

# FIGHT RACISM!

# FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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## Miners strike back - Kinnock runs FIGHT TO THE FINISH

The blazing barricades lit by the 5,000 strong mass picket at Cortonwood on 9 November signal the determination of the striking miners to halt the latest 'back-to-work' movement and regain once again the initiative in the power struggle between the NUM and the Thatcher government. Five mass rallies have been called by the NUM Executive in key areas to prepare the striking miners for a fight to the finish, as well as to counteract what Arthur Scargill calls the 'vile propaganda of the media against the strike'. 3,000 attended a mass rally in Edinburgh on 6 November. And significantly the battle of Cortonwood took place the morning after the mass rally in nearby Sheffield. 4,000 miners, their families and supporters crammed into Sheffield City Hall with an additional two thousand in overflow halls. They heard Peter Heathfield, General Secretary of the NUM urge them to 'stand firm, remain united and together we can weather the storm'. By Monday 12 November, barricades had appeared throughout South Yorkshire and the miners were defending themselves with 'stones, bricks and petrol bombs'.

The miners' strike is in a critical phase. A whole series of NCB/government measures over the last few weeks have been deliberately designed to exert maximum pressure on striking miners and their families. The breaking off of two sets of negotiations, the settling of the pit deputies' (NACODS) threatened strike, the offering of huge pay packets

to encourage scabbing, the sacking of hundreds of miners who have been convicted in the courts, a series of High Court attacks on NUM funds - have all been coordinated at the highest level by the NCB and government in an effort to demoralise and weaken the strike.

### Labour leaders attack NUM

But the pressure on the strikers has not



JOHN HARRIS/IFL

only come from the NCB and the government. At crucial moments throughout the strike the leadership of the TUC and Labour Party has intervened in order to force the NUM into an unprincipled compromise and, in particular, to undermine the position of Arthur Scargill.

At the end of October major disputes in the NCB were beginning to surface and be made public. MacGregor's handling of the strike was being seriously questioned inside the NCB itself. A rapid series of MacGregor style promotions and demotions took place among top NCB managers. However a

story in the *Sunday Times* on a NUM Libyan connection came to the rescue and was promoted to divert attention from what the British Association of Colliery Management called 'incompetence at the highest level' in the NCB. Foremost among the NUM's critics were none other than the General Secretary of the TUC, Willis and the leader of the Labour Party, Kinnock.

The NUM chief executive Roger Windsor was invited by Libyan trade unionists to visit Libya. Windsor's visit was sensationalised in the media and the subject of an orgy of criticism - led off by Willis and Kinnock. Without asking the NUM for a word of explanation Willis stated publicly 'I have expressed to Mr Scargill my condemnation of the meeting with Colonel Gadafy. This has created the impression that the NUM is prepared to consort with a government which is heavily implicated in terrorist campaigns outside its own borders.' Mr Willis has no difficulty at all on the other hand, about keeping quiet about the murder of children and innocent people by plastic bullets fired by British soldiers and the RUC in the British occupied Six Counties of Ireland.

Kinnock, too, rushed to pontificate: 'Any offers from them (the Libyans) ... would be an insult to everything the British trade union movement stands for. If such offers are ever made, then of course they must and will be rejected.' Kinnock, who has not lifted a finger to help the miners, who has actively scabbed on the miners all the way through and who is not prepared to attend a single one of the five mass NUM rallies using the lame excuse that his diary is 'too full', still thinks he has the right to dictate from which countries the NUM may receive aid. In fact the NUM is receiving help from trade unionists in fifty countries. Such international solidarity is in stark contrast to the actions of those scab leaders of the British labour movement, Kinnock and Willis who chose to attack the NUM over the Libyan visit while remaining silent over the seizure of NUM funds by ruling class courts in the same week.

During October the TUC attempted to exert more and more control over the strike, even at one point negotiating at ACAS with the pit deputies' union NACODS and the NCB, while Scargill and the NUM were left waiting out in the cold. Jack Eccles, new TUC chairman, celebrated his appointment by attacking the NUM, talking of 'the rigidity of our colleagues in the NUM' and stating that it was time for

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### ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT AGM

## THE STREETS CONFRONT THE CONFERENCE

Anti-imperialists and anti-apartheid activists scored significant political advances at the AGM of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Despite attempts by the AAM leadership, ably supported by Fleet Street, to isolate supporters of FRFI and City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, they were unable to prevent two resolutions proposed by City Group supporters being overwhelmingly carried by the AGM. One of these motions insisted that the fight against apartheid is inseparable from the fight against racism in Britain. The other called for the organisation of street activities, petitioning and an increase of work with trade unions, political parties, black, youth, students, women, gays, disabled, and pensioners groups. That is, the politics already guiding City Group's work and which had been attacked by the AAM leadership. The passing of these motions severely undermines the backward notion that the fight against apartheid is a separate issue unconnected with oppression in Britain.

Sixteen contributions from FRFI and City AA - demonstrating a broad spectrum from pensioners to black youth, from Labour councillors to communists - pressed home the point that what is needed is a campaigning, anti-imperialist Anti-Apartheid Movement. No one should imagine that this year's AAM AGM was anything like its predecessors. The hall (changed at the last moment to accommodate large numbers) was packed for the central debate around the motion condemning the AAM Executive for its divisive attack on the South African Embassy Picket Campaign. The debate was allowed 1 hour and was the first motion of the day. It was around this motion that the AAM leadership focused its attack on City Group and the RCG.

Moving the motion on behalf of City Group, Bradford AA Group and a group of six RCG supporters, Carol Brickley gave the history of the SAEPC's battle to win back the right to picket on the pavement outside the Embassy and its decisive victory against the combined forces of the British police and the South African embassy. She went on:

'We did not expect the Anti-Apartheid Movement to take the rap for what we did, or indeed to necessarily join in. What we did expect, and I believe had a right to expect, was that the AAM would not condemn us.'

She pointed out the broad forces involved in the campaign who had been drawn into the AAM as a result and their justifiable anger at the Executive's statement condemning the campaign. These forces, she said, were the future of the movement.

At the end of the debate what counted was numbers, not open or honest debate. The motion was defeated 416 against, 210 for and 11 abstentions. The 'ultra-left' takeover (their term for criticising the executive) had been defeated. The emergency was over, for the time being at any rate.

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### CHRISTMAS FOR THE MINERS

Dear Comrades,  
I am a member of the Fitzwilliam and Kinsley miners' wives support group. In the past 8 months we have fed striking miners and raised money etc. We are now facing very severe financial hardship as winter closes in on us and Christmas draws near. There are over 600 children

in our communities and we are trying to provide a Christmas party and each child with a toy, so as not to make Christmas too unhappy for them. I trust comrades will appreciate the huge task we have ahead of us and the short time with which we have to achieve our target. So I would like to ask all

comrades, who are in a position to do so to help us in our time of need. Donations of either money or toys can be sent to: Mrs Linda Turgoose, Chairwoman, FKMWSG, 41 Kinsley House Crescent, Fitzwilliam, Pontefract, W. Yorkshire. Please make cheques payable to Mrs Linda Turgoose.  
Yours, Patsy O'Dowd

## 'you ain't seen nothing yet'

Beneath the balloons, the ballyhoo and Reagan's bloated conceit, the US ruling class will be sobering up to confront a world that is far from impressed by the stage managed display of confidence. What solace they can garner from the apparent lack of organised opposition at home is more than matched by the dread that US imperialism has of the rising masses of Central and Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. To these millions Reagan is a comic book caricature of Yankee idols who have passed on with history. The US ruling class knows that its fate will be decided in the forests and mountains of Central America and Asia, the city squares of Santiago and Sao Paulo, the hills above Beirut and Jerusalem, the ghettos of Soweto and Detroit, not on a ballot paper.

Imperialism is in crisis and the US bourgeoisie must try to solve it. Reagan represented a faction that wants to accelerate the attack upon the national liberation movements abroad, the socialist countries and the working class, especially black people, at home. Mondale had no disagreements with Reagan about the general direction of policy. But spoke for those in the ruling class who erred on the side of caution. While Reagan wrung every last drop of flag-waving delirium out of the Grenada invasion, claiming the 'Vietnam syndrome' was buried, he could hardly

bring himself to look at the debacle in Lebanon.

### The poor abstain

In the drunken welter of statistics one figure stands out: only 53 per cent of the electorate bothered to vote at all. Reagan's 'great victory' was achieved with less than 37 per cent of those eligible to vote. Such is Reagan's mandate with which to condemn the Nicaraguan elections where 82 per cent of the electorate voted and 70 per cent of these supported the Sandinista candidates.

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weekend and reports on the  
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PAUL MATTESSON

THE STREETS CONFRONT THE CONFERENCE

# Red Scare

When entrenched bureaucrats have lost touch with the movement they claim to lead, they commonly raise the spectre of 'communist conspiracy' in order to label all opposition to their leadership. The Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) leadership is no exception to this rule. At the moment when there is a desperate need for a united and active solidarity movement with the rising struggles in Southern Africa, the AAM leadership chose to pursue a campaign of slanders and attacks against the local anti-apartheid group which represents direct action in the movement – the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group. Having lost the political argument against City Group – especially after the victory of the South African Embassy Picket Campaign (SAEPC) – the AAM leadership chose the well-trodden, bourgeois path of a 'red scare' in its efforts to defeat City group supporters at the AGM.

PAUL MATTESSON

Take-over bid?

It easily recruited the apartheid-loving capitalist press to its side. For there is nothing they like better than red-baiting especially if it sows divisions in the movement they oppose. Even the *Morning Star* was signed up and sunk so low as to run its own 'red scare' campaign. In the few days before the AGM, the attempt by City Group supporters to criticise the AAM leadership's position on the SAEPC, to argue for more militant activities, and to nominate 13 people for the National Committee of 30+ members, became a 'takeover bid' (*The Guardian*), an 'improbable City takeover bid' (*The Times*) and a 'bid to head Anti-Apartheid campaign' (*Morning Star*), masterminded by the Revolutionary Communist Group. The AAM leadership was up against an 'ultra-left sect' (*The Guardian*), 'ultra-left elements' (*Morning Star*), and the 'heady rhetoric' of a group which 'supports uncritically the IRA' and 'influences no one in the broad Labour movement' (*The Times*).

*The Times* accused City Group of attracting support from 'minorities' – women, blacks, gays, youth and 'now the miners'. Undoubtedly the majority of the population. Whereas the *Morning Star* tried to frighten its readers into believing that we were trying to narrow the base of the movement. In a red scare



you can't win. And if you are still not convinced *The Guardian* warned that 'two hundred new members have been signed up by City Group this week. All will be able to attend the AGM and vote'. All this was an underhand appeal to their own inactive following.

The 'red scare' had the desired effect. The AGM had double the normal numbers present – over 600. By carefully fixing the agenda and making sure the main debate took place in the morning the AAM leadership was able to pack the hall and win the crucial vote on the SAEPC, as well as getting its own National Committee slate elected (voting ended at 2.30pm). Even the tellers who count the votes were chosen in advance from Executive supporters. The AAM Executive had in fact put more energy into mobilising against the activists in City Group than it has ever done in mobilising to fight apartheid. But a 'red scare' also has unpredictable side effects.

Out of control

Those who can be mobilised by such means are not serious fighters against apartheid. Over 200 of them left after casting their vote. In the afternoon City Group and its supporters were close to having a majority. They were therefore able to prevent Bob Hughes's underhand attempt to suppress democracy and by-pass two City Group motions later in the day – he took the vote on this but refused to count it as he would

National Committee

City of London AA Group nominated 13 people to the National Committee: including David Kitson, Norma Kitson, their two children Amanda and Steven; three Labour MPs, Jeremy Corbyn, Stuart Holland, Tony Banks; a local Labour councillor; 3 City AA members and only 3 RCG members.

None of the thirteen were elected. Stuart Holland MP withdrew under pressure, it is rumoured, from the Shadow Cabinet. The biggest disgrace for the AAM leadership was that its 'red scare campaign' prevented the election of David Kitson, and ensured the election of two of the thugs who physically attacked RCG and City Group supporters.

Report compiled by Carol Brickley, Andy Goddard, David Reed and John Strawson

WHO NEEDS DEMOCRACY

The forces opposed to us at the AGM are motivated by one common sentiment – that the AAM should not change despite the fact that the political climate in Britain is changing dramatically. Such forces have no use for democracy. But democracy is essential if the movement is to be unified around the central task of fighting imperialism. Manoeuvres, slanders and lies will not convince people to leave the conference hall and go out onto the streets to fight apartheid. Manoeuvres, slanders and lies will not convince people to commit their time to the struggle. Democracy will. The only forces which do have a use for democracy, for open and honest methods, are the oppressed and their allies.

The nightmare for the current leadership of the Anti-Apartheid Movement must be that the forces who support democracy are growing, and are bound to grow. This year the political climate in Britain has changed beyond all recognition. One section of the British working class – the striking miners – has issued a challenge to the British state and has recognised the scab role of the TUC and Labour leaders and their supporters. The British working class is irretrievably divided between those who have nothing to lose, and those who have everything, especially their privileges, to lose. The RCG is proud to stand with those who have nothing to lose but their chains – whether they are striking miners, black and white youth, or the unemployed. These are the forces which will change the society we live in.

# Communists organise

As soon as it became clear that the AAM leadership were launching a diversionary campaign against City Group and the RCG from public platforms, we knew that the time had come to act to defend the principle of building a united, militant and democratic solidarity movement against apartheid. The RCG took the view that attempts to destroy City Group (see FRFI 43) and that attacks on the RCG/FRFI weakened the Anti-Apartheid Movement just at the moment when a strong and determined organisation was demanded of us by all those actually fighting apartheid.

'Packed meeting'

Far from trying to pack the meeting with people fed on lies – or for that matter on 'heady rhetoric' – we turned

our attention to mobilising as many activists as possible to be at the AGM to defend democracy and the right of anti-imperialists to be in the movement. As we have explained many times in this paper, the activities of the South African Embassy Picket Campaign (SAEPC) and of City Group have won many people to anti-apartheid activities for the first time. These people, many of them young, working class and black represent the future of the AAM and we persuaded them to join the national movement. The leadership of the movement had to come face to face with many who had fought on the streets to defend the democratic right to organise against apartheid – a very different experience from the committee room of the House of Commons.

Mobilisation

In London FRFI supporters organised a public meeting addressed by David Reed. Referring to the AAM leadership's campaign of slander, and their attempt to sabotage the SAEPC, he warned that 'those who refuse to defend the right to demonstrate against apartheid in Britain cannot be trusted to defend those struggling for democratic rights in South Africa'.

Unconditional support

On the night before the AGM a packed meeting at London's Conway Hall heard Carol Brickley for the Editorial Board of FRFI spell out the need for anti-imperialists to organise to defend their democratic right to be in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. She also dispelled rumours that the RCG does not support the African National Congress (ANC) in its liberation struggle. Referring to the RCG Manifesto, she said that the RCG 'gives unconditional support to the ANC, SWAPO and all other forces in their fight to overthrow the racist apartheid state.' Although the meeting had been called by the RCG, it was open to all who agreed a common fight for the same principles at the AGM. The success of the meeting was seen the next day when over 200 people took their politics into the AGM in a militant and disciplined way.

Putting it on record

The RCG outlines the facts of its own organisation for the AAM AGM, not in a defensive way but to put it on record. We believe that our task is to build a powerful communist organisation in Britain which defends the interests of the whole working class in its struggle against imperialism.

We cannot build such an organisation on the basis of cheap tricks, manoeuvres or lies. The fact that many people have come forward to join the RCG since the AGM is testimony to an honest communist approach to politics. At the end of the AGM, more than 200 people had been through a political experience which will arm them for the future task of changing the AAM into a fighting organisation. Our supporters gathered at the end for an impromptu open air rally knowing that the day had been well spent fighting opportunism.

Debating with fascists

National Committee member, Hanif Bhamjee, reported in the debate on South Africa's constitutional fraud that he had debated with a representative of the South African embassy in a school. This open revision of the AAM's stated policy of isolating the apartheid regime was not answered by the AAM's officers. The protest came from FRFI and City Group. Andy Higginbottom said that the aim of the AAM is not to debate with apartheid but to destroy it. Danlami pressed the AAM leadership to make clear that the movement boycotts fascists. Martin Spafford, Vice-President of Westminster NUT said, with the right approach from the AAM, young people themselves would prevent the ambassadors of apartheid from coming into schools.

almost certainly have been defeated. Both City Group motions were passed with large majorities.

Some of the more thuggish elements brought to the meeting took the 'red baiting' very literally. Two National Committee members physically attacked City Group and FRFI comrades – including two black comrades. One of the attackers, a steward, was forced to apologise and was removed from his post after a protest had been lodged about his behaviour. An attempt was made to deny entrance to a black comrade who is a member of the AAM, but we know that, for instance, a white woman barrister was allowed in without credentials.

David Kitson

Perhaps the most disgusting side-effect of the 'red scare' was the treatment of David Kitson at the AGM. Running through the attacks from the AAM leadership and the press was the allegation that the RCG is trying to manipulate the Kitson family for its own ends. Even the *Morning Star* joined this campaign by saying that 'the group has capitalised on its links with the Kitson family'. The result of these infamous lies was that a courageous and determined fighter against apartheid, a man who had spent 20 years in prison for taking up that fight, was snubbed by a significant proportion of those supporting the AAM leadership. They even refused to join in the standing ovation

## Communist Principles

The outstanding contribution of the day came from David Kitson who gave us a shining example of communist principles and commitment to the liberation struggle.

He told the AGM of the importance of international solidarity – 'Throughout we knew that we were not alone'. He spoke of the support of TASS, his union, and of the success of the 86 day picket organised by his family and City Group. Turning to Britain, he pointed to new developments, the striking miners, the Greenham women and the black youth who battle against racism, 'They have set a new tempo which we should join in'. In particular David Kitson called for the release of Nelson Mandela – expressing the hope that by next year Mandela will be free and other political prisoners would be able to join him at the AAM AGM. To loud applause from the communists in the audience he said: 'The armed struggle of the ANC goes on as the bottom line... Freedom will come from the muzzle of the AK 47. I say the AK47 to show who the friends of the South African people are – the socialist countries.'

# South Africa

'We cannot go back now. Our duty as the oppressed people is to step up resistance and create an ungovernable situation.'

Thami Mali, Transvaal Stay-Away Committee

Every day the struggle in South Africa reaches new heights. For two days, 5 and 6 November, hundreds and thousands of black workers in the townships of the industrial heartland around Johannesburg (the Vaal Triangle), as well as in the East and West Rand, answered the call of the Transvaal Stay-Away Committee and refused to go to work. The massive success of the stay-away was enhanced by the support of 250,000 students and schoolchildren who continue to boycott their classes. Students set up roadblocks around the townships to stop vehicles carrying people to work. As usual, the racist police responded with gunfire – the death toll is at least 20, with hundreds arrested. On 8 November the committee which organised the strike was taken into police detention.

The stay-away was organised in response to the invasion, two weeks earlier, of the black townships of Sharpeville, Sebokeng and Boipatong by a combined force of 10,000 racist troops and police. The townships were sealed off while systematic house-to-house searches were carried out. 400 arrests were made. The charges were petty and clearly the whole operation was designed as a mighty show of strength to intimidate the black youth into submission. But far from it, it had the opposite effect, with black youth coming out on the streets to battle with the armed forces pelting them with stones and other missiles. Plastic bullets, teargas and birdshot were fired at the youth.

