in the Caribbean.

The imperialists prize Jamaica for its bauxite deposits, for its strategic position close to revolutionary Cuba, Grenada and Nicaragua, and as a sentry for US oil and mineral supply routes from South America. Jamaica is now the fourth largest recipient of US aid after Israel, El Salvador and Egypt. Between 1981 and 1983 military assistance will more than triple. By 1985 Jamaica will receive the same amount of

military equipment from imperialism as is used to prop up the El Salvadorean junta. For recent NATO manoeuvres US and British ships have used Kingston harbour to launch threatening operations against Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada. Having a long experience in oppressing Caribbean peoples, British police and military experts have been brought into the Jamaican forces to work alongside US Green Berets and Israeli officers. British regiments have restored their 'Caribbean-hop' with the SAS resuming training on the island. Cuban built and donated schools and an agricultural college are being transformed into military installations.

Accompanying the military build-up is the increased subordination of the Jamaican economy to imperialist interests. David Rockefeller, of the US First National Bank, heads a team of multinationals that advise Seaga on policy. The dispossession of land from Jamaican farmers has been speeded up as the giant US and British multinationals, Gulf and Western, United Brands, British and

American Tobacco buy them out. As the imperialist crisis has deepened so the capitalist bauxite and aluminium markets have shrunk. This, combined with a fall in the price given by the multinationals for sugar and bananas has led to a worsening shortage of foreign exchange in Jamaica, and an increased dependence on loans to buy imports. The consequence has been thousands of sackings by Jamaican firms and the US and Canadian bauxite corporations resulting in what the Jamaican Manufacturers' Association estimate is factory output running at 39% of its capacity. Public services, education and health programmes have been cut back, and this in an island suffering recent outbreaks of polio and where more than a quarter of the people are illiterate. Such squalor contrasts with the wealthy US and European tourist areas where available foreign currency is used to import luxuries at the expense of much needed medical goods for Jamaican people. Jamaican workers are facing regular food shortages and price increases, rent rises over 50% in the ghettos and an official unemployment rate of 26% which vastly underestimates the number of urban youth without work.

Trade union rights are under attack. The Communist Workers Party of Jamaica has pointed out that three-quarters of the Caribbean's industrial

disputes are about preserving democratic rights, apart from wages. Police have been used to frame and bribe opposition trade unionists and politicians in attempts to silence them. The imperialists and their regime are determined that resistance will be smashed and have tightened their grip on the media as a weapon in this struggle. Seaga appointed himself Information Minister and led the way in a series of purges of progressive broadcasters and journalists and attempted closures of progressive publications.

However, the Jamaican people broke their slave shackles in 1838; a century later they celebrated in an uprising which wrung the right to vote and form trade unions out of the British colonialists. In 1962 Jamaica gained formal independence, but the chains of oppression that were forged by British capitalism still bind the island. Three years ago the youth of Kingston, Spanish Town and Montego Bay fought police from behind 500 barricades. The next great battle of the militant Jamaican people will be alongside their risen comrades in Central America and their brothers and sisters in Britain and the USA to take state power, the land and the factories.

Trevor Rayne



● RUC in Castleblaney

The Free State government has given carte-blanche to squads of armed undercover agents to operate with impunity in the 26 Counties. This latest fact emerged when a four-man hit unit of the RUC was discovered operating secretly in the Co Monaghan town of Castleblaney by alert locals.

It was during a late night dance session on 8 August when some locals became aware of the abnormal behaviour of a number of customers. Unwittingly the suspects encountered a Garda patrol car, attempted to escape but were prevented from doing so; they were arrested following a fracas and after a brief period released.

The mission of the undercover unit was obviously sinister, probably to kidnap or assassinate in a well worn RUC tradition. However the Free State government delivered an innocuous slap on the wrist to the British ambassador, having released the RUC men.

Meanwhile in typical application of double standards, the Free State Minister of Justice turned down an application from Owen Carron, MP, recipient of numerous death threats, for permission to carry his gun, legally held in the Six Counties, south of the border. The pretext offered was that it was not policy to issue firearms certificates in the South... if you are a Republican!  
Morrigan

● The London Bombings

The IRA's ability to punish the British war machine internationally evidenced by the most recent London bombings, engendered a reaction of dismay and outrage in ruling class circles in Southern Ireland.

Middle-class bodies such as the Royal Dublin Society and Limerick Chamber of Commerce tendered their sympathy for deceased imperialist soldiers and the former body offered to compensate the British army for the loss of some of their Irish-bred horses. Their servility and inferiority feelings express the true terms of the relationship that subsists between bourgeois Britain and bourgeois Ireland.

Further condemnations of the bombings by the opportunist CPI and Workers Party indicate the secret bonds that also bind these organisations to the will of their master.

Morrigan

● Sinn Fein censored

The 18 July decision of the Free State Supreme Court upholding political censorship comes as no surprise to Republicans and socialists who have been selectively chosen by the Free State ruling class for frame-ups and political show-trials over a long period of time.

The 18 July decision centred on the constitutionality of an RTE ban on the recording and broadcasting of speeches by Republican spokespersons imposed under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act. Sinn Fein contested the ban in the High Court at the time of the last general election and won. However, on appeal from the government the Supreme Court overturned the High Court decision holding that it was constitutional for a Minister of Justice to ban free expression from a source the Minister believed to involve 'an evil and dangerous organisation'.

The lessons of the Supreme Court decision are obvious. Democratic rights and liberties are never secure under the capitalist system, but will be bartered to prolong the temporary power and sway of monopoly capital.

Morrigan

# IRISH JAIL GERRY TUIE

British control over the 26 Counties of Ireland was further strengthened with the conviction on July 13 of Gerry Tuite to ten years imprisonment

In December 1980 Tuite made a dramatic escape from Brixton Prison in London where he was being held as an Irish Republican prisoner on remand facing political charges. He returned to freedom in his own country only to be seized by the Fianna Fail government and tried under the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act in Dublin's Special Court.

This first trial relates to charges of possession of explosives in London in 1978. He will be put on trial again in October on a second charge of conspiracy to cause explosions (with British policemen giving evidence).

During the proceedings the prosecution failed to present or produce much of its alleged evidence, exhibits and witnesses. Such 'evidence' as was put forward was not contained in the initial British prosecution case but 'emerged' only at the Special Court. It revealed a number of anomalies giving it the hallmarks of spuriousness and fabrication. Whereas a search using 'sniffer' devices of a London flat vacated by Tuite revealed nothing, a subsequent police search of the long-since unoccupied flat produced 'incriminating material'!

