

# FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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## NUM in retreat

# NCB takes the offensive

The National Coal Board informed the mining unions on 28 March that it intends to shut pits immediately without using the consultative procedure agreed with NACODS (pit deputies) in October last year. On the same day, the Executive Committee of the NUM voted overwhelmingly by 18-5, against the wishes of Arthur Scargill, to recommend the lifting of the 18-month long overtime ban. These two events are an unambiguous indicator of the balance of forces which now exists in the coalfields since the end of the strike. The NCB has taken the offensive and the NUM is in retreat.

### NCB offensive

'... People are now discovering the price of insubordination and insurrection – and boy are we going to make it stick' – MacGregor

With the return to work the ruling class has not hesitated in ruthlessly driving home its advantage in a series of measures aimed at further weakening and dividing the NUM and rooting out those militant activists who were the driving force during the strike.

MacGregor, allowed by his publicity men to open his mouth now that the strike is over, has been giving voice to the crude union-crushing instincts that won him Thatcher's favour. Refusing point-blank to reinstate any miner convicted of 'violence' he stated '... People are now discovering the price of insubordination and insurrection – and boy are we going to make it stick.' Furthermore,

as many sacked miners have found out, to be acquitted of an offence does not guarantee a job. MacGregor has ruled that 'The fact that a person has been acquitted of a particular offence is not a guarantee that that person will continue (in employment) if in the opinion of management that person has committed an offence that is against the interests of the country'. In other words, the NCB is ensuring, even if the courts don't, that the most militant fighters are sacked. In many areas miners have been sacked who had charges against them dropped or who have been acquitted.

The number of miners sacked by 25 March was 900 of which 280 have been reinstated, leaving 620. This figure includes 200 in Scotland, 300 in Yorkshire (150 in the Rotherham area) and 40 in Kent. At least 300 miners have been

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## Record profits for banking

# The rich get richer

A record number of British businesses failed in 1984. Company liquidations reached 13,647, an increase of 9.5 per cent. Unemployment continued to grow in 1984 and the relentless attack on the living standards of the lower paid continued. Yet the British imperialist banks continued to make record profits – profits made out of the misery of millions of people all over the world.

In 1984 the profits of the four major banks rose to a record £1,929 million – a rise of 12 per cent on the previous year. This occurred in spite of bad debt provisions at a staggering £1,761 million and a massive fall of 40 per cent in Midland Bank's profits due to the huge losses of Crocker National Bank, Midland's Californian subsidiary.

increase in the deficit on non-oil goods to £11.4bn, British overseas investment increased by 45% from £10.5bn in 1983 to £15.2bn in 1984, much of this due to an increase in portfolio investment by the banks. Britain's net overseas assets have now increased six times since 1979 and reached a massive £75bn at the end

	£ (million)		% increase	Debt Provisions		% increase
	Pre-tax Profits	1984		1983	1984	
Nat West	518	671	30%	264	351	33%
Midland	225	135	-40%	318	616	94%
Barclays	557	655	18%	475	525	11%
Lloyds	419	468	12%	219	269	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,719</b>	<b>1,929</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>1,761</b>	<b>38%</b>

The assets of the four big banks increased by 16% to reach a staggering £250.6bn in 1984.

of 1984, equivalent to 23 per cent of the GDP.

	Assets of banks (£ billion)			Net overseas assets (£ billion)		
	1983	1984	% increase	1979	1981	% GDP
Nat West*	60.0	71.5	19%	12½	30½	6½
Midland	52.6	61.4	17%	57	75	12
Barclays	64.9	73.6	13%			19
Lloyds	38.4	44.0	15%			23
<b>Total</b>	<b>215.9</b>	<b>250.6</b>	<b>16%</b>			

\* Provisional

While Britain's trading performance deteriorated sharply in 1984 with a 40%

The financiers and the bankers who the Thatcher government represents are still raking it in, extending their control and building their nest egg for the future – much of it overseas.

David Reed

## South Africa in revolt

# MASSACRE AT LANGA

The apartheid regime in South Africa marked the 25th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, by opening fire on 4,000 mourners in Langa in the Eastern Cape, butchering more than 45 people and injuring countless more. At Sharpeville in 1960, the police shot dead 69 black people peacefully demonstrating against the pass laws. Twenty five years later, despite all the claims of reform, the apartheid regime still answers the demands of black people for freedom and justice, with murder and bloody repression. The townships in the Eastern Cape have been sealed off, and troops and armoured trucks patrol the streets. Since the massacre at Langa, the uprisings in the townships of the Eastern Cape have continued. In response to this, Louis Le Grange, Minister of 'Law and Order' imposed a three-month ban on all public meetings calling for a stay-at-home, and all meetings of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and 28 other anti-apartheid organisations in the Eastern Cape.

Early in the morning on 21 March, thousands of mourners gathered in the Langa township, to travel together to Kwanobuhle for the funeral of a youth murdered by police in the previous week. The police forced them out of the buses and taxis they were in so the people proceeded to march peacefully towards Uitenhage, the white industrial centre which lies between Langa and Kwanobuhle. All of a sudden, a black youth riding his bicycle in front of the procession was shot in the head, then without warning the police fired indiscriminately into the crowd. Many wounded people were shot dead where they lay and as they tried to flee the carnage. Fire hoses had to be called in to wash the streets of their blood.

The exact figure of those who died on that day may never be known. The fascist regime still churns out its lies that 19 died, they also concocted their version of what happened – that the police were forced to shoot in self defence when rocks and petrol bombs were hurled at them by a 'communist-inspired' mob. Even the police evidence to the judicial enquiry contradicts the regime's account of events. No traces of petrol bombs have been found, and the police were seen planting stones in the hands of the dead. And of course the atrocity at Langa has taken place in the face of apartheid's most grotesque lie – that apartheid in South Africa is under-going a period of 'reform'.

The stark reality of Botha's so-called era of 'reforms' is that apartheid is as brutal today as it was 25 years ago. Black people, the vast majority in South Africa, are still being mowed down in the streets, one person is arrested every three minutes under the pass laws, and they are still denied all basic democratic and human rights. The people's leaders remain incarcerated in apartheid's gaols, and while Botha makes offers of release to political prisoners, like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, on condition that they renounce violence, the leadership of the non-violent UDF has been put on trial for high treason. Black people in South Africa are not conned – apartheid can never be reformed, it has to be totally smashed.

Over the last year, black resistance to apartheid terror has grown more and

thousands of black people in a show of strength and defiance. The scenes of 35,000 marching to bury the dead of Langa, to the rhythm of freedom songs with clenched fists, were an incredible demonstration that apartheid terror will never crush the determination of the people to be free.

### Death to collaborators of apartheid

The immense hatred felt towards the stooges of apartheid, the black policemen and councillors who prosper from the oppression of their own people, has resulted in the burning down or petrol



The people take their revenge on apartheid's black stooges

more militant. Massively successful school boycotts, stay-at-homes, strikes, bus boycotts, and mass protest at rent increases and forced removals are almost a daily occurrence in black townships throughout South Africa. In the Eastern Cape itself the weekend before Langa, hundreds of thousands of workers staged a 3-day stay-at-home around Port Elizabeth, which crippled industry in the area. Over 15 workers were killed. 21 March was also the first day in a 2-day strike organised in Uitenhage, centre of the motor industry, which succeeded in stopping production at the multinational factories of Goodyear tyres, Volkswagen and Firestone amongst others. On 22 March, 40,000 miners at the world's biggest gold mine in the Vaal Reef, walked out.

Funerals are also treated as major political events, mobilising tens of

bombing of their homes and their own deaths. In the Kwanobuhle township, all members of the council have resigned. The only one who did not has been killed by the people of the township, and his son was hacked to death and then his body set alight. In Tinus, a township near Port Elizabeth 18 houses were burnt down. The homes of councillors further away in Parys and Welkom in the Orange Free State have been attacked. In Stilfontein in the Transvaal about 150 black youth were only stopped from marching on to local government offices by police firing teargas at them. In Soweto, two hand grenades were thrown into a government office, causing considerable damage.

To complement this, the number of guerrilla attacks on government build-

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# NCB takes the offensive

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suspended without pay pending court hearings yet to come.

The NCB is making a concerted attempt to destroy NUM organisation at the pits. Union officials are finding their union work is restricted, that they are being consulted little, if at all, on shift patterns and that previous custom and practice agreements have been dropped. At Bilston Glen in Scotland the NCB threw the union out of its offices and dumped union papers and documents in the canteen. Guard dogs were installed on the premises and kennelled in the union offices.

With a NCB directive to its areas to cut down hard on jobs in the next year, Scargill's prediction of massive job losses at the beginning of the strike is now borne out. Figures as high as 40,000 job losses have been talked of by NCB area directors. 20 pits are on an immediate list for closure: four to five in South Wales, two to three in Scotland and the North East, up to six each in Yorkshire and the Midlands and at least one of three pits in the Kent coalfield. Since the end of the strike 800 redundancies have been announced in Kent and 1,700 in the North East.

Under the guise of 'urgently assessing the problems caused by the strike at individual collieries' the NCB has now declared its intention of shutting down pits without union consultation, by stating that the colliery review procedure does not apply to pits where 'irreparable' damage has occurred during the strike. This completely brushes aside the NACODS agreement of October 1984, declared at the time by Thatcher to be 'sacrosanct' and drives home what was apparent all along - that the new procedure was just a ploy to buy off potential NACODS support for the NUM at a crucial stage of the strike. By the end of the strike, with no organised force challenging the ruling class, it can simply overrule any so-called agreements. NACODS are being forced to learn these basic class lessons the hard way. Its National Executive is holding an emergency meeting on 1 April to consider a call from its South Wales area to ballot for a national strike.

At Bedwas pit in South Wales NUM members voted to agree to the NCB decision to close their pit. NACODS objections that the closure had not gone through the new colliery procedure were ignored by the NCB. A futile attempt to challenge this in the High Court was blocked by the judge, who ruled that the NCB was carrying out its statutory duty.

refused to go back. They wanted to continue the fight until those miners victimised during the strike were given their jobs back. But after a week they were forced to accept the inevitable - that the vast majority of miners had gone back and would try and get reinstatement by other means. They too were forced to go back.

Pockets of resistance have continued throughout the militant coalfields. On 14 March 700 South Wales miners walked out at the Phurnacite plant at Cynon Valley and picketed out three other pits over the sacking of five workers for alleged intimidation of scab Paul Watson. 12 women were also arrested. However they voted narrowly to go back the next day. In the Kent area the High Court has been used to ban sacked Kent miners from carrying out union safety inspections underground and a High Court injunction has been taken out to prevent 39 Kent miners from 'assaulting, molesting, intimidating...' miners working at the pits.

The class struggle has a relentless logic of its own. The series of setbacks and political defeats confirms that the fighting miners who have identified with Arthur Scargill's leadership are now being increasingly isolated, as those who want the restoration of normal union 'practices' get the upper hand.

Within the NUM, the scab miners are making a bid to increase their influence. On 11 March the Notts area Executive Committee sacked Henry Richardson, the General Secretary, who had been suspended for the last two months. On 25 March it was announced that Richardson and President Ray Chadburn had been voted off the NUM National Executive in the Notts elections. Scabs are also trying to take legal steps to prevent strikers from standing in forthcoming branch elections.

On 14 March three areas, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and South Derbyshire, agreed to challenge the authority of the NUM executive on the continuing overtime ban (Notts had lifted it two weeks earlier) and the proposed ballot for a 50p levy on all miners to help the victimised miners. The acting General Secretary of Notts area NUM, scab Roy Lynk, regards these three areas as the basis for a 'new democratic section' of the NUM. In Durham by the end of March a breakaway scab union, the Mineworkers and Attendant Trades Union, claiming to organise 2,000 miners and mechanics, had been formed.

Preventing these splits from develop-

ershire did not even take part in the ballot. The result is a serious blow to those sacked and to militant miners fighting to maintain their ground inside the NUM and with the NCB. The ballot was lost because NUM leaders and officials did not organise at grass roots level to fight for it - no doubt because a national levy would have meant an immediate confrontation with the scab areas possibly precipitating a break-away union.

The result of the ballot is particularly hard as the government, hand in glove as always with the NCB, is denying benefit to sacked miners, claiming that they are 'in dispute' with their employers. The £16 per week non-existent strike pay is still being deducted from any benefit paid to wives and children. The DHSS stated on 25 March that benefit would not be paid until the overtime ban ends and coal production assumes the levels of October 1983, prior to the introduction of the ban.

There is growing pressure also to accept the NCB pay offer of 5.2 per cent - outstanding for the past two years - which is conditional on lifting the overtime ban and resuming normal working. On 28 March the NUM Executive Committee gave way to this pressure and voted to recommend an end to the overtime ban to a delegate conference on 2 April - in effect to end all organised resistance in the present period to the pit closure programme and a reliance on conciliation and negotiation. Again of prime consideration was the need to maintain unity with those areas where the overtime ban had ended either openly or in practice.

Making concessions to the scab areas in order to avoid a split in the union is not restricted to right-wing officials. George Bolton, Scottish Area Vice-President and Chairman of the CPGB, said that 'the most important question for the union is to take the appropriate decisions to bring the industry back to normal'. 'Back to normal' in fact means an end to the overtime ban, negotiations with the NCB and maintaining the unity of the NUM, including the scabs. 'Back to normal' in the wider movement also means unity with scabs like Kinnock and Willis. So Bolton's CPGB comrade Mick McGahey was able to state five days after the end of the strike 'I have no dispute with the leader of the Labour Party and we will continue to work together'. Kinnock and Willis have been invited to the Scottish miners gala later this year. The crucial lessons of the year long strike are being thrown aside as some NUM leaders and officials are all too ready to build bridges with the opportunists who did so much damage to their strike.

Olivia Adamson and David Reed

# ANTI-IMPERIALISTS REMEMBERED

The following speech was delivered by Susan Davidson on behalf of FRFI at a rally organised by the Asian Collective of East London to commemorate Martyrs' Day on Saturday 25 March.

In April 1929 the 'Trade Dispute Bill' introduced by the British Raj in India, intended to curtail the rights of labourers to strike, was being discussed in the legislative assembly in Delhi. The British government also sought to introduce the 'Public Safety bill' to check the Communist Movement in India by isolating it from external relations.

Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutta threw two bombs in the Assembly Hall while the Bills were being discussed. They were apprehended and brought to trial in June 1929 in Delhi. Sentence was 'Death by Hanging'. They were hanged on 23 March 1930.

*Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* brings greetings to the Asian Collective of East London. With you we commemorate Martyrs' Day and remember the sacrifices of the anti-imperialists Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutta. When we look back 55 years to 1930 and the judicial murder of the Indian patriots and freedom fighters we see how much we can learn from that struggle that must be carried forward today.