The army remains on stand-by to be moved into other black townships. The killings, shootings and detentions continue daily. Many student leaders have been detained and United Democratic Front (UDF) Secretary General, Popo Molefe, has been arrested under indefinite detention laws. The apartheid regime has stepped up its attacks on the UDF, which is now under threat of being banned altogether. The so-called 'independent homeland' of the Transkei has already banned the UDF. Yet in the face of this greater repression, organised resistance mounts. The two day stay-away was organised by a combination of forces – by black trade union federations, including the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and CUSA, civic associations in the town-

## SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS STRIKE BACK



POPPER/PHOTO

Youth in Evaton defy the police

ships, student bodies like the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the UDF. The message of the 2 million strong UDF is clear,

'Let them ban the UDF. What they are facing is the voice of the people and that cannot be banned.'

The people's resistance can never be broken. A shining example of this is the conduct of the Durban 3, who continue to wage a principled political battle with not only the apartheid regime, but its biggest backers – the British government. Conditions in the Durban Consulate have become even harsher, with the British government placing greater and greater pressure on the three to leave and therefore face immediate arrest and indefinite detention as did their three comrades.

All the signs are that moves are afoot to expel the Durban 3. Not only does the Consulate treat them as 'unwelcome guests' but following the Natal Supreme Court's rejection of their application that the detention orders issued against them be declared invalid, Geoffrey Howe issued a warning that Britain would not tolerate an indefinite stay by the Durban 3. Nor will it tolerate them

issuing political statements from the Consulate. Following the Durban 3's interview with ITN, all access to the outside world was cut off and visits from their families and lawyers were stopped. Donald Anderson MP, Labour spokesperson for Southern Africa, who recently spent 5 days in South Africa visiting the Durban 3, has accused the Thatcher government of making the conditions in the Durban Consulate far worse than if they were detained under apartheid's security laws. In his words, Britain has proved beyond a doubt that it is 'the best collaborator of the apartheid regime'.

Indeed, we need action in this country on a scale which the oppressed in South Africa deserve, daily sacrificing their lives in the cause of freedom and justice. Let us match the sentiments of Thami Mali of the Transvaal Stay-Away Committee, when he said,

'We have proved to the Government that we have the power in our hands and we can use it. No amount of intimidation can stop us on our way to liberation.'

Ruby Khan

## 24 hour picket demands RELEASE ALL THE UDF DETAINEES

City of London Anti-Apartheid Group held a well-attended 24 hour picket between Friday 26 and Saturday 27 October to demand the release of over 2,000 supporters of the UDF in apartheid's jails.

14 student unions sent representatives from places as far afield as Crewe. Trade union branches sent messages of support, and a delegation of striking miners were given a rousing welcome. Among those addressing the picket were Councillors Bob Latham, Bill McElroy, Terry Rich, Linda Quigley (ex-Armagh prisoner) and Stanley Clinton Davis. One of the high spots of the picket was GLC Councillor Paul Boateng's message, it concluded 'On behalf of the GLC I want to congratulate City Group for regaining the right to demonstrate against apartheid on this pavement. On behalf of the GLC I want to say Viva City Group!'



PAUL MATTISON

## IRISH AAM RESIGNATIONS

Prominent Free State politicians are joining in the rush to resign from the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM) in an attempt to force the IAAM to disaffiliate Sinn Fein. IAAM have steadfastly refused to expel Sinn Fein despite the resignation of Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald, and Minister of Health and Social Welfare Barry Desmond. Arch-scab Conor Cruise O'Brien is also expected to resign. The IAAM, in a statement, regretted the resignation of FitzGerald at a time when the apartheid regime was 'literally waging war' on the black masses of South Africa and the need for solidarity was greater than ever. The IAAM EC has repeated that Sinn Fein as a legal political organisation which supports the aims of the IAAM, is entitled to be affiliated.

FRFI salutes the principled, democratic stance taken by IAAM which is in sharp contrast to the attitude and behaviour of the AAM EC here in Britain.

## CLOSE DOWN THE RACIST SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY!

80 people participated in the launching meeting of the SAEPC campaign to close down the embassy, sponsored by Camden Council Race Relations Committee. The platform brought together broad forces – Jeremy Corbyn MP, Councillor Robert Latham, Bill James on behalf of the NUM and Wilmette Brown from Kings Cross Women's Centre as well as City Group and SAEPC speakers. Messages of support for the campaign were received from MPs Tony Banks and Stuart Holland. The meeting was totally unified in the struggle to end British collaboration with apartheid. Since the meeting new sponsors for the campaign have continued to come forward, including the actress Julie Christie.

SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY PICKET CAMPAIGN

OUR CAMPAIGN MUST BECOME YOUR CAMPAIGN!

If you want to help close down the South African Embassy, don't delay in contacting the SAEPC. Fill up the form below and we will get back to you by return of post.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Return to SAEPC, c/o BM Box City AA London WC1N 3XX

## ANGOLA IN THE FRONTLINE

For over ten years the racist apartheid regime has waged a continuous war of attrition against the People's Republic of Angola. South Africa's aim is to bring down the MPLA Workers Party government and install its own puppet Jonas Savimbi. From the beginning Britain and the US have encouraged South Africa's aggression. All three racist powers give support to Savimbi's counter-revolutionary movement Unita, which is directly organised by the South African military.

Journalist Victoria Brittain recently revealed the destruction wrought by Unita in Angola. In the provincial capital of Huambo the war waged by Unita overshadows everything. The main problem is mines left by Unita. A doctor at the hospital reported 'Most weeks we get a dozen or more of these mine accidents, but sometimes 20 or 40 come in at once'.

The children in the hospital are mostly war orphans – survivors of Unita's attacks on villages now largely inhabited by women and children. Most of the children suffer from kwashiorkor or marasmus, the diseases of malnutrition. Brittain reports that feeding programmes have been started by the International Red Cross in six centres round Huambo to try and combat the serious food situation. Mines and ambushes on roads, and on the Benguela railway, have reduced traffic to periodic escorted convoys.

Unita is organised by South Africa. Unita's recruits are trained in South African camps in Namibia where they are taught violent anti-communism. Recently captured Unita guerillas say they are supplied by air – South Africa is putting 40 tonnes of material a day into Unita operations. Former Portuguese officers working with the South Africans organise the logistics of all the major sabotage attacks, particularly those in urban areas.

The young People's Republic has been forced into a perpetual war to defend itself from imperialism. This has made it a thousand times more difficult for Angola to plan programmes of production and to build a socialist society. The devastation caused by the war is immense and has exacerbated the serious problems of organising agriculture on a new basis.

Added to the horrendous problems caused by Unita is the illegal occupation of Cunene province by South African forces. Despite the Lusaka agreement in February that South Africa would withdraw within a month it is still in Angola with no intention of leaving. Since February South Africa has violated the disengagement accords 60 times. For the last three months it has conducted daily flights over Angolan air space. In May South African troops destroyed the town of Ngiva building by building. They razed Ngiva to the ground and have set up a semi-permanent base south of the town. The US has never given diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of Angola. Botha never intended to make peace. Unita's band of racists, frustrated colonialists and anti-communists are fighting a war of imperialist aggression. Without their backers they could not survive. Last month the northern tribalist grouping FNLA surrendered to MPLA's amnesty, the 1,500 soldiers brought with them 20,000 civilians. They saw no point in continuing to fight the People's Republic. This victory has strengthened the resolve of the MPLA and the people's army FPLA. As MPLA Organising Secretary told the peasants congress,

'The objective of this destruction you are living with and suffering under is that tomorrow we will say we cannot cope, and will demand peace from South Africa. But we will never bow to South Africa. We can meet this aggression. We are helped by our friends. Cuban friends and socialist friends from other countries.'

Hands Off Angola!

Nomsa Langa

## NAMIBIA: INDEPENDENCE NOW!

For many years South Africa, prompted by the US and with Britain's support, has insisted on the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola as a precondition for Namibian independence. After close consultation with the US, South Africa has presented a new demand on SWAPO in order to delay Namibian independence and to justify South Africa's occupation of southern Angola. In his address to the Anti-Apartheid Movement's AGM Shapua Kaukungua, SWAPO's Representative for Western Europe, explained the latest manoeuvre of imperialism:

'Today South Africa is not only linking our country's independence to the presence of the Cuban forces in Angola, but insisting that it cannot implement its promises to withdraw its troops from the People's Republic of Angola until SWAPO agrees to unilaterally end the armed struggle and to stop all hostile propaganda attacks on South Africa's illegal and brutal occupation of our country ... The apartheid regime is inviting SWAPO to go to Namibia and partici-

pate in what it is calling a peaceful, orderly and democratic political process inside the country, but with their military and police still in occupation of our country and the administration still firmly in place, what this amounts to is a demand that SWAPO becomes its puppet government.'

With thousands of Namibians tortured, murdered, 'disappeared' or imprisoned SWAPO well knows the meaning of South Africa's imposed 'democratic political process' – repression. SWAPO demands the dismantling and withdrawal of apartheid state repression within the framework set out by the United Nations.

Shapua Kaukungua ended his speech with the call on the people of Britain and their government to end all forms of collaboration with apartheid, to bring about a total ban on the import to Britain of Namibian products and comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

Andy Goddard

## KASSINGA DETAINEES FREED

The remaining 75 people abducted from Kassinga in Southern Angola following the massacre of several hundred Namibians on the 4 May 1978 have now been released. One was released last week and the remainder were taken from the concentration camp near Mariental to a South African military camp at Oshivelo, notorious for the use of brainwashing techniques. There, they were subjected to further pressure to collaborate with the regime. Most had suffered torture during the six years of

the arbitrary detention but once again they resisted the pressure and refused to cooperate. They were then told yesterday that they could go home but were warned that Koevoet (South African's terror unit) will probably get them. One of those released yesterday has already been re-arrested. Petrus Haimbodi was told to join 101 Battalion, he refused and was rearrested within hours of being released.

SWAPO Statement 19 October 1984

## police repression legalised

One of the first acts of the new Parliamentary session was to pass the draconian Police Bill. The new Police and Criminal Evidence Act gives the authority of law to numerous police practices which were previously illegal and represents a severe curtailment of the British working class's democratic rights. Under the new act, the police have powers to detain people for 96 hours without charge, and to hold them for 48 hours without access to lawyers. The Act also makes it easier for involuntary statements – ie extorted by illegal pressure during detention – to be accepted as evidence. The police now have powers to stop and search anyone at any time that they 'reasonably suspect' of committing an arrestable offence. They can set up road-blocks for up to seven days and search all passing vehicles. They have powers to strip search and obtain fingerprints.

The new Act will be directed primarily at the most oppressed sections of the



Police attack a miner

British working class who dare to resist the racism, exploitation and repression of the British ruling class. Based on the recommendations of a Royal Commission established by the last Labour government, the ruling class formulated the Police Bill soon after the 1981 uprisings of black and white youth. But the Bill always had a wider aim – to suppress resistance from any section of the working class and will now no doubt be used

against the fighting miners, black youth and any section of the British people defending their rights. The British state which has armed its police with CS gas, plastic bullets, armoured vehicles, riot equipment and weapons has now further strengthened its 'body of armed men' against the working class and democratic movement.

The Labour Party's role in this affair has been abominable. It failed to mount any serious opposition to the Bill while it went through Parliament and has refused to commit itself to repeal the Act if Labour are ever returned to power. Its main concern was to modify clauses of the Bill which affected the rights of middle-class sectors such as lawyers, doctors and journalists. The burden of fighting these new laws will rest on the mass of the working class and its most oppressed sections in particular. In this fight it will get no support from the Kinnocks and others of his ilk who have attacked the miners in the current struggle and who when in government have used the powers of the state against black and white workers.

Eddie Abrahams

## Newham 7 Defence Campaign

### PICKET THE RACISTS

On 14 September, the Newham 7 won their first victory when 6 of them had conspiracy charges dismissed. All 7 however still face charges of 'causing an affray' and 'criminal damage'. The 7 black youth were charged following a series of racist attacks on the black community organised from the Duke of Edinburgh pub. The attacks still continue. Asian women passing the pub have been spat at and had beer thrown at them. Black people are frequently beaten up, sometimes badly. The police have done nothing about these racists operating from the pub. The response of the black community was expressed in the words of one youth who told FRFI 'If the police won't act then WE will.'

On Saturday 3 November, the Newham 7 mounted a mass picket of the Duke of Edinburgh. A policeman was heard to say that only 30 were expected. Instead at 11am there were already 100 picketers including a contingent from FRFI which had also supported the Newham 8 campaign last year. Other banners present included Newham 7, ZAFIR Asian Youth Movement, Chingford Walthamstow Labour Party, North Hackney LPYS and Fitzwilliam 9. The picket rapidly grew to 300 strong at which point the police moved in to order half of it over the road. The splitting of the picket encouraged many spectators to join in!

At 12 noon, in noisy militant fashion, the picket marched to the nearby Queens pub. One of the black youth who addressed the rally explained the reason to FRFI:

'My family and friends have lived beside Queens for years supporting

the pub through thick and thin... It is the only place in the area where black and white can meet socially... the new landlord wants to get rid of us... He has the full support of the Newham police and Ind Coope... 75 people are banned from there now. Many are black and Asian working class people, that's what they don't like.'

The day's protest ended with a march to Forest Gate police station. The increasing number of violent racist attacks and discrimination are backed up and assisted by the police. A leaflet distributed during the day stated:

'When they come to attack our people We will stand our ground and fight When the pigs frame us up We will smash their laws and fight...!'

Anne Fury



Rally in Manchester in support of Viraj Mendis

## Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign

### mass rally against Home Office

FRFI supporter Viraj Mendis was called to a Home Office interview at Manchester Airport on Monday 29 October. Holding the interview at the airport, even though the racist Home Office had no 'right' to immediately deport Viraj, was just another dirty intimidation tactic of deportation Minister David Waddington. Despite only 10 days notice of the interview the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign (VMDC) organised a mass rally on Saturday preceding the interview.

For seven days leading up to the rally, the campaign was out on the streets every day to publicise Viraj's case and as a result 80 people supported the rally in Piccadilly, Manchester town centre. A threatened National Front attack never took place. Organisations supporting the rally included FRFI, the Campaign Against the Police Bill, the University Students Union, Anti-Apartheid, Manchester ISC, the City Council, the Gay Centre and the Labour Party. As well as Viraj, speakers included councillor Val Stevens, FRFI and others.

For 2½ hours shoppers and passers by saw banners and placards in support of Viraj. Hundreds heard of his role as an FRFI supporter in anti-racist struggles and in the Manchester ISC and came forward to sign the petition demanding his right to remain in Britain. The VMDC now has over 10,000 signatures to its petition. Encouraged by the support from the people of Manchester and by the recent local victories of Esther Ankele and Miebaka Brown against deportation orders, the VMDC is more determined than ever to continue its fight.

The interview on the Monday following was in fact police interrogation,

under the new Police Bill. Viraj was not permitted to have a friend accompany him and did not have a solicitor with him. He had to sit through 2 hours of intensive questioning about every aspect of his life and that of his family, wife and friends. The Home Office interrogators were searching for information to justify their racist moves against him. They are determined to deport him despite the fact that he has lived in Britain for 11 years, and the fact that he faces persecution if deported to Sri Lanka.

Over 50 black people are deported every week!

Show your opposition to this and fight for Viraj's right to stay. Send telegrams or letters of protest today to David Waddington, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1.

The VMDC meets weekly in Manchester Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Sundays. A support group has been set up in Bradford which meets fortnightly. For further information contact: VMDC, Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.

Viraj Mendis has the right! Here to stay – here to fight!

Anwar

### WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT MOSS SIDE POLICE STATION

On Thursday 19 April 1984 Jacqueline Berkeley and three other young black women were arrested after an alleged street disturbance and taken to Moss Side police station in Manchester. Jackie says that she was taken alone into a single cell, stripped naked, racially abused, and raped by one policeman and then another, while two police-women held her down and forced her legs apart. Jackie was taken to court two days later, charged with assaulting the police and with criminal damage – tearing police shirts. Jackie was speechless on her release and it wasn't until the following Tuesday that she disclosed to a youth worker that she had been raped.

A team was set up by the police to investigate Jackie's complaint, led by Chief Superintendent Glover and Chief Inspector Birkenshaw. Predictably it ended by providing Jackie with a summons from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), charging her

with wasting police time by making a false complaint.

The Jackie Berkeley Defence Committee is demanding from the Greater Manchester Police and the DPP the truth about what happened. Jackie faces charges of assaulting police, damaging police uniforms, threatening behaviour and making a false complaint. She and her family need your support at Manchester Magistrates Court on Monday 25 February 1985. Send donations to Jackie Berkeley Defence Committee, c/o 38 Haydn Avenue, Moss Side, Manchester 14. Demonstrate your support through involvement in the campaign. The police will label the allegation of rape as incredible. The black community in Britain knows that it is wholly in keeping with our experience at the hands of the British police.

From statement by Jackie Berkeley Defence Committee

### ● Edinburgh FRFI anti-fascist initiative

An initial response has been received to the Edinburgh Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! initiative (see FRFI 43) calling on all progressive groups in Edinburgh to unite against the growing presence of fascism.

A positive response came from the First of May bookshop collective (themselves threatened on numerous occasions by fascists/loyalists) and the Edinburgh Latin American Solidarity Campaign. Both wish to meet other groups to discuss what can be done. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for certain representatives of the Labour controlled Edinburgh District Council. Councillors Val Woodward and Alex Wood refused point blank to consider even a meeting to discuss joint action. Alex Wood explained that the Labour group already had 'their own committee' and justified sectarianism saying that the Labour Party could not work with the Revolutionary Communist Group because we regard them as 'counter-revolutionary.'

Edinburgh FRFI will point out to these councillors that however our political views may differ the point of setting up an anti-fascist campaign is that it can unite all different progressive groups on the one issue in order to guarantee strong effective action.

Helen Anderson for Edinburgh FRFI

### ● Colin Roach – police expose themselves

When Colin Roach was killed in Stoke Newington police station on 12 January 1983, the police claimed he committed suicide in the station foyer. There was no evidence for this – no blood on the foyer walls and no marks where the gun had allegedly fallen. Despite this and the massive protest movement by the local community, which was brutally attacked by the police, the 'inquest' ratified the police cover up operation by endorsing their suicide verdict. Over a year later, the police, in the person of Sir Kenneth Newman, have 'accidentally' let slip their story of lies and falsehoods. In his Commissioners report to Parliament, Newman states that Colin 'committed suicide' not in the foyer, but in 'an interview room'. Scotland Yard claims not to be able to explain this 'mistake'. We know that it is a product of a racist police cover up falling apart.

### ● Cirus Noor back on normal location

After 4 months in Wandsworth Prison's hospital wing, Cirus Noor a black political prisoner is back on normal location. To break his fighting spirit, the prison authorities and Home Office tried to certify him under the Mental Health Act. Had they succeeded, Cirus could have been detained indefinitely. This savage manoeuvre, used frequently against black prisoners, was defeated following protests by Cirus, other prisoners (Shujaa Moshesh staged a 3 day hunger strike), FRFI and the SNHDC (see FRFI 39 and 40). Nevertheless while in the prison 'hospital' Cirus was forcibly drugged and also lost 4 months remission. He will now be held until April 1985. Vigilance remains necessary as the Home Office warns that he will be released 'unless of course future reports indicate that hospital treatment is appropriate'.