The trial and conviction of Gerry Tuite by the government of Charles Haughey shows that Irish Republicanism is as much a threat to the collaborators of the British-created Free State as to the British imperialist state itself. So terrified is the crisis-ridden government of Fianna Fail that it is even prepared to give up the last pretences of independent judicial sovereignty from Britain.

When the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act was being debated in Leinster House in 1975 the hypocrite Haughey was among its fiercest parliamentary

opponents. Passed in 1976, the Act is designed to get round the ban in international law on extradition for political offences. (The British do this by not recognising political offences.)

Not only has the Fianna Fail government, like the coalition government before it, used the Act for the purpose it was intended - having passed ten year sentences on Republican prisoners who escaped from Belfast's Crumlin Road

prison in June last year - it has even extended its scope. In addition to covering 'certain acts done in Northern Ireland' the conviction of Tuite means that it will be used against Republican activity in England.

The jailing of Gerry Tuite and others under this treacherous Act shows clearly that the struggle for Irish freedom must be directed at the ruling class of the 26 Counties as much as at their masters, the British imperialists.

Sylvia Burns

## POLICE STOOGES

The use of puppets, stooges and informers from among the population by an occupying imperialist power is as old as the British Empire.

In spite of the use by the British of the most modern methods of surveillance, computers, electronic spying etc., in spite of the torture and humiliation of political prisoners, in spite of the non-jury Diplock Courts, in spite of electoral disenfranchisement and all the legal backing of the imperialists' state machine, the British still resort to this well-tryed and trusted method in the catalogue of repression.

Throughout 1982 a few informers sold themselves to the RUC and the British Army. These mercenaries sold out to mercenary talk. Offers of new lives abroad, plus payments of five-figure sums of money are known to be freely available to anyone among the nationalist population who 'talks' to get a conviction. And let us not forget that in the oppressed Northern statelet a few words are all that is needed to put a man or woman into the prisons of the British for many years. No other 'proof' is necessary.

Late last year Christopher Black, whose entire family are now believed to be living in England, and one other person gave 'evidence' to the police incriminating about 40 people, most of them alleged members of the INLA.

These political prisoners have been on remand since that time and are now threatening to go on hunger strike. The anger of those held in Crumlin Road gaol is directed in particular to the use of uncorroborated evidence as a method of detention without trial.

It is 'estimated' by the authorities that over 200 people are being detained in the North on the basis of 'information' sold to the RUC. In recent months about 50 prisoners who have been held for long periods on charges based on word of mouth have seen the 'evidence' withdrawn when their cases come up in court.

Sylvia Burns

## Clydeside TOM Document

As regular readers of FRFI know, Clydeside Troops Out Movement called the police to have the FRFI contingent removed from a march in Hamilton on 22 May. FRFI made this known publicly and issued a demand to the National Steering Committee of the Troops Out Movement (TOM) to expel Clydeside TOM. TOM's National Steering Committee responded to this with an insultingly brief, unsigned letter denying the allegations. Just what investigation did TOM base its categorical denial on? Not any, is the answer. They chose to believe a four-page document produced by Clydeside TOM which lies about police involvement and goes on to launch a viciously sectarian attack on the RCG and Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee. The document is a 'secret' one for internal TOM circulation only. TOM has not the courage to deny the allegations publicly. Nor is this surprising. For their denial is a lie, their four-page document is a pack of lies and there are just too many independent witnesses testifying that the police were called, to allow TOM to dare to make a public stand on the issue.

In the Clydeside TOM document it says:

'As to the events in Hamilton... During the preparations of this march the band alliance decided that it did not want GIFAC/RCG banners on the march as it did not want (sic) to be associated with these organisations. This request was supported by other organisations supporting the march. Because of strength of feeling about this among ordinary supporters no need was felt for extensive discussion or a vote, on this issue and the decision was relayed to GIFAC. On the day of the march an RCG banner was displayed. Two stewards were sent to deal with the problem. They were one of the two chief stewards and a bandmaster - both responsible and trusted people. After some argument the RCG took their banner down. WE STRESS THAT OUR STEWARDS RELIED ENTIRELY ON THEIR MORAL AUTHORITY AND THAT FORCE WAS NOT USED.

WE REJECT WITH CONTEMPT ANY SUGGESTION THAT OUR STEWARDS HAD ANY CONTACT WITH THE POLICE OVER THIS MATTER.' (Emphasis in original)

Really this just will not do! Putting lies in capitals does not render them any closer to the truth. Firstly Clydeside TOM openly admits banning GIFAC and the RCG from the march for purely sectarian reasons - disgraceful enough, one would think. Secondly, it admits that a self-appointed clique took the banning decision - 'no need was felt for a vote' indeed! Third, they ask people to believe that they used their 'moral authority' and the RCG - which has fought every attempt to ban us either by the police or Labour movement bureaucrats - evidently crumbled in the face of their great 'moral authority'. What nonsense. We have never been removed from a march except by police force, eg Glasgow May 1981. And having seen

Clydeside TOM at its pro-imperialist work over the past years we have no hesitation in saying that it has no moral authority, no political principle and no shred of the normal, decent standards of political behaviour. We repeat the fact - which TOM must recognise and act on: Clydeside TOM called the police to remove FRFI from the march.

So numerous are the lies in Clydeside TOM's document that it would make tedious reading to list them all, and we have no intention of doing so here. GIFAC has produced a statement in reply to Clydeside TOM which makes the essential political point:

'Once again we in the GIFAC state that this sectarian position must be ended. The Irish people need all the support they can get. It's intolerable that an organisation which fully supports the struggle of the Irish people should be prevented from marching in this way. Such bans only aid our enemy, only weaken the already too small solidarity movement. The CTOM must put a stop to its plans to continue to ban the GIFAC and other organisations.'

Copies of Clydeside TOM's 'secret' document are available to bona fide organisations and individuals who want one. Also individual signed statements testifying to the truth of the Clydeside TOM's actions on the Hamilton march. These include statements by Edinburgh LCI members, SWP members, Tyne-side Action Committee on Ireland members and other independents. All available from:

RCG (Scotland) Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh. Please enclose a large stamped addressed envelope.