In 1927 the British Labour government set up the Simon Commission to draw up plans for the future of India. On the commission were leading members of the British labour movement. These included JH Thomas, former leader of the National Union of Railwaymen. He had sold out during the 1926 General Strike and before that had betrayed the Irish workers in the 1913 Dublin Lock-out. Also on the commission was the young Clement Atlee, who as Labour Prime Minister in 1945 was determined to hand a distraught and divided India over to non-communist forces. Lord Passfield, formerly Sydney Webb, also contributed. He was a leading Fabian supporter of the 'socialist colonial policy' which regarded 'non-civilised' peoples as needing the guidance of advanced nations.

The Simon Commission's Report refused to recommend Dominion status to India, which was the demand of the Swaraj movement, the independence movement of that period.

Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, accepted the so-called reforms of the Simon Commission, which amounted to little more than the inclusion of the Princely Indian States into consultation.

The British labour movement of that time viewed the right to the colonies as inalienable and made it clear that it wanted to claim a share of the fruits of Empire for the British working class. In 1929 Ben Tillet, former hero of the young Docker's Trades Union, became President of the Trades Union Congress. In his Presidential address he spoke of developing the Empire into 'an economic unit comparable to the USA.'

This was the background to the Indian workers' struggles of 1927-1929. Indian communists were undoubtedly the leading force organising strikes in the railway, jute and steel working sectors.

Conditions for the Indian workers were appalling. For example, the Anglo-

Indian Tata Iron and Steel Company was making 290% profit; its workers were receiving one twelfth of British wages. But as well as the economic super-profits that British imperialists were extracting from sweated Indian labour, there were strategic military interests too. In 1927 the Labour government signed an Anglo-Iraq Treaty giving air bases to the British near the Persian Gulf to control the eastern approaches to India.

It was against these conditions of imperialist self-interest that the British rulers of India were determined to crush the communist-led workers' movement. And it was at this point in time that such a freedom-movement, based on non-sectarian unity, could have gained independence for a socialist, free and united India. The British Raj, in an unholy alliance with the British labour movement and the international capitalists, were determined to prevent this.

The heroes of Martyrs' Day were the hope for the future - they remain a guiding light to us today.

The black communist British MP, Sharpurji Saklatvala, worked for support in Britain for the Free India Movement. He linked the anti-imperialist struggles of the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa and the East to the anti-racist struggle in Britain. We in *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* do likewise. The imperialist, racist enemy must be defeated on all fronts.

In April 1979 the Labour government sent in 5,000 police to Southall to protect the National Front. As a result one thousand people were arrested, 800 injured, some for life, and Blair Peach was murdered. This act of imperialist aggression came 60 years after the massacre of 379 people at Amritsar. In April 1919 General Dyer gave orders to fire on unarmed protesters who were demonstrating for freedom from racism and oppression.

Today the British government departs 50 people a month, every month from Britain and they are mostly black. This act of callous control by the state in order to defend the privileges of the ruling class is the same today as in 1919-1929 and 1979.

We in *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* pledge our support for the continuing struggle.

**Inquilab Zindabad!  
(Long Live Revolution!)**

## Cypriot refugees occupy church

On 28 February, Vassilis and Katerina Nicola, a Greek Cypriot couple, sought sanctuary from immediate deportation in St Mary's Church near Euston in London. For over a month their action has frustrated Home Office intentions to deport them. The occupation has become a focal point for the London Cypriot community which has extended enormous material and other help to the couple. Indeed their action has gained extensive publicity and widespread support from black, anti-racist, women's, Irish and community groups on the one hand and Bishops, Lords, MPs and Labour Party Councillors on the other.

The occupation has highlighted the plight of the majority of Cypriot refugees in Britain. British governments, both Labour and Conservative, have consistently refused to recognise the refugee status of Cypriots uprooted by the Turkish invasion of north Cyprus. They claim that those who are now in Britain are either 'displaced persons' or illegal immigrants.

Despite concessions of indefinite stay won for a handful of Cypriots by the campaigning of the Cypriot Workers Community Action Group and other organisations, the situation for the majority has deteriorated recently. Since 1981, the Home Office has insisted that even most of those formerly classified as 'displaced persons' should now return to Cyprus. The mere presence of a relative in Cyprus, even if the relative is, as in most cases, a refugee from the Turkish occupied north, means almost certain deportation.

The occupation and the publicity it is receiving is not only a considerable embarrassment to the Home Office, reluctant to force entry into a church and seize the couple. They are now on the horns of a dilemma: Home Office capitulation will encourage others to take similar action. But the existence of the occupation has already prompted a Phillipino woman and her child under a deportation threat to occupy a church nearby. The couple are determined to stay in St Mary's until they win the right to remain in Britain. For further information: Cypriot Advisory Service, 26 Clerkenwell Road, London NW1. Keinde Olawale



## NUM in retreat

The split in the NUM has been a decisive factor throughout the strike. At its beginning the determination, courage and organisation of those on strike prevented the scab miners and more lukewarm supporters of the strike particularly among NUM officials, from holding back the struggle. By the end of the strike the balance of forces within the NUM had changed. The vote for an organised return to work showed the union almost evenly divided and the NUM National Executive evenly split. The Kent miners and sections of Scottish and Yorkshire miners initially

ing further has become the overriding concern of many full-time NUM officials. These officials are deliberately squashing any further action which might lead to the political split within the NUM taking an organisational form. This means making major concessions to the scab areas, increasing their influence, with devastating consequences.

The most devastating setback was the ballot over a 50p weekly levy for sacked miners. On 26 March it was announced that the ballot was lost - 54% of the 109,150 miners who voted were against the levy. Worse still, the scab areas of Notts, South Derbyshire and Leicest-

## ARRESTS

The final number of arrests up to 5 March 1985 in England and Wales and up to 6 March in Scotland is 11,312. 7,917 pickets were charged up to 5 March and 5,633 cases heard. 200 miners have been sent to gaol or received some form of custodial sentence. Two of the 101 arrested on the London demonstration in support of the miners on 24 February were given gaol sentences of 2 months. Two thirds of miners arrested had bail conditions imposed on them, with many being put under curfew.

At the rally to begin the march, speakers pointed to the links that were being forged between numerous organisations committed to fighting deportations and the racist British state. Amongst others, messages were delivered by Councillor Val Stevens, Dundee FRFI, and one from the Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee which pointed out the similarity between the position of black people under racist immigration controls and that of Irish people under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

As the pouring rain abated, the demonstrators moved off led by those who were threatened by immigration controls. As numerous bystanders joined,

# NO DEPORTATIONS 2,000 demonstrate

Months of hard work brought together 2,000 people from all over Britain for the demonstration in Manchester on Saturday 23 March behind the banner 'Fight Deportations! Unite Families! Fight Racism!' In the final two weeks RCG/FRFI comrades, many campaign members and people under threat, worked full time helping to distribute thousands more leaflets, flyposting in three different languages, organising press conferences and meetings.



### JOYCE ROUCOU

Joyce is an ex-merchant marine who came to this country on a Commonwealth passport from the Seychelles in 1975. He lives in Wythenshawe and works for the Manchester City Council Direct Works Department. After his marriage to a British citizen ended, the Home Office are attempting to deport him. Yet Joyce is now living with another woman, Kim, and they have two children.

His deportation would mean the break up of yet another family. Joyce is determined to fight. For further information contact the Joyce Roucou DC, c/o Wythenshawe Law Centre, Fenside Road, Sharston, Manchester 22 (phone 061-428-8775, ask for Pete Smith.).

### VICTORY FOR THE ASLAM FAMILY DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

After a 5 month campaign against a threat of deportation, the Aslam family have won the right to stay in this country. Their victory against the Home Office will give confidence to many others to organise and fight against deportations.

The campaign was established last October by the family and members of the community with the help of the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign and the Revolutionary Communist Group. From the outset, the campaign was built on democratic principles and was open to all organisations and individuals who agreed with its aims and joined its activities. The campaign worked openly and on the streets, collecting 10,000 signatures for its petition, organising street meetings, public meetings, a local demonstration on 15 December and a picket of the Home Office in London on 20 February. Through its democratic organisation and open work, the campaign succeeded in drawing support from the Pakistani Workers Association, members of the Labour Party, Gerald Kaufman MP, the Asian Womens Movement, the Bishop of Manchester and the City Council. The united forces of the community, these organisations and many others ensured this victory!  
Chris Fraser



PAUL MATTSSON

thousands of others took leaflets. The display of banners demonstrated the wide support for the struggle against deportations. Campaign banners were followed by contingents from FRFI, the Irish Solidarity Movement, City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism, Asian Welfare Advisory Centre, Kashmir Muslim International Welfare, Manchester Polytechnic Students

Union, Pakistani Welfare, Pakistani Workers Association, Labour, Liberal and Communist Parties, Moss Side Miners Support Group, NALGO, ASTMS—Central Manchester and many others.

The demonstration ended with a mass rally addressed by all those directly threatened with deportation or the break up of their families. It began with a minute's silence for black people murdered by the racist police in South Africa. The fighting spirit of the day's events, which included a programme of entertainment and educational videos, was caught in the speech by FRFI supporter Viraj Mendis, himself threatened with deportation to Sri Lanka. Thanking FRFI comrades, all others and the City Council, for their role in his campaign and the demonstration, he said:

'It is the largest such demonstration held in Manchester and shows what can be done if we are united. This is only the beginning! The Home Office has seen nothing yet!'

Chris Fraser

### AKHTAR ABDULLAH AND WALAIT BEGUM KHAN

Akhtar and Walait are a happily married couple living in Cheetham Hill, Manchester. Walait is a British born UK citizen, while Akhtar came to this country in 1982. The Home Office claim that Akhtar's primary intent in marrying was to gain residence rights in Britain and has refused to accept its own adjudicator's decision against a deportation threat! In a disgusting racist letter to Akhtar's MP, David Waddington from the Home Office wrote:

'... (Walait) has lived in this country all her life. I note however that she had some knowledge of Urdu and despite her westernised upbringing, she agreed to a traditionally arranged marriage in accordance to Asian culture... In these circumstances it would not seem unreasonable in keeping with these customs to expect her to return to the sub-continent with her husband.'

Walait and Akhtar are fighting this racist and sexist attempt to destroy their life in Britain. For further information contact Akhtar Abdullah DC, c/o Abraham Moss Centre, Youth Wing, Crescent Road, Crumpsall, Manchester 8

kicking her while she was on the floor. The police denied this.

The whole trial proved to be a massive cover up. At one stage the magistrate moved the trial to a smaller court to keep out Jackie's supporters. Immediately an occupation of the small court was organised and a petition handed to the magistrate. Despite being ordered to move, they remained until the trial was adjourned and reconvened in the larger court. Thus the protest was successful. Throughout the press were in complete collusion with the police. Whenever the police were shown to be lying they either walked out of the court or stopped writing. At the end of each session they would get their orders from the prosecution.

Jackie's supporters are convinced that she is telling the truth that she was raped by the police. Brutality at the hands of Moss Side police is the experience of black people. The whole corrupt system is going to do nothing for Jackie and she needs as much support as possible. Jackie is up for sentencing on 11 April and there will be a picket of Manchester Magistrates Court, Crown Square at 10am.

Jack Smith and Terry, Manchester

### PEDRO GALLEGUILLOS

Pedro Galleguillos is a 24 year old Chilean who has lived in Manchester for 2½ years. In November 1984 he was given a deportation order and imprisoned in Strangeways. While voting to condemn Chile's violation of human rights in the UN, the British government has no reservations about throwing Pedro, an opponent of fascist Pinochet, into the clutches of the Chilean police. FRFI has helped to set up a defence campaign for Pedro which after a number of militant pickets outside Strangeways secured his release. But the threat of deportation remains.

For more information contact: Pedro Galleguillos DC, c/o 9 Lucy Street, Manchester 15

# Jackie Berkeley convicted

A packed Manchester court was in uproar when stipendiary magistrate Glynmour Jones found Moss Side woman Jackie Berkeley guilty of 6 out of 7 charges brought against her by the police. There had been a strong picket outside the court every day of the 3 week hearing with support coming from many organisations including women's groups, student unions and FRFI.

Jackie Berkeley made an official complaint of being raped by police while in custody at Moss Side police station. She said she was held down by 2 police-women Askew and Dyson. Her legs were forced apart while 2 policemen, PC Reubens and PC (now sergeant) Fellows raped her. After an official police investigation, led by Chief Inspector Glover, Jackie was charged with wasting police time.

Jackie's supporters who packed the court every day heard countless contradictions in the police evidence.

The police claimed that whilst wearing open-toed sandals and being carried in mid air by 4 police officers Jackie kicked and broke a metal restraint strap on the police van.

— Whilst in custody the police denied forcibly removing Jackie's clothes despite forensic evidence which was consistent with this.

— After being raped Jackie was said by the police to have violently attacked 4 or 5 of them in the cell corridor twice. Jackie is 5 foot 1 inch and weighs 9 stone.

— During these attacks Jackie was said to have ripped two policewomen's shirts. Dyson admitted in court that the damage looked as if it could have been done with scissors.

— The prosecution witness, Pamela Stanners, who gave evidence from a hospital bed said that she saw Jackie being beaten up in the cell corridor. At one stage 6 police officers were

The assistance of Manchester City Council, including £50,000 and free office facilities, has added strength to the campaign. Those who refuse to accept this support, who in fact calculatedly seek to drive it away, serve only to weaken the struggle of black people in the narrow interests of their own organisations. The fact is that the Labour controlled Manchester City Council, unlike the PWA, has not attempted to impose its views on the campaign and has not tried to limit it to what is acceptable to the Labour Party. Indeed, by supporting the campaign's demands, the council put itself into opposition to official Labour Party policy on immigration controls!

Tariq Ali's attacks on the RCG are slanderous. He knows that the RCG played a full part in planning and organising virtually every event of the AFDC. Indeed the RCG helped to set up the campaign and invited the PWA to join it.

Why has Tariq Ali chosen to engage in this attack when joint democratic work is proving to be so successful? Tariq Ali attacks the RCG because we fight for the principled unity of all those prepared to actively oppose deportations and the racist immigration laws. This is what will win more campaigns. He opposes this unity and seeks to keep the campaign isolated from other sections of the working class prepared to fight—to ensure that his organisation can retain total control over them. Such attempts to undermine unity and weaken the anti-deportation campaign will be discredited as it becomes more and more evident that only the broadest unity can achieve success.

Chris Fraser/Viraj Mendis

## MASSACRE AT LANGA

continued from page 1

ings and installations has been on the increase, though not reported in the press.

### End imperialist collaboration

In the period since the Langa massacre the imperialists have been forced to condemn the shootings. This goes against the grain for everyone. President Botha has spent the last 18 months courting approval and extra western imperialist backing for South Africa in the grips of economic crisis. The 'reforms' were a conspiracy of the imperialists to defraud the world that apartheid is being dismantled. The massacre at Langa confirmed that apartheid is unchanged and has strengthened the anti-apartheid cause by exposing the fraud.