### ● Deportation threat against 1981 youth

On Wednesday 10 October, the High Court turned down Karamjit Singh's appeal against a Home Office deportation order. During the 1981 uprisings two racist Birmingham clubs were petrol bombed. In 1983 Karamjit and 4 other youths were imprisoned for arson. Karamjit was sentenced to 18 months. Whilst in prison the Home Office initiated deportation proceedings against him. He was interviewed by immigration officers and within months of his release he received a deportation order. The Karamjit Singh Defence Campaign stated: 'It is clear that the Home Office is attempting to link deportation with criminalisation. Therefore, this is a threat to all black people who resort to self-defence...' The campaign is now appealing to the Civil Court. For information contact Campaign Against the Criminalisation and Deportation of Black Youth, c/o 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.



# FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

**SPECIAL  
PULLOUT**

10p. Free to Strikers

*Special pullout contains reports on the Irish Solidarity weekend on 13 and 14 October, on a Yorkshire miners' meeting on plastic bullets and police terror in Grimethorpe*

## WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE



### BELFAST-BRIXTON-ORGREAVE *An Injury to One is an Injury to All*

On the very weekend that the British media spewed out ruling class hysteria about the Brighton bombing, the Irish Solidarity Movement defiantly held its Irish Solidarity Weekend march and Conference. The weekend showed that genuine solidarity with the Irish struggle for national liberation can be built amongst the working class in Britain. Saturday's 300 strong march was trailed by reporters eager no doubt to see a hostile response from the working class community along the route. They were to be sorely disappointed as passers by gave the march a friendly reception. Hysteria about the Brighton bombing was confined entirely to the ruling class. Working class people in Britain have begun to suffer the poverty, unemployment and repression which has long been the lot of people oppressed by imperialism. The miners' strike and the brutal response of the police and courts has opened many people's eyes to the reality of the British imperialist state. Ruling class propaganda about the Irish struggle is no longer easily swallowed. That an openly pro-Irish march should meet warmth and sympathy on the day after an IRA attempt to blow up the British government shows the change that is taking place.

Sunday's Conference 'Belfast, Brixton, Orgreave - An Injury to One is an Injury to All' drove home this point. The audience of 220 rose cheering to see John McCluskey, ex Irish POW, and Malcolm Pitt, President of Kent NUM, raising clasped hands on the platform in a magnificent display of unity between the Irish people and British workers in struggle. During eight months of determined struggle the miners have learned major political lessons. Their experience has driven many of them to identify with the struggle of the Irish people. That is the significance of a miners leader, Malcolm Pitt, speaking on an Irish solidarity platform and saying:

'... the miners are now learning that oppression is the same wherever it is and that indeed the Irish people and the British working class are allies in a common struggle against the common exploiter and the common oppressor ... We fight the same battle but ... on different fronts.'

As FRFI has consistently argued it is those forces in Britain which face exploitation and repression that will be the first to make common cause with the Irish people.

The Irish people have resisted the repressive forces of British imperialism for decades. John McCluskey, a symbol of that resistance, spent ten years in a British gaol, losing all his

remission and spending four and a half years in solitary confinement as a result of his stand for the rights of Irish prisoners and for all prisoners. He told the Conference that as miners are sent to prison because of the strike, the British working class must learn, as the Irish people learned, that those imprisoned as a result of struggle must not be forgotten. A movement must fight for the rights of its prisoners and understand that they are political prisoners.

John McCluskey constantly emphasised another lesson - that no struggle can advance unless it is politically organised, that everybody who opposes imperialism must join a political movement. The POWs, he said, know this even from the inside of a prison looking out. This is a message of enormous importance for the developing forces of revolution in Britain, forces which as yet are not politically organised.

Political organisation is essential, not only to deal with attacks by the ruling class but also to oppose its agents within the working class. David Reed, a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist Group, warned of the 'deadly grip' of opportunism, pointing out that the same Labour and trade union leaders who have tried to undermine the miners strike have also consistently supported British rule in Ireland. The British working class can only advance its struggle by breaking from these opportunists and uniting with its real allies, the Irish people who are fighting British imperialism. As Kinnock once again scabs on the miners strike by refusing to speak at NUM rallies called at a critical stage of the strike, this political lesson is driven home.

The platform at the Conference united representatives of miners in struggle, Irish revolutionaries and communists. The purpose of the Irish Solidarity Weekend was to aid the building of an anti-imperialist solidarity movement which can unite those whose own experience of struggle has led them to oppose the British state. Miners, peace women, black people, prisoners - they will give genuine solidarity to the Irish people. For two years the ISM has campaigned for united action amongst organisations which claim to support the Irish people. These organisations have barely responded and with few exceptions boycotted the ISM Weekend. The task of building solidarity with the Irish struggle is too urgent to be left to the whims and fancies of sectarians such as these. We must look to the future and build a movement which can give practical expression to the slogan 'Belfast, Brixton, Orgreave - An Injury to One is an Injury to All!'

Maxine Williams, Malcolm Ellis, Pauline Sellars

#### POLICE TERROR IN GRIMETHORPE

The level of police brutality and police occupation of entire communities during the miners strike has led increasingly to comparisons being drawn with life in occupied Ireland. In October in the Yorkshire village of Grimethorpe the comparison was forcibly raised when police brutality led the community to fight back using methods long familiar in Ireland.

On Sunday 14 October the police arrested nineteen men and three youths who were bagging coal on a local tip. Though in previous disputes miners have been allowed to collect coal the NCB has changed this policy during the current strike. They called the police who arrived in three armoured riot vans. Numerous riot police in unnumbered boiler suits chased the miners swinging their truncheons. One 14 year old was handcuffed to a police bike. Such was the ferocity of the police attack that local women on the nearby estate built barricades to try and stop the police vans. Early the following morning miners fought with police in the pit yard and later, when the NCB brought in loaders to remove the coal that they themselves had dumped there, angry pickets set fire to one of the giant £40,000 machines and destroyed it. As riot vans moved into the area again, a large crowd assembled and moved off to the local police station where they smashed every window and overturned a police car. Two police officers - one a woman - were forced to flee and police reinforcements were rushed in. Confrontations carried on that evening and the next. The Chief Constable of South Yorkshire raised the comparison with Ireland again when he asserted 'There are no no-go areas in South Yorkshire'.

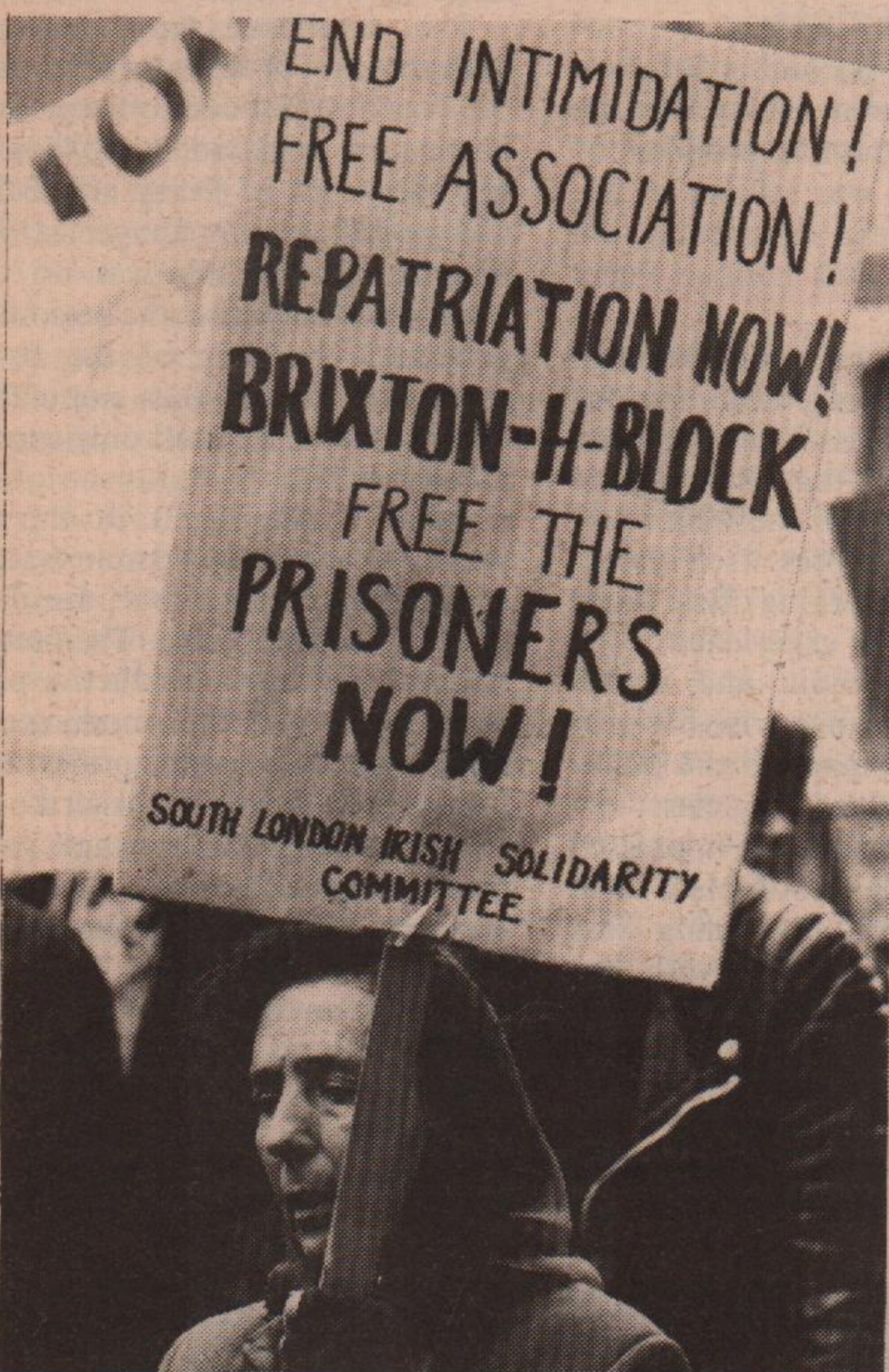
As in the Six Counties of Ireland there was no shortage of people stepping in to try and damp down the fire lit by police brutality. A hasty meeting was called between the Police Committee, the police and the local community. So frightened by the community's response were the police that the Deputy Chief Constable apologised 'unreservedly' for police misbehaviour. When George Moore, a member of the Labour controlled police authority told miners to stay away from coal tips as they were NCB property, everybody in the hall just laughed. During the discussion a miner pointed out that nobody condemned David for throwing stones at Goliath. George Moore replied that no one achieved anything by such means. The miner replied 'David did' and got loud applause.

The sham of the police apology at the meeting was shown when that very day, in Rossington, just a few miles away, a young miner was badly injured when a police horsebox was deliberately driven into him.

Olivia Adamson



JOHN HARRIS/IFL



PAUL MATTSSON

# BELFAST, BRIXTON, ORGREAVE

## JOHN McCLUSKEY

John McCluskey was released from Parkhurst gaol on 10 October 1984 having served a ten year sentence as an Irish POW. He lost every day of his remission and spent four and a half years in solitary confinement. '... I was picked up in 1974 and I was 100% committed then; I'm more than 100% committed now.'

'... We can't afford to sit back, none of us, that's how serious the struggle is ... so I accept this invitation to speak here on this platform with the ISM 100% and I'm proud to be with you here today and also with Malcolm Pitt.'

### ON THE MINERS

There are a lot of miners who have been picked up and locked up in prison today and if I have one criticism of the NUM... it's this: they have not yet thought out clearly their position in relation to their imprisoned comrades and that is a grave weakness... Will they be forgotten about or is it just a memory, a demonstration outside the prisons now and again? How are their comrades to behave when they are locked in prison... If they are political prisoners obviously they must then fight for political status within the prison, that is something that the miners, as far as I know, haven't yet thought about. We in occupied Ireland... learned that lesson late but nevertheless we learned it from experience, we had to fight for political status and political prisoners in this country, although they are not recognised as political prisoners, have nevertheless achieved quite a lot over the last ten years... struggling on different fronts, trying to educate different prisoners around us, struggling against horrible conditions and paying a fairly heavy penalty for that struggle...

### ON TRADE UNION LEADERS

I'm sure there are a few other (Trade Union) leaders who would be prepared to take the same stand as Malcolm Pitt but there are a tremendous amount of them who would not and will not speak to the workers and tell them the truth, that their struggle is the same struggle against the government, against the capitalists and until they realise this they will get nowhere

### ON PRISONERS

... there are many Irish prisoners serving life sentences and conditions are going to be worse for them in the future... The Home Office... have already made plans to open up seven or eight control units... disruptive prisoners, prisoners who have a political ideal or are trying to organise things within the prison... they are going to put them into these control units... They haven't yet been opened up but it is quite obvious that they're going to be worse than the prison conditions that are around at the moment

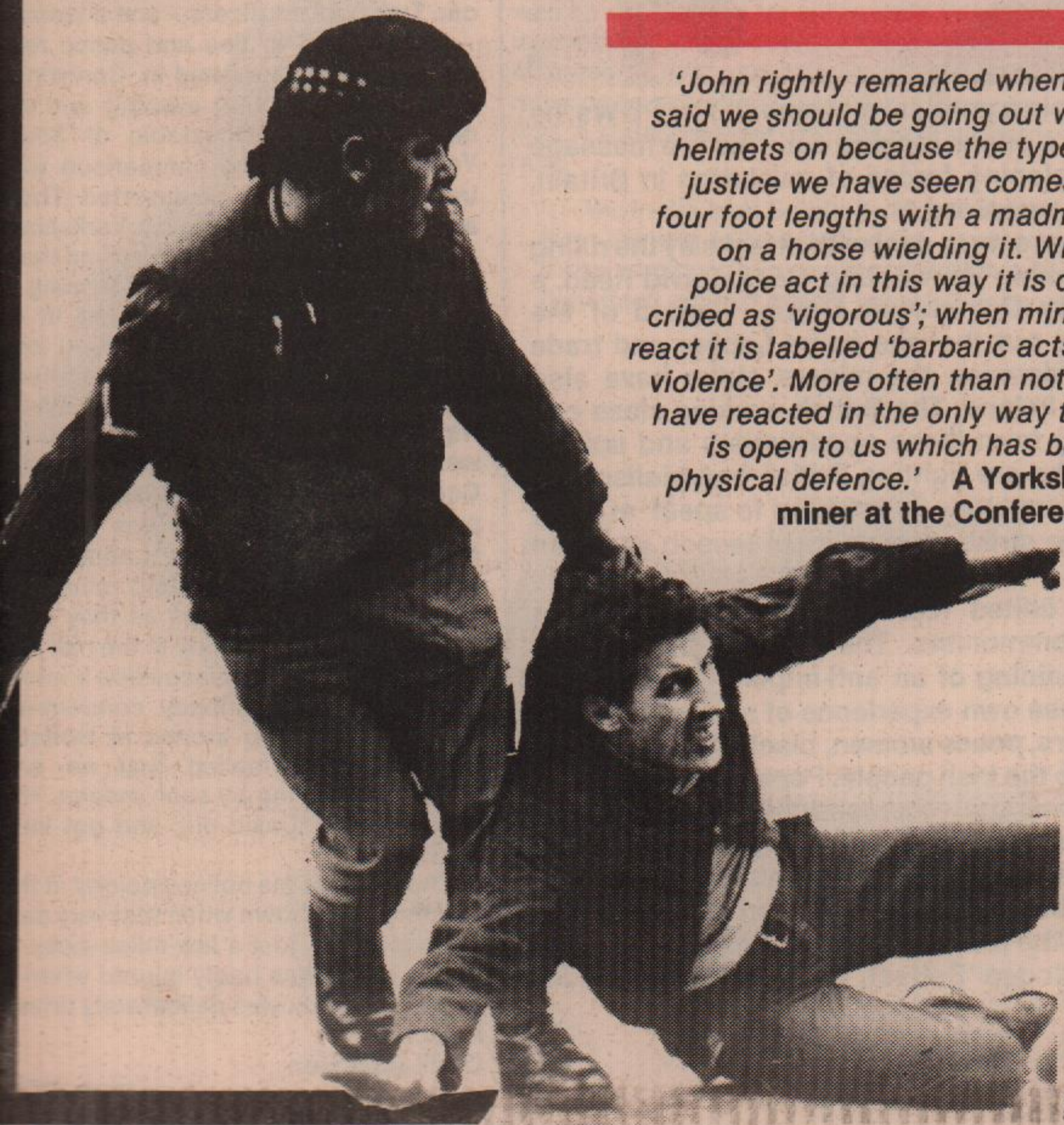
... the prisoners) are living in isolation, lack of communication with people outside, people on the outside not knowing what is needed. The most important thing that has happened in the last two or three years was this organisation, the ISM and a number of other organisations who have kept regular contact through writing, papers, letters and books... the curtains were pulled back and the prisoners were beginning to get a little bit of information on what was happening and we felt that was a great achievement

... It will be a great pleasure for me to write to the prisoners and be able to tell them that I've spoken to you. They will obviously read the FRFI which is, I think, the best paper that prisoners get today because it covers the problems of prisoners and highlights one of the essential issues in any struggle... FRFI seems to have a fairly clear policy and sees the prisoners struggle as an issue, as a very important issue in any struggle

### ON ORGANISATION

If you want to know what is going on, even in your own country in this class struggle, there's no place for any individual who is serious outside of a political movement. You should be part of a movement... It is pointless coming along to a Conference if you are not going to join a movement... We know that, from the inside of the prisons looking out - you must be part of an organisation, you must take part in some way.

'John rightly remarked when he said we should be going out with helmets on because the type of justice we have seen comes in four foot lengths with a madman on a horse wielding it. When police act in this way it is described as 'vigorous'; when miners react it is labelled 'barbaric acts of violence'. More often than not we have reacted in the only way that is open to us which has been physical defence.' A Yorkshire miner at the Conference



Malcolm Pitt (right) greets John McCluskey

## DAVID REED

David Reed is a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist Group whose book 'Ireland Key to the British Revolution' re-establishes the authentic communist position in relation to the Irish revolution.

Over ten years ago it was only the ruling class in Britain which grasped from its own class standpoint the significance of the Irish struggle in relation to the class struggle in Britain. The ruling class recognised that since the insurrection in August 1969 the most direct revolutionary challenge to British imperialism had come from Ireland. The ruling class has understood what impact the Irish revolution could have on the British working class; it has understood that it could give impetus to revolutionary forces in Britain. The ruling class has been quick to use the experience gained in Ireland to prepare for the major unrest and popular rebellion which is inevitable even here as the crisis imposes intolerable levels of unemployment, poverty, homelessness and repression on whole sections of the British working class.

John Biggs-Davidson, right-wing Tory MP and member of the Tory parliamentary committee on Northern Ireland, as early as 1973 with remarkable foresight, voiced the essential connection between Britain and Ireland. In doing so he gave clear expression to the nightmare that haunts the ruling class in relation to Ireland:

'What happens in Londonderry is very relevant to what can happen in London, and if we lose in Belfast, we may have to fight in Brixton or Birmingham. Just as Spain in the thirties was a rehearsal for a wider European conflict so perhaps what is happening in Northern Ireland is a rehearsal for urban guerilla war more widely in Europe, particularly in Britain'

Making the same speech today he would undoubtedly add Orgreave.

The ruling class fears the revolutionary potential of the Irish struggle. Last year ex-secretary of state for Northern Ireland, James Prior, rather shell-shocked from Sinn Fein's dramatic election victories in 1982 and June 1983, warned us, in November 1983, of the

'danger' of Ireland becoming Britain's Cuba. He said this immediately after the election of Gerry Adams as president of Sinn Fein - and he was talking of the dangers of Sinn Fein superseding the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

But while such connections between Britain and Ireland have been obvious to the British ruling class, it has only been in the last few years that the concrete practical significance of the Irish revolution has begun to impress itself on sections of the British working class. It has been a direct result of experience of the class struggle in Britain and it has occurred as the deepening crisis has provoked militant resistance to the police from sections of the working class.