● Dublin Youth Support IRA

An opinion poll carried out in Dublin among unemployed youth has revealed that among unemployed youth between 16 and 24 in Dublin no less than 23% regarded the Provisional IRA as a good organisation. This figure, in the face of anti-Republican propaganda which is strong and all-pervasive in the Free State media, confirms powerful support for the revolutionary national struggle among the unemployed youth.

It was these youths who, following the murder of Bobby Sands, IRA Volunteer, on hunger strike last year, engaged the Free State police in fierce and sustained street fighting in the very heart of Dublin. This blow struck by the youth against Free State collaboration with British imperialism was the most significant development of the hunger strike campaign. It revealed the revolutionary potential of that campaign to extend the struggle into the heart of the Free State itself. Not surprisingly it drew forth slanderous condemnation from all the collaborationist forces, open and disguised.

However the poll findings one year later confirm that the youth remain firm in their support of the revolutionary national struggle. The Irish ruling class and all those who fear the revolutionary hatred and anger of the youth will be dismayed by these findings. But communists and anti-imperialists know that when the faces of the dispossessed youth are integrated into the revolutionary national struggle the end will be at hand not only for British imperialism but also for all its collaborators in Ireland.  
Terry Marlowe

● Report on Irish AAM Concert

The Irish Anti Apartheid Movement held a commemorative concert in Liberty Hall Dublin on Friday 25 June.

The main speaker was Kadar Asmal, the chairperson IAA, who said that there were and are striking similarities between the struggle in South Africa and the Irish struggle. He pointed out that the ANC was 60 years established, that in fact they commemorated its foundation on 2 June.

He gave a long outline of the history of the struggle of the ANC and the various means of struggle used.

Eamonn Mac Thomais, the distinguished Dublin writer and historian began by quoting the Freedom Charter of South Africa and said it reminded him of the writings of Padraig Pearse, the 1916 leader.

He saw that people were in prison in South Africa today for standing by the Freedom Charter, while in Ireland anyone who stands by the Irish Charter, the 1916 Proclamation, could be imprisoned. Eamonn pointed out that the apartheid laws were very similar to the British laws which were used for hundreds of years in Ireland. Eamonn Mac Thomais was imprisoned on four occasions by the Free State, he is a former editor of the Republican paper An Phoblacht.

Ulick O'Connor, writer and poet, read three of his poems, including one about Black and last year's long hunger strike. Ulick concluded with a poem about a South African child whose father was in prison.

A collection for an ANC college in Tanzania raised almost £70. An Iranian student distributed leaflets condemning Israel's atrocities in the Lebanon.

The commemoration was not reported at all in the Dublin newspapers nor by Radio/Telefís Eirann.

# RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up

## ● Dundee Street Meetings on PLO

On 14 August Dundee FRFI supporters group held its fourth successful street meeting in City Square in support of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and to denounce the savage genocide of the Zionists in Lebanon.

Here in Dundee the situation for building a massive campaign in support of Palestinian self-determination could not have been better. The District Council and local Labour Party have campaigned in the labour movement for many years and has a proud record of support for the PLO. Dundee has twinned with Nablus on the West Bank and its mayor Bassam Shaka (who had his legs blown off by a Zionist bomb) was recently a civic guest.

Yet despite this proud record not one British left group officially supported the street meetings. Although invited, the Labour Party, CPGB, SWP, and WRP did not even reply to us. Despite their absence, FRFI supporters will continue their work. In this work we are again having to resist police attacks. Dundee FRFI group has had to battle long and hard for the right to use City Square. In the past police have seized copies of revolutionary newspapers in a blatant attempt to censor our activities. Again, at the last street meeting we were ordered to remove our banners and placards, but refused. We now have copies of the bye-laws written in large letters on placards which we intend to display in the future to defend our rights.

## ● Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Campaign

On 19 August the Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Campaign held its first public meeting for some time. A message of support was received from the GIFAC who welcomed the support which the DIRSC had shown for its marches in the past and looked forward to further joint activity.

A letter was also read out from the mother of Patsy O'Hara - INLA - a volunteer who was murdered during last year's hunger strike, which addressed the Irish Solidarity Movements in Scotland, England and Wales.

A committee meeting will take place very soon to plan future work in Dundee. Details from FRFI sellers.

## ● Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee

A step forward for Irish Solidarity work in Bradford was made in July with the holding of the Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee's first public meeting. The audience of 25 people watched the video, Ireland's Hunger Strike, and heard a speech calling on people in Bradford to come forward and work

with BISC to build up solidarity with the Irish people. A reporter from the reactionary local paper, the Telegraph and Argus, was barred from the meeting as a response to the paper's hypocrisy in showing front-page pictures of injured horses, while ignoring the maimed and murdered victims of plastic bullets. The very next day the same paper began a hysterical campaign against BISC and the meeting, with headlines of, 'PROIRA Meeting Fury'. As a direct result of these newspaper articles, moves are now afoot to ban BISC from using Bradford College premises for meetings - moves which have the backing of the Deputy President of the College Students Union, who also happens to be a supporter of the anti-Irish 'Militant' newspaper. BISC and FRFI supporters in the college will be fighting any attempts to censor their activity on Ireland.

Despite the press campaign against BISC, people in Bradford have continued to show that there is widespread support for the ending of British imperialist rule in Ireland. The petition calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops has now attracted several hundred signatures. This support from members of the public has predictably alarmed the police who have stepped up their harassment of BISC members in the city centre. The police demanded that placards calling for Victory to the Irish People! were removed as they would cause a 'breach of the peace', and also that members of the public should not be approached with the petition as this would constitute an 'obstruction'. The police have openly admitted their attempt to break up BISC activities because they are 'too touchy'. This latest harassment, in line with the escalation of police attacks nationally on anti-imperialists, will be fought by BISC. More street meetings are planned and local councillors are to be contacted to support free speech on Ireland.

Contact by writing to:  
**Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee, c/o Box BISC, LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2**  
Jenefer Thomas

## ● Leeds 3 - the struggle goes on

Regular readers of FRFI will recall how West Yorkshire police appealed to the Divisional Court against the successful appeal by two Leeds FRFI supporters, Gordon Teal and Bill Bolloten, arrested for selling FRFI from door to door in Chapeltown on 28 May 1981.