The coming period will see British and US imperialists forced to respond to calls for action against apartheid. They will, of course, resist the imposition of any real action or sanctions. In an attempt to maintain business as usual, Britain's Foreign Minister, Malcolm Rifkind, has refused to consider implementing sanctions against the apartheid regime, saying that that would be an 'emotional and unwise response'. President Reagan, in his thoroughly racist statement, refused to blame South African police violence, as that 'ignores that there was rioting going on', and in addition there is 'an element in South Africa

that does not want a peaceful settlement (but) who want a violent settlement, who want trouble on the streets.'

The coming period will be a test both of the organisation of the freedom struggle in South Africa itself, and the ability of the solidarity movements in Britain and the USA to prevent continued imperialist backing for the regime. Already the imperialist media are paving the way for further repression in their coverage of the attacks on apartheid's black stooges - they are shedding more tears for the black policemen and councillors who have betrayed the masses - than they have ever shed for the victims of apartheid.

And Botha, with the confidence that imperialism will continue to back his butchering regime, has promised more terror, 'We are going to keep order in South Africa. And nobody in the world is going to stop me.'

It will be the revolutionary oppressed black masses of Southern Africa who will put a stop to Botha's barbarism. When Bob Hughes - British AAM Chair - appeared on radio following the Langa massacre, he announced his fear of 'bloody revolution' in South Africa and the need to prevent it. Bob Hughes should be reminded that, regardless of his own political prejudices, the people of South Africa will choose 'bloody revolution' if it is necessary to achieve their freedom. Our job is to support their struggle whatever form it takes by breaking British support and collaboration with the South African regime.

Charine James and Ruby Khan

21 March, Sebokeng - youths stoned and set alight passing vehicles



# End British collaboration with apartheid

Not by chance was it that an international gang of brigands met to discuss their investments in South Africa at Leeds Castle, Kent, in early March. Many leading British companies - BP, Barclays, GEC to name but a few - attended. For British involvement in apartheid is rooted in economics. British banks and British multinational companies make vast profits from the enslavement of 21 million black people in South Africa. British collaboration with apartheid is very profitable.

Apartheid is not profitable for the 21 million black people in South Africa who live in poverty and under a brutal repressive regime. Unemployment amongst black people is thought to be well over 3 million. Apartheid is not profitable for the one in four families with children in Britain who now live below the poverty line as defined by the British government. But apartheid is profitable for the imperialist banks and multinational companies which make their highest rates of profit worldwide in South Africa. And it is profitable for all those who, through their collaboration with apartheid, their investments in apartheid, have a stake - big or small - in those profits.

In the last five years to 1983, the United States companies' rate of profit from investing in apartheid was 18 per cent for manufacturing and 25 per cent for mining. This can be compared to 12.6 per cent and 13.7 per cent respec-

tively in other parts of the world. Little wonder that 350 or so US companies operate in South Africa with assets in the region of \$2.3bn. If banking operations and gold stocks are included then estimates suggest that overall US investment in apartheid could be \$14bn (nearly £12bn).

British companies' stake in apartheid gives an average rate of profit of some 21 per cent. This is extremely high compared to a 6-7 per cent average return on investment in Britain. So it is no surprise that 500 British companies invest in South Africa and include the financial and industrial leaders of the South African economy. Direct investment from Britain is in the region of £5bn - a third of all foreign direct investment in South Africa. It is very profitable. In 1981, while 6 per cent of Britain's total foreign direct investment went to South Africa, 13 per cent of all earnings from foreign direct investment came from

# SWAPO 25th ANNIVERSARY Victory to the Namibian people

19 April 1985 marks the 25th anniversary of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO). Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! salutes all those fighting and all those who have died in the struggle for freedom in Namibia. The predecessor to SWAPO, the Ovambo-land People's Organisation whose main aim was to organise protests against the conditions of the contract workers, came to realise that a broader struggle against colonial repression and for national independence was necessary. This need was emphasised when in 1959 OPO organised a massive campaign in conjunction with local groups against forced removals from Windhoek to Katutura. The South African police responded with a brutal and vicious attack on the demonstrators, 11 were killed and 54 were injured, while most of the national leaders were arrested, banned or restricted. On 19 April 1960 SWAPO was formed. SWAPO's primary aim was and continues to be the liberation of the Namibian people from colonial oppression, and the achievement of independence.

SWAPO has organised and campaigned with this objective at the forefront, gaining the support of the majority of the people as well as international recognition. However, the apartheid regime failed to respond to purely diplomatic and legal efforts. So in 1966 the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) was launched and the armed struggle began. PLAN have since waged a war of liberation against the illegal occupation of Namibia by the apartheid regime, becoming increasingly effective in carrying out sabotage operations and attacks on South African military bases. Over the years SWAPO has escalated the liberation war, and this has meant South

Africa has had to increase its expenditure to maintain control over the Namibian people. It now costs South Africa over \$3 million a day to keep up the war against SWAPO.

In 1978 apartheid's terrorists attacked a refugee camp inside Angola murdering over 600 Namibians, mostly women and children and detaining over 200 people without trial. Recent reports from City AA member Reverend John Wheeler tell of South African troops blowing up the school, hospital and wells of a community in the north of Namibia.

Currently there are two freedom fighters who face trial: Sam Mundjindji

South Africa. Indirect investment (share-portfolios etc) gives Britain a further stake of some £6bn and considerably more when all the assets of the major banks are taken into account. British banks and companies earned £1bn last year from their investments in apartheid.

In March, British companies with a crucial stake in apartheid, announced their profits for the last year.

ICI profits topped £1bn for the first time this year. Around 60 per cent of

ICI assets are abroad and it has a 38 per cent stake in AE&CI (South Africa) which has a monopoly in the production of explosives (largely for mining).

The Royal Dutch/Shell group had a net income of £3.65bn in 1984 and British Petroleum announced post-tax profits of £1.26bn. Shell and BP control 40 per cent of oil sales in South Africa.

Barclays Bank increased its profits in 1984 by 18 per cent to a record £655m. This was in spite of a 42 per cent fall in the profits of its 55 per cent owned South African subsidiary, Barclays National - a slight hiccup after its record-breaking profits last year. Still Barclays National's profits were £54m and its assets have risen some 25 per cent to R19.43bn or some £9.1bn. Next year it will almost certainly be back.

If one international group of parasites had a slight setback in South Africa, another immediately took its place. The fifth largest British bank, Standard Chartered UK, increased its profits by 8 per cent to £290.3 million. Its 52.8 per cent owned South African subsidiary, Standard Bank Investment Corporation (STANBIC), increased its profits by 27 per cent to over £100m - overtaking Barclays and becoming South Africa's most profitable bank. Its assets increased by 41 per cent last year to R16.1bn or some £7.5bn.

Barclays National and STANBIC control over 50 per cent of the banking sector in South Africa, and together with the British merchant bank Hill Samuel,

are the major lenders for South Africa's capital investment programme in power, energy, transport, communication and the military. British banks had claims of \$5.562bn (£4.7bn) on South Africa (end June 1984), a rise of \$1.02bn (£0.9bn) or 22.5 per cent on the previous year. Britain's stake in apartheid is enormous. And precisely because investment in apartheid is so profitable, British collaboration with apartheid will not be easily broken.

Recent developments in South Africa are, however, beginning to worry the international backers of apartheid. The South African economy is running into a deep crisis which, as unemployment grows, is bringing forth militant resistance by black people against the racist apartheid state. South Africa desperately needs financial support from the international banks. Its foreign debt has increased to over \$17bn - a 30 per cent rise on the previous year. This debt represents some 30 per cent of its gross national product and two thirds of it is due to be paid back this year. South Africa desperately needs support from the oil companies, as some 60 per cent of its needs come from imported oil. It pays premiums of \$150-\$200m to buy oil secretly, costing it some \$2bn in a full year. A total financial and oil boycott of South Africa would bring it to its knees. But it would also destroy the foundation of those massive profits that the imperialist banks and companies get from their stake in apartheid. Faced with growing international demands for economic sanctions against South Africa, the international backers of apartheid are seeking a strategy to force cosmetic changes on the apartheid regime and to appease international opinion.

In early March an important gathering of British, US, South African and other multinational companies and banks with a stake in apartheid, met in Leeds Castle, Kent for a two day conference. It was chaired by Edward Heath, who said in 1981:

'the longer the bondage of blacks lasted, the more likely they were to turn to an armed struggle which the Soviet Union is only waiting to sponsor.'



and Veiko Nghitewa. They have been charged with armed robbery, kidnapping and murder; if they are found guilty they face many years in jail. These two courageous freedom fighters are being criminalised for legitimately engaging in the liberation war. SWAPO continues to wage the war for liberation and self-determination for Namibia. Twenty five years is a long time to be in struggle, but each day brings the day of liberation closer.

In Britain it is the task of all anti-apartheid activists, anti-imperialists and communists to build support and solidarity for the revolutionary liberation movement in Southern Africa.

Death to Apartheid!  
Victory to SWAPO!

Nomsa Langa

The Leeds Castle conference was attended by Leon Sullivan who framed a code of conduct for US companies operating in South Africa - to make the brutal and profitable exploitation of black people acceptable to liberal opinion in the US, and no doubt in the vain hope of staving off black resistance to this exploitation. Leon Sullivan made the purpose of the conference crystal clear when he said:

'If something isn't done to bring full equality of opportunity socially, economically and politically for the black population of South Africa there will be no return from chaos... Time is running out. Business and governments must play a role in helping to bring about that solution.'

If revolution is not to destroy the racist apartheid state, if the massive profits are still to be made, then the South African government has to be forced to make concessions before it's too late.

This conference saw a representative gathering of the most important gang of international exploiters ever to sit in one room: including Mobil Oil, General Motors, Citibank for US; Shell, BP, GEC, Barclays, Rio Tinto Zinc from Britain; Barlow Rand, Premier Group, Anglo Vaal from South Africa; and SKF from Sweden. Justice Jan Steyn, the Chief Executive of the Urban Foundation, South Africa, was also present. These representatives of international capitalism were organising to protect their interests - their profits in South Africa.

The black people of South Africa are also organising to defend their interests. They are heroically fighting back against the racist South African state and its imperialist backers. Many have been murdered, brutalised and imprisoned fighting for their rights, but they know that their struggle will be eventually victorious.

Following the Langa massacre, the time has come to take the side of the black people of South Africa by organising to end all British collaboration with apartheid.

David Reed

# sham boycott

'Beyond Debate' was the headline of *Anti-Apartheid News* (March 1985) announcing the protest demonstration and counter rally against the Oxford Union debate on South Africa's constitutional reforms, due to take place on 7 March. AA News correctly pointed out:

'The event is indeed a total irrelevance as far as the struggle to destroy apartheid is concerned, for all those taking part, in their various ways, are serving the interests of the South African regime and their racist paymasters in Pretoria. Meanwhile, those with whom a real and genuine debate about South Africa's future should be held are silenced and suppressed in prison, in detention, banished and in exile.'

Students travelled from as far as Exeter and Sunderland to join the 400 people who demonstrated in opposition to the debate with representatives of apartheid. The campaign had already deterred two of the original participants, stooges Gatsha Buthezi and Allan Hendrickse from taking part. The plan was to picket the sham debate on Botha's constitution and then hold an alternative rally addressed by UDF patron Rev Allan Boesak. The South African regime prevented the Rev Boesak from coming, and Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa of the UDF spoke in his place. But the principled boycott of the sham debate was undermined from within by the leaders of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Canon Paul Ostreicher, after consultations with Bishop Trevor Huddleston, President of the AAM, agreed to speak in the reactionary debate on a new motion of severing links with apartheid. But Ostreicher was debating with Bow Sutton, a member of Botha's President's Council and the fascist New Republic Party! By entering the debate Ostreicher lost the point of the boycott before he opened his mouth. At Ostreicher's request the AAM called off the picket of the debate, and led the march away from the Union. Then the organisers pushed through, without time for discussion, an invitation to Ostreicher to speak to the alternative rally. The counter rally had been turned into a sham boycott. Mike Terry, Executive Secretary of the AAM, shared the platform and made no intervention to stop Ostreicher. City AA, FRFI supporters and many black people, walked out in protest when Ostreicher spoke. Unrepentant, and confident of support from the AAM leadership, Ostreicher then returned to the Union, his conscience cleared, to continue the debate with apartheid.

The April AA News fails to tell you this:

'A vote on his request to attend and to deliver a message of solidarity decided that he should be allowed to do so, by, on a rough count, 160 to 110. This contentious matter out of the way, however, the alternative rally ...'

The whole matter is swept under the carpet. We conclude that the AAM leadership would rather debate with apartheid than allow open debate with its own members and supporters. The AAM leadership's reliance on respectable British establishment figures such as Ostreicher, inevitably leads to behind-the-scenes dirty deals and, ultimately, as happened at Oxford, blatant accommodation to apartheid. Little wonder this same narrow grouping is trying to stifle democracy in the movement's ranks. The presence of an anti-imperialist trend within the AAM points to a principled way forward for anti-apartheid activists who go beyond what is acceptable to the British establishment.

Andy Goddard

## BOYCOTTING APARTHEID

Despite the sectarian disaffiliation of City Group from the AAM, City Group is engaged in more and more activities and its membership is growing.

On 9 March City Group held a Call to Action Conference in support of the Boycott Campaign. Speakers included David Kitson, Richard Balfe MEP, Bill McElroy (North Westminster Labour Councillor) and David Reed of FRFI. 100 people attended a day of discussion, workshops, videos and films. Richard Balfe - a long-standing supporter of City Group and anti-apartheid activities - expressed his disgust at the AAM's treatment of City Group and pledged his support for 'the only AA local group which has substantial numbers of young black people in it'. The day was ended in the most appropriate way - picketing the embassy.

The following Wednesday we were out on the streets again outside BP Oil as part of the international day of action in support of the oil embargo. On Saturday 16 March we protested outside Austin Reed menswear in Regent Street - imports of South African clothes and textiles have risen from £1.4 million in 1974 to £14 million in 1983.

A large contingent of City Group and FRFI supporters attended the demonstration against racist deportations in Manchester on 23 March. In the same way that black people in South Africa face forced removal to the bantustans, black people in Britain are under constant threat from the British government's racist immigration laws. We felt that by attending the demonstration we were giving practical expression to the successful motion we proposed to the last AAM AGM recognising the connection between apartheid in South Africa and racism in Britain.

On 26 March we were back out again when FRFI supporters and City Group members demonstrated outside Barclays headquarters in the City of London. We



entered the bank, asked to see the manager (he didn't appear of course), and distributed our leaflets in the bank. One black comrade, an FRFI supporter, was violently ejected by the security guards who didn't like hearing the truth about Barclays' support for apartheid - they didn't

## Separate developments in common

THE NEWS that the Anti-apartheid Movement has closed down its dissent has taken some students of solidarity movements by surprise. For the 25-year-old movement has in the past avoided the other radical groups. Remarkably it has managed to bring together activists from the ultra-left through the Conservative Party in common opposition to the Pretoria regime. It can boast three out of the four main party leaders among its members, and its affiliates include all the major trade unions, the Methodist Church, and the London District of the Communist Party.