When the first uprising of oppressed black youth in Britain took place in St Pauls, Bristol in 1980, the ruling class instinctively drew a parallel with Ireland:

'It was like a scene from Belfast without bombs' (Daily Mail 3 April 1980).

'These are things that we have regarded with horror when they happen in

Ulster. We never dreamed that in the England of 1980 we could have "no-go" areas like those of Londonderry. It must never, never, happen again' (Sun 5 April 1980)

The main uprising of black and white youth took place in British cities in 1981. For the first time in Britain CS gas was used by police against the protestors in Liverpool 8. CS grenades designed to penetrate walls were fired at people causing serious injuries. One man, David Moore, was murdered by being deliberately crushed by a police jeep against a garden fence. After CS gas came riot shields, snatch squads, intensive riot training with plastic bullets, and trained marksmen and soldiers in reserve.

The experience from Ireland was being used on protestors in Britain. And the youth responded to the police with barricades, bricks and petrol bombs just like the youth of Derry and Belfast in the period of the hunger strike. To understand that this was no one-off occurrence but rather the beginning of a systematic building of the forces of repression to deal with popular rebellion in Britain we need only turn to the miners' strike.

What is significant in the miners strike is that lower paid miners, the miners directly under threat, are dictating the terms of the strike. The better paid miners in the more productive pits such as in Notts and the 'moderate' trade union leaders have been prevented from imposing their will on the strike in spite of the propaganda barrage from the media, support from the Thatcher government, National Coal Board and the Labour Party leadership. This was most important on the issue of a national ballot. So with no opportunist forces able to decisively undermine the strike the state is forced out into the open to show its true colours - police violence and repression against striking miners.

# A FIGHTING ALLI



# LEAVE

**BELOW WE REPRINT IN FULL DAVID REED'S SPEECH TO THE ISM CONFERENCE AND EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECHES MADE BY JOHN McCLUSKEY AND MALCOLM PITT.**

We have seen a national coordinated police action against the miners, some 20,000 police are involved with around 8,000 operational at any one time. The action is coordinated by Scotland Yard using massive computer backed data gathering for intelligence, etc, under the control of Kenneth Newman. Kenneth Newman is the man responsible for re-organising the Royal Ulster Constabulary to deal with the Republican Movement. We have seen the use of road blocks, political questioning, beatings, illegal fingerprinting and photographing, snatch squads, phone taps, infiltrators - the miners have been brutalised and attacked by baton-wielding police in full riot gear.

Eldon Griffiths, Tory MP and official parliamentary advisor to the Police Federation indicated what lies ahead when he said at the end of September:

'police will soon need to be equipped with plastic bullets to combat armed pickets firing airguns and other weapons'

Alongside the police violence we have seen the mobilisation of the courts and the law against the striking miners. General Sir Frank Kitson - head of UK Land Forces explained this process in his book 'Low intensity operations, subversion, insurgency and peace-keeping'. Kitson said that the law is:

'just another weapon in the government's arsenal and it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public.'

This is the ruling class speaking to themselves and so they tend to tell a little of the truth. Kitson's views draw together years of experience of British strategy in counter-revolutionary violence against liberation movements throughout the world and, of course, in the Six Counties of Ireland from 1970-1972. This strategy can be clearly seen developing in the use of political bail conditions.

Of the 1,745 miners charged in Nottinghamshire alone to 2 October, 1,649 of them (94.5%), have been put on conditional bail - that is to say they have had political bail conditions imposed on them to prevent them from picketing. In all, 4,000 miners have now had bail conditions imposed on them - something like 80% of those charged. The bail conditions explicitly bar them from picketing or approaching National Coal Board property, or both - that is, the law is being used to remove 'unwanted members' of the NUM from the picket lines. We have seen the use of archaic laws to arrest people during the miners' strike; the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1975 is being used against the miners - it was last used in 1972 against the Shrewsbury building workers, three of whom were sent to prison, Des Warren for three years, Ricky Tomlinson for two years and McKinsie Jones for nine months. Already 39 miners have received prison sentences and many more face the threat of long prison terms. Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, recently threatened striking miners, saying,

'those tempted to try their hand at violence and crime in future might care to reflect on the fact that arson, assault causing grievous bodily harm and criminal damage with intent to endanger life are offences which carry life sentences as a maximum'

James Anderton, chief constable of Manchester, made the position of the ruling class crystal clear when he said that mass pickets were: 'acts of terrorism without the bullet and bomb'.

The use of the term 'terrorist' is no coincidence or mistake. Any force which threatens the power of the ruling class is invariably labelled 'terrorist'. So the democratic right to protest, to picket, to organise against scabs and police violence is being criminalised just as the democratic struggle of the nationalist people of Ireland for freedom from British rule was criminalised. Kenneth Newman, head of the Metropolitan Police made it clear how he would deal with unwelcome protest here in Britain when he said: 'when willing compliance with the law was not present the police had to apply coercion'. When Newman was head of the RUC, that coercion involved the torture of suspects to extract confessions in order to put them away for a very, very long period of time.

As more laws against working class struggle are enacted, for example, the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill - which will legalise many police actions now illegal and being used against the miners - road blocks, sealing off areas, raiding homes and so on, so will more and more political and trade union activity be labelled 'criminal' and effective mass action against such laws will be labelled 'terrorism'.

The lessons being learned by many miners today are the same as those understood by the Irish people many years ago, that is, when the struggle of working people for their rights conflicts with the rule of profit and the dominance of the wealthy, the ruling class will use every means at its disposal - it will disregard its own 'laws' and so-called 'democracy' - to maintain its own power.

The connections between Ireland, the uprisings in 1981, and the miners' strike are inevitably being drawn by the miners and their leaders.

In *March 1984* - Arthur Scargill said that: 'Brixton, Toxteth and St Pauls were warning shots that injustice and inequality can only be pushed so far'.

In *May 1984* - an Ollerton miner stated: 'The police are everywhere; it's just like Belfast'.

In *July 1984* - *The Miner* carried the headline: 'Belfast comes to Blidworth'.

And in *August 1984* in a whole page on the connection with Ireland *The Miner* said: 'It is not difficult to see where we go from here. Is it so unrealistic to assume that lessons learned by the ruling class in Northern Ireland will be vigorously exercised here? After all, the current police commissioner of the Metropolitan Police is the same Kenneth Newman who served in Northern Ireland from 1973-1979 and re-organised the RUC. The Labour Movement ignores the warnings at its peril'.

Faced with state repression we have seen during the miners' strike the miners have responded on the same lines as the oppressed have responded everywhere. The lessons of Ireland, of Brixton and Liverpool 8 are very quickly learned under such conditions. The miners have built barricades, set them alight, overturned cars, hurled bricks and stakes in self-defence against the police. They are forced to go way beyond the legal, constitutional and peaceful means of struggle so beloved by opportunists like Kinnock, Murray, Bill Sirs and others.

No one more than Arthur Scargill embodies the shift that has taken place in working class politics as a result of the miners' strike. His refusal to purge his contempt of the High Court judgement of 28 September is a direct challenge to the legitimacy of the courts. He makes it clear that he would rather go to prison

than betray his class when he says:

'I stand by my class, by my union - and if that means prison so be it. We have come too far, we have suffered too much for there to be any compromise with either the judiciary or the government'.

His refusal to condemn the miners' 'violence' in defence of their jobs and communities shows him again standing by his class. When he does this he necessarily comes into conflict not only with the ruling class and its courts but also with opportunists like Kinnock, Murray, Sirs and the rest. While Thatcher stands by her class, Scargill stands by his. Kinnock, however, sits on the fence, pathetically condemning 'all violence... without fear or favour' and in so doing, let's have no doubt about it, he betrays the miners and he betrays the working class.

Little wonder that the miners, like those fighting state repression before them, are accused of 'terrorism'.

The fact that striking miners, in order to defend their jobs, are forced into confrontation with the state and its opportunist defenders in the working class movement is another vital connection between the miners' struggle and the struggle of the Irish people for self-determination.

We should remember that the struggle of the nationalist minority in the Six Counties of Ireland began, as did the miners' strike, peacefully. In Ireland they marched against sectarian discrimination and for fundamental democratic rights. They were batoned off the street by the RUC. They were brutalised, shot at and their houses were burnt out. On 14 August 1969, nine year old Patrick Rooney had half his head blown away by high velocity bullets fired by the RUC which pierced the wall of his bedroom and killed him in his bed. This is just one example of the police terror directed against the nationalist people and it happened, I'd like to remind this audience, before the Provisional IRA came into being.

This brutal repression failed to drive the nationalist minority into submission. They organised mass protests and demonstrations against the paramilitary forces of the Six County statelet and against the British army, that was sent in by a Labour government to prop up the sectarian loyalist statelet. And then the people created their own people's army, the Provisional IRA. [Applause]

To this day the nationalist people have continued to fight back. They have refused to allow their struggle for self-determination to be deterred by imperialist violence or held back by the constitutional and legal limits laid down by British imperialism.

The reality that British rule can only be maintained by coercion and terror has been exposed in Ireland again and again. If the Irish Kinnocks, the Social Democratic and Labour Party - the moderate constitutional nationalist party in Ireland - could control the fightback of the nationalist people in the Six Counties, there would be no British army, no Bloody Sundays, no Diplock courts, because there would be no effective threat to British imperialist rule in Ireland.

Just as, if the Kinnocks, the Murrays, the Bill Sirs and the scab miners could control the miners' strike there would be no riot squads and baton charges and there would be no threat of plastic bullets being used against the striking miners because there would be no effective threat to the power, wealth and privilege of the British ruling class. For the Irish people and the miners, the message of the British ruling class is the same - you may protest only so long as your protest poses no serious threat. You may picket so long as your picketing is ineffective. However, as soon as you decide that your rights - in the case of the Irish people, the right to self-determination, in the case of the miners, the right to a job - are to be fought for effectively, the rules of engagement will quickly change

and the full force of the state will be brought into action against you.

In Ireland a whole array of special legislation exists to make the struggle of the nationalist people a crime and give the RUC and British army virtually unlimited power to arrest and detain. People are arrested under the Emergency Powers Act and/or the Prevention of Terrorism Act. They can be held for years on remand before their case comes to court. People are then convicted in specially created non-jury courts by loyalist judges. From 1976-1979 torture was used to extract confessions from suspects before they were taken to court. And there's a great deal of evidence today that torture is once again being used in Ireland. Today paid informers are used to fabricate evidence against nationalists. 35 people were sentenced to over 4,000 years in prison solely on the word of one paid informer.

When the nationalist people followed the constitutional path demanded by the British government and put up Bobby Sands for election, which he won convincingly - the British changed the rules so prisoners could no longer stand in elections. And the British today refuse to talk to elected Sinn Fein representatives.

In Britain, the Prevention of Terrorism Act has been used to intimidate Irish people in order to discourage them from political activity in support of the

continued overleaf

## MALCOLM PITT

*Malcolm Pitt is President of Kent NUM and early in the miners' strike was imprisoned for his refusal to accept bail conditions restricting his activity. On the day of the ISM Conference 800 French trade unionists had arrived in Kent with 400 tons of food and £58,000. Malcolm Pitt nevertheless came to the Conference and took his stand on the side of the Irish people.*

'I thought it was necessary to come today despite the obvious problem we've got in our coalfield with organising such a tremendous manifestation of solidarity because, particularly in the present atmosphere I think it is absolutely essential that everyone who recognises the legitimate struggle of the Irish people for unity, stand up and actually express their solidarity with the Irish people. Whatever position people take on the question of the Brighton bombing... one thing we must do as a Labour or trade union movement is to make it quite clear that the question of violence in Ireland and in Great Britain is clearly the result of imperialist exploitation and oppression

'And we hear too all the arguments about ballots, about votes, about the process of democracy. We do not concede that any person has the right to put a cross on a piece of paper to vote somebody else out of a job. We will not concede that these people in government have the right to lecture the NUM and also the British Labour and trade union movement in the virtues of democracy. These people... have no right to lecture the British miners... because these are the people who have denied the Irish people the right to unity and nationhood. These are the people who for years played the Orange card and gerrymandered the constituencies of Derry and Belfast. And these are the people who for over 200 years have kept half the peoples of the world in the chains of imperialist oppression with their armies and their thugs

'The crisis of their system... can no longer be contained in the far far reaches of the third world... This struggle is now in their own backyard in the very heartland of capitalism, in Britain and in Ireland. And we see the most powerful combination, as Lenin said, the greatest trial for British imperialism is the combination of industrial action by the British working class and the struggle for national liberation

'... many of the Labour politicians have dangled about in the middle, 'there's violence on the one side and violence on the other.' Well I say that our union is unambiguous when it says that we are proud of our young miners... We welcome the birth of a new generation of class fighters in this country

'But also our women, I take the chance on this platform to pay tribute to the women of the British coalfields. Because as in Ireland, as so long ago in the Commune of Paris, in Red Petrograd, in the sierras of Cuba, in every single gigantic social upheaval then the women have refused to accept a submissive role in society

'We have seen over the past eight months the whole paraphernalia of the riot police... the special squads, which in fact the people of Ireland have experienced for generations... Whole villages have been cordoned off... thousands of our members arrested, systematically beaten... interrogated by Special Branch men and several of our members (they have got a bit of a way to catch up with John) have spent periods of time in prison... their crime is the audacity to fight for the right to work... We have lost five of our members in this dispute... they are as much the victims of British imperialism as Sean Downes.

'... we ought to pledge ourselves again to the complete emancipation of labour. Because the emancipation of labour, the fight for socialism is intertwined indissolubly with the fight for the national liberation of Ireland. In the words of James Connolly, and these should be remembered by every trade unionist and Labour movement activist in this country, he said 'The cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland and the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour, they cannot be dis severed.'



JOHN HARRIS/JIF

### Peter Wardlaw Scottish Republican prisoner

...the magnificent response by the miners and their communities has shown that the oppressed are linked... when under attack they will fight back...

### East London Asian Collective

We believe that Black people's struggle against racism, against the Police Bill, deportation and all other state oppression are... part and parcel of the struggle of the Irish people for self-determination.

# ANCE AGAINST A COMMON ENEMY

continued

Republican Movement in Ireland. Of the 5,600 arrested under the PTA by the end of 1983, 104 (1.8%) were charged with so-called terrorist offences and 86 (1.5%) were found guilty. Clearly, this law is designed to silence the Irish community in Britain.

When the SDLP demand that Irish people 'keep within the law', when Kinnock and Murray demand that striking miners keep within the law, they are in fact demanding submission to British imperialist exploitation and oppression.

It is no coincidence that the same Labour and trade union leadership who have condemned picket line violence and continually attempt to undermine the miners' strike are the same people who have consistently supported British rule in Ireland. Indeed the Labour Party, whenever it has been in government, has in fact escalated imperialist violence and repression in Ireland.

The Irish people have long found themselves confronted by a reactionary alliance of the British imperialist state, its loyalist supporters, the so-called moderate nationalists of the SDLP and the treacherous pro-imperialist leadership of the British Labour and trade union movement. The disastrous consequences for both the Irish people and the British working class of this reactionary leadership of the British Labour and trade union movement has been demonstrated time and again on the Irish question.

In 1913, the poorest and most oppressed Dublin workers, organised in the Irish Transport and General Workers Union led by James Larkin and James Connolly, had to confront the reactionary alliance of the Dublin capitalists, the British imperialist ruling class and the leaders of the British Labour and trade union movement. The Dublin workers fought a courageous and determined eight month struggle in the course of which they created their own workers' defence force against police violence - the Irish Citizen Army. The one thing they needed to ensure victory was real solidarity action from the working class in Britain. Rank and file workers in transport unions and indeed the South Wales miners did respond by organising sympathetic strike action and making donations to the Dublin workers. The Dublin workers attracted support from revolutionary nationalists in Ireland, socialist leaders like John Maclean in Britain, militant suffragettes like Sylvia Pankhurst and many thousands of rank and file workers.

However, the British Labour and trade union leaders moved into action immediately to stamp out solidarity action. Larkin was forced to appeal to British workers directly and urged them to reject their leaders who he described as 'serpents'. Unfortunately, the strength of the opportunist trade union leadership proved too great. Ben Tillett, previously regarded as a militant leader and who had stood on platforms with Larkin calling for the arming of workers, led the attack on Larkin at the special TUC congress called in December 1913.



Tillett turned against Larkin because Larkin and the struggle he represented, threatened to undermine the control of the opportunist leaders over the British working class, that is, to split the British labour movement. The British Labour and trade union leaders were as terrified of 'Larkinism' as the Dublin employers themselves. William Martin Murphy, leader of the Dublin employers, made clear what was so terrifying about Larkinism when he said:

'It is not a question of an attack on trade unionism at all. I have been in business for nearly 50 years and I have never before known anything like Larkinism. It is not trade unionism in the ordinary sense at all.'

In just the same way today, the government, the media, the Labour Party and trade union leaders continually denounce what they call 'Scargillism'. 'It's not trade unionism in the ordinary sense

**Vince Donnelly Irish POW**

*I must congratulate all at ISM on a very successful year, the outcome of hard work and dedication at all levels. May the next year be equally successful and satisfying and, if so, we will reap the just rewards of our efforts by starting imperialism on the slippery slope to defeat.*

at all'. No, it isn't trade unionism in the ordinary sense at all - it's fighting trade unionism that is going to win through effective picketing. The parallel between 'Scargillism' and 'Larkinism' is an obvious one. The struggle of oppressed workers not only threatens the ruling class but also those Labour and trade union leaders who have hung on to their powerful positions in the labour movement through negotiation, compromise and compliance with the ruling class, its laws and institutions. The consequence of this in 1913 was not only a defeat for the Dublin workers but also for the British working class who a year later were led to the slaughter in the first imperialist war and it was Ben Tillett who called on workers to join the British army.

In 1921, the Irish people led by the IRA had fought British imperialism to a standstill and forced the British government to negotiate with Republican leaders. Unfortunately, throughout the war of independence and during the treaty negotiations, the British Labour and trade union leadership successfully prevented any significant mobilisation of British workers in support of the Irish people's struggle for a united independent Republic. This meant that Lloyd George could threaten the Irish people with 'an immediate and terrible war' should they not accept the partition of Ireland. In the succeeding civil war the anti-Treaty Republicans were left to fight alone and were defeated. The consequences for the British working class were a whole series of betrayals and defeats at the hands of the very same Labour and trade union leadership, culminating in the defeat of the General Strike of 1926.

In the recent period the same process can be seen during the hunger strike of 1981. At no time during that courageous struggle by Irish prisoners of war was there any significant opposition from the Labour and trade union movement to the murderous policy of the Thatcher government. The uprisings in the same year of black and white youth were similarly isolated and betrayed. The Thatcher government was therefore able to survive the most serious challenge to its rule since it was elected in 1979. The consequence for the British working class was the imperialist slaughter in the Falklands/Malvinas, and a landslide victory for the most reactionary government since the Second World War.

As we have already said, many miners

have come to see that the failure to oppose British repression in Ireland has led to a strengthening and refinement of the very apparatus that is used, and will be used to a greater and greater degree, against any militant resistance in Britain.

If I might take the opportunity of quoting Malcolm Pitt who said at the 18 August demonstration this year, calling for British withdrawal from Ireland,

'the people of Ireland and the British miners and the British working class are locked in struggle with the same enemy but on different fronts... And we have to be honest as a Labour movement we often turned our backs. But now, we are experiencing the same tactics, and we have learnt the lesson, we will remember, and we will stand with all oppressed against this sort of harassment in the future.'