On 21 July 1982 Lord Justice Ormrod and Mr Justice Comyn upheld the police appeal. Gordon Teal and Bill Bolloten have now to go back to Leeds Crown Court for another hearing of the case. Merely for selling FRFI the two supporters have been assaulted by the police, arrested, dragged through five appearances at Leeds

Magistrates Court, a Crown Court hearing, a Divisional Court hearing and now another Crown Court hearing. To cap it all, Gordon Teal has had to pay £147 legal aid contributions for the privilege of having been taken to the Divisional Court by the police.

It is now over 15 months since the arrests, yet little does the British judicial system care about the worry, anxiety and inconvenience such drawn-out proceedings cause. Even less does it care that the reasons for its actions are understood by its victims. The Divisional Court's justifications for returning Gordon Teal and Bill Bolloten to Leeds Crown Court for retrial can only be understood by the demented logic of reactionary ruling class minds. Truly, British justice is nothing but an incomprehensible tangle of laws, delays, opinions and interpretations designed by the ruling class to trap and oppress the workers.

The date of the new hearing has yet to be set. FRFI will continue to fight this case and asks for your support. Money is particularly needed to meet legal costs. Messages of support and donations please to:

**Leeds Three Defence Campaign, c/o FRFI, LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2**  
Gordon Teal

## ● London meeting supports PLO

On 14 July London FRFI held a meeting to protest against the Zionist invasion of Lebanon. The 100-strong audience listened to rousing speeches in support of the struggles of the Palestinian People led by the PLO and afterwards participated in a lively discussion.

The FRFI speaker emphasised the fact that the Zionist state of Israel was established by British imperialism in order to service its interests in that part of the world. And further, that from its birth the puppet state of Israel had carried out this reactionary role by its world-wide support of the most reactionary regimes including South Africa - the supply and delivery of armaments by the Zionist state being one of its prime services to imperialism.

The next speaker was Hassan Iranian People Fedai Guerillas of the Village, a movement of the Palestinians in occupied Palestine. He had recently left Palestine after having been under house arrest for two years. He vividly conveyed the oppression suffered by the Palestinian people being robbed of their land, having their houses bulldozed about them, and being subjected to the constant harassment of the repressive laws applied to Palestinians by the Zionist state. He described how the Israeli authorities try to destroy the Palestinian national identity and their allegiance to the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. If you voice

this recognition of the PLO you are thrown into prison. If you wear Palestinian colours you are thrown into prison. Racism, assassination and terror are the methods of control used by the authorities against the occupied population. The true voice of the oppressed Palestinians, his speech was repeatedly interrupted by applause when he said,

'as victims of racism, as victims of imperialism, we cannot and will not be racists or support any kind of imperialism. We try to unite our struggle with the Jews, especially the oppressed Jews... because we believe that Zionism is not only the enemy of the Palestinians and the whole Arab nation, it is also the enemy of the Jews in Israel.'

He further added,

'...our struggle is not only for Palestine... the Palestinian people believe that the whole question of liberation in the world is their question... For example, the women of political prisoners in Israel... demonstrated not only to defend their sons in Israeli jails, they also defended the revolutionaries of the Irish people.'

He received a long ovation and then continued,

'We defend the struggle of the people of El Salvador and every movement against imperialism, Zionism, reactionaries everywhere and all of us will be victorious!'

Hassan Eljabari was followed by Michel Massih, a Palestinian barrister practising in Britain and by solidarity messages from London Sinn Fein, the Organisation of Iranian People Fedaiin Guerrillas, the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign and the sponsoring organisations of the meeting, the City Branch of Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Revolutionary Communist League and the North and South London Irish Solidarity Committees. The collection taken brought in £160, and having met the expenses of the meeting from this, the remaining £70 was donated to the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

## ● Northumbria police call for curb on demos

Over the last few months Greys Monument in Newcastle has become a focal point for political activists, protests and demonstrations. This has proved too much for the Northumbria police.

Using as an excuse the fact that there has been political daubing on various buildings and memorials, and backed up by the Normandy Veterans Association and Newcastle Council, Chief Supt. Thynne has said, 'Police are keen to ensure law and order at protest gatherings on the memorial steps, but any obstruction to the public whether it be by political groups or buskers and sellers will lead to prosecution.' Chief Supt. Thynne then went on at great lengths to say 'We would not like to ban freedom of speech for anyone, no matter what political group it may be'.

However, it is perfectly obvious that the first serious moves have been made to curtail free speech and demonstrations in Newcastle. The instrument for this will be 'obstruction' laws which are used for political censorship by the police nationally. The Tyneside Irish Freedom Action Committee is not going to be intimidated from carrying on its work. Anyone wishing to contact the committee should write to **AS King, c/o Porters Lodge, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.**  
Blanche Ashley

## EVENTS

### 5 - 10 SEPTEMBER

#### ■ LONDON

Public Meeting. **Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!** Film: **The Patriot Game.** Friday 3 September. Holborn Central Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1, 7.30pm. Admission 70p (50p in advance) 30p unwaged. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee.

#### ■ LONDON

**Namibia Day** Benefit Gig. To raise funds for Namibia war victims. Bands: Tribesmen, Kingston Rebel Sound System, SWAPO singers. Saturday 4 September. Haringey Trade and Community Centre, Brabant Road, N22 (near Wood Green Tube), 8pm-12 midnight. Admission: £2, unwaged £1.50. Tickets from Namibia Support Committee, 53 Leverton St, London NW5. 267 1914/2.

#### ■ LONDON

Public Forum. **Trade Unions in Retreat.** Tuesday 7 September, Camden Labour Club, Carol St, NW1, 7.30pm. N London FRFI.

### 11 - 17 SEPTEMBER

#### ■ LEEDS

Demonstration: **Defend the Precinct 6! Stop Police Harassment!** 11 September. Assemble Eastgate 2pm. (near NCP Car Park).

#### ■ LONDON

Planning Meeting: **End Loans to Southern Africa (ELTSA).** We need your help to build the campaign against British economic collaboration with apartheid. Thursday 16 September at 467 Caledonian Road, London N7, 6-8.30pm. New members especially welcome. Write to above address or tel 01-609 0211 for details.

#### ■ LEEDS

FRFI Public Forum. **Victory to the ANC! Smash Apartheid Now!** Thursday 16 September, Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7. Leeds FRFI.

#### ■ BRADFORD

Public Meeting. **Stop Police Harassment! Stop Police Censorship on Ireland!** Friday 17 September, Room 2, Central Library, 7.30pm. Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee.