Set the three-year-old dissent between Anti-Apartheid and its City of London organisation, which has been founded at the initiative of Chief Albert Luthe, together with Bishop Trevor Huddleston and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Both the ANC and Swapo, the Namibia Independent movement, last year decided to boycott the City group and its activities. According to the representative, Solly Smith, the ANC does not support the struggle in South Africa. A notable casualty of the dispute has been David Kitson, who spent 20 years in South African jails and the high command of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Both he and his wife, Norma, have now been arrested.

Anti-Apartheid was originally founded at the initiative of Chief Albert Luthe, together with Bishop Trevor Huddleston and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Both the ANC and Swapo, the Namibia Independent movement, last year decided to boycott the City group and its activities. According to the representative, Solly Smith, the ANC does not support the struggle in South Africa. A notable casualty of the dispute has been David Kitson, who spent 20 years in South African jails and the high command of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Both he and his wife, Norma, have now been arrested.

set up the City group. That summer, the newly formed group organised an 86-day picket outside the South African embassy in Trafalgar Square to press for the release of David Kitson. The picket showed remarkable tenacity. But it went head-on in the face of opposition from the ANC and despite Anti-Apartheid's leadership. Both felt that it was wrong to concentrate on the plight of one white prisoner. Such a campaign, they thought, risked diverting attention from ANC members facing execution.

Relations between the City of London and Anti-Apartheid's headquarters in Mandala Street in north London quickly deteriorated. In the City group, the Revolutionary Communist Group ran a slate of 13 candidates for the national committee, which included David Kitson and three members of his family, several prominent RCG members and two Labour MPs, Jeremy Corbyn and Tony Banks.

This 'takeover bid' could never have succeeded (even supposing it was inspired by the RCG) for the simple reason that the National Committee consists of 30 elected members as well as affiliated organisations. City Group did not nominate even half this number - simple maths should be a part of every journalist's training.

Then our innumerate journalist really gets to grips with the nitty-gritty in the shape of Mike Terry. 'I've occupied that embassy and South African Airways myself - and

main activity - was banned. Anti-Apartheid's ban should be official protest City group and their supporters, including several Labour MPs, continued picketing. When a magistrate lifted the ban, the City group felt vindicated. But in the view of the Anti-Apartheid leadership, the authority of its elected bodies was being doubted. At the movement's annual general meeting last October, the 200-strong City group launched what was widely seen as a takeover bid inspired by the Revolutionary Communist Group. It ran a slate of 13 candidates for the national committee, which included David Kitson and three members of his family, several prominent RCG members and two Labour MPs, Jeremy Corbyn and Tony Banks.

But Mike Terry reacts angrily to the suggestion that heid prefer Communist domination. 'I've occupied that embassy and South African Airways myself - and taken it over', he says. 'The issue of direct action against apartheid is not to do with how to communicate the message.'

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# The divisions in the Anti-Apartheid Movement

On 8 March, Mike Terry, Executive Secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), wrote to City of London Anti-Apartheid Group to confirm the national committee's decision to expel City Group from the AAM:

'...since [your] letter did not provide the assurances which the Executive sought... the national committee decided to no longer recognise the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group as an organisation in membership under Clause 7 (c) of the Constitution'

The April issue of *Anti-Apartheid News* goes further to give the 'official version' of the disaffiliation:

'Explaining the national committee's decision, AAM chairperson Bob Hughes said that the Movement was 'not expelling any individual or organisation.'

'We are not seeking to prevent any form of anti-apartheid activity, least of all picketing at South Africa House, which we have been organising for 25 years; nor are we pursuing any political vendettas.'

What we cannot have is an organisation in membership as a local group if it is not one. It is as simple as that. We regret that this has happened but the national committee has to consider the interests of the Movement as a whole.'

Whilst Bob Hughes prefers to pass the issue off as a technical matter, not involving anything as gruesome as political issues, there are clearly others who are not so lily-livered. An article appeared in *The Guardian* on 23 March written by Seumas Milne, which raised the issues which the AAM leadership is unwilling to have debated within the movement.

FRFI readers should know that Seumas Milne is not a politically neutral, liberal-minded journalist (if indeed such a thing exists). He was until recently business manager of *Straight Left* - part of the CPGB opposition to its Eurocommunist leadership. He claims to have resigned from the CPGB. What is certain is that he is now acting like a mouthpiece for a section of the AAM leadership which wants to discredit City AA through the pages of *The Guardian*, erstwhile advertiser for the apartheid regime.

Milne's article is composed of a series of lies, backed up by selective quotes supplied by Mike Terry and others. He starts by stating that the AAM is a broad movement 'Remarkably it has managed to bring together activists from the ultra-left through to the Conservative

like the City Group banner being raised inside the bank either.

We have been active throughout March, fighting apartheid. We supported a demonstration in Cambridge, and when we heard that the South African Sporting Authority were holding a press conference claiming that there was no longer any apartheid in sport, we picketed the International Press Centre.

In response to the vicious brutality of the racist regime gunning down black people in the Eastern Cape, City Group held pickets every night for a week outside the South African Embassy. The pickets were so successful we have decided to carry on whilst the level of struggle and the level of repression in South Africa is so intense. It is certainly the case that the people of London want anti-apartheid activities out on the streets which they can join in - City Group is providing them. Susannah Lloyd and Richard Roques

SEUMAS MILNE on a split in Anti-Apartheid

This defeat gave Anti-apartheid's national committee the green light to take action when the City group failed to give assurances that it would operate as a normal organisation and restrict its activities to its own area, the decision was taken to exclude it from the official movement. Although no individual members have been expelled, the disciplinary body has City group members as the focus of its attention. The crisis frightened at being exposed by effective campaigning on the streets. But Mike Terry reacts angrily to the suggestion that heid prefer Communist domination. 'I've occupied that embassy and South African Airways myself - and taken it over', he says. 'The issue of direct action against apartheid is not to do with how to communicate the message.'

South African goods were interfered in getting the our case, and getting local councils and their representatives to implement the boycott. He points to Ford workers' refusal to handle South African goods, and the month's boycott declarations by Hackney and Newham councils, as examples of success that can be achieved by using the whole range of forms of campaigning.

Mike Terry and Anti-apartheid's other leaders hope that the City group and they can get on with their month of boycott action. 'The level of special work has increased enormously since the City group came on the scene.'

The final *coup de grace* is issued with customary lack of logic: 'The level of Special Branch surveillance of our work has increased enormously since City Group came on the scene.'

Given that you don't have to be further left than the NCCL to be under surveillance by Special Branch, this is a very telling comment. Is Mike Terry saying that without City Group, the AAM will not be any challenge to British interests in South Africa? Surely not!

Throughout his article Milne is at pains to discredit City Group, repeating the ill-informed gossip which has circulated in the movement for the last 3 years. City Group is 'GLC-funded', has misappropriated '£600 worth of donations' and 'refused to consult with Anti-Apartheid's officers'. All of which is lies, except for the GLC-funding.

But perhaps Seumas Milne's most vicious jabs are reserved not for City Group but for the Kitson family. The reference to David Kitson as 'one white prisoner' - when all those who came to the 86 day picket know that neither David Kitson, nor his family, nor indeed City Group, has ever separated the campaign for his release from the campaign to release all political prisoners - is intended to discredit a man who has dedicated his life to the cause of South African freedom. Norma and David Kitson are referred to as 'casualties of the dispute' because they have 'been suspended from ANC membership'. This attempt to discredit two principled fighters against apartheid puts Milne and his backers to shame.

ANC Chief Representative in London, Solly Smith, is quoted as saying 'the activities of City Anti-Apartheid do not support the struggle in South Africa'. Comrade Solly Smith is mistaken. City Group is committed to supporting the struggle of all those fighting for liberation in South Africa, including the ANC.

Since Seumas Milne's piece of gutter journalism appeared *The Guardian* has printed two letters (one from Norma Kitson) in reply. We are sure that the sponsors of this article are complacent in their belief that the article will have damaged the cause which City Group stands for. But they should not feel comfortable at all. Since the article appeared Reg Race and Ken Livingstone of the GLC have given their support to City Group, and on the picket outside South Africa House more and more people are joining.

Carol Brickley



## POLICE FILE

● The International Police Association, based in Britain and dominated by British officers, may soon be thrown out of the UN because of its links with South African police. Mr H Hallett, former chief constable of Kent, proposed the admission of South African officers in 1982, against opposition from Belgium, Holland and Nigeria. The British continually refused requests for information about how many South Africans were members, but have now admitted there are as many as 850. The British argued that these members joined as individuals and not as representatives of apartheid – this argument was unanimously rejected by a UN committee investigating the IPA's UN consultative status. Following the massacre at Langa (did the Uitenhage police shoot as individuals or as representatives of apartheid?) that status is likely to be withdrawn. The IPA has been reprimanded and some delegates voted for its expulsion because they believed the British had 'misinformed' (lied to) the UN committee.

● Miners in Shirebrook, Derbyshire, appear to be busily engaged in settling some old scores. On one night in March the police station was attacked on several different occasions and a lump of concrete was hurled through the windscreen of a patrol car. A coy police spokesman said, 'we are keeping an open mind about the motives'.

● The vindictiveness of the police knows no bounds. When a Barkingside publican discovered that his daughter's fiancé had broken off the engagement, he employed his friends in the local police force to exact retribution. The police 'searched' the home of the ex-fiance Anthony Barnett, and 'found' six live bullets which of course they had previously planted. Barnett was later acquitted of unlawful possession of the ammunition, and £5250 damages were awarded against the Metropolitan Police for false imprisonment and malicious persecution. The name of the publican who is so friendly with the blue swine is, incidentally, Reginald Goring.

● First recommendation to the Thatcher war-on-hooligans cabinet committee is watch out for the blue-clad lunatic fringe. Eg William Ross, 23, banned from football matches as a bail condition and charged with threatening behaviour after a Chelsea/Sunderland Milk Cup tie. A clue to Ross' vocation may be his address – Broadwick Street, Soho, W1 – a police barracks to those in the know. PC Ross is one of Pimlico's finest and fattest, stationed at Rochester Row PTA interrogation centre.

● This new war cabinet has its own task force: whether steaming into Port Stanley or Elland Road, it makes no difference. PC Robert Meggitt is in the Eastern Area Task Force, northern flank of Thatcher's campaign and facing the massed ranks of Leeds United supporters. During a match between Leeds United and Portsmouth Meggitt allegedly hit Neil Westerman on the head with his police helmet when Westerman jeered the referee (tut tut), then hit him again as Westerman stood up to allow police to pass along a row of seats, and then again, this time with a severe blow to the head which required hospital treatment. PC Meggitt, who is not a Chelsea fan, was acquitted.

## BUDGET FOR SWEATED LABOUR

In his 1985 budget, Chancellor Nigel Lawson was prevented, by the sterling crisis and the cost of fighting the miners, from repeating last year's massive handouts to the rich. There is consolation for the wealthy in a £155m cut in Capital Gains Tax: but for the unemployed and the low paid Lawson's 'Budget for Jobs' is a hollow lie, barely concealing further attacks on the working class. The introduction of a sliding scale of reduced National Insurance (NI) contributions for employers and low-paid workers is presented as an incentive to hire more workers. In fact it will force wage levels down, and reinforce the poverty trap. The graduated scheme will raise marginal tax rates, ie the percentage of extra income paid in tax, and thus discourage the low paid from seeking upgrading, overtime and so on. The overall cost of labour to capital will be cut by £80m a year. Despite the acclaimed 'reductions', the worker on £55 per week will pay NI at a higher rate than in 1979, and the extra couple of pounds will be taken by other increases.

These moves go hand in hand with Lawson's view that workers' rights are 'obstacles in the labour market'. He plans to scrap Wages Councils, which set minimum pay levels for around three million of the lowest paid, 75% of whom are women. The government has already run down the Wage Council's inspectorate, which last year found over 40% of employers paying below these poverty rates. By extending the qualifying period for protection against unfair dismissal to 2 years, Lawson has in-

## GOVERNMENT OFFENSIVE AGAINST TEACHERS

After being taken to court last month by Solihull Council, the National Union of Teachers has since voted by a massive majority in favour of its no cover action in support of a £1,200 across the board pay claim. It is instructive to note that the areas with the strongest support (94-95%) suffer some of the worst unemployment, whilst the area with the least support is the Home Counties (59.5%). Solihull Council is still docking teachers' pay – £2 each time they refuse to cover for absent colleagues.

In Scotland, George Younger, the Scottish Secretary, has sent a letter to all Scottish education authorities suggesting that they avoid the consequences of teachers' action organised by the Educational Institute of Scotland in key Tory constituencies, by opening schools during holidays and employing private tutors. This is to try and quell growing unrest amongst middle class/Tory-voting parents in these constituencies over the effect on their children's chances in public examinations.

Dame Mary Warnock, the establishment's favourite educationalist, rallied to the government's cause when she delivered the Dimpleby Lecture on BBC TV. Her speech was carefully attuned to the government's present offensive against teachers. She 'advised' teachers to abandon their action which identifies them with 'non-professional' ie working class occupations. She proffered the alternative of a self-regulating professional body. There are many teachers intent on clinging to their status and privileges who will listen to this siren voice.

In the recently exposed minutes of a meeting last November between Joseph and the local authority representatives, Joseph was shown to be arguing for the ability 'to offer differential pay to teachers ranging from the less able to the outstanding'. Even the usually compliant local authorities want to avoid this question of 'merit pay', seeing it as divisive. The minutes also showed that a 7.5% offer made to the teachers by the authorities had been declared 'out of the question' the day before by Joseph. The NUT, whilst attacking his duplicity in offering a salary structure package he was not prepared to fund, have failed to expose the more profound aspect of his intention – the buying off of upper sections of teachers. The latest government White Paper on Education, published on 28 March, indicates that the relating of teacher assessment to salary is due to become law – with or without the consent of the teachers.

Those teachers determined to continue the fight and to resist the government measures face an uphill battle against the majority of teachers who are still intent on preserving their relatively privileged position, come what may. Sian Bond

creased bosses' power to sack workers at will.

Increases in YTS and other 'training' schemes proposed in the budget will, at low cost, artificially reduce unemployment figures and produce more cheap labour. Lawson's statement that 'unemployment will not be an option' for young people echoes Thatcher's plan to end social security for those under 18 who refuse compulsory 'training'.