However, it is vital also to recognise that the failure to make common cause with the Irish people has strengthened the deadly grip of the opportunist Labour and trade union leadership over the working class as a whole.

The enemies of the miners are indeed the enemies of the Irish people, but these enemies extend into the ranks of the organised working class movement as well.

By the same token, the Irish people fighting for self-determination are the real allies of miners fighting to defend their jobs and communities. The Irish people fighting for self-determination are our allies in the struggle to free the working class and oppressed in Britain from the rule of profit and all the devas-

**PUBLIC WARNING - BELFAST TODAY, ORGREAVE TOMORROW - BAN PLASTIC BULLETS**

On Wednesday 10 October a 60 strong public meeting was held in Kinsley Hotel, Kinsley, Yorks calling for the banning of plastic bullets. The meeting was called by two Yorkshire miners, and the speakers invited were David Reed, from the RCG/FRFI, Dr Paul Redgrave, from Troops Out Movement, and Bill Webster, from Militant.

David Reed's contribution was one of political insight as to why plastic bullets were commonplace in the Six Counties of Ireland, and how they could, would and will be used here. He said:

'For you (the miners) and the Irish people the message from the British ruling class is the same - "You may protest so long as your protest serves no serious threat. You may picket so long as your picketing is ineffective. However, as soon as you decide that your rights, in the case of the miners the right to a job, in the case of the Irish people the right to self-determination, are to be fought for then the rules of engagement will quickly change."

Hence the use of plastic bullets. And the need also for the British working class to support the Irish people in their struggle against the common enemy.

Paul Redgrave gave a concise history of the horrific injuries and fatalities that have occurred since plastic bullets were invented. He had been a member of the International Inquiry into deaths and injuries due to plastic bullets in 1982. Bill Webster, from Militant, did not seem to know that the meeting was about plastic bullets. Instead he chose to spout Militant rhetoric attacking Sinn Fein and talking about the generosity of

the UDA to the miners. He stated that freedom in Ireland would come from the unity of the privileged loyalist working class and the oppressed nationalists. Furthermore that the ruling class would never introduce plastic bullets here in Britain because of the power of the organised labour and trade union movement. He was loudly received by a hostile reaction to his unrealistic viewpoint. The fact that the trade union and labour movement had already let plastic bullets be used against the Irish people was pointed out to him. Also, that the real unity existed not between loyalists and nationalists, striking miners and scabs, but between the striking miners and the nationalist people. He attempted to retrieve the situation by accusing the miners present for being slow. He then found himself in a realistic situation that people threatened him with physical violence for his forthright stupidity and utopian idealism. David Reed ended the meeting by saying that he was appalled at Militant for, 'the idea of the miners being slow is a joke. The miners are 1,000 years ahead of the Militant Tendency' in their recognition of the fact that they face the same enemy as the Irish people - British imperialism, and that they have to support their struggle. The meeting was a success in as much as many people were enlightened on the issues of plastic bullets and Irish history. We from Fitzwilliam extend our thanks to David Reed and Paul Redgrave, but find it impossible to commend poor old Bill for his contribution. We recommend that he take a course in human nature and reality. Denis Yorkshire miner



PAUL MATTHEWSON

The ISM banner led an Irish POW contingent and a Victory to the Armagh Women banner. ISCs from Edinburgh, Manchester, North, South and East London, Leeds, Bradford, Southampton and Dundee were present, also banners from FRFI/RCG; Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign; Proletarian; Peoples Democratic Front; SAEPC; and Gays. Comrades from Breakout! Collective; Greenham Common; Feminist Action; Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign; East London Asian Collective; Red Action and Bristol TOM joined the march. Support was evident - 246 FRFI were sold, thousands of leaflets were given out and over £69 collected on petitions and at the rally. The march was an opportunity for all those in Britain who declare their support for the right of the Irish people to self-determination to stand up and be counted. Yet, the Irish Freedom Movement, TOM and Irelands War Support Group were conspicuous for their absence refusing to rise above sectarian differences and place the interests of the Irish people first. A statement from the ISM in response to the Brighton bombing was read out at the rally,

'... We in the Irish Solidarity Movement say that all the deaths and injuries resulting from the war in Ireland are the direct responsibility of British imperialism and all those who condone continued British rule in Ireland. The Irish people have a right to fight back against British imperialism by whatever means they choose!'

Pauline and Aine

**MRS ELIZABETH HILL**

Margaret Thatcher has said that there are no political prisoners but the fact that she is treating them as a Special Category A is admitting that they are political prisoners... political prisoners of war. Five prisoners have died in this country and four prisoners have been sent back - the Price sisters, Gerard Kelly and Hugh Feeney. These prisoners were almost at death's door during the hunger strike and were force fed. If they get their way they would like to send all the prisoners back in coffins. But we must not stand back and watch this. We have got to have them repatriated back to our own country.

**Join the ISM now**

In the past year the ISM has held three national weeks of action - against informers and in support of Irish POWs; we have held 14 prison pickets, over 30 local public meetings, 2 day-schools, 3 local and 1 national demonstrations, supported over 17 marches and held at least 40 street rallies throughout the country. Fifty-five people went over to Belfast on the ISM Delegation and were present at the brutal RUC assault on the peaceful anti-internment rally. During the miners' strike we have worked to strengthen the links between the striking miners and the struggle of the Irish people.

We have campaigned on the basis of the three demands of the ISM - Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Right of Repatriation for all Irish POWs! Although we have achieved a lot - this is only a fraction of what can and must be done in Britain. We need YOU to join the ISM, take part in organising work so that it is possible to achieve more - take part in building a strong and significant solidarity movement that can contribute to the struggle of the Irish people for freedom from British rule.

**JOIN THE ISM NOW!**

Fill in the form and send it off NOW with your affiliation fee (£4/£2 unwaged for individuals/£20 national political organisations)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Organisation \_\_\_\_\_  
Return to: ISM BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX

**Join RCG**

The Revolutionary Communist Group and its newspaper FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! take the side of all those struggling against imperialism - the striking miners, black people, the Irish people, oppressed people all over the world.

If you want to know more about us and our newspaper FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! return the slip below.

Please send more information about the RCG and how to obtain FRFI regularly

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Return to FRFI BM Box 5909 London WC1N 3XX

ation and misery that that rule brings. Our task is to forge a fighting alliance of the Irish people, trade unionists forced to defend their jobs and living standards, black workers confronting systematic racist oppression, black and white youth confronting police harassment, unemployment and poverty, Greenham women fighting for peace and all other oppressed sections of the working class. Only such an alliance can throw off the deadening influence of opportunism and destroy the common enemy of the Irish people and the British working class - British imperialism.

**Belfast, Brixton, Orgreave - An injury to one is an injury to all Victory to the miners Victory to the Irish People**

David Reed

# Prisoners Fightback

## JOHN BOWDEN ATTACKED

**John Bowden has been kept in total isolation since January 1983. In September this year he was suddenly moved to Lincoln prison from Winson Green and on arrival threatened with a physical beating if he did not comply 'immediately and unquestioningly with all orders, rules and regulations'.**

Personal possessions were confiscated including his radio. Lord Elton informed John's MP that he is 'looking into the circumstances of his isolation'. Recently we were assured that his continued solitary confinement 'was not a punishment' but merely a means of containing a 'difficult' prisoner. At Lincoln prison, driven beyond endurance, John started a dirty protest, smearing his cell and his body with excreta. On 25 September he was attacked in his cell by ten screws in overalls. He was beaten to the ground his legs and arms twisted into unnatural positions, then dragged along a narrow passageway lined on both sides by screws - including a prison governor.

They forced John's face to the ground with a boot to the back of his head, then hurled him into the strong box. Pinned to the ground his clothing was ripped from his body. Naked - his arms, legs, fingers and toes were twisted and stamped upon by screws. A senior screw directed comments at John: 'Now you are the fucking hostage!' and 'Let's hear you scream, you communist bastard.'

Left bruised and naked in the strong box for 24 hours, no food, water or bedding, his right eye swollen and closed, his body a mass of bruises, intermittently a screw would approach the strong box door and shout insults and abuse at John.

Eventually screws dressed in overalls entered the cell. They surrounded John as the governor spoke. The governor wanted to negotiate. John demanded to

see a doctor and have his personal possessions returned. John demanded that while he was at Lincoln prison he would not be threatened or intimidated. He was then put back in an ordinary cell, and eventually saw a 'doctor'. During the time he was manhandled in the strong box he received an injury to the muscular wall of his chest constricting movement of his neck and right arm - for this he was prescribed 'winter green' ointment!

John now exists totally alone. Meals are brought to his cell and he gets less

than and hour's exercise a day accompanied by at least six screws who hate and fear him. His mail is restricted and interfered with; his political literature has been confiscated.

The prison department confirmed that John was moved to Lincoln on 25 September (he has now been moved yet again, to Durham) and began a dirty protest and that he was forcibly removed from his cell to a 'special cell' overnight. They claimed that prison officers who removed him used 'no more force than was necessary'. Home Office also confirm that John is denied use of his radio. The prison department is clearly laying the ground for the introduction of their new 'special units' for 'subversive' prisoners. Political prisoners are called 'subversive' in this country and singled out for specially severe harassment.

Ainne Fury

**Send cards and letters of solidarity to John, (B41173), HM Prison Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HU**

## Brutality continues in Wandsworth

**The latest information from Wandsworth prison indicates that nothing has changed since our last report on the regime there (see FRFI 42). Prisoners say that assaults by prison officers remain an almost daily occurrence with black prisoners being picked out for special beatings. In the last three months five black prisoners have been 'sectioned' - transferred to special hospitals. Prisoners are still being placed on report for trivial 'offences' and then beaten up in the punishment block.**

One incident, on Sunday 21 October, is typical of what is happening. A young white prisoner was dragged from his cell by 12 prison officers. They carried him face down from the top landing to the

bottom so that his face banged on the stairs. He was kicked and punched all the way. Racist prison officers are deliberately provoking black prisoners with racist abuse. One black prisoner in

October had five to six prison officers outside his cell door shouting 'black cunt' and 'black bastard' through the door. When he reacted he was beaten by a gang of screws and left with a broken nose. Racist prison officers are also encouraging racist prisoners to harass black prisoners. Prisoners say that they expect major trouble in the prison as a result of these racist attacks.

Most prisoners are now being held on 23 hour lock-up, often with two or three sharing a small, badly-lit, badly-ventilated, damp and cold cell. There is no association. No work. Education classes are frequently cancelled at the whim of prison officers. The cells are freezing cold and damp in the winter. Alongside the cockroaches that infest the prison, there are now also rats on the wings (the four-legged, long-tailed variety that is). Prison officers in the hospital wing are still sporting small round NF badges which they wear under their lapels.

The officially-sanctioned brutal and inhuman regime at Wandsworth is being covered up by the Home Office. The Prison Inspectorate visited Wandsworth in April 1982. In January this year, their report was presented to Home Secretary Leon Brittan. It has still not been published. It is known that the report criticises lack of supervision of the punishment block by governor and medical staff. The Inspectorate visited Wandsworth again in September this year and stated that they were willing to revisit the prison if asked. This unusual offer indicates that they found something to investigate there.

The racist, brutal regime at Wandsworth is a deliberate policy of the Home Office to intimidate prisoners. The beatings, forced druggings, sectioning, racism and inhuman conditions at Wandsworth show how far the British ruling class will go in using prisons to repress the working class and oppressed in this country. The fact that prisoners are still braving further punishment by getting information out of the prison confirms that the brutality will not stop the fightback in prison.

Terry O'Halloran

## PRISON NEWS

**Black prisoner Philip Sydney-Cyrus has written from Albany having been given 7 days 'non-associated' labour, loss of 'privileges' and 7 days loss of remission on a false charge of 'abusive language' to a screw. This is his tenth punishment there, including fines of £7.50. The trouble started when he was assaulted by a racist prisoner in Camphill prison in April. The screws put Philip down the block and called the police. Two screws are acting as witnesses alongside the racist prisoner in charges against Philip. His own defence witnesses have been scattered to other prisons by the Camphill governor. Philip was transferred to Albany. The racist prisoner is now released, leaving Philip to the mercy of the Albany screws. FRFI sends Philip our best wishes. Send him yours to HMP Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight.**

Jack Devine in Perth prison has been fined two days wages for refusing to sew mailbags in August. He refused along with others because the prisoners were receiving only the minimum £1.02 per week. Persisting in the protest, he and his friends were each given ten days loss of wages, recreation, smoking and loss of mattresses day and night.

On 29 October a food poisoning outbreak of salmonella was reported at Armley prison Leeds. Stanley Royds Hospital, where 19 old people died from Salmonella is only ten miles away. The common factor is the dirty, infested, overcrowded conditions which both the hospitalised elderly and prisoners suffer. The prison authorities have tried to blame food brought into remand prisoners in Armley. However, the suspected cases include convicted prisoners who only eat prison food.

The government has just announced a new £15.5 million maximum security prison to be built within the perimeter of Peterhead prison near Aberdeen and to be completed by 1990. The government has also announced the appointment of three 'experts' to advise on the new special segregation units called for by the Control Review Committee (see FRFI 43). These units will be designed to 'control' - repress - prisoners who resist injustice in the prisons. Perhaps the three professors - Tony Bottoms, Roy King and John Gunn - would like to volunteer to be the first inmates of the new units?

An estimated 16% of adult male prisoners are said to have made an attempt on their own life. Figures for 1983 show 19 deaths by hanging with an inquest verdict of suicide; one prisoner who cut his own wrists; and two others who died through asphyxia by hanging resulting in open verdicts. Behind the fearful figures for prison suicides - a rate of 38.6 per 100,000 prisoners (1982 England and Wales) compared with 5.6 per 100,000 in the general population - lies the daily planned viciousness of the prison regime. Readers will not be surprised to learn that the figure for Scotland is even higher with a rate of 54 per 100,000 prisoners.

A NACRO report *Trends in the use of custody 1973 to 1983* confirms the steady increase in the number of people sent to prison. The following figures show the number given custodial sentences as a percentage of all people sentenced for offences:

	1973	1983
Young adults		
Male	10%	13%
Female	3%	5%
Adults		
Male	16%	20%
Female	3%	5%

Tony Sheridan

### Review

## The trial of Dedan Kimathi

*The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo. Currently touring Oxford, Manchester, Leeds, Catford, Stratford and Brixton. Presented by Wazalendo Players '84.

Supporters of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! went to see *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* on 20 October at the Africa Centre. In Kenya the ruling regime calls this 'Kenyatta Day' but Kenyan workers and peasants know it as Kimathi or Mau Mau Freedom Fighters Day. Thirty-two years ago to the day the British administration declared the State of Emergency all over Kenya. On 20 October 1952 they arrested the KAU and Mau Mau leadership and unleashed a reign of terror and genocide which was to last ten years (see FRFI 32). And 32 years ago Dedan Kimathi led the Mau Mau Land and Freedom Army into the forests and mountains to wage a superb guerilla struggle that was to finally compel British imperialism to seek a political solution out of the colonial war. On 21 October 1956 Kimathi was captured by the colonial authorities. After a short trial he was sentenced to death and executed at Kamiti Prison on 18 February 1957.

The play opens and closes with the trial and sentencing of Kimathi and tells his story and that of the Kenyan people with the flashbacks that we are so familiar with on film. But this is not just a historical review with songs and changing scenes. Nor is it merely concerned with the heroic struggles of the past.

*The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* is a play in which authors, actors and audience come together not for the sake of a theatrical experience, but because of real-life experiences and problems. It is created in the tradition of Epic Theatre after the manner of Bertolt Brecht who wrote for the

struggle of the Mau Mau and Kimathi have an immediate and dramatic significance.

The link between the past and the present is the opportunism which the British fostered in order to preserve imperialist control. Kimathi is tempted in his death



Dedan Kimathi - after capture

working class public of Europe. In this tradition everything about the play is political, the language, the rehearsals, all are a challenge to authority. This play led to bans, censorship and persecution for the authors and audiences in Kenya. The performance of the play in Britain has been labelled as communist inspired by the Kenyan government and ignored or dismissed by the bourgeois media.

Yet audiences come to Epic Theatre because they have a question to ask. The play is therefore rehearsed in communities where there is a need to understand how it comes about that Dedan Kimathi and his struggle was victorious over the British, but is defeated by the newly independent Kenyan state. When the Queen of England can visit the tomb of Jomo Kenyatta in 1983, while in 1984 thousands of Kenyans are massacred and hundreds detained without trial, the



Mau Mau suspects in British concentration camp

cell to give up his militant stand for the national rights of the oppressed. The opportunists appear in the guise of Christian men of peace, young national business interests and black separatism. All three argue for the ending of hostilities, compromise and the chance of expanding capitalism under a national flag. But behind the opportunists stand the international banks who wait only to hand over power to those who will carry out their work of exploitation for them. Behind Kimathi stand the toiling masses of the oppressed who must fight for social justice. The past and the present embrace in the struggle against opportunism.

The audiences at this play will not find sentimentality, heroism or nostalgia. Rather they will find renewed strength to struggle for the liberation of Africa from neo-colonial rule which remains a major democratic question of today.

Kimathi Our struggle must therefore continue  
our people will never surrender  
Internal and external foes  
will be demolished  
And Kenya shall be free!  
So, go!  
Organise in your homes  
Organise in the mountains  
Know that your only  
Kindred blood is he  
who is in the struggle  
Denounce those who weaken  
Our struggle  
by creating ethnic divisions  
Uproot from you those  
Who are selling out to  
imperialism  
Kenyan masses shall be free!

All readers of this paper should make every effort to go and see this superb play.

Susan Davidson

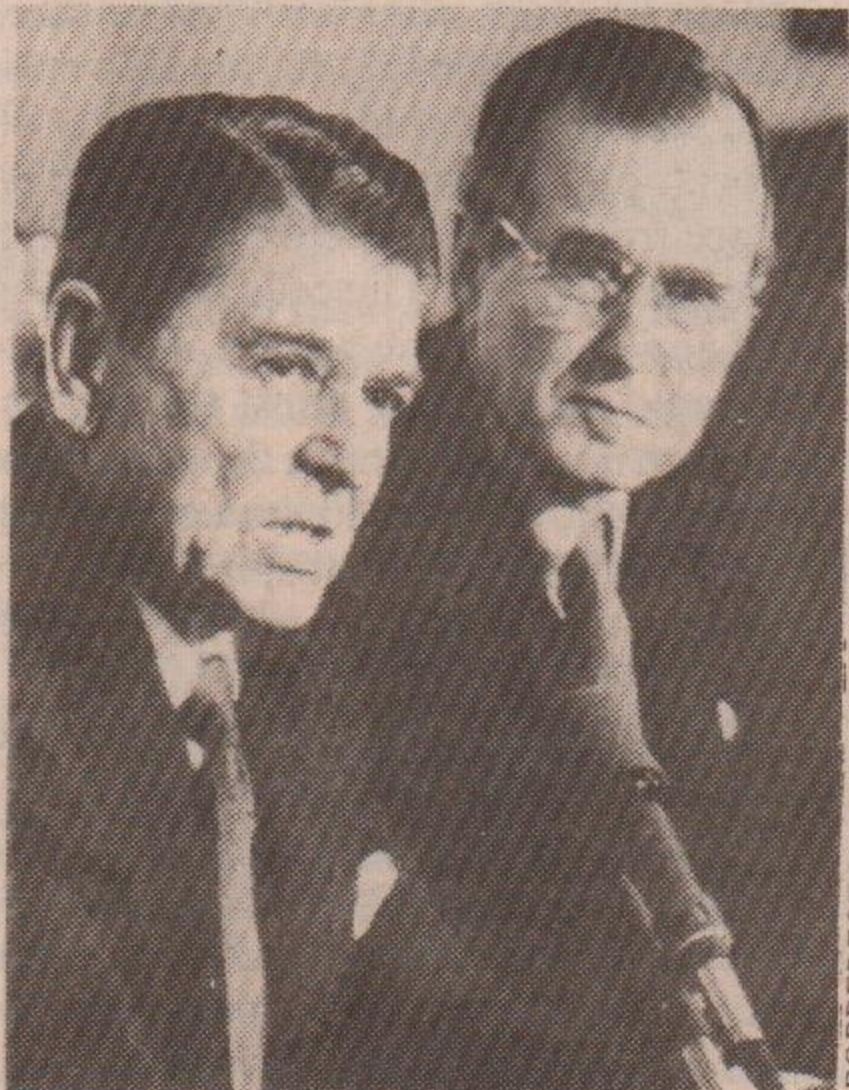
# International

REAGAN continued from page 1

## 'you ain't seen nothing yet'

Confronted with the issue of worsening poverty Reagan glibly referred to 'pockets...that haven't caught up'. Thirty-five million US citizens live below the poverty line, a third are children, and 47 million people suffer malnutrition. One in five rural dwellers rot in poverty, over a third of all black people and a quarter of Hispanics. Already black people's unemployment rate is twice that of the white population, and for black youth it is seven times the national average at over 50 per cent. Black people, the poor and most Hispanics did not vote for Reagan. They live in Third World conditions of deepening poverty surrounded by a contemptuous elite who added 30 per cent to Moët et Chandon's US champagne sales last year.