### 18 - 24 SEPTEMBER

#### ■ GLASGOW

Public Meeting. **Scottish Prisons - Take the Lid Off!** Wednesday 22 September, City Hall, Albion Street, 7.30pm. Admission 25p. Glasgow FRFI.

#### ■ LEEDS

Public Meeting. **Defend the Precinct 6! Stop Police Harassment!** Thursday 23 September 8pm, Leeds Trades Club.

### 25 SEPT - 1 OCT

#### ■ EDINBURGH

Public Meeting. **Police, Prison and Repression.** Tuesday 28 September, Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place, 7.30pm, admission 25p. Edinburgh FRFI.

#### ■ LONDON

Public Forum. **The Appointment of Sir Kenneth Newman.** Wednesday 29 September, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton 7.30pm. Admission 30p. S London FRFI.

#### ■ MANCHESTER

Public Forum. **Building the Communist Movement in Britain.** Friday 1 October, Lass O'Gowrie Public House, Charles Street (next to BBC Oxford Road) 7.30pm, Manchester FRFI.

### 2 - 9 OCTOBER

#### ■ LONDON

Public Meeting. **No Police Censorship! Drop the Charges Now!** Tuesday 5 October, Lola Jones Hall, Tooting Swimming Pool, Garratt Lane, SW17, 7.30pm. Admission 30p (40p on door). South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

#### ■ LONDON

Public Forum: **South African Political Prisoners.** Tuesday 5 October, Camden Labour Club, Carol Street, NW1, 7.30pm. N London FRFI Group.

#### ■ DUNDEE

Public Meeting: **Police - Censorship and Repression.** Thursday 7 October. Location from sellers, 7pm. Admission 25p. Dundee FRFI.

#### ■ BRADFORD

Public Forum: **Smash Racist Immigration Controls.** Friday 8 October, Room 4, Central Library, 7.30pm. Bradford FRFI.

#### ■ NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

A night of Irish music by Red Umbrella. Free buffet, Free raffle! Friday 8 October, Printers Pie (Upstairs) 7pm. Admission 75p. Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland.

## COMING SOON

#### ■ LONDON

Street Meetings: **Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Defend Democratic Rights!** Saturday 9 October, Tooting Broadway Tube, 1.45pm. South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

#### ■ LONDON

Pickets called by North and South London Irish Solidarity Committees. **Drop the Charges! End Police Harassment!** Tooting 3 - Monday 11 October, Wells St Magistrates Court, W1, 9.30am. Mayday 2 - Tuesday/Wednesday 12-13 October, Wells St Magistrates Court W1, 9.30am. Roundwood 1 - Tuesday 19 October, Willesden Magistrates Court, NW10, 9.30am.

#### ■ LEEDS

Public Forum: **The Prison Struggle.** Thursday 14 October, 7.30pm. Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7. Leeds FRFI.

#### ■ NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

Exhibition: **Bin Lids and Barricades.** October 18-29. St Thomas the Martyr Church, Haymarket. Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland.

#### ■ BUILDING AN IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

One Day National Conference Called by NLISC and SLISC - other organisations and individuals sponsoring it. Sunday 21 November, Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, N19. **SESSIONS ON: solidarity with the Irish Revolution; Irish prisoners, PTA and Police harassment. Debates and discussion. Local reports. Speakers will include David Reed (author of the Communist Tradition on Ireland) and Alastair Logan (solicitor with detailed knowledge of the PTA and Irish Prisoners. Many others invited. All welcome. Delegates fee is £2.50 for employed, £1 for unemployed. Accommodation, creche and refreshments available. Send applications now to NLISC, Box BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX. Sponsorships invited from other bodies, committees etc, working in support of the Irish struggle.**

## SUPPORT COMMITTEES

#### ■ LEEDS

Precinct 6 Defence Committee meets every Wednesday in Leeds Trades Club at 7.30pm. All welcome.

#### ■ NORTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Friday 17 September and 1 October at Camden Labour Club, Carol St, London NW1 at 7.30pm

#### ■ SOUTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets Thursdays, 9 and 23 September and 7 October at Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton at 7.30pm

#### ■ TYNESIDE

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

#### ■ GLASGOW

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

#### ■ BRADFORD

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

## FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

■ **SOUTH LONDON** meets on Tuesday 14 September at Jeffrey's Library, Jeffreys Road, Stockwell SW4 7.30pm

■ **NORTH LONDON** Tuesday 21 September, 7.30pm, Camden Labour Club, Carol Street, NW1

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

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

■ **LEEDS** meets on Tuesdays 7 and 21 September, 5 October at Leeds Trades Council Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7, 7.30pm

■ **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

# Letters

## Warmest greetings

**Letter from National Council of Resistance (Iran)**  
The following letter is a response to FRFI's support for the anti-imperialist forces in Iran amongst whom are the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaii Guerrillas and the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran. The latter is the dominant and most consistently democratic revolutionary force in the NCR. This letter is from the NCR offices in Paris.

Dear Friends,  
Coinciding with the commencement of the second year of its successful campaign of resistance, we are pleased to inform you that the Chairman of the National Council of Resistance (founded on July 21, 1981), Mr Mas'ud Rajavi, wishes to express his sincere regards and conveys the warmest greetings.

Mr Rajavi wishes to further express his gratitude for your solidarity and for your message of support. At the same time, we hope you will be kind enough to forgive any delay that might have arisen in this respect.

As you are well aware, the reactionary dictatorship of Khomeini has been in a full campaign of war, with its maximal efforts and using every available means, against humanity and democracy, the reply to which has, nevertheless, been a remarkable resistance that has surpassed historical boundaries stretching far beyond.