The 1985 budget must be seen in the context of overall Tory policy. In Britain today, as the capitalist crisis deepens, there are 15 million people in low income families and 500,000 below Supplementary Benefit level. Yet 45% of gains from tax changes since 1979 has gone to the top 1% of taxpayers, while only 5% has gone to the bottom 25%. Continual attacks on the welfare state have been mounted. With prescription charges now £2 – a tenfold increase since the Tories came to power – many will be unable to afford essential medicines. Inspired by Reagan's America, the Department of Health is considering a voucher payment system for the NHS. This would destroy the basic principle of a free and universal health service for the poor. During the coldest winter for decades, £86m was cut from long-term Supplementary Benefit (SB) claimants by taking £1 from their heating additions, and £11m was taken from low income families by changing Family Income Supplement rules. In November 1984 housing benefit

was cut for families with workers under 18, while board and lodging payments for those who leave in search of work are ended. But recommendations before the Social Security Reviews, due to report soon, will make these savage cuts seem insignificant.

With the nauseating cant of Tory ideology, Fowler claims that the social security system must not 'crowd out personal provision and stifle individual effort'. Thus with perverted logic his 'radical but sensible reforms' plan to abolish heating additions, dietary additions, severe weather allowances and single payments for SB claimants. Fowler is considering scrapping the earnings-related pension scheme, and means-testing Child Benefit. The Housing Benefit Review advises a cut of £2 billion, halving the provision and costing 4 million people, many of them pensioners, up to £20 per week.

In his budget speech, Lawson claimed that jobs should be created by free markets, deregulation and privatisation. His plans therefore continue the process of anti-union legislation, the mobilisation of state power against the NUM, and hysterical attacks on all those who challenge the unbridled power of capital. The 1985 budget comes as the Barking Hospital strike passes the one year mark. Sacked by a private contractor for refusing wage cuts, the women of Barking Hospital are fighting against the society Lawson plans: a sweatshop economy where workers without rights or welfare benefits can be forced to sell their labour for a pittance.

Dave Burton

PAUL MATSSON



## POLICE END WOMEN'S HOSPITAL OCCUPATION

At the beginning of March the women occupying the South London Women's Hospital were issued with an eviction order, telling them to leave before midnight on 16 March. After almost nine months of occupation the women were not going to give in lightly, and 60 women barricaded themselves in, ready to resist eviction.

In a violent raid in the early hours of Wednesday 27 March, 200 police, including 40 WPCs, and accompanied by a few bailiffs, stormed the hospital. The policemen smashed their way through the barricades with mallets, and once entry was possible, the policewomen were used to forcibly remove the women inside.

One woman, Jackie, was dragged along by the hair and thrown down the steps. A group of women retreated to the roof of the building and two of them were arrested and beaten. The black woman was beaten particularly badly, and one of the women was stripsearched. Later both were released without charge. The tough handling by the policewomen showed them to be just as much violent instruments of state as their male counterparts.

At about 10am thirty women were walking past the hospital, having held a picket of the police press conference which attempted to justify the operation. The police took offence when one woman spat on the ground and arrested six of them, including the black woman arrested earlier. One woman was held overnight. The six are charged with obstruction and insulting behaviour, and are due to appear at South Western Magistrates Court, Lavender Hill on 17 April at 10am.

It is clear that Wandsworth District Health Authority was prepared to use any means – including police violence – to ensure that the hospital is closed and its plans implemented for a 57% cut in

hospital beds in the area.

The South London Women's Hospital was the only place in the country where women could be guaranteed treatment by women – this was especially important for Asian women. The health authority, in step with its racist and sexist masters in government, ignored the long campaign to keep the hospital open. It is a tribute to the women who occupied that the authority took so long to evict them. The building itself was put to many uses for local women to meet and take classes like self-defence. During the occupation the women, inspired by the Greenham women, gave solidarity to many other

## SOCIAL INSECURITY

As of 29 April, government attacks on the unemployed reach a new pitch. From that day Supplementary Benefit payments will be subjected to new, highly restrictive conditions, aimed particularly at those under 26 staying in bed and breakfast accommodation. In most areas of the country lodgings allowances will only continue for a maximum of four weeks. After that, new accommodation in another DHSS catchment area will have to be found, otherwise the lodgings allowance will stop. There is a six month ban on re-claiming in the same area, and a reduced ceiling of £60 per week on how much can be paid.

These restrictions will result in young people sleeping rough, battered women being forced to return home to violence and

## DON'T MOURN – ORGANISE! FIGHT DHSS ATTACKS ON YOUTH!

Pickets

9.30 – 11.30am

Monday 29 April – Thursday 2 May  
Lauriston Dole, Tollcross  
Edinburgh

Public meeting

Crosswinds Community Centre  
1 – 2pm Friday 3 May  
Organised by Edinburgh FRFI

## POLICE SET UP SIEGE

On Friday 22 March after 43 hours under police siege in a transit van, James Baigrie, aged 34, from Fife, died. He had escaped from Saughton prison, Edinburgh, 15 months before, where he was on a life sentence.

More than 120 police were drafted into Philbeach Gardens, Kensington where the siege took place. The area was cordoned off with police blocking both ends of the Gardens. They took up residence in flats overlooking the transit and were relieved by van loads of police from all over London. Marksman wearing bullet proof vests surrounded the van throughout the 43 hours and lights were set up to spotlight the van during the night.

James Baigrie, in freezing weather, wearing a track suit and with only one blanket, determined to maintain his guard. Police said he had a sawn-off shot gun. He had no food or water and kept himself awake with amphetamines. His main demand, should he surrender, was to be moved to less severe prison conditions than at Saughton to continue his sentence. There is no evidence that this demand was even considered by police or Home Office.

A local resident, an eyewitness to the entire siege, wrote in a letter to *The Guardian* (28 March) that 'the tragic outcome should, and could, have been averted' and that 'Baigrie took a field telephone into his van without any sign of trouble' early on in the siege. Thirty hours later, at 1.40 on Friday morning, police fired two CS gas cartridges through the back of the van. Immediately after this a shot was heard from inside the van. Grappling hooks and a landrover were used to wrench off the van doors while police shone lights inside and marksmen took up position around the entrance. Six minutes later, when police thought it safe to look, they found Baigrie dead with gunshot wounds to his head. A local woman put flowers on the spot where he died.

Once again a set-piece siege has been used to provide a huge publicity bonanza in the media for the Metropolitan Police. Breakfast TV showed lines of them marching smugly from the scene – a job well done, and Home Secretary Leon Brittan expressed his full confidence in their handling of the siege. James Baigrie was caught between the massed force of the British state's police and the horror of the British state's prisons. The odds were stacked against him.

Alexa Byrne

struggles against racism, sexism and imperialism.

The recent news that women who have already been screened are dying of cervical cancer confirms what many women have known for years – that the health of the working class who can't pay for health care, and of women especially, is a very low priority.

A real fear is that instead of being used to improve our lives the South London Women's Hospital will now be used to incarcerate us. There are rumours that the hospital has been earmarked to become a women's psychiatric prison. The fight to defend those charged and to reopen the hospital goes on. For more information contact the campaign at (01) 274 7748.

Susan Lloyd and Carol Owen

waves of the dispossessed having to change their lodgings once a month. This new sadistic turn of the screw comes after last year's media-inspired 'Costa del Dole' revelations where unemployed youth in Bournemouth were 'found' to be staying in guest house accommodation. The word 'guest' is not quite accurate. Most of these seedy establishments have no proper heating, shared bedrooms with as many as can be crammed in, and breakfast often consists of a packet of crisps and a teabag. Landlords throw you out at 9.30 in the morning. The papers are full of ads for these places, saying 'Claimants welcome'.

The government supports this set-up fully. DHSS officials collaborate with the bed and breakfast circuit by placing emergency homeless there, and uses the availability of these dives to refuse furniture grants to those lucky enough to be allocated a house.

The government are daily creating a greater and greater reservoir of hatred and anger. Communists must begin to support the inevitable fight back. Earlier attacks on the unemployed in the twenties and thirties were met with determined resistance as communists and anarchists took part in the struggle. 'Behold your future executioners!' was the banner waved in the faces of the rich and famous then. Today this spirit must rise again.

Gary Clapton

# FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Pull-out review of the Miners' Strike 1984-85

## MINERS STRIKE a new dimension in British politics

The most heroic strike that the British working class has seen for decades ended on 5 March 1985. The year long miners' strike, the longest major industrial battle in British history, has changed the political consciousness of hundreds of thousands of people. The courage and determination of the striking miners, their families and communities will have a lasting impact on the working class struggle in Britain in the years ahead.

A victory in an outright sense for the miners, of the 1972/74 Saltley Gate kind, appeared unlikely throughout the strike because of the bitter split in the NUM and the growing split in the organised trade union movement. After the TUC conference in September such a victory became virtually impossible. It was clear that the split in the organised working class movement was not simply one between the trade union 'bureaucracy' and the rank and file but went down deep into the ranks of the working class. Key workers, dockers, power and steel workers, lorry drivers and sections of miners themselves – on the whole the better paid in more secure jobs – were scabbing on the miners' strike.

However, as many miners have pointed out, and Arthur Scargill has stated on numerous occasions, the year long struggle itself represented a political victory. The lessons learned, the forms of struggle adopted, and the new organisations thrown up during the strike point to the way forward for the working class movement in this country.

The political gains of the strike are very significant ones. First, the mining communities and hundreds of thousands of their supporters have come to understand the vicious class character of the British imperialist state as they have experienced its police, courts and prisons. Many now recognise the need for disciplined organisation to defend themselves against it.

Second, thousands of workers have come to know the character of the leadership of the Labour Party and trade union movement and realise that a new fighting movement can only be built after a decisive break with these leaders and the section of the working class which follows them.

Third, the mining communities themselves forced to fight with the brick, the barricade and the petrol bomb against Thatcher's national riot police, have come for the first time to see allies in those fighting for freedom in the Six Counties of Ireland and in black people forced to fight against the racist police state in Britain.

Fourth, and perhaps the most important political development in the strike has been the critical and often leading role of the women in the mining communities; defending and sustaining the strike through organisation, demonstrations, street activities and defence of their relatives and friends in prison for supporting the strike.

The women's support groups in the mining areas and miners' support groups in the towns and cities are a major gain of the strike. Their work is still crucial to continue the struggle against victimisation of striking miners and to defend the imprisoned miners. Increased activity from these groups now the strike has ended would mean solid organisation and experience exists

to defend miners and other workers in the future.

Arthur Scargill went some way to acknowledge these points at a Chesterfield rally for International Women's Day on 9 March 1985. He urged the women's support groups to rededicate themselves to the struggle and to become involved in wider issues such as rate capping and the peace movement. He demanded of Labour and trade union leaders that they stop equivocating on the demand for an amnesty for all miners victimised during the strike, stating that he regarded all miners arrested and gaoled as political prisoners. Finally, he launched a bitter attack on the union leaders, particularly those in the power industry, who, he said, 'should hang their heads in eternal shame for what they have done during this dispute'.

Scargill's speeches have continually posed a way forward for the working class movement which goes beyond the traditional methods of struggle of the trade union movement. It would indeed be progress if the working class women who have been involved in the support groups took their experience into the movements for peace, against rate-capping, took a stand in solidarity with those fighting racism, and with those fighting imperialism in Ireland, South Africa and throughout the world.

To become 'involved in the wider issues' they will have to fight many Labour Party and Communist Party members within the NUM and outside in the trade union movement for the right to exist and develop their work. For there are those who will not follow the path of these new class organisations and are intent on reasserting the deadly grip of traditional labour movement methods of organisation, negotiation and compromise.

Already, in the miners' support groups in the towns and cities, those who refuse to break from the dead weight of British labour movement traditions – and this includes most British left organisations – are seeking either to confine the work of the support groups to the most narrow basis or, as in many cases, to disband them altogether. RCG members working in support groups are fighting against this and calling on the groups to step up their work and politically organise first and foremost, around the issue of sacked miners and miners in gaol. In doing this work it is important that the broadest forces are involved. To exclude anybody from these groups or to restrict their activities is to play into the hands of those narrow minded NUM and Labour and trade union officials whose only concern is to get back to normal and extinguish the crucial political lessons of the miners' strike.

These developments in the support groups are little more than a reflection

of similar occurrences within the NUM itself. There, all too many officials, including Mick McGahey and George Bolton, leading CPGB members, are in a headlong rush to reconcile the differences within the NUM and within the broad labour movement as a whole. The urge for unity within the NUM, which necessarily involves conciliation with the scab areas, has led to the NUM Executive Committee's call for an end to the overtime ban and the abject failure to organise a victory in the ballot for a 50p weekly levy for sacked miners and their families. It is the same urge for conciliation that has led McGahey and the Scottish area NUM to invite Kinnock and Willis to the Scottish Miners Gala later this year.

Real communists oppose any attempt at reconciliation with such opportunists. Those advocating 'unity' with such forces are, as Lenin argued, 'objectively defending the enslavement of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie with the aid of its best agents in the labour movement'. Communists and socialists have to abandon their preoccupation with the privileged minority of the working class and their leaders, and go down 'lower and deeper to the real masses'. That, Lenin said, is the 'whole meaning and whole purport of the struggle against opportunism.'

The miners' strike has not only confirmed this by exposing the role of the organised trade union movement during the strike, but also because a year of bitter struggle has thrown up new class organisations of the kind that would be capable of taking the struggle of the working class forward. Because of this towards the end of the strike, in January 1985, the RCG argued for a new emphasis of political work. Our call 'Go out to the people' argued for the organisation of the thousands of ordinary working class people outside the organised labour movement who wanted the miners to win and see Thatcher defeated. The work of women's support groups and the miners support groups made a crucial contribution to the strike precisely because they were outside the control of Labour and trade union bureaucracies.

Whether the work of these groups is able, in the face of determined opposition, to go forward or not, the lessons learned not only by the mining communities but by thousands of their supporters will not be forgotten. They will provide valuable lessons and experience for the working class struggles that lie ahead. In this way the miners' strike 1984-5 will undoubtedly have brought 'a new dimension to British politics'.