The Democratic campaign had no mass social basis: tax manipulations by Reagan's government raised the incomes of the middle classes. Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition, appealing to the black and oppressed people of the USA were effectively drained of momentum by the Democratic leadership, assisted by the police who arrested voter registration campaigners. Reagan's popularity with the middle classes has been bought with a series of budget deficits and astronomic injections of



Reagan and Vice President Bush

ful for the tide of chauvinism raised up by Reagan, it needs every flag and balloon it can hand on to.

### Bourgeois democracy: bread and circuses

Lenin once observed that:

'in the era of printing and parliamentarism it is impossible to gain the following of the masses without a widely ramified, systematically managed, well-equipped system of flattery, lies, fraud, juggling with fashionable and popular catchwords and promising all manner of reforms and blessings to workers right and left — as long as they renounce the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie'.

Big business has been grooming the professional actor for his political career for twenty years. Reagan provided the voice tone for catchwords, eye-twinkle for flattery, and the camera angles and lighting also lied. Entrances and exits, Nancy with the smiling eyes, all were as meticulously planned as a film set, and there were Frank Sinatra and Charlton Heston for the election day finale. Journalists were scrutinised and selected for their sympathetic views or excluded from Reagan altogether. His campaign

coverage was as tightly controlled as the news from the British and US respective invasions of the Malvinas and Grenada. It was an exercise in manipulating responses, run by advertising executives. The *Chicago Tribune* feared that Reagan was 'a danger to world peace' and that his budget deficit threatened to 'bankrupt America', and it supported him for the Presidency!

Reverend Jerry Falwell, founder of the arch-conservative Moral Majority led prayers 'that God will send a spiritual awakening to America' on election day, and, just in case God is as deaf as his 'chosen instrument', the Moral Majority donated US\$11 million to Reagan's campaign funds. Circuses cost money, spectacular frauds cost fortunes. In the end it was the party that could raise the most money which won. The US ruling class endorsed Reagan's record with tens of millions of dollars. For his personal ambition Reagan has ignited the aspirations of ultra-right and fascist-inclined politicians who are nurturing and feeding upon the most backward and racist elements in the white working class. Without any significant anti-imperialist movement based in the working class and oppressed people, the middle classes were drawn behind the bourgeois cheerleaders along the star spangled highway to war!

A single senate seat fought over in North Carolina cost US\$23 million, more than the combined expenditure of all parties on the last British general election. The victor was Senator Jesse Helms, open racist, supporter of compulsory school prayers and El Salvadorian pathological killer D'Aubuisson and apartheid's Botha. Opponent of abortion, homosexuals, and civil rights legislation: the Ten Commandments are sufficient says Jesse. One quarter of a million supporters raised twice as much for Helms as his opponent raised. Helms is expected to be given the chair

of the critical Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Fifty-four pro-Zionist groups backed Reagan with money; Cuban exiles, the orchestrators of Death Squads, the Mafia all chipped in. Reagan obliged them by letting slip that the CIA was directing the contras inside Nicaragua, that mercenaries training for an invasion were part of 'a well established tradition in our country'. The Shah of Iran was a model of progress and democracy who 'did our bidding'. The only alternative to Marcos in the Philippines was communism, and so on.

The US ruling class understands that to maintain its power there must be many more Grenadas, abroad and at home. How gratified it must be to see applications to the three military service academies increase by 59 per cent since 1980, and re-enlistment into the forces running at a post-1946 all time high of 71 per cent. In the past year the Pentagon has spent over US\$220 billions on weapons and US\$300,000 on dial-a-porn calls. Yes Reagan is as American as comic books and a sawn-off shot gun. That weapon is loaded and being levelled right now at the struggling masses of the globe. But let the US ruling class think on: when they invaded Vietnam black soldiers made up 16 per cent of the combat troops, they suffered 23 per cent of the fatalities, and ended the war with half of the 'dishonourable' discharges. Today, one third of the US army is black, black people will not vote for Reagan and be increasingly less prepared to die for him. The future course of the global class struggle will increasingly rest on the real majority of Americans: black people, Hispanics, and poor white workers linking arms with the other enemies of US imperialism in Central and South America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East and Asia — the majority of humanity.

Trevor Rayne

### CHILE - THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK

Chile's bloodstained dictator Augusto Pinochet has taken drastic steps to attempt to shore up his fascist regime against growing popular and militant opposition. This has led to Pinochet's increasing isolation and almost total reliance upon the pampered military. In response to the first general strike since his counter-revolutionary coup in 1973, Pinochet has declared a new 'state of siege'. Under its terms he has taken sweeping powers. He has already issued decrees banning six opposition papers, heavily increasing censorship, and forbidding political parties, trade unions, students from holding any gatherings from demonstrations to private meetings. Within hours of the decrees being signed Pinochet's goons raided opposition groups all over the country. In Santiago these raids included the offices of the Popular Democratic Movement (MPD, the grouping which includes the Communist Party). In all fourteen people were detained.

The general strike was a turning point in the democratic movement. It drew in many workers and advanced the tactics of the mass democratic movement. Baricades were set up, Molotov cocktails thrown at the police, tyres were burned and the security forces prevented from entering whole neighbourhoods. The strike was called by the National Workers' Command (CNT) with the WPD playing a pivotal role in its organisation. The Communist Party has succeeded in attracting the support of the youth to the mobilisations. This, particularly since the CP leadership announced its support for armed struggle to overthrow the dictatorship.

In 1984 there have been 300 bomb explosions aimed at the dictatorship. In one recent incident six policemen died. Pinochet recently remarked 'The only way I am going to leave the Presidency is feet first'. It looks as if it might be sooner than he had imagined.

Nigel Doyle and John Strawson

Later: As we go to press news comes in of 4,000 people arrested, over 300 detained after Pinochet's troops, helicopters and armoured cars sealed off a working class suburb of Santiago.

### CENTRAL AMERICA

## Reagan Beware!

The most serious threat to re-elected Reagan comes from the mass popular uprisings of Central America. Within hours of Reagan's confirmation of victory, the US military threatened to escalate its subversion of the Nicaraguan revolution into all out war when US gunboats were dispatched into Nicaraguan waters. Reagan may be tempted by his easy victory over Mondale to chance his arm against the Central American revolution and to polish his hero's mantle with the blood of the oppressed.

In five years, US imperialism has multiplied its aid to the El Salvador regime 27 fold, it has built its army to 40,000 men, trained elite battalions, supplied the airforce with 50 sophisticated helicopters and sent in an unknown number of military advisers. Fifty thousand dead El Salvadoreans has not stemmed the revolutionary forces whose determination to battle on will be redoubled by any US threat of invasion. In Nicaragua too US imperialism faces an unbowed revolution. Honduras has been transformed into a military base for the assault on the Sandinistas: 13 US airfields, radar stations, tank ditches, ammunition depots and the infrastructure of war, have been built on Nicaragua's borders. Millions of dollars to the CIA run counter-revolutionaries has resulted in the death of 7,600, the equivalent of seven times US dead in Vietnam. Contra activity and US economic sabotage has meant losses of \$237m, equivalent to \$102bn US and \$284bn of EEC export earnings. Nevertheless the revolution's slogan remains 'Victory or Death!' Its reply to the war-mongering over Mig jets has been to arm the masses.

Crushing tiny and almost unarmed Grenada is one thing, but US imperialism will face its Nemesis should it dare to commit its forces against the Central American masses schooled in years of combat. Here Reagan will find no easy victory, only another Vietnam.

### NICARAGUA

The Nicaraguan masses and the Sandinista government scored a significant political victory against the Reagan Administration on Sunday 4 November when over 80% of the people turned out to vote in the Nicaraguan elections. The Sandinistas received over 70% of the vote, yet again confirming the mass popular support for the revolution. While the British Government refused to send official observers to monitor the polls (it did so when the fascist regime in El Salvador organised rigged elections last year), all international observers who did attend testified to the election's democratic character. Such testimony means as little to the US regime as the lives of the 7,600 people murdered by the contras.

US imperialism already has a well prepared plan for an invasion of the country codenamed Operation Black Moon. According to documents unearthed by the Sandinistas, the US ad-

ministration is prepared to spend \$10bn on an invasion, employ 60,000 troops, 200 aircraft and 700 helicopters. While preparing to sacrifice 11,000-28,000 US soldiers, it does not care for the substantially greater Nicaraguan casualties.

### EL SALVADOR

On 15 October, in the town of La Palma situated in FMLN controlled territory, El Salvador's President Duarte sat to negotiate with representatives of the FMLN-FDR. The FMLN rejected the regime's demand to lay down arms and declared that 'Dialogue has to begin while our rifles fight and deliver hard blows to the puppet regime.'

The FMLN, while not excluding negotiations, recognises that US imperialism and its puppet Duarte remain resolved to destroy the FMLN. They have therefore called upon the people to intensify the struggle on all fronts — military, political, social and diplomatic. Following the La Palma meeting,



Sandinista supporters demonstrate against counter-revolution

the FMLN carried out a series of major military operations, one of which delivered a decisive blow to the regime. FMLN guerrillas ambushed an army helicopter killing Lt Col Domingo Monterrosa. Known among the people as the 'maximum war criminal' Monterrosa was El Salvador's foremost exponent of US counter-insurgency tactics. Admired by the US military, he was a ruthless killer responsible for the 1981 massacre of hundreds of civilians in El Mozote. Nevertheless, despite the praise heaped on him, Monterrosa failed to dislodge FMLN forces from Monterrosa province where he concentrated his numerous military campaigns.

### GUATEMALA

In 1954 CIA-trained Guatemalan traitors and mercenaries were installed in the place of the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, after US planes had bombed towns and villages and threatened to raze Guatemala City to the ground. The US government claimed to be combatting 'communist aggression'.

Since 1954, 100,000 Guatemalans have been murdered by the state and its agencies. Another 35,000 have 'disappeared'. Over the past three years the entire trade union leadership has been exterminated. Torture, mass killings

and the firing of villages await those suspected of rebellion. Into this stepped British Foreign Secretary Howe who, in a clandestine meeting with his Guatemalan counterpart this October, sought to re-establish consular relations with the Guatemalan regime. They were broken off in 1981 over Britain's role in neighbouring Belize.

All the horror and destruction has failed to break and cow Guatemala's people. Just as in 1954 when the patriots saw they must take their fight underground so today the volunteers of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG) are hauling themselves out of the nightmare. The regime's scorched earth policies and genocide in the countryside have not destroyed the guerrilla units. Patient and painstaking work has drawn Guatemala's indian people, 60 percent of the population, into the ranks and leadership of the revolutionaries. During 1983 the Guatemalan police admitted losing 511 officers through guerrilla attacks. Between 21 March and 15 August this year the URNG claims 535 state troop casualties achieved in 84 engagements. Imperialism's dream, Guatemala's nightmare, will end with the URNG objective: 'a revolutionary, popular and democratic government'.

Eddie Abrahams  
Trevor Rayne



POPPER/OTO

## Bloody pogroms follow Gandhi assassination

An explosion of communal violence and bloody pogroms against Sikhs have swept through India following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Sikhs have been hacked and burnt to death and their homes and property destroyed in what has developed into an orgy of Hindu chauvinism. Yet the communal tensions unleashed since the death of Indira Gandhi are indeed no more than the legacy of the rule of Gandhi herself and the corrupt Congress Party.

In Gandhi's earlier period of prime ministership, elected state governments were removed on a total of 27 separate occasions, often achieved through destabilisation tactics. For example, the communist-led Left Front government in West Bengal was brought down in this manner by Gandhi in 1972.

In 1975 the 19 month long Emergency was imposed. This period was marked by the curbing of democratic rights, the detention and torture of 150,000 political prisoners without trial, compulsory sterilisation and the forcible evictions of slum dwellers and urban poor. Gandhi

cloaked these actions by fostering a personality cult ('Indira is India, India is Indira') and making manipulative use of 'socialist' rhetoric. A telling comment was later made by Gandhi to the Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar: 'We spoke of socialism because that was what went down with the masses'.

In recent months 'the leader of the world's largest democracy' engineered the removal of democratically-elected governments in Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh. Ironically it was Gandhi's disastrous manipulation of the situation in the Punjab

which led to her demise at the hands of Sikh militants. Gandhi and the Congress Party sponsored and financed the Sikh fundamentalists led by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to undermine the Akali Dal government in Punjab state. But those they fed turned against them: fundamentalists killed and terrorised Hindus and other Sikhs demanding Sikh autonomy. They occupied the Golden Temple. In June 1984 the Indian Army was sent by Gandhi to invade the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar — thousands of Sikhs were massacred in this bloody assault, and much of the temple complex destroyed.

The Indian masses, 60% of whom live at subsistence level in the most terrible and crushing poverty, can expect little to change with the rapid appointment of Rajiv Gandhi.

Bill Hughes

## US attacks workers without documents

'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free' reads the inscription on the Statue of Liberty at the entrance to New York Harbour. Yet New York Harbour was where the myths and dreams ended and the harsh reality of immigration to the US really began. Just as in Britain, the US has always welcomed the poor and oppressed, so long as they can serve as fresh fuel for the machinery of exploitation and profit-making.

The intensifying crisis of imperialism has led to mounting poverty for the masses in Central America. As a result of this, and counter-revolutionary repression in the area, several million Latinos have crossed the Mexican border seeking refuge and work, where they are easy prey for capitalists wanting cheap labour. One hour's work in the US can bring in more than a day's work in Mexico. Estimates of the numbers of such undocumented workers vary from 3m to 12m — nobody knows for sure how many there really are. It is estimated that non-payment of taxes and benefits, combined with low wages, is pouring an extra \$18bn a year into the pockets of greedy employers. The ruling class complains that they are a drain on the welfare, the labour aristocracy claim they are stealing jobs and creating unemployment. This coalition is pushing for inten-

sified attacks on undocumented workers.

The 1984 budget has been increased by an extra \$93m for an 'enhanced enforcement' package which will double the number of Border Patrol agents and increase the number of deportation and detention officers. The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) has begun to crack down on the church activists who, smuggling political refugees from Mexico to Canada, face a possible 15 years in prison and a \$15,000 fine. According to Wayne Kirkpatrick, a Border Patrol officer, 'We are protecting jobs for American workers, saving taxpayers' money by keeping people off the welfare rolls, saving thousands of dollars in medical fees. We're doing a good job.'

New immigration legislation, in the shape of the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill,

## LEBANON

### Imperialist manoeuvres continue

The recent visit to the USA by Shimon Peres the Israeli Prime Minister highlighted the Zionist state's total dependence on US imperialism and exposed it as the military wing of the Reagan Administration in the Middle East.

To preserve the Israeli state's military effectiveness, threatened by grave economic crisis, Reagan agreed to hand over \$1.2bn economic aid on 1 January 1985 as a new year's present in what will be a total economic and military aid package of \$2.6bn next year. A joint Economic Development Committee was set up as well as a free trade zone between the two countries to prevent the total collapse of the Israeli economy.

Since 1948, the state of Israel has received \$28bn aid averaging over \$2bn since 1973. Peres is now demanding \$4bn for 1986. Unabashed by the staggering amount, he explained that Israel is an ally of the US:

'... which does not ask for US troops to help us do the job.'

This 'job' is the suppression of anti-imperialist movements, particularly the Palestinian, which threaten US interests in the Middle East. Currently the most pressing 'job' is that of trying to control the resurgent revolutionary movement in Israeli occupied South Lebanon. When Peres was in the USA, the British press was full of talk about plans for an Israeli withdrawal. Such plans of course have nothing to do with the recognition of the Lebanese people's right to self-determination. The Israeli occupation is costing \$1.2m a day draining its economy, while the resistance which has carried out over 700 military operations this year, is sapping the army's morale and fighting ability. The Israeli government is thus trying to replace direct occupation with rule by the puppet gangsters of the South Lebanon Army, UN forces and Syrian guarantees not to fill positions vacated by Israel and to prevent Palestinian fighters from re-establishing bases in South Lebanon.

In the task of replacing one set of oppressors for another, the British government has offered its services. While in the Middle East in late October Sir Geoffrey Howe British Foreign Secretary declared Britain's willingness to play a role in a reinforced UN force to replace the Israeli army in South Lebanon. remarking on Britain's role in large US designs, a former head of the US Secret Services noted that:

'Whenever we want to subvert a country, we always find the British have an island within easy reach.'

In this particular case, the island is Cyprus where Britain has a military base ready for use, in addition to its forces stationed in the Sinai.

Eddie Abrahams

which failed to pass the last session of Congress, would have implemented sweeping new repressive measures against undocumented workers. Even though the Bill has failed to become law, thousands have lost their jobs as frightened employers sack those they have been exploiting. Whole families have gone into hiding, in case they face deportation. The entire Latino community is facing intensified discrimination.

Steve Palmer

## ETHIOPIA

Eight hundred and fifty million people in this world are in hunger. With every minute that passes 28 children die from starvation. Now two million Ethiopians are in imminent danger from famine. Like excited vultures the bourgeois press has picked over their plight to hurl abuse at the socialist Ethiopia government and to glorify the memory of the white colonial rule in Africa. What afflicts the Ethiopians and the fifth of Africa's population trapped in hunger is a scourge more deadly than drought, imperialism.

In 1974 the Ethiopian people and army threw out the feudal remnants of Emperor Haile Selassie, and embarked upon laying the foundations for socialism. They faced titanic problems: 2 per cent of the people had owned 80 per cent of the land; there was 93 per cent illiteracy; and just 130 doctors to serve 30 million people, whose average life expectancy was 35-37 years. The new government turned the land over to the peasantry and Fidel Castro declared in 1977 'We feel the Ethiopian revolution is a truly historic event'. US imperialism cut off aid, and Somalia was mobilised against the Ethiopian revolution.