Your support for the National Council of Resistance does indeed speak of the respect that you hold for the Iranian people's just and democratic struggle, while being also indicative of the faith you maintain for the realisation of justice and democracy in our homeland. In fact, deep in their hearts and in their thoughts, our people will always cherish your support and solidarity. With profound gratitude and best wishes,  
**Office of the National Council of Resistance.**

## REVIEW COPIES RECEIVED

- pb = paperback, hb = hardback
- Mohamed Babu **African socialism or socialist Africa** Zed Press £5.95 pb, £16.95 hb
- Dan Nabudere **Imperialism in East Africa (Vol 1)** Zed Press £16.95 hb
- George Beckford/Michael Witter **Small Garden, Bitter Weed, Struggle and change in Jamaica** Zed Press £5.95 pb, £16.95 hb
- Alexander Shlyapnikov **On the eve of 1917** Allison & Busby £4.95 pb
- John Mercer **The stories of vanishing peoples** Allison & Busby £2.95 pb
- Richard Croucher **Engineers at War 1939-1945** Merlin Press £4.80 pb
- James Dunkerly **The Long War - Dictatorship & Revolution in El Salvador** Junction Books £5.95 pb, £12.50 hb
- Andrew Gamble **Britain in Decline** Macmillan Press £3.95 pb, £12.50 hb
- Latin America Bureau (Essays) **The European Challenge - Europe's new role in Latin America** LAB £3.95 pb
- Jenny Pearce **Under the Eagle - US intervention in Central America & the Caribbean** LAB £3.95 pb
- Tom Pickard **The Jarrow March** Allison & Busby
- Tony Cliff **Neither Washington nor Moscow** Bookmarks £3.95

## SEAMUS COSTELLO Slanderous attacks?

**Editorial note:** This letter has been condensed for reasons of space

Comrade,  
Throughout the Hunger Strike the entire British left were revealed as totally bankrupt, reactionary, and pro-imperialist, the RCG being the only exception... However... under the disguise of a review your paper FRFI July-August carried a veiled slanderous attack on the IRSP. Your more serious offence in our opinion was in committing the crime of carrying out slanderous attacks on the memory and accomplishment of Seamus Costello the murdered revolutionary Republican Socialist leader...

1 Why did Costello spend four years in the Officials after their opportunism became clear? I'm sure the IRSP comrades recognize that it was an error not to break from the Officials sooner but the fact is the IRSP/INLA did recognize that a point had been reached when the Officials were hopelessly bankrupt, degenerate and counter revolutionary and for this they are to be congratulated... Your review, like most articles on Ireland in *Socialist Worker*, *Socialist Challenge*, *Newsline*, *Militant*, starts by commending and praising the courage of Irish Republicans and ends up attacking them.

2 Why did it become necessary to establish a new political party instead of allying themselves with the Provisionals? This question was raised in an interview in an IRSP pamphlet available from the IRSP head office in Dublin on request. In reply the IRSP say:

- 1 In certain respects the IRSP is in agreement with the Provisionals but there are many areas of disagreement.
- 2 The IRSP is a revolutionary socialist party.
- 3 We the IRSP contend that the struggle for national liberation must be led and controlled by the working class.

This is not the case at present. Of course one reason why the IRSP didn't join the Provisionals may have been that they wouldn't have been welcomed. In *Hands Off Ireland!* No 9 Nov '79 an IRA spokesperson when asked do you foresee the IRA and INLA working together in future, answered 'No, I don't think that will happen mainly because of the previous history of INLA.'

## Pleasant surprise Bulgarians lash Brits

Dear comrades,  
I recently returned from socialist Bulgaria. Imagine my pleasant surprise on opening the English language weekly *Sofia News* for August the 11th and finding that the lead item in the international news column was of the Brit attack on the anti-internment demonstration in Derry! The paper carried many other items of anti-imperialist interest. The Bulgarians have a strong sympathy for the liberation struggles of oppressed people. They were oppressed by the Turks for a long period of their history, and after a long period of partisan struggle joined with the Soviet Red Army to chase the German fascists out of the country at gunpoint. No wonder the imperialists and their hangers-on attack the socialist countries!  
Yours sincerely  
GT  
London

3 How could Costello justify opposing free abortion on demand? It really is not on for your reviewer to drag up something from 8 years ago. Between 76/79 your Irish bulletin *Hands Off Ireland!* quite rightly criticized the Brit left groups who used as a pretext for their failure to support the armed struggle of the IRA, the IRA's alleged lack of a progressive policy on a variety of issues...

4 The pamphlet contains an obvious attack on the Provisionals made by Costello in September 1976?... Is your reviewer so naive to imagine it is possible to explain the formation of the IRSP/INLA without criticizing the Provisionals in some way and finally if anything has been diminished, it is the

sincerity of the RCG's claims to want to build any principled anti-imperialist movement.

**J Malone**  
Irish Republican Solidarity Campaign  
Dundee

**SP replies:**  
If Comrade Malone read the review with any attention at all, he would have noticed that I was criticising not Seamus Costello, but a pamphlet about him. I criticised that pamphlet because it didn't explain some of the important things Seamus Costello did or some of the policies he supported. I did not and could not pass judgement on his views or his actions - that is for the Irish movement to do, not the British.

## WHO GUARDS THE GUARDS

1

Enquiries were held - everyone agreed  
The prisoner was murdered - a terrible deed  
Three prison guards - charged into his cell  
A vicious onslaught - a defenceless man fell  
Kicked him - punched him - broke flesh and bone  
Left him there bleeding - to die all alone.

*Who guards the guards - the question was cried  
Who guards the guards - but no-one replied  
Who guards the guards - his last dying breath  
Who guards the guards - that beat him to death?*

2

Court was assembled - culprits brought to book  
Statements were given - the oath it was took  
But the killers went free - no retribution  
'Not Guilty' verdicts - a legal execution!!!  
They say Justice is blind - that much is plain  
For she'd have wept - to see what they done in her name.

*Who guards the guards - the question was cried  
Who guards the guards - but no-one replied  
Who guards the guards - his last dying breath  
Who guards the guards - that beat him to death?*

3

Hey Mister Guard - help us understand  
How your conscience - justifies blood on your hand  
Do you sleep at night - do your kids fear your touch  
Can you look your wife in the eye - does it bother you much?  
'Cos a prisoner's been murdered - and no-one's to blame  
Just clean up the blood boys - and cross out his name!

*Who guards the guards - the question was cried  
Who guards the guards - but no-one replied  
Who guards the guards - his last dying breath  
Who guards the guards - that beat him to death?*

JA

## Resistance in Scottish cages

Dear FRFI  
From 4 June for 11 days opposition to the barbaric prison cages (see FRFI 21) stepped up in Scotland's Porterfield Prison, Inverness.

For nearly two months the prison system was able to silence the protest but some of the truth eventually leaked out on 4 August when 'serious damage' to the cages was admitted. The deputy governor of Porterfield along with another couple of flunkies also got a taste of their own medicine when the prisoners emptied a chamber pot over their heads.

The cages, already bare and grim enough, are ominously said to have built in 'further security measures'. The nature of these measures is not clear but FRFI readers can be assured that the attempt to make animals out of prisoners will reach new evil depths.