Olivia Adamson and David Reed

FIGHT RACISM!  
FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

MINERS ON STRIKE  
PEOPLE versus STATE

FIGHT RACISM!  
FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Thatcher Botha WANTED FOR MURDER  
MINERS FIGHT POLICE & SCABS

FIGHT RACISM!  
FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

POLICE RIOT  
MINERS FIGHT ON KINNOCK SCABS

FIGHT RACISM!  
FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

The Miners Strike  
Belfast comes to Blidworth

FIGHT RACISM!  
FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

GO OUT TO THE PEOPLE  
CAMDEN'S HOMELESS TAKE OVER

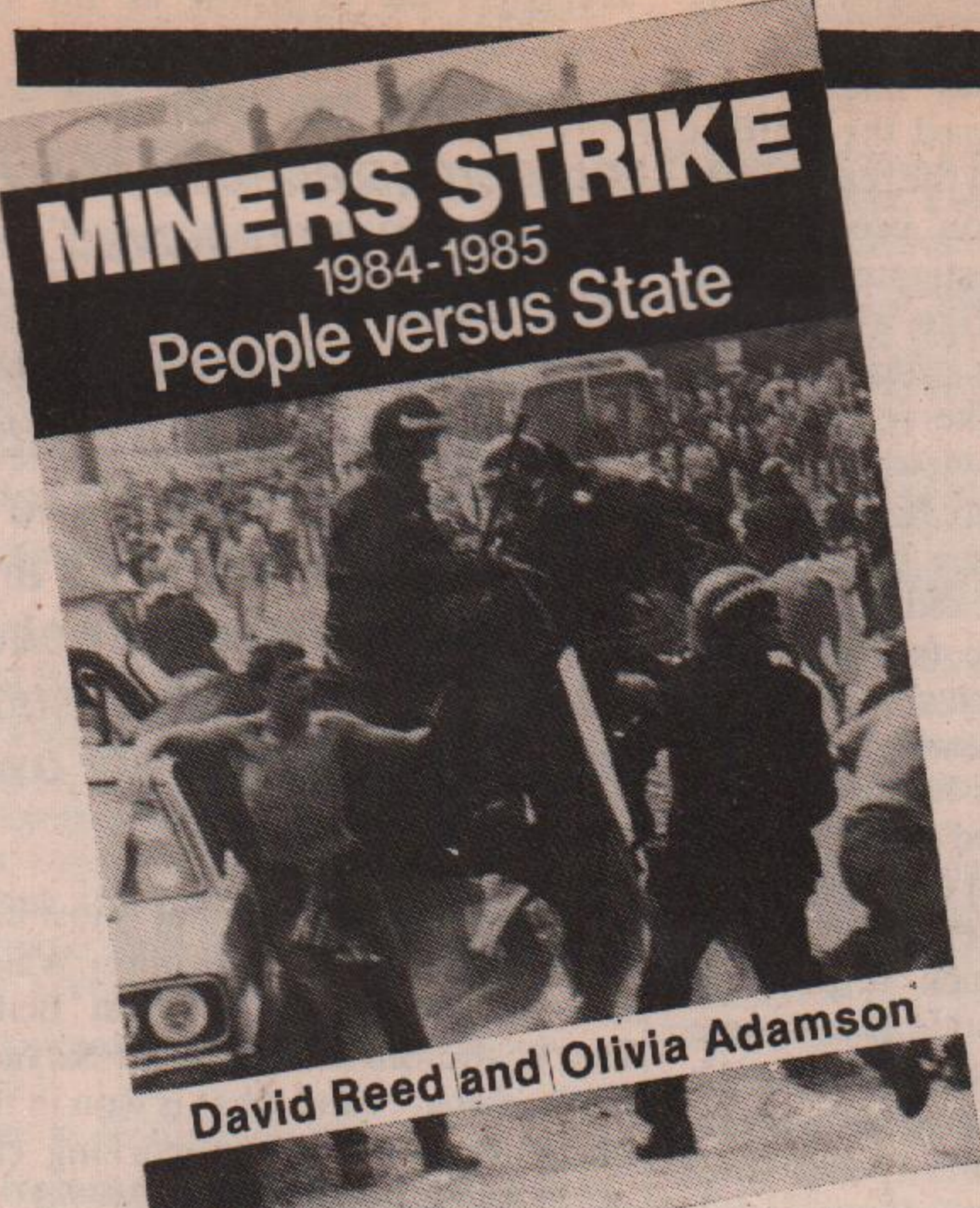
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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE  
NO DEPORTATIONS!

Defend the Embassy Picket

MINERS STRIKE 1984-85  
People versus State  
PUBLIC MEETINGS

Speakers David Reed and Olivia Adamson  
London Public Dayschool Sunday 28 April 10.30-4.30pm, Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, London N19 (Also - 'South Africa - Reform or Revolution' Speaker Carol Brickley)  
Manchester Thursday 9 May, Manchester Polytechnic Students Union, 7.30pm  
Leeds Public Dayschool Sunday 26 May 10.30-4.30pm; Venue to be announced  
Bradford Tuesday 7 May Queen's Hall, Morley Street 7.30pm  
Edinburgh Monday 13 May Trades Council Social Club, Broughton St Lane, off Broughton Street 7.30pm  
Dundee Thursday 16 May Wellgate Library 7.30pm  
Glasgow Tuesday 14 May AUEW Halls, West Regent St. (Off Blythswood Sq.) 7.30pm  
Dunfermline Wednesday 15 May 7.30pm Venue to be announced  
Fitzwilliam (nr Pontefract) Friday 25 May, Kinsley Hotel, Fitzwilliam, Nr Pontefract, 7.30pm



MINERS STRIKE  
1984-5  
People versus State  
David Reed and Olivia Adamson

144 pp, paperback  
Publication date 1 May 1985  
£2.50 + 40p postage.  
Order from:  
Larkin Publications,  
BCM Box 5909,  
London WC1N 3XX.

This book contains a detailed political analysis of the heroic miners' strike as it took place. There is a diary of events, many photographs, eye-witness accounts of miners' pickets, police actions and other dramatic events. An appendix contains reviews of books and pamphlets published on the strike as it progressed, as well as speeches, articles and statements by striking miners, political activists, political prisoners and others supporting the strike. Together they give a political history of a strike which has transformed political life for hundreds of thousands of people in Britain.

The book argues that the miners' strike has produced a wealth of political gains: the leading role of working class women in the struggle; the new class organisations thrown up in the mining areas and towns and cities during the strike; and the recognition of the common interest of striking miners with people oppressed by British imperialism – Irish people, black people in Britain and the people of South Africa fighting to destroy the racist apartheid state. It has also produced important lessons: the split in the working class movement; the disastrous influence of the leadership of the Labour and trade union movement; and the class character of the state, its police, laws and courts.

Building on these political gains and learning the lessons of the strike, a new fighting working class movement can and must be built in Britain.

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*'... what is lost in the coalfields of Kent, Yorkshire, Wales is lost for the people of West Belfast, Derry, the Six Counties, El Salvador, Chile, Peru... and what is won in these places is won for the working class, propertyless peoples of the world.'*

Although I have previously expressed a personal message of solidarity with the struggle of the miners to protect their jobs, pits and communities, I would like, through Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! to convey my admiration and encouragement to all those who have so courageously withstood all attempts to make them crawl before the 'would-be-masters'. Over the past year we Republican POWs have watched with a special interest the events involving the striking miners and a close affinity has been built up with those in the forefront of that struggle – much to the puzzlement of some in this country.

It is not merely a wish to see just anyone oppose Thatcher and the Tory government, regardless of who they are, but a genuine feeling of solidarity with people who we see experiencing a very similar situation as that in which we Irish Republicans exist. Particularly so in relation to the prison struggle – it is much more than coincidence that there are numerous similarities between events involving us and those which the miners have faced. Then if we examine the struggles waged by oppressed peoples throughout the world we learn that though the names and faces may change the underlying forces and factors which shape events are practically identical.

I mentioned earlier that our identification with the miners' plight has puzzled some – I was of course referring to those in British army uniform who walk our streets and help maintain imperialist oppression of our people. In many instances they themselves have families, relatives, neighbours and friends involved in the NUM strike and the sight of seeing those who they are meant to harass, oppress and murder, if given the opportunity, collecting money, food-parcels etc for the relief of miners' families, comes as something of a shock to them. There are others no doubt of Irish origin who also wonder why we should be in any way concerned about 'those who are all the same, whose people are over here murdering us'. – There are of course racists to be found everywhere and those who haven't seriously analysed the conflict here nor truly identified the real enemy.

In the rare television programmes which genuinely investigated events connected with the strike we had the opportunity of hearing striking miners and their families make reference to Ireland and how their views regarding the war being waged here had changed. They spoke of how they initially had been horrified and shocked at the sheer brutality of the police (sent to their villages to protect 'private property' and to ensure that those who 'sold their souls' – or who simply had never had one – would be protected as they carried out their scab activities) and they could now better understand events in the Six Counties. Normally such brutal and murderous actions of state forces were reserved for the peoples of England's colonies and it must say something for the crisis within capitalism, and England's decline as an imperial power, that she must today resort to such activities against her own people.

Unfortunately the vast majority of the labour force has not recognised this, or if they have, they have conveniently chosen to ignore it. But I'm sure it's wrong to simply blame the rank-and-file of the labour movement – at all times it is they who are the most militant and determined to protect their interests and rights, but their spirit of resistance has been gradually undermined and weakened by a leadership subservient to the ruling class – a leadership where selfish concern for their own prestige and position has blinded them to what the original aims of trade unionism were. In Ireland such people were once referred to as 'Gombeen men', lackeys, and history shows us that all oppressed peoples

were cursed with such elements.

From our position in the H Blocks of Long Kesh we can easily understand the feelings of treachery and loneliness the strikers must have felt when all the rhetoric and verbalism, risen to such heights at the Labour Party and Trades Union congresses, never materialised into practical support and solidarity on the ground. We too once believed that 'nationalist' politicians who made much noise in support of our cause actually meant what they said, and it was a lesson to us when we discovered that beyond the rhetoric there was nothing. What we did discover though was that there were thousands upon thousands of ordinary people the length and breadth of Ireland, and in many countries throughout the world, who were at one with us in our struggle and who sought that victory just as ardently. Hopefully the miners and their families and communities will also be aware that there are those throughout the world, totally unconnected with the NUM strike, who seek victory for them just as much as they themselves do. Bobby Sands said when he knew he was shortly to die, '... I die, not just in an attempt to end the barbarity of H Block and win back the rightful recognition as a political prisoner but because what is lost in here is lost for the Republic and those wretched oppressed whom I am deeply proud to know as the risen

*'Normally such brutal and murderous actions of state forces were reserved for the peoples of England's colonies and it must say something for the crisis within capitalism, and England's decline as an imperial power, that she must today resort to such activities against her own people.'*

people... Likewise, what is lost in the coalfields of Kent, Yorkshire, Wales is lost for the people of West Belfast, Derry, the Six Counties, El Salvador, Chile, Peru... and what is won in these places is won for the working class, propertyless peoples of the world.

The media's portrayal of the strike surpassed even my own expectations as to how blatantly partisan they can be and no one should any longer be in any doubt (if ever anyone was!) that they are merely another tool in the hands of the ruling class. For many months we were treated to the spectacle of 'picket violence' with loud condemnations from all-round; even Kinnock had to have his tuppenceworth. But once numbers returning to work rose to sufficient levels the 'violence' mysteriously disappeared from our screens and each evening of news was how many 'went back to work that day'.

We POWs experienced a similar portrayal of our prison struggle though in reverse order. With the beginning of the 'blanket protest' (well documented in David Reed's book, *Ireland: the key to*



ANDREW WIARD/REPORT

# The hand of solid

the British revolution), the evening news daily gave the figures of those in the H Blocks 'conforming' to prison rules and those not. At one stage it rose to about 90 conforming and 10 not – the only thing they neglected to mention was that the 90 were a mixture of loyalists and non-political prisoners while only the 10 were Republicans! Gradually more Republicans were sentenced and the 10 became 20, then 30, 40, 50 – until the figures suddenly dropped from the news; obviously they had become too embarrassing to the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). Later came the 'violence' of the no-wash protest (a totally passive protest of non-cooperation with prison staff) and later still the 'violence' of the hunger-strike. Paradoxically, the same media refer to Gandhi's hunger-strike as a 'supreme form of passive protest'.

One major result of the miners' strike has been the politicisation of the rank-and-file workers, and just as importantly, and even more so, the involvement of the women in the struggle. Those mothers, wives, sisters who probably once thought they would never be involved in political work, never mind being to the forefront of such a militant and revolutionary struggle, have earned the respect and admiration of not only their own families and communities but oppressed peoples everywhere. Our own female comrades, friends and relatives showed the same revolutionary capabilities in the Relatives Action Committees formed during the period of our prison protest. It wasn't that they suddenly created these capabilities – they always had them. But they now were given the opportunity to use them. Our imprisoned comrades in Armagh prison must be an example to all women wherever they may be. Though small in number they have shown those who thought to intimidate,

degrade and brutalise them that once one has a conviction, a commitment to a struggle for freedom from whatever oppression, then no might of the aggressor will defeat them. As Republican POWs we salute the courage and total selfless dedication of the women of the coalfields.

With the decision to initiate an 'organised return to work' there will doubtless be a certain amount of demoralisation amongst those who gave so much to the NUM struggle over the past year and who will question if it was all for nothing. While not presuming to be in a position to give those people advice as to what they should or shouldn't do, I would again refer to the course of our own prison struggle – a struggle which I feel bears so many striking similarities to that of the NUM – and ask those miners to look and see if they can find any encouragement from it.

From the start of our prison protest in 1976 to the end of the hunger-strike in 1981 our hopes had, in the intervening period, at times soared to great heights only to be then dashed almost to despair. Many various and prolonged attempts were made to break us and even our families were not spared from this. Prominent political activists who organised support groups on our behalf were even murdered by Loyalist death-squads on the orders of British intelligence (as was revealed in court by those tried for the murders). Finally 10 of our comrades died on hunger-strike in an attempt to achieve our objective – the recognition and rights of political prisoners. Our demands were not something far-fetched – we merely (like the NUM) wanted the British government to stand by the agreement made in 1972 when they first granted political status to Republican POWs.

*Laurence McKeown, Republican POW in H-Block 5 of Long Kesh prison in the British-occupied Six Counties of Northern Ireland, sends this message of solidarity and inspiration to the British miners and their communities.*

What oppressors throughout history have failed to learn however is that by the mere fact of 'winning' a battle they have often lost the war. General Westmoreland still claims to this day, which is probably correct, that the American armed forces never lost a battle against the Vietcong; they did however lose the war, and while Margaret Thatcher may have claimed to have 'won' the hunger-strike battle the very fact that it had ever taken place showed the world that Republican prisoners were indeed political prisoners. Apart from that, the lessons learned and experience gained through that five year period of protest were to contribute greatly both to internal military victories and external political ones.

With the unsuccessful conclusion to the hunger-strike there was of course a general demoralisation felt amongst the POWs, but this did not last long. Years of struggle had taught us to be resilient and it was merely a question of analysing our position and formulating strategies. One year later (October 1982) a decision was made to end the 'no work' protest and thus be moved into all the H Blocks (we had until then been isolated in two of the eight H Blocks), not to give up our struggle for our demands but to once again be amongst all the prisoners and to initiate a campaign for segregation from Loyalists. Isolated in small numbers we had been more easily controlled.

Less than one year later – on September 25 1983 – 38 Republican Prisoners drove out the front gate of the prison and so happened the greatest escape in the history of British prisons. The supposedly 'defeated and demoralised' had shown that defeat in a battle only means total defeat in the war if you allow it to be – the revolutionary however merely redirects his/her energies into another course of action. Shortly after this the NIO also had to accept that the integration of Loyalist and Republican prisoners was unworkable and segregation had to be conceded – we had won another battle.

I don't mean to boast of our actions but hopefully to show those miners who have struggled so hard that the end of the strike does not necessarily mean the end of the struggle for their demands. Rather they have shown all people what can be achieved when they unite together in common cause and have raised the consciousness of their own people and others in a way which could never be equalised by any amount of political theorising.