Ethiopian President Colonel Mengistu Haile Marian said 'imperialism has left time bombs in Africa'. Coffee growing lands like Ethiopia and Uganda must produce a third again more of the crop to buy a tractor as ten years ago. Through price manipulations Africa is losing \$10 billion a year to the imperialist nations. With export prices forced down Africa has been forced to borrow: in 1981 Africa paid the imperialist banks \$4.1 billion; in 1986 this payment will be \$11.6 billion. One third of Ethiopia's debt repayments this year will be in interest! Such robbery deprives Africa's nations of the means to invest in their land: tractors contribute 2 per cent of the productive power, draught animals 13 per cent, and human labour 85 per cent.

With all the compassion of the executioner's last offer the British government yielded to the public's demand that Ethiopia be given aid. Five million pounds were taken from another allotted use and directed to Ethiopia. Britain has reduced its overseas aid to 0.35 per cent of the national product, yet British banking and commercial claims abroad amounted to 167 per cent of the national product in 1982.

Twice as much food is produced annually in the world than is necessary to feed the world's population, but if its price does not bring a profit it shall not be eaten. British and USA farmers are paid not to grow and to destroy crops. Truly, from the Irish 'famine' to Ethiopia today 'Mass famine is jewelry for the rich' (Ngugi). Trevor Rayne

## GENERAL NAMED AS MURDER SUSPECT

The official inquiry into the murder of Philippines opposition leader, Benigno Aquino has named General Fabian Ver, 24 other top military men and 1 civilian as prime suspects. According to the report they are 'indictable for the premeditated killing' of Aquino and fellow oppositionist Rolando Galman. Benigno Aquino was gunned down at Manila International Airport in August 1983 after returning from years of exile. The murder took place while he was surrounded by government security officials and in full view of the TV cameras.

Since the murder there have been widespread protests, rallies and demonstrations culminating in the 21 August general strike demanding the arrest of those responsible and the dismantling of the Marcos US-backed dictatorship. The official inquiry was headed by Justice Corazon Agrava, who was carefully selected by Marcos himself. Agrava clearly could not resist the pressure of the mass protests in turning in a half honest report naming the military as the murderers. It is only half honest because the other prime suspect in the minds of the 52 million Filipinos is President Ferdinand Marcos himself. Most observers agree that in any reasonably fair electoral contest between Marcos and Aquino, Aquino would have won hands down. John Strawson

## THAI TROOPS OUT OF LAOS NOW!

FRFI has received an urgent appeal from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic calling for international support to defend the right of the Lao people to self-determination.

For four months this year troops of the reactionary Thai Prem Tinsulanonda regime occupied three Laotian villages of Bane Kang, Bane May and Bane Savang. After organised resistance by the Lao people and international pressure, these troops have now been withdrawn, although leaving behind terrified villagers and a devastated local agriculture. The Thai troops have not left the People's Democratic Republic, however; they have merely re-grouped south of Bane May and are steadily reinforcing their positions. The Lao government fears an imminent attack on the region.

The message ends:

The Lao People's Democratic Republic launches an urgent appeal to the peoples of all countries to continue to show their sympathy and support for the just struggles of the Lao people as they safeguard their sovereignty over these three villages, and sympathy and support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Laos, for peace and stability in South East Asia and throughout the world'.

Messages of solidarity with Laos should be sent to: Embassy of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 5, Palace Green, London W8.

# ROUND UP

## ●FRFI supporter arrested in Brixton

After a period of systematic harassment of FRFI and Irish solidarity activists, the Brixton police made their first arrest on 25 September. Ruby Noorani, along with three others were selling FRFI and collecting signatures for a petition against plastic bullets. Some 20 minutes after already harassing us, PC L913 strode up to Ruby and without warning arrested her. Ruby was charged with obstructing the highway even though there were not many people passing by at the time.

When the case was heard at Camberwell Magistrates court on 25 October, the police evidence consisted of the usual fabrications and inconsistencies. One PC testified that there were no other FRFI sellers, another testified precisely the opposite and both invented a conversation with Ruby that never took place. The case was then adjourned to 4 January. The police are never in want of money to carry out their prosecutions, but Ruby is still being denied legal aid. We need your donations to cover our legal and campaign expenses. Send donations to FRFI, BM Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX

## SPECIAL FUND

### AN APPEAL TO ALL OUR READERS AND SUPPORTERS Help us buy our own typesetting equipment! - cost £6000!

Typesetting is an indispensable stage in the process of producing FRFI, pamphlets, books and other propaganda material. With technically advanced equipment we can get FRFI and other material to YOU quicker.

As the press, radio and TV are used even more intensively to attack the working class, communist books, newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets are all the more necessary.

In times of ruling class reaction and capitalist crisis we need to create an expanding production unit for anti-imperialists, democrats, communists, the working class and the oppressed.

Help us in our campaign! Help us keep FRFI independent! Help us raise £6000. With your help we can succeed.

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

I/we want to donate £\_\_\_\_\_ to the Special FRFI Fund.

Name/Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

I do/do not want you to mention my name/organisation \_\_\_\_\_

## ●Anti-Apartheid debate

At a recent meeting of Leeds Park Lane College Anti-Apartheid Group a debate was held between the SWP and RCG. The SWP speaker criticised the ANC for allegedly pursuing a 'purely military strategy' and said that the trade unions should organise a general strike of six million workers, accompanied by an armed insurrection.

The RCG speaker said that the struggle against apartheid was involving all sections of the population, not only trade unionists, and that the armed struggle was a crucial part of the overall fight-back. The liberation struggle, led by the ANC, SWAPO and the UDF, was posing a major challenge to British imperialism which was up to its neck in apartheid. It was therefore our duty to build solidarity with the liberation forces and to actively campaign in support of their call to isolate apartheid.

The SWP tried to defend their

## GREETINGS TO IRISH POWs

The following Irish Republican prisoners have forthcoming birthdays. FRFI sends our greetings and asks our readers to send birthday cards, preferably recorded delivery to ensure their arrival.

**Paul Norney**, 836532, 11 November, HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 2TN

**Brendan Dowd**, 758662, 17 November, HM Prison, Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

**Andy Mulryan**, 461576, 18 November, HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 5TZ

**James Bennet**, 464989, 4 December, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London, W12 0AE

**Liam Baker**, 464984, 6 December, HM Prison, Hedon Road, Hull, North Humberside, HU9 5LS

**Hugh Doherty**, 338636, 7 December, HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

**Noel Gibson**, 879225, 11 December, Gartree (see above)

We apologise sincerely to the prisoners whose birthdays should have appeared in the previous two issues of FRFI. The greetings were omitted in error.

opposition to the boycott call by arguing that British investments in South Africa helped to create a working class which would destroy apartheid. According to this perverse logic, the very investments which play a central role in sustaining the apartheid regime are now said to be contributing to its downfall!

Idealist, arrogant advice to the liberation movements and the search for a progressive side to British imperialism – such is the essence of the SWP's position on South Africa.

David Jackson

## ●SAEPC court case Verdicts

After a peaceful picket at Albany Street police station to support 19 people arrested outside South Africa House on 6 July, a 'Coal Not Dole' badge was stuck on a police coach. The police swarmed off the coach and attacked the picketers who were on their way home. Typically, the only people charged after this police riot were two SAEPC supporters – Venti and Kayode – who appeared at Highbury Magistrates Court on Tuesday 6 November. Witnesses described how the police 'waded in' using fists, knees and boots and dragged people away on the ground. The scene was compared to police behaviour on the terraces at Arsenal.

Kayode was arrested when he went to help his sister who had been pushed to the ground by police and was being dragged along the pavement by her feet. Kayode was charged with obstruction of

the police! The charge was however dismissed when he produced a photo showing both Kayode and his sister being dragged along the ground – a fact the police denied in the witness box. Venti who was charged with using abusive language and behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace was found guilty and given a six month conditional discharge. The magistrate while saying he could not allow prosecution questions about Venti's support for political parties, did nothing to stop a series of attempts by the prosecution to label Venti a 'left wing extremist'. Supporters of the SAEPC who had packed the public gallery, witnessed a jumble of police lies. Venti was alleged to have knocked off a policeman's helmet – but interestingly was not charged with assaulting the police! While the police lied, Venti wasn't lucky enough to have had a photo of his arrest when he was doing nothing more than walking down the road.

Jim Jones

## ●Dundee Anti-Apartheid 12 hour picket

A large number of anti-apartheid activists braved the driving rain and bitter cold and successfully held a 12 hour picket in Dundee City Square on Saturday 3 November. The picket was called by Dundee Anti-Apartheid group and attracted a large number of youth, six of whom travelled all the way through from Coatbridge. The picket was supported by Edinburgh and Dundee FRFI, who were instrumental in the organisation

of the day's events. A rally was held at midday, with songs, chants and speeches from a local anti-apartheid speaker, one of the Coatbridge 'skins' and from Edinburgh and Dundee FRFI. A picket university was held in the evening and leafletting and petitioning and paper selling took place throughout the day. Despite the atrocious weather 67 FRFIs were sold and nearly £30 raised. Throughout the day a creche was provided for children in a comrade's house nearby.

Although Dundee City Square has traditionally been a free-speech area governed by specific by-laws, there seems to be a move afoot to restrict the activities of anti-apartheid campaigners there. Evidence for this is that a visit was made to the member who wrote to the District Council applying for use of the Square, by the police, and on confirming the arrangement the District Council made the condition that police requirements be adhered to on the day. This is despite our knowledge that two other political organisations made similar applications and were not subject to police questioning. Complaints have been sent to the Chief Constable and legal advice is being sought. As it happened, the police preferred to take shelter from the storm on the day of the picket and presumably hoped that the weather would prove to be a deterrent to supporters. They were wrong and we will continue to organise in the City Square and challenge their right to limit our activities.

HF

## EVENTS

### Forums

#### ●LONDON

Tuesday 27 November 'Building a Communist Party in Britain today' at Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London NW1 at 7.30pm (nearest tube Euston). Admission 50p waged/25p unwaged.

### Irish Solidarity Movement

The Irish Solidarity Movement has affiliated bodies in Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford, Southampton, North, South and East London. The ISM can be contacted by writing to ISM, BM Box 1320, London WC1 3XX

#### MANCHESTER

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly on Wednesdays. For details contact MISC, Box 47, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN

#### EDINBURGH

Join the Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee! We hold street meetings, rallies and other public events in our work. Weekly planning meetings with education and discussion. Write to EISC c/o Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

#### ●IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

**Annual General Meeting of the Irish Solidarity Movement.** All affiliated bodies and organisations are urged to attend. Saturday 24 November. For details of time, place and transport contact: ISM BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX. Called by Irish Solidarity Movement

### FRFI supporters groups

#### ●MANCHESTER

FRFI supporters group meets fortnightly. Contact Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN. for details

#### ●EDINBURGH

October supporters Group. Get involved with FRFI activities in Edinburgh! Fortnightly meetings with political discussion and organisation of our work. Mondays 12 and 26 November, Drummond School, bottom of Broughton St 7.9pm. Admission 20p. Called by Edinburgh FRFI

#### ●BRADFORD

Wednesday 5 December, 7.30pm Queen's Hall, Morley St

#### ●LEEDS

Wednesday 21 November, 7.30pm in Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7

#### ●DUNDEE

Street Sales. Join us! Help Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! Sell FRFI every Saturday, 12.00 Murrugate, Dundee

### Miners' strike

#### ●LONDON

Public Meeting: **Victory to the Irish People! Victory to the Miners!** Speakers: Warwickshire Striking Miner; Irish Solidarity Movement; Campaigner Against Strip Searches in Armagh Gaol. Tuesday 20 November, 7.30pm, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London WC1 (nearest tube: Kings Cross). Admission 50p/25p unwaged. Called by Irish Solidarity Committees

#### ●EDINBURGH

Public Meeting **The Miners' Strike - Enemies and Friends.** Thursday 29 November, Crosswinds, Tollcross, 7pm. Admission 20p. Called by Edinburgh FRFI

#### ●LEEDS

Public Meeting **Defend the Fitzwilliam 9! Striking Miners are not Criminals! Victory to the Miners!** Thursday 29 November, 7.30pm Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7. Speakers invited: Fitzwilliam 9, FRFI and others. Called by Leeds FRFI

#### ●DUNDEE

Public Meeting/Video **The Miners' Struggle** Thursday 25 January 1985, 7.30pm Wellgate Library, Wellgate Centre, Dundee Admission 50p employed; 25p unemployed. Called by Revolutionary Communist Group

### Public meetings

#### ●DUNDEE

Public Meeting **The Irish Struggle - Revolutionary Challenge to British Imperialism** Thursday 13 December 7.30pm Wellgate Library, Wellgate Centre, Dundee. Admission 25p. Called by Revolutionary Communist Group

#### ●MANCHESTER

Public Discussion Meeting **'Irish Prisoners in English Jails'** Wednesday 21 November 7.30pm Unicorn Hotel, Church St Manchester. Called by Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee

#### ●BRADFORD

Public Meeting **Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Support the Right of Repatriation for All Irish POWs!** Wednesday 21 November 12.45pm Queens Hall Conference Room, Queens Hall, Morley St, Bradford 7. Called by Bradford College FRFI Society

### Demonstration

#### ●MANCHESTER

**Demonstration: Manchester Martyrs Commemoration March. March in solidarity with Irish Republican Prisoners** Sunday 25 November. Assembles 1pm Strangeways Prison, Ducie Street Manchester. Transport from London, Southampton, Scotland, Leeds, Bradford. Contact ISM, BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX or local ISC. London Coach Tickets £4.50. Called by Sinn Fein

### South Africa

#### SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY PICKET CAMPAIGN

**Campaign meeting** 7.30pm Sunday 25 November, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube: Holborn)

**Apartheid Out of Britain! Close Down the Racist Embassy!** - SAEPC Festival Theatre, films, songs, exhibitions and discussion. Saturday 26 January 10-4 to be followed by march to a picket of the South African embassy. Details to be announced.

For further information contact SAEPC, c/o BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX or phone (01-837 6050)

#### ●BRADFORD

**Bradford Anti-Apartheid Group** meets fortnightly. For details write to Bradford AA c/o The Stary Plough Bookshop, 6 Edmund Street, Bradford 5, West Yorkshire

#### ●LONDON

**City of London Anti-Apartheid Group: Picket the South African Embassy!** Every Friday 5.30-7.30pm, Trafalgar Square. Bring your banners! For further information about City AA contact BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX or phone (01-837 6050)

### Campaigns

#### ●MANCHESTER

Public Meeting **Defend Jackie Berkeley!** Wednesday 5 December Moss Side Community Education Centre, Moss Side 7.30pm. Called by Jackie Berkeley Defence Campaign

**BARKING HOSPITAL STRIKE** Longest running NHS Dispute Supporters welcome on the picket line, especially every Tuesday 6.30am-8am. Barking Hospital, Upney Lane, Barking. Nearest tube Upney (District line). Messages of support and for more information ring 01-592 5038

#### ●MANCHESTER

**Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign** meets every Sunday 7.30pm, Manchester Town Hall. Contact: Box 38, Corn Exchange BDS, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN for details.

#### ●BRADFORD

**Viraj Mendis Support Committee** meets fortnightly. For details write to VMSC, c/o The Stary Plough Bookshop, 6 Edmund Street, Bradford 5, West Yorkshire.

## Larkin publications



### Ireland: the key to the British revolution by David Reed

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'David Reed's book gives a detailed account of the last 140 years of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland and its effect on the workers' movement in Britain. It is written in a simple and easy to read style and must be of great value to the teenage youth... and also to the adult worker who knows little about the struggle in Ireland or its vital importance...'  
Sean Mac Stiofain

### The revolutionary road to communism in Britain

Manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Group  
Price £1.50 (+30p p&p) 175 pages

Readers will be pleased to know that the number of copies of 'Ireland: the key to the British revolution' that we have been paid for rose to over 1000 in September and considerably more have been sold.

Many thanks to all supporters who sent in bookshop addresses and ordered the books from libraries. Please carry on, it has been very effective.

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(Offer ends 1 January 1985)

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

# Letters

## Comments on the Anti-Apartheid Movement AGM

Dear Comrades, I am writing to express my utter disgust and disbelief of the proceedings at the AAM's AGM. A day which saw personal attacks, both verbal and physical, upon the honourable and courageous Kitson family. A day which witnesses the start of a 'red scare', perpetrated by people I can only presume have never been involved in real struggle.

How sickening that these privileged people claim to be involved in the liberation struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa and Namibia.

One of the good things to come out of the AGM though, was that these people can no longer hide behind their veil of privilege, they had to expose themselves on Sunday to protect their easy privileged membership of the AAM.

It was after the AGM that I became convinced (if I wasn't already) just who was right and who was wrong. I believe it was Malcolm X, the great black revolutionary who said, 'if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem', because they cannot honestly claim, after 25 years of existence or indeed after

Sunday's AGM, to be part of the solution.

To these people I have this to say: viva RCG/FRFI, viva the Kitson family, viva SAEPD, viva City AA. All power to the people. Our day rapidly approaches, comrades, you have my unconditional support from now on.

In solidarity,  
**Paul B**  
Stoke on Trent

## Anti-racists?

Dear Comrades, I want to tell you about my experience at the Anti Apartheid Movement's AGM on 28 October.

I was collecting signatures on the petition against my deportation, at the conference (for details about my campaign see FRFI). The attitude of a lot of people horrified me. These so-called anti-racists were refusing to sign my petition because I am an FRFI supporter! One person said he saw me voting in favour of a City AA motion - so he won't support my campaign. Some admitted that their hatred for FRFI was greater than their hatred for the racist British Immigration Controls - many of

these people were supporters of the Communist Party of Great Britain!

I suppose I shouldn't have been so horrified. For these people the very existence of an anti-imperialist trend in the Anti-Apartheid movement threatens their opportunist political interests. So I should not be surprised that they should use the dirtiest, most openly racist and unprincipled methods to fight this trend.

On the positive side what impressed me most was the principled stand made by David Kitson. For me he expressed most clearly the magnificent struggle of the South African masses.

So comrades let us redouble our efforts to build an Anti-Apartheid movement in this country which does justice to that struggle.

**Viraj Mendis**  
Manchester

## You never lose

Dear Friends, Speaking as an individual member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement I would like to tell you that I was there at the AGM on Sunday and I think that City Group were marvellous. Usually when people can't stand the bureaucratic nonsense of hierarchi-

cal movements that grow so big and self important they lose sight of their aims and objectives, then people just leave it and let the bloated bureaucratic and pompous plutocrats carry on stifling it. Not so City Group. It was marvellous to see all those people, two hundred people encompassing the whole spectrum from dear old grannies, to youthful and religious young men. From the brave young Zimbabwe boy to grey-haired Eddie Abrahams, and gay actor and the enthusiastic Tony James were just electrifying. It's stupid of the bourgeois press to pretend that this lively young group is trying to 'take over' when it seemed so obvious to me, who has never been to none of Annie's meetings, that you merely care enough to want to improve and modernise things from within. Sunday made that very clear to me. Congratulations for not just deserting the AA Movement in this country as most progressive groups have had to, (sadly so far...) but had the guts, brains and determination to work at reactionary, old stick-in-the-muds from within their own underwear.

Like the miners could not come to your recent events because of bail conditions, and the Irish community

missed the John McCluskey release celebration march because of the PTA act in London recently, (ISM event), well there are reasons much like this why lots of people are afraid to come and join you. Nevertheless, we get inspiration from your amazing battles which if you don't always win... you never lose.