In a small crack in the prison censorship a prisoner in

Peterhead prison has just been allowed to receive FRFI. It possibly has something to do with the fact that he has a case lodged with the European Court of Human Rights and that we had written to him outlining a future campaign to secure these rights for him.

GC  
Scotland

## You know the truth

Dear FRFI,  
I am a Palestinian and it is the first time I have read your paper, issue no 21. It is really uplifting and comforting to hear a voice raised courageously against Zionism, a voice which knows what the truth really is and fights for it. In the Lebanon war the Israelis had to unmask their savage face that had been well hidden for 34 years.

I wish I could make all the world read your paper.  
Keep up your great work.  
Sincerely  
MH  
Manchester

## Scourge of the earth

Dear Comrade,  
Many thanks for your letter of 28 July including your very wonderful paper which I will be grateful to accept starting with your current enclosed issue No 21...

Imperialism is the scourge of the earth, the sooner it is burned to the roots the better. With all the sincerity and admiration of my heart, I thank those gallant men and women of all nationalities who stand on street corners in the face of Police hostility and preach the atrocious barbarism of the British government and its army in the six northern counties of Ireland.

I am yours very sincerely  
PJC  
Lincs

## Poisoning the youth

Dear FRFI,  
The British capitalist state, having destroyed the latest threat to its degrading racist rule (The Summer Uprisings), is determined to make sure that it will face no such similar threat from future generations of youth.

It has attempted to do this by employing racist, middle-class teachers in many schools, hoping to brainwash youth with fascist ideas. The ideas usually follow the same trend as the following:

- Large scale immigration is one of the major causes of the recession in Great Britain today.
- The Soviet Union (ie communism) is the only major threat to world security and must be annihilated.
- Great Britain is a very righteous and fair country and has always been just and fair in any situation, in any part of the world.
- Unemployment has been caused by Trade Unions and Socialists who have overpriced workers by demanding higher wages, and can only be eradicated by eliminating these organisations.

There are many more fascist ideas being taught in schools, but the above four are the major ones. The British state hopes that the majority of white middle-class youth will believe these lies and therefore be ideal 'troops' to combat Socialism and Communism. But thankfully only a small minority are gullible enough to be fooled by this blatantly obvious attempt to

## Kampuchea

Dear Comrades,  
When the UN General Assembly opens on 21 September, the imperialists will be trying to seat as the Kampuchean delegate a representative of their newly created anti-Vietnamese coalition of exiles. This coalition, fronted by Sihanouk and Son Sann, is based on the genocidal Khmer Rouge who murdered millions of Kampucheans. The imperialists want the Khmer Rouge returned to power to enslave the people of Kampuchea, to threaten the revolutionary governments in the area, and to help police their billions of dollars worth of investment in South-East Asia.

The British government will support this monstrous charade unless there is sufficient opposition in this country. All individuals and organisations should write NOW to their MP and to the Foreign Secretary, demanding that the British government should support the proposal that the Kampuchean seat at the UN be left open for the time being - a position supported by the present Kampuchean government.  
Yours fraternally  
Steve Palmer  
London

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**

poison their minds, but we must never forget that the threat still remains.

One obvious example of this policy is a statement made by a History teacher to a classfull of pupils, in a school in Leeds. He said 'The Soviet Union is the biggest colonial power that the world has ever seen'.

If that is so, then what were the British soldiers doing in places like India, Africa and the Middle-East? Were they not colonising free and independent nations for Britain's own selfish and capitalist needs. British soldiers are responsible for the suppression and murder of thousands of citizens of these independent nations. We can even see British colonialism in action today in the British occupation of the North of Ireland.

How can a British teacher have the nerve to accuse another country of colonialism without referring to the British Empire? The tragedy of the situation is that some fools will actually believe these lies and will therefore be ideal recruits for racist, fascist organisations.

This problem, along with the other obvious type of racism, both by fascists and teachers is normal for non-white pupils to endure. Pupils should organise to prevent this type of racist filth being taught and stop black pupils being victimized by racist teachers.

If this could be done then victory over the capitalist state and the fascist organisations would be one step nearer and we will progress another rung up the ladder of annihilating fascists and racists.

GSH  
Leeds

## 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

## BRITISH ARMY SHOOT UNARMED REPUBLICAN

In Derry City on Wednesday 25 August at 4.30pm IRA volunteer Eamonn Bradley was shot dead by a British army patrol of the 2nd Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment as he was walking home from the pub. The shooting was deliberate calculated murder by the British army.

Eamonn Bradley was shot first in the leg and then, after he had fallen, he was shot in the head. He was unarmed at the time. The first RUC statement issued was the usual lying rubbish about an army patrol being fired on. However

there were too many witnesses and reluctantly, in 4 contradictory statements, the RUC was obliged to tell the truth: Eamonn Bradley was unarmed when he was murdered by the army.

Eamonn Bradley was well known and

respected for the 4 years he spent on the blanket protest up to his release from Long Kesh concentration camp in April this year. Having failed to break him in prison, British imperialism murdered him outside. FRFI sends its sympathy and solidarity to Eamonn Bradley's comrades, family and friends. Such imperialist terror will never break the Irish people's will to resist British imperialism.

## POLIO OUTBREAK IN WEST BELFAST

On Sunday 14 August two emergency clinics were opened in West Belfast following an outbreak of polio – the first in the Six Counties for five years. The background to the outbreak is the appalling housing conditions in Ballymurphy, a nationalist area off the Falls Road.

Ballymurphy is where two-year Martin Conlon, who has polio, lives. The area also has a high incidence of diarrhoea amongst youth, outbreaks of jaundice

and hepatitis. All these diseases and the polio outbreak are connected to the foul conditions imposed on the nationalist people of Ballymurphy.

Two estates, in particular, are described by SDLP health spokesman Dr Joe Hendron as unfit for humans. The flats are rat-infested. There are stagnant pools of water caused by burst pipes and blocked sewers. In some cases raw sewage has seeped into gardens in the area. Small wonder that diarrhoea, jaundice, hepatitis and now polio should break out amongst the people forced to live in these conditions.

Systematic sectarian discrimination, without which the Six County statelet could not exist, means that nationalist workers are more likely to be unemployed, more likely to live in unfit housing and their children more likely to suffer from, and die from, poverty-related diseases. The case of Ballymurphy is evidence of the consequences of British imperialist rule for the nationalist workers in the Six Counties: British army/RUC torture and murder, poverty, disease and death.