I would hope also that the people of the mining communities now feel a solidarity with other oppressed groupings in their own country and with oppressed peoples in other lands – particularly my own country.

Some glaring contradictions have certainly come to the fore and many inconsistencies on the part of those who supposedly represent the interests of the working class in England. Many of those contradictions and inconsistencies had been apparent to us long before now – not because we are more politically aware than others – but because we bore the brunt of those contradictions. The Secretary of State for the Six



Counties who was most infatuated with the desire to achieve a military defeat of the IRA and whose 'Green light' to the SAS and other undercover operatives led to the deaths of many civilians as well as IRA volunteers, was none other than the NUM-sponsored Labour MP - Roy Mason! The fact that a so-called representative of the working class still has to have a numerous and ever-present bodyguard to protect him from the revenge of an oppressed people says a lot for the working class leadership I referred to earlier. I do accept however that there are notable exceptions - amongst those of course being the NUM President Arthur Scargill.

Marx had a means of testing the depth of his contemporaries' revolutionary views which was by questioning them on various international issues and from the answers they gave deciding as to whether or not he considered them to be truly revolutionary in their thinking and practices in the art of socialist thinking. It was a personal interest of his to expose the Roy Masons of his day!

In conclusion, I would like to thank *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* for the opportunity to express my views on the NUM struggle. I would also like to thank them for the copies they freely provide to us, for the time, energy and finance they have expended on behalf of imprisoned Republicans in English prisons. I believe the views I have expressed in my letter are also those of my imprisoned comrades and if good wishes and feelings of solidarity had been enough to achieve victory then those emanating from the H Blocks of Long Kesh directed towards the striking miners, their families and communities would have defeated MacGregor, Thatcher and the Tories ages ago. As POWs we have no more than good wishes and the hand of revolutionary solidarity and comradeship to extend to you but these we are more than glad to offer you.

Onwards - ever onwards to victory.  
Ciofaidh ár lá.

Laurence McKeown, H Block 5

# arity

## Broad forces needed for National Prisoners Committee

The British Prison System, Miners and the Labour Movement' was the title of the conference held on 23 March in Barnsley at the National Organisation of Miners' Prisoners and Supporters (NOMPAS). NOMPAS, set up by Martin Walker, Research Officer for Greenwich Council and author of *State of Siege*, aims to be an umbrella organisation co-ordinating the work for miners' prisoners by committees and groups around the country.

About forty people, mainly from the mining communities, attended, Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) members attended with the Fitzwilliam Prisoners Aid Committee (FPAC) delegates. The conference was addressed by Walker, Tim Owen, a barrister, Jackie O'Connell, a leading member of the (Irish) Prisoners Aid Committee in the 1970s, Geoff Coggan of PROP and Ronan Bennett, who was framed and detained in Long Kesh and later in Brixton Prison, also in the 1970s.

The conference decided to approach support groups in the towns and cities, offering speakers and to produce publicity and a statement of aims for circulation. A main concern, at the moment is to win official recognition from the NUM as a body which co-ordinates work for the miners in prison.

The RCG argued that the most effective way to win NUM recognition is to involve a wide and active range of support groups, organisations and individuals - some of whom are already organising prisoner support work - to make the campaign as long and representative as possible. If miners in prison are to remain an issue

## MINERS SUPPORT GROUPS

RCG and FRFI supporters have been active in miners support groups in London, Leeds, Glasgow and Edinburgh. All these groups are holding meetings, collections and benefits for the sacked and imprisoned miners. Many other support groups have been disbanded already, despite the work which needs to be done in every town and city on the miners in prison and those sacked. We have argued that this must be campaigned for in the widest possible way. No-one should wait for a lead to be given by the Labour Party or the TUC. Local activists must take the initiative.

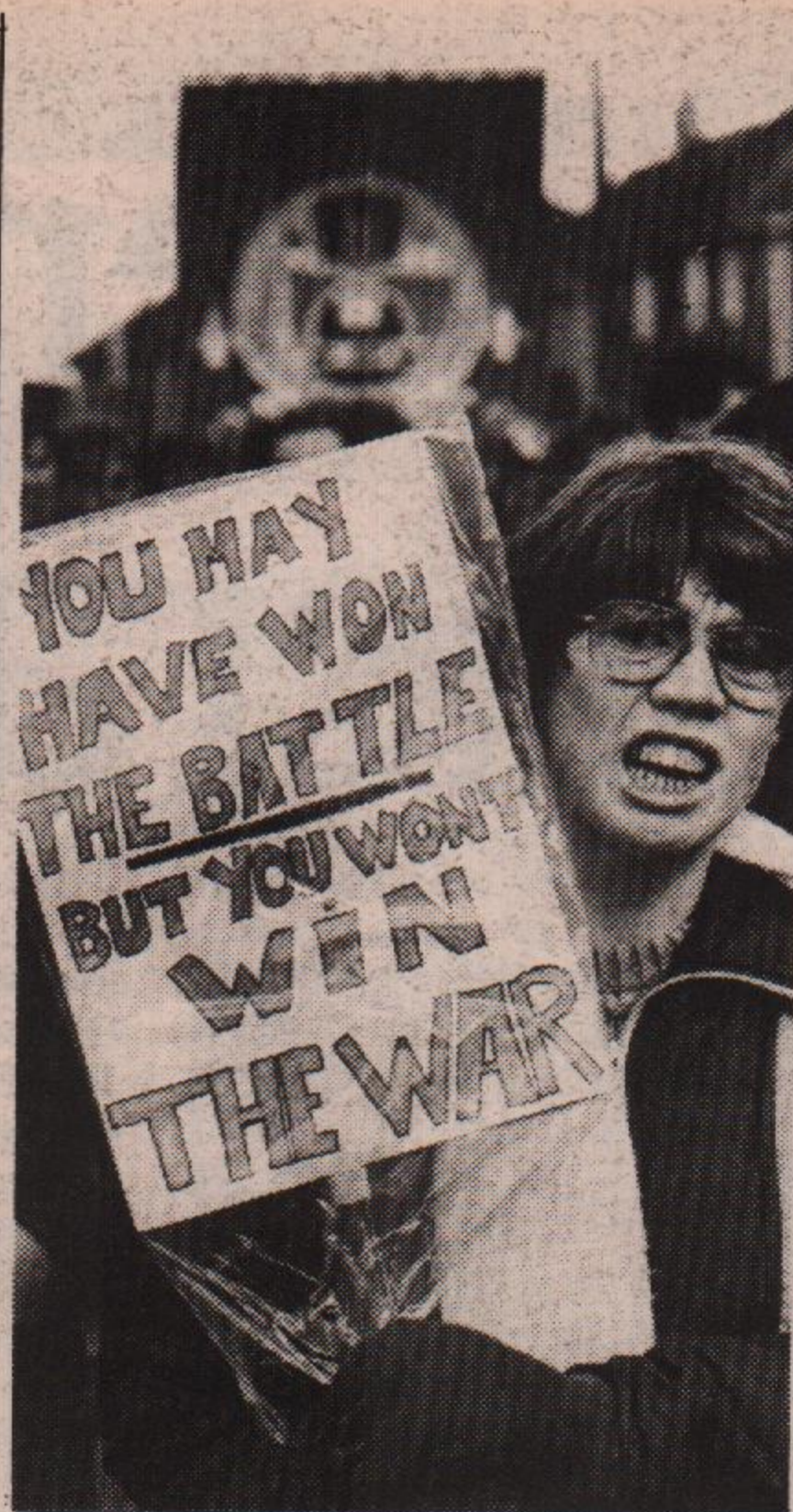
Our standpoint has met opposition from those forces which, despite the lessons of the strike, still place their faith in the traditions of struggle of the existing Labour and trade union movement.

From Wandsworth to Edinburgh we have heard the same arguments: pickets of prisons are dangerous for prisoners, and not useful unless they are supported by the trade unions; pickets of the NCB for reinstatement are a waste of time - particularly if not supported by the trade unions; street collections and petitioning will be unproductive - better to do it in the workplaces; who should be involved in the campaign? ... the trade unions; and if they're not involved then the best thing to do is to insist that every attender of the support groups is delegated from their trade union or trade council! This last suggestion came from a member of the Lambeth support group, who also attacked the picket of Wandsworth prison called by the Islington support group - firstly for not being supported by the NUM and then, when it was pointed out that not only did Kent NUM support it, but Malcolm Pitt the president of Kent actually addressed the picket, they attacked Malcolm Pitt as a maverick who acted on his own! Other support groups which were low in number and unimaginative in approach just disbanded themselves rather than take up the challenge.

'Women, blacks and one-legged banjo players' are all very well... but workers need to be won, was the answer of Edinburgh SWP leader, William Black, to our comrades urging that new sources of support had to be gone out to. This last disgusting remark is the best example of the kind of opposition faced by our comrades and others - some of us women, some of us black, some of us, shamefully, unemployed.

If the support groups are to do the work which is urgently called for they must ally themselves with those in the mining communities who want to fight for their imprisoned comrades and those in the working class who understand the importance of defending the political prisoners of the strike.

Maggie Mellon



JOHN HARRIS/IFL



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Celebration by Women Against Pit Closures, 9 March, Chesterfield. Scargill urged the women's support groups to rededicate themselves to the struggle even though the strike had ended:

'This is not the end, it's the beginning because you are part of this union and must remain part of the miners union ...

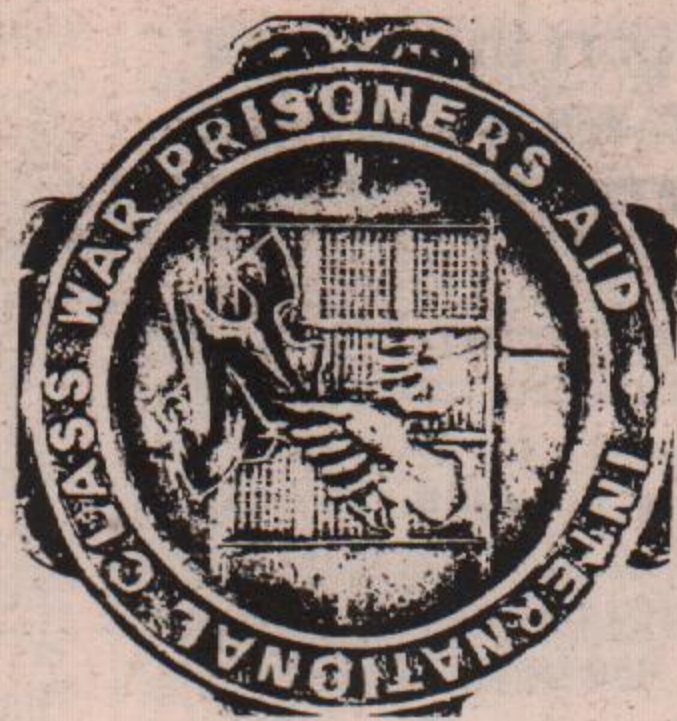
We've got to take this fight forward and step up the campaign. The women's support groups have got to take on a broader role. You must become involved in the wider issues. Learn and understand that ratercapping affects each and every one of us and that the peace movement is absolutely important.'

FRFI was at the rally and at the Market Hall where we had a stall exhibiting out work over the strike and calling for support for the campaigns we are involved in - on Ireland, anti-deportations, South Africa. The response we got demonstrated that many of the women who have fought throughout the strike are ready to take their struggle forward.



JOHN HARRIS/IFL

## Class War Prisoners



The sentence, if known, is given in brackets

**HMP Ranby, Nr Retford, Notts DN22 8EU**

Paul Brothwell, Derby (12 mths); Peter Cooper, Derby (6 mths); Ron Staniland, Derby (6 mths)

**HMP Sudbury, Derby DE6 5HW**

Kevin Beal, Derby, 031, (2½ yrs); Graham Cooper, Derby (2½ yrs); Steve Goodall, 039, (2½ yrs); David James, 034, (2½ yrs); Ian Kestle, Derby, (2½ yrs); Peter Pearson, 038, Derby (2½ yrs); Michael Southwell, 030, Derby (2½ yrs); Glen Wright, Derby (6 mths); Kevin Neal, (2½ yrs)

**HMP Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE**

Peter Gates (UCATT), (12 mths)

**HMP Lincoln, Greetwell Rd, Lincoln LN2 4BD**

Jimmy Lees, Derby; Steve and Victor Gregory (remand), Derby; Guy Bennett, Armthorpe, (3 mths)

**HMP Durham, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HU**

William Smith, Northumberland (2½ yrs)

**HMYO Centre, Glen Parva, Saffron Rd, Wigton, Leicester**

Simon Brookes, E71244, Derby (18 mths); Robert Travis, Derby (18 mths)

**Millers Park YCC, Wellingborough, Northants**

David Gaunt, E71037, Derby (3 yrs); Paul Jones, E71036, Derby, (2½ yrs); David Mason, E711033, Derby (2½ yrs); Phillip Sterland, E71035, Derby (2½ yrs)

**HMP Kirkham, Preston, Lancashire PR4 2RA**

Dennis Penningham (3 mths); Paul Wright Saville (18 mths)

**HMP Armley, Armley Rd, Leeds 12**

Ian Black, Yorks (6 mths); Michael and Alan Eyrebowho, Yorks; Gary Milward, Yorks; Steve Wakefield, Yorks; Neil Marshall, Darfield (3 mths); S Neith, Armthorpe; Dale Scofield (3 mths); Kevin Green, S Yorks, G78668

**HMP Leicester, Welford Rd, Leicester LE2 7AJ**

Ian Kestle, E71032 (2½ yrs)

**HMP Haverigg Open, Milham, Cumbria**

Peter Hurst, Yorks (6 mths)

**HMP Saughton, Edinburgh**

Brian Miller, Solsgirth (4 mths)

**HMP Cardiff, Knox Rd, Cardiff, South Glamorgan CF2 1UG**

Dean Hancock, 899410, Wales (Remand); Russell Shankland, 883752, Wales (Remand); Mr Williams, Wales (Remand)

**HMP Walton Gaol, Liverpool**

William Bannister, Staffordshire (2 yrs); Michael Jones, Staffordshire (2 yrs); Stephen Lowe, Staffordshire (2 yrs); Raymond Patton, Staffordshire (2 yrs)

**HMP Wandsworth, PO Box 757, Heathfield Rd, London SW18 3HS**

Terry French, B73383, Kent (5 yrs)

**HMYO Chelmsford, Springfield Rd, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6LQ**

Chris Tazey, A29398, Kent (3 yrs)

**HMP Featherstone, New Rd, Wolverhampton WV10 7PU**

John Ellis; Mark Grove; Peter Newbold;

Billy Taylor

**Wymott Prison, Leyland, Lancs PR5 3LW**  
Gordon Miller, E461977, Durham (4 mths); Bill Jackson, C54231 (6 mths)

**HMP Rudgate, Weatherby LS23 7AZ**

Gary Hopper, E46193, Durham (4 mths); George Richardson, E46187, Durham (4 mths)