Long live David Reed  
Yasa the RCG  
Viva City Group, Carol and the SAEPD  
**GIPSIES**  
(Gypsies Insist on Permanent Sites In Exuberant Surrounds)

## Which side are they on?

Dear FRFI, May I through your paper strongly protest the actions of certain members of the Anti-Apartheid Movement at their annual general meeting which was held at Central Hall on Sunday 28 October 1984. I refer particularly to the treatment of the speaker David Kitson, a man who for 20 years was in a South African prison.

Now as far as I can see Mr Kitson was in that prison because he fought against apartheid, the same apartheid as everyone in that hall that day was against. Irrespective of if you fight that apartheid on the street outside the South African Embassy or if you talk about it on your country estate apartheid is apartheid and should be crushed.

So why did certain members of that movement treat Mr Kitson with such indignity? When he finished speaking they remained in their seats at their sides. Now it is not my place to tell people as and when to cheer somebody. But if someone has been in prison for 20 years fighting for their cause I believe he at least deserves a hand clap. Those people should be disgusted with themselves - they do not deserve to be connected with the Anti-Apartheid Movement. When the day comes that Nelson Mandela is free let's hope he supports the street campaign as Mr Kitson has done. He himself will be disgusting treated by the AAM, but I know who's side I am on. The side of the people who want freedom for the people in South Africa.

**Terry**  
Manchester

## Jubilation

Dear FRFI, Since the Brighton Bombing, newspapers up and down the country have been reporting in their usual biased way, claiming that everyone is in unity with Thatcher and her government in condemning the attack. In Dundee we were wondering what kind of response we would receive on the street when we held our next street meeting on Ireland. Well, in answer to our question, this letter was printed in our local rag and it certainly proves the newspapers wrong, don't you think?

**BC**  
Dundee

**VISITOR HORRIFIED**  
*As a visitor to Dundee from Southern England, I was horrified to overhear and see the conduct and behaviour of a party in a hostelry.*

*On hearing the newspaper headline relating to the heinous attack in Brighton on our democratically elected political leader, they immediately gave vent to much cheering, jubilation, toasting and general joy.*

*My friends, who come from the Dundee area, were deeply embarrassed by the incident. Indeed they had to dissuade me from intervening in the true Falklands spirit, umbrella and all!*

*I can only presume sobriety later induced logic to their thoughts. - Mrs J Townsley, Richmond*

## Censorship

Dear FRFI, I wish to comment on this much vaunted, free, democratic society in which we live. Where we are told a person has the right to say whatever he wishes, and each has the right to

print and publish any material propagating any political viewpoint they wish. Well let me relate my own personal experience of recent months, mainly concerning David Reed's 'Ireland: the key to the British revolution'.

I bought a copy of David Reed's book last July, and immediately placed an order in Sutton Central Library. I gave all the necessary details, paid my 30p, and was told that it would take three weeks to acquire a copy for me. That was four months ago, and every Saturday since, I have been assured that they are trying desperately hard to get a copy of the said book. Strange isn't it.

My tale of woe doesn't end there however. I was introduced to 'Labour Herald' a couple of months ago and considered it to be second only to FRFI which I have no hesitation in proclaiming as the best paper produced in this country. However I thought I would place an order for it at the newsagent, and then I could be a regular reader of the two best papers that are produced in this country. But despite supplying all the necessary details, once again, it just can not be got. Strange isn't it.

There is no difficulty in getting any printed material belonging to the pro-imperialist organisations. Apart from the popular trash, you can get papers produced by Conservatives, Labour, Liberals, Social Democrats, the Communist Party of Great Britain, or many other groups who can be relied on to toe the imperialist line. In their refusal to do so, I salute the Revolutionary Communist Group and your magnificent newspaper FRFI.

Yours fraternally,  
**M Murtagh**

The following was written by Anne Fury of the North London Irish Solidarity Committee:

**The Tories slept so peacefully in their Grand Hotel  
Then a Big Bang buried some  
Said Thatcher, 'Bloody Hell!  
'Twas my own precious person  
'Was in that bathroom last,  
'Good job I never waited  
'To wash or wipe my arse.'**

**Those naughty Camden councillors  
In North London wouldn't vote  
To condemn the wicked 'terrorists'  
That missed the squint eyed goat.  
They pointed out - quite rightly  
That no Tory makes a fuss  
When the deaths are 'only Irish'  
But now they shriek 'IT'S US!'**

**Poor old Norman Tebbit  
With his knickers round his knees  
Says, 'Before I pose for camera  
'Pass my trousers please!  
Tebbit's leg on main news  
Again on breakfast TV  
In every National paper  
In the Standard for tea.**

**Even the fascist media  
Can't pretend he fights for life  
So this week they must record  
Every tingle of his wife.  
But when the press between them  
Have finished with these clowns  
There's been five miners killed on  
picket lines  
And what about Sean Downes!**

## Police torture - Police State

Dear FRFI, I'm writing to let you know that in Edinburgh you no longer need to commit a crime to be beaten and charged.

On Friday 5 October, I was walking home when I was grabbed and pushed into a doorway by two policemen. When I asked what was going on I was punched in the face and hit with a torch. As I was trying to find out why they had stopped me a police dog van pulled up and I was thrown in the back beside the dogs. As I struggled to get out I was punched again. At this point I started to fight back and was eventually beaten unconscious by five policemen.

When I came round I was in a freezing cell with no light and I had been stripped naked and had my hands cuffed behind my back. I was left like this until about 10am on Saturday, about 11 hours in total. I was denied the right to see a doctor or a lawyer and was not told what I had been charged with until Monday when I was taken to court and found guilty of 2 police assaults, breach of the peace and resisting arrest, resulting in a £150 fine.

All that for walking home. This has confirmed my belief that we are living in a police state.

**Budgie**

## Solidarity

Dear FRFI, I wish to express my solidarity with all those opposed to racism, imperialism, repression and state violence. In particular I express my total support for the freedom fighters of Northern Ireland and my personal solidarity with the people of Northern Ireland and their opposition to the murdering British Army and RUC. Smash the imperialist war-mongers now! Troops out now!

I am greatly encouraged by your articles in FRFI (September and

October) revealing the increasing sense of solidarity between the working class people of Britain and the people of Ireland. The miners' strike is ideologically one of the most relevant events to the working class movement in the last one hundred years. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the professional Whitehall liars to support the illusion of democracy in the face of such blatant repression against the working class people of this country. The fight against imperialism has been brought to the doorstep of one of the world's most ardent supporters of imperialism, namely Britain. There is a strong feeling of solidarity amongst the prisoners of Albany with the miners' struggle for justice and freedom. I salute the courage and resolution of Arthur Scargill for his part in the miners' struggle. May the national liberation movements throughout the world unite against the common enemy of imperialism and the neo-colonialist policies of America and Western Europe.

In conclusion I pay my respects to the fallen revolutionaries of Northern Ireland, El Salvador, Palestine and South Africa. Destroy imperialism, destroy racism.

**Danny Breaks**  
**HMP Albany**

## Arven 37

Dear FRFI So the Ministry of Defence has unveiled its latest weapon of oppression, the Arven 37 which is a rapid-fire plastic bullet gun, capable of firing 60 rounds per minute, which makes it more than 12 times more efficient than the present weapon.

Though claimed for marketing only to the USA and third world countries, here we see Britain's collaboration with reactionary regimes helping keep oppressed peoples down.

Contrary to MOD denials of eventual use in Northern Ireland, the MOD has informed the RUC of the existence and the capability of the

Arven 37. We should have no doubt at all that this latest weapon will eventually make its way into the murderous hands of the RUC, to keep the Republican people down. With the heightening of class contradictions here in Britain it is also a matter of time before this vile, lethal weapon becomes part of the arsenal of Britain's police force, to be used against people who stand up against oppression and injustice. It is up to all people who are socially and politically aware to expose the existence, the nature and the implications of the Arven 37.

Yours fraternally  
**M Garrett**

## Support the miners

Dear Friends, During a recent Student Union meeting at Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama, (which has the only course in the country aimed at training performers for Community Theatre), we were honoured to listen to two Yorkshire miners who came to inform us of their present situation and call for support.

No time was wasted. We learned how police were using military tactics against miners - endless cavalry charges and assaults with batons - miners have been murdered and maimed by the government's 'law enforcement officers'. We are sure that the news that police have been sealing off communities and rigorously and violently enforcing curfews will not surprise your readers as we are all aware that many of the 'policemen' involved are fresh from their green uniforms and oppressive duties in the occupied Six Counties of Ireland.

The miners pointed out that through the strike they had become aware of the very real reasons for the Uprisings of 1981. They expressed the desire to unite in bringing to justice the Metropolitan Police (in particular) in the most direct and practical way!

An attack was made upon opportunists such as the Ginger Pillock (Neil Kinnock) in contrast to the principled leadership of Arthur Scargill. They pointed out that there are two Tory councils in their area, one of which is called a Labour council. The miners stated emphatically that Arthur Scargill is only as good as those he serves and that they put him there because they knew that he would represent their demands and would not back down.

Our College, staff and students are united over support for the miners' strike. So far we have joined pickets, raised £200 and are organising a sponsored day long performance session. We hope to raise at least £4,000.

**Victory to the NUM!**  
**Active solidarity not just resolutions!**  
Yours in the struggle,  
**Anthony W Johnson and signed by 11 other students**

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Your contribution is needed to subsidise FRFI: send us your own donation, ask friends to do the same. Better even, help your nearest FRFI Supporter Group organise their next fundraising event. Last month their collective effort raised: £68 in South and £64.73 in North London, £51.05 in Manchester, £30.27 in Edinburgh, £19.50 Dundee, £18.64 Bradford, £5 Leeds, £1.20 Liverpool. Supporters and readers who want to remain unnamed donated £119.82.

All donations are published in this column and your name/organisation is printed alongside it if you wish. Make your donation payable to 'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX  
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# HANDS OFF IRELAND

## RCG Statement on Brighton bombing

MARTIN MAYER/NETWORK

On 12 October an IRA bomb exploded at the Grand Hotel, Brighton killing four people and injuring others. The target for this audacious action was Margaret Thatcher and her Cabinet who only narrowly escaped death.

Police, politicians, the media – the whole ruling class – quickly attempted to provoke anti-Irish hysteria. Unlike on previous occasions their efforts fell extremely flat. Local papers and radio stations attempting to solicit 'outraged' responses from the public kept inadvertently finding examples of people expressing anything but outrage. LBC interviewed people as the ISM march passed by on the day after the bombing. They asked one man whether he thought it correct for the IRA to bomb its way to freedom, 'What do you expect them to do, sing their way to freedom,' he said. Most members of the Labour Group on Camden Council voted against a Tory motion condemning the bombing. One councillor spoke saying that the bombing 'was not wicked' and that Thatcher was 'not in any sense an innocent victim'. All this is a sign of the shift that has taken place in British politics during the past nine months of the miners' strike. Large sections of the working class were completely unmoved by the prospect of the sudden demise of a government responsible not only for oppression and murder in Ireland but also for savage attacks on miners, black people and the poor and unemployed in Britain.

Labour Party leaders joined with the Government in denouncing the bombing as an attack on democracy. This from politicians who have always supported British imperialist terror against the Irish peoples' democratic rights, particularly the right to self-determination. We would point out that Neil Kinnock's Labour Party voted at its Conference by ten to one to keep British troops in Ireland. And that the Labour-controlled Strathclyde Council used the Brighton bombing as a pretext for banning two pro-Republican marches in Glasgow, organised by the Bands Alliance.

As FRFI has repeatedly said, all deaths and injuries resulting from such actions are directly the responsibility of British imperialism and all those who condone British imperialist rule in Ireland.



Firemen in the ruins of the no-longer Grand Hotel.

SINN FEIN ARD FHEIS

## Important decisions

This year's Ard Fheis heard Gerry Adams defend the Brighton bombing saying:

'... the British connection, the partition of this country, and the resultant suffering and grief is far from democratic. On the contrary it is undemocratic, unwanted, illegal, and immoral. All casualties and fatalities in Ireland and Britain as a result of the war are sad symptoms of our British problem and the Brighton bombing was an inevitable result of the British presence in this country. Far from being a blow against democracy it was a blow for democracy.'

Later in his speech he denounced the Dublin Forum report and the politics of constitutional nationalism:

'Constitutional nationalism in the Irish context is a contradiction when the constitutionality involved is British constitutionality. And British constitutionality in Ireland means the maintainance of a six county colony which is not, never has been and never will be a viable social, political or economic unit'.

Later in the day an IRA spokesman read a message from the Army Council which said that as long as British troops were on the streets of the Six Counties there will be more bombs in Britain.

The Ard Fheis reaffirmed Sinn Fein's non-recognition of the Twenty Six

County Parliament. Delegates at the Ard Fheis overwhelmingly supported Sinn Fein's policy of standing on an abstentionist basis in Twenty Six County elections. A counter motion calling for non participation in elections was defeated with delegates arguing that Sinn Fein had to provide a political alternative in the South. A resolution urging Sinn Fein to register as a political party in the South was debated. Non-registration means that Sinn Fein cannot put its name on ballot papers, a problem which it overcomes by changing candidates names by deed poll to include the words Sinn Fein. A series of speakers opposed registration calling it 'creeping Free Statism' and 'recognition of Free State institutions'. Another delegate said:

'We are done with the Free State and there is no going back. If people want it let them join the Workers Party.'

The motion for registration was heavily defeated. During discussions on electoral policy in the South it was pointed out that the Free State regime had since 1922 shot, hanged and gaoled Republicans and that over 200 Republicans were in gaol at the present time.

In another important debate delegates supported a policy document on women which, amongst other progressive measures, supported the availability of divorce and contraception. This gives the lie to those reactionaries who argue that the Republican Movement is a sectarian, religious-based organisation. It also confirms that the liberation of women is part and parcel of the struggle for national liberation.

Amongst other decisions taken at the Ard Fheis was a decision to disband Sinn Fein Britain. Speakers in support of this motion included John McCluskey and Ray MacLochlainn, Irish POWs recently released from gaols in Britain, who said they were speaking for the majority of Irish prisoners in Britain.

Maxine Williams

to remove sanitary protection. They are left standing naked and bleeding in front of the paid thugs who administer this torture.

Linda confirmed that all this torture has failed to break the spirit of the women POWs. Morale, she said, 'is tremendously high'. The women suffer but that suffering 'only strengthens our commitment'.

Linda also talked about the role of women in the liberation struggle overall. 'Women have always been very active in all fields.' During internment, she said, 'when the men were all locked up everything carried on. The men were locked up but the women stepped in and took over.' She stressed that the

## Free State attack on NUM

The neo-colonial Free State ruling class has joined with the British government in attacking the NUM. In an attempt to protect union funds against sequestration, the NUM moved £8.5 million into an account in a Dublin Bank. No doubt the NUM believed that the money would be safe in an 'independent' country.

However, the 'independent' judiciary of the 'independent' Twenty Six Counties moved rapidly to attack the NUM on behalf of their imperialist masters. On Sunday 4 November Mr 'Justice' Barrington set up a special 'court' hearing in his own home in order to freeze the NUM's Dublin account. Further, Barrington ordered that all books and correspondence relating to the account be produced for inspection by the British sequestrators. The NUM had already moved all but £2.8 million out of the account before the Dublin court ruling. The sequestrators will now use the books from the Dublin account to track down the £6 million that has been moved.

So much for the independence of the 'independent' Free State. At the ISM conference in October Malcolm Pitt, President Kent NUM, pointed out that it was the British ruling class 'who pay the wages of the Dublin politicians who collaborate with British imperialism in the suppression of Irish people in struggle for national liberation.' The bought-off Dublin politicians have now added to their list of crimes against the Irish people, the crime of collaborating with the British ruling class against miners in Britain fighting for their jobs. This is only further confirmation that the struggle for national liberation in Ireland and the struggle of the British working class for its rights in Britain is, indeed, one struggle.

Terry Marlowe

## British terror machine

The British terror machine designed to crush the resistance of the nationalist people rolls on. On Tuesday 16 October Stephen McMenamin was shot in the back by the British army in Ballymurphy, West Belfast. He had been 'joyriding' in a stolen car with a friend, when the car was rammed by a landrover. This is nothing new for in the last five years in West Belfast alone 42 cars have been fired at by the security forces, with three people killed and 13 injured as a result.

On 19 October Fred Jackson, aged 43, a father of 6 children, was shot in the head by undercover policemen as he drove to work in Dungannon, County Tyrone. Immediately the police issued a statement saying he had been hit by crossfire between the IRA and a routine RUC patrol. The facts that later emerged were totally different. The IRA Active Service Unit had not fired a shot but was followed by 2 undercover RUC units who opened fire and killed Fred Jackson in his own car as he pulled into his works yard.

Show trials in non-jury Diplock Courts using paid perjurers to frame Republicans, continue. On 16 October Raymond Gilmour appeared in the witness box to give fabricated evidence against 35 people on a total of 180 charges. As with other informers the brainwashing and disorientation of Gilmour by the RUC was obvious. Gilmour could not remember his own date of birth, nor the ages of his two children. Yet his evidence alone could ensure that 35 nationalists are imprisoned.

In their attempts to crush the resistance of the Irish people, the British ruling class will sink to any depths, from shoot-to-kill operations to show trials.

Chas Millington



Linda Quigley

national struggle was the major issue. 'We do take a stand on women's issues but there's a war going on in our country – we fight for all of our people... We're very aware of what we don't have and firmly believe that in a free Ireland we will get what we want but until the national question's resolved it's a question of priorities'.

Finally Linda called for full support from Britain for the women's struggle against strip searching. She called for demonstrations, lobbying, pressure on MPs and councillors to force the government to end the torture in Armagh. FRFI sends its greetings and solidarity to Linda Quigley and all her comrades. We will do all we can to aid the heroic struggle of the women POWs against the sexual and psychological torture of strip searching.

**Victory to the Armagh women!  
End strip searching now!**

Terry Marlowe

## Using our bodies against us

From Monday 21 October to Friday 26 October, ex-Armagh prisoner Linda Quigley came to London for a week of action against strip searching in Armagh prison. The week – initiated by Sinn Fein and supported by ISM, TOM, IFM, IWSG, FRFI, Proletarian and RCL – was very successful though, predictably, ignored by the bourgeois media. The highpoint was a rally in Conway Hall on 24 October. Over 300 people heard speeches from Linda Quigley, John McCluskey ex-POW, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Pauline Sellars for ISM, speakers from IBRG, TOM, IFM, IWSG and London Armagh Group. Wednesday morning Linda Quigley spoke to FRFI about the struggle in Armagh prison.

The strip searching began in November 1982 with the arrival of a new governor Thomas Murtagh. The excuse was 'security'. Since then over 2,000 strip searches have taken place and produced two 'finds' – one small bottle of perfume and a £5 note. Linda pointed out that there have never been any escapes from Armagh nor have any guns, explosives or weapons ever been found. She rejected the 'security' excuse: 'They are trying to use our bodies as a weapon against us, to try to break us.'

Many of the women are very young and most come from 'traditional Irish Catholic homes. There is no nudity in the homes. In many cases no-one has ever seen their bodies and they are being

stripped naked on a regular basis over a long period of time in front of strangers that are openly hostile.'

The remand prisoners bear the brunt of this sexual and psychological torture. Women involved in the lengthy paid perjurer 'trials' may be stripped twice a day, every day, for months on end. Women going to remand hearings in Armagh court are stripped twice in 20 minutes. Whilst two female warders carry out the search, there will often be as many as 8 or more present. Linda told how Katherine Moore was once confronted by 15 warders. She refused to strip and was blindfolded, beaten to the ground and forcibly stripped. Women who are having their period are forced