James Martin

## Anti-Republican Propaganda & Blackmail

In addition to the growing use of informers (see page 13) the RUC and the British army is expert in the use of anti-Republican propaganda and blackmail. This is seen in the case of Mrs Fiona Brown 'kidnapped by the IRA' according to the RUC and their loyal supporters in the press.

On 9 July Bobby Brown, Fiona Brown's husband, was detained and charged with membership of the IRA. A week later 16 more people were detained in Belfast after a series of searches for arms and ammunition and were to be charged with similar 'offences'. It was made known by the 'authorities' that they had made a 'significant breakthrough' against the IRA. At about the same time as the raids Fiona Brown disappeared. Her mother has since received a letter from her stating that she was well and safe. *An Phoblacht/Republican News* states that Fiona Brown, in fact, left her home to escape arrest by the RUC and is safe with friends. The RUC have attempted to turn this to their advantage by claiming that she has been kidnapped by the IRA and issuing thousands of posters and leaflets 'concerned' about the 'missing woman'.

The reality of the RUC's 'concern' has been exposed by Bobby Brown himself. When he appeared in court Bobby Brown withdrew the statement signed by him saying that it was signed under pressure. This pressure included withholding of medical treatment for his hand which was broken during his arrest and constant isolation. His statement to the court resulted in the immediate release of four prisoners. Bobby Brown has also sent a letter out from Crumlin Road Prison which decisively exposes the hypocrisy and brutality of the RUC:

'I would like to take this opportunity to put the community right about the events concerning my wife's disappearance which Jim Prior RUC and their string of anti-Republican followers seem very concerned about. I am sure that she is being looked after

alright – better than what I was in Castlereagh – I am being held hostage in the basement wing of Crumlin Road Prison by the British Government now from the 16th July in the hope that I take their rotten deal... Jim Prior made a statement in the House of Commons showing concern about the safety of my wife and on the same day signed a statement holding me here for another month.

I would like to say that the RUC and all their figureheads are only using and abusing my wife's name against the IRA for their propaganda aims. The ball is in the RUC's hands.'

As we go to press Fiona Brown has appeared at a Sinn Fein Press Conference and confirmed that she left home because she feared arrest by the RUC. Given the treatment of Bobby Brown we are not surprised at her decision at all. Once again imperialist anti-Republican propaganda and blackmail has backfired on the imperialists.

Sylvia Burns

## BUILDING AN IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

ONE DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Called by  
North London Irish Solidarity Committee,  
South London Irish Solidarity Committee

Sponsored by:  
GIFAC, Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland, RCG,  
Wolf Tone Cumman of Sinn Fein, RCL

SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER 9.15–5.30  
Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, N19

SESSIONS ON:

Solidarity with the Irish Revolution; Irish Prisoners, PTA and Police Harassment. Debates and discussion. Local Reports Speakers will include

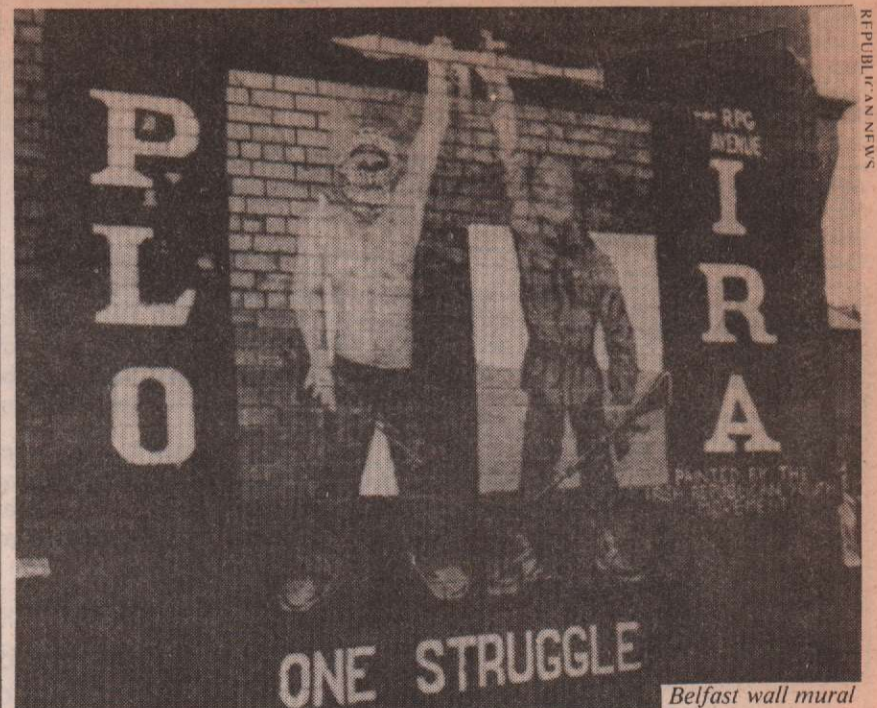
David Reed (Author of the Communist Tradition on Ireland) and Alastair Logan (solicitor with detailed knowledge of the PTA and Irish Prisoners). Many others invited

All welcome

Delegates fee is £2.50 for employed, £1 for unemployed  
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Sponsorship invited from other bodies, committees, etc working in support of the Irish struggle

## Belfast Anti-Internment March



Belfast wall mural

Thousands took part in the annual anti-internment march in Belfast on Sunday 8 August. The turn-out demonstrated the continuing unbroken spirit of the nationalist people. This was also shown in the magnificent wall paintings seen along the route of the march. One such painting also showed the internationalism of the oppressed depicting a PLO fedayeen and an IRA volunteer jointly holding a rocket-launcher.

This internationalist spirit was also displayed at the rally following the march by the presence of a speaker from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. This speaker was greeted with great enthusiasm by the nationalist people who chanted PLO-IRA! PLO-IRA!

This year's march not only commemorated internment but also the struggle of Irish POWs in English jails. A statement from the H-Blocks drew attention to the fight of the POWs in England and called for a campaign to win the right of repatriation for the POWs. Other speakers included Steve Bundred, GLC councillor, who called for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. For this he has since been subjected to filthy abuse in the British press.

FRFI supporters from Leeds, Bradford, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle took part in the march which was led by a delegation organised by TOM. 300 copies of FRFI were sold to the crowds.

The march demonstrated once again the popular and internationalist character of the Republican struggle to free Ireland from British imperialist domination.

GC