## Prison not yet known

Glen Black, unemployed, Dawden North East (NE) (2 yrs); Stanley Gregory, unemployed, Dawden NE (2 yrs); Kevin Hughes, unemployed, Dawden NE (2 yrs); Gary Kristonson, warehouseman, Dawden NE (2 yrs); Brian Little, Engineer, Dawden NE (2 yrs); John Little, Dawden NUM (2 yrs); Raymond Patterson, Dawden NUM (2 yrs); Mark Rochester, Dawden NUM (2 yrs); Ian Stephenson, unemployed, Dawden NE (2 yrs); Alan Hawkins, North Derbyshire (4 mths); Brian Martin, North Derbyshire (3 mths); Keith Millward, North Derbyshire (3 mths); Michael Partington, North Derbyshire (3 mths); Patrick McHale, Bentley (Remand); Gary Mould, Stoke on Trent (2 yrs YC)

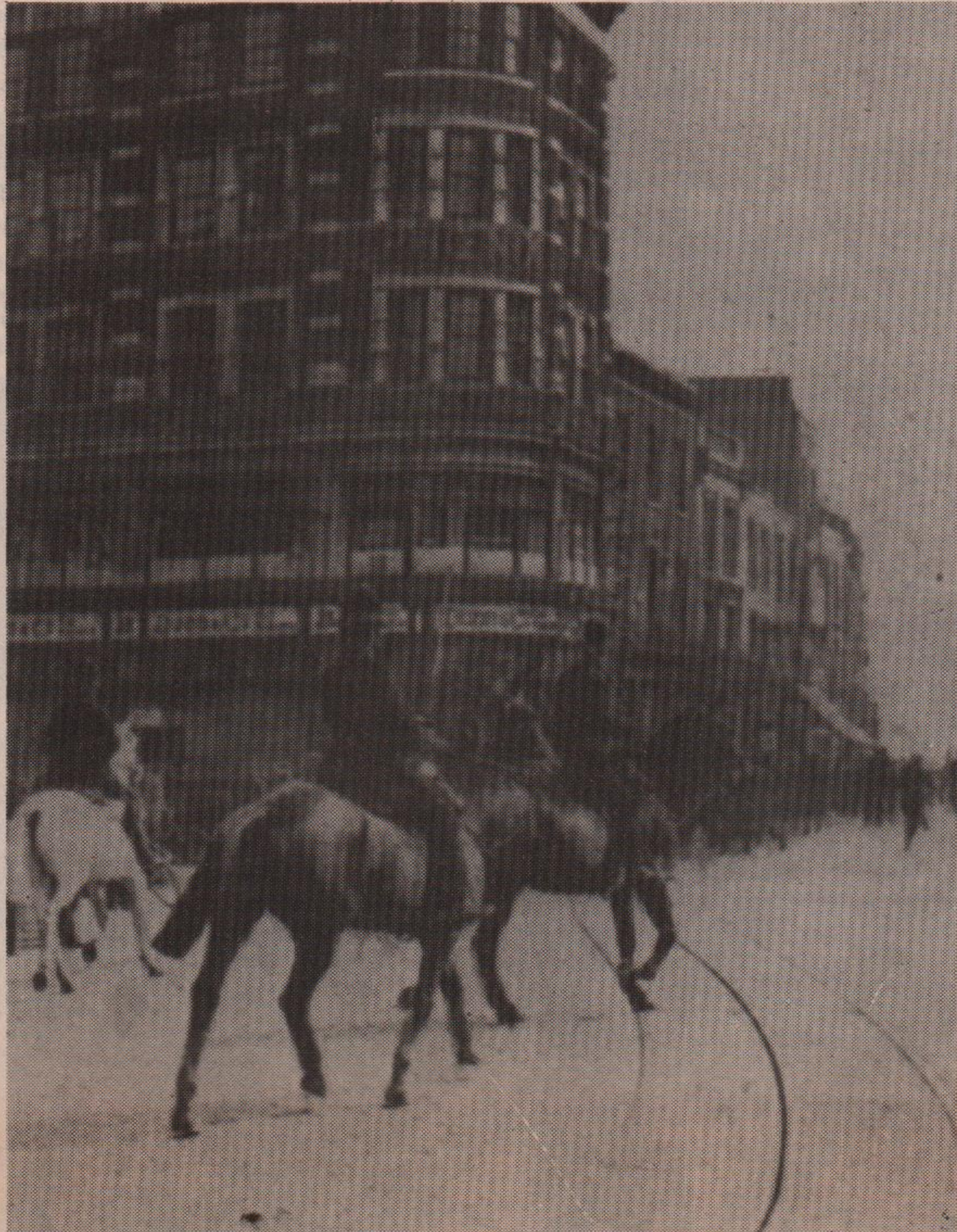
## Islington Miners Support Committee

**PUBLIC MEETING**  
Thursday 11 April 7.30pm  
Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent (off Holloway Rd)

**No Victimisation!**  
**Free the Class War Prisoners!**

Speakers include: Kaye Sutcliffe (Women Against Pit Closures - Kent); Liz French (Women Against Pit Closures - Kent, wife of Terry French, miner imprisoned for five years); Sacked miner, Kent NUM; Barking Hospital Striker; and others

# The miners and the 1926 general strike



Mounted police clearing the road after a riot at the Elephant and Castle

**'Do all you can to keep everybody smiling; the way to do this is to smile yourself... Do any odd jobs that want doing about the house. Do a little to interest and amuse the kiddies now you have the chance, do what you can to improve your health: a good walk every day will keep you fit.' This was the inspiring advice offered by the TUC during the May 1926 General Strike. It had been forced to call the strike by rank and file trade unionists, who were determined to support the miners in their fight against large reductions in wages (by 41% for the South Wales miners) and an increase of at least 14% in working hours.**

Labour Party, and then a member of the left wing ILP, Ramsay MacDonald had secret talks with the chairman of the Engineering and Allied Employers' Federation, to press for a settlement based on temporary wage cuts!

Commenting on the sell-out, the miners' leader, A J Cook, said '... I have had experience of being bullied in colliery offices... but never have we been bullied by the employers and the government to the extent that we were bullied by certain trade union leaders to accept a reduction in wages... One man on the other side said to me, "The TUC will help us"...' The 'other side' were quite right—they instinctively recognised that the TUC could be relied on to do its utmost to control and then betray the General Strike. At the end of the strike the miners were forced to fight on alone for over 6 months.

## The left and the General Strike

The revolutionary forces were too weak to prevent a return to work and large scale victimisation. The ruling class had prepared well. On 14 October 1925 the police arrested 12 leading officials of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) and they were sentenced to 6-12 months in prison; 7 got six months. Within days of this verdict, 200 South

Wales anthracite miners were given terms of imprisonment ranging from 14 days to 12 months for alleged acts of violence carried out during a strike in July 1925. 2 days after the strike began the police raided the CPGB press, and its newspaper had to be duplicated secretly.

As the miners continued their strike alone, the CPGB began to gain increasing influence. Everywhere communists were in the front line—of the 5,000 people prosecuted during the strike 1,200 were CPGB members and 400 of these were sent to prison. During the General Strike half of the prosecutions related not to acts of violence, but to acts of 'incitement' under the 1920 Emergency Powers Act. Thus a striker was given a month's imprisonment for tearing down a government poster; a communist found chalking 'seditious' slogans on a pavement was gaoled for 2 months with hard labour; and there were several arrests simply for being in possession of communist newspapers.

Workers also recognised that the CPGB was willing to work with all sections of the labour movement to fight for the miners. It built up a strong and principled left wing in the trade unions, the National Minority Movement, which was strong enough 3 months after the strike began to call a conference representing nearly a million workers, including 108 delegates from the major

coalfields. On 7 October Minority Movement leaders had the support of the Miners' Federation Conference in calling for a rejection of further negotiations with the mineowners or the government.

But the CPGB did not confine its activity to the trade union movement. Well before the General Strike began it had called for the formation of Councils of Action, broadly-based local bodies to include all types of working-class organisation. Whatever their political differences, communists, all varieties of social democrats and non-political workers were able to campaign together. As a result, the Councils of Action were very effective in organising mass pickets—for example, in some areas of London streets were blocked except for transport 'by permission of the TUC'.

Because of its principled and non-sectarian activity, the CPGB gained considerable support. During the strike, its membership doubled (to 10,000), and its paper *Workers' Weekly* reached a peak circulation of 80,000 in August. In some areas, particularly in Yorkshire, the CPGB was so effective that party meetings were banned, and party leaders were conducted out of the county by the police, using the Emergency Powers Act. But the opportunists were still powerful enough to inflict a crushing defeat on the miners.

## The great betrayal

The 'official' labour movement watched with indifference or hostility while the miners starved—the right wing tried to pressure the miners back to work, while the 'left' refused to organise effective solidarity. On 19 May the Miners' Federation demanded that the movement organise an effective embargo on the import of coal, and a levy on the membership to give them support. The Tory government spent large sums to import foreign coal—imports rose from 600,000 tons in June to 4 million in October. Partners in crime J H Thomas and Ramsay MacDonald ensured that nothing was done to support the miners. The main coal-carrying rail service continued to carry 67% of the pre-strike loads of coal.

Unfortunately, the miners' most popular leader, A J Cook, was unwilling to fight against the opportunists, right and left. As early as 23 June, 6 weeks after the end of the General Strike, the TUC General Council and the miners' leaders (including Cook) announced that a conference of trade union executives, scheduled for 25 June, was to be postponed until after the settlement of the strike. Mutual criticism was to cease, and A J Cook's pamphlet, *Nine Days*, an attack on the role of the TUC leadership during the General Strike, was to be withdrawn from circulation. Unlike today's CPGB which covers up for the TUC, the Executive Committee of the CPGB issued a statement that '... the miners leaders have made a serious mistake in subscribing to the General Council's decision not to call a conference.'

The CPGB also campaigned against other concessions to opportunism on Cook's part, notably over the 'Bishops Proposals'. Prominent church leaders made proposals for the resumption of work under existing conditions, with government help for 4 months, during which time a national agreement would be negotiated. Pointing out that this did not guarantee a minimum wage and merely postponed for 4 months the imposition of worse conditions, the CPGB campaigned vigorously against the proposals. This was instrumental in their rejection (70-30%) at a special

miners' conference (30 August).

However, the opportunists were very well organised and ultimately were able to defeat the miners. The Bournemouth TUC Conference (6-11 September), half of which consisted of officials, refused even to discuss the imposition of an embargo. The Labour Party backed it up—at its Margate Conference (11-15 October) Ramsay MacDonald argued against a levy, and the vote was 62% in his favour. Assessed on the total Labour vote at the 1924 election the total contribution received from the labour movement was less than 1d (equivalent of 8p) per head. The TUC contributed a paltry £68,000 (4%), as compared to the £249,000 (15%) collected by the Labour Women's Committee. The final insult was that the breakaway union of Notts miners was strongly supported by a Labour MP, an official of the Notts' Miners Association, G H Spencer.

The strike was still solid at the beginning of September, when less than 5% of the miners had returned to work. But increasing hardship and betrayal by the official labour movement took its toll and by the beginning of November there was a steady drift back to work—by the end of the month it was all over. The miners had suffered a crushing defeat.

## Soviet workers' solidarity

Deserted by all sections of the official British labour movement, the miners were enabled to carry on so long by the tremendous political and financial support given by the Soviet trade unions. In Kharkov there was a demonstration of 100,000—columns of workers left the factories and offices red flags flying and bands playing; the unions organised a levy of a quarter of a day's pay—a big sacrifice, at a time when Soviet wages were very low; and dockers refused to load ships destined for British ports and organised meetings with British seamen. After the betrayal, the USSR Miners' Union sent £270,000 (perhaps the equivalent of more than £5m today) to the miners, eventually contributing more than half of the £1.6m collected during the strike; and transport workers maintained an embargo on oil and coal. Soviet trade unions gave unstinting moral and political support to the strike, recognising that a victory for the miners would be a decisive step in building a revolutionary movement in Britain.

## Victory or defeat?

The mineowners and their government imposed harsh terms on the returning strikers—union members were victimised, some for years, and company unionism, in the form of the Spencer union, returned to the coalfields. In the following year, the government passed repressive legislation against the trade unions, and in revenge for the Soviet trade unions' solidarity raided the Soviet trade mission. In this sense, the strike was a crushing defeat. Yet hundreds of thousands of workers came to recognise the openly treacherous character of the right wing of the labour and trade union movement and the timidity of its left wing. The tiny Communist Party was able to show that united campaigns were possible, which could effectively lead large numbers of workers in struggle. The fact that the political steps forward to building a revolutionary movement were halted and later reversed should not obscure the many successes of the CPGB in building a powerful, united, and principled movement during the strike itself.

Patrick Newman

**LEBANON: THE FRACTURED COUNTRY**

by David Gilmour, Sphere Books, 1984, 231 pages, £2.95

This concise history of Lebanon up to 1983 is well worth reading, being packed with facts and information. David Gilmour is an idealist historian who believes that individuals can alter the fundamental course of the class struggle. Some of the decisive developments in Lebanon's history—the 1975-76 Civil War for example—he attributes to the absence of sufficiently moderate and skilled politicians. Despite this and the author's prolific speculation which becomes irritating, the book is good value at £2.95.

Lebanon was an artificial creation, carved out to suit imperialist interests. General Edward Spears, later British Minister to Syria and Lebanon, wrote in 1920:

'...the French and the British... satisfied each others' appetites after the First World War, by serving up strips of Arab lands to each other.'

Lebanon was 'served up' to the French. But it was British armed forces, in 1918 and 1941, who secured the territory against the Arab anti-imperialist movement. The country lacked any historic or economic unity and its two major cities, Beirut and Tripoli were torn from their natural Syrian hinterland. The French designed National Pact of 1941 imposed some cohesion on the artificial union of Christian, Sunni, Shiite and Druze communities. Power was apportioned to the

bourgeois classes according to their religious/sectarian affiliations. The lion's share went to the Christian bourgeoisie who ever since the Crusades constituted a pro-European, pro-imperialist force in the region. They were entrusted with the Presidency and given command of the army and the police. The Muslim bourgeoisie was offered sufficient concessions to reconcile it to the new state, but the Muslim masses received nothing.

The sectarian state that emerged was the instrument of a profligate commercial and financial bourgeoisie, dominated by Christians and dependent on imperialism. After independence in 1943, the country was opened up to international banking and finance capital. Beirut rapidly became a major banking trade and tourist centre displaying all the gaudy decadence of an imperialist city. But behind the glitter of gold reflected off the sumptuous tourist beaches, class polarisation accelerated. In 1960, 4% of the population disposed of 32% of GNP, while 50% disposed of only 18%. The parasitic bourgeoisie couldn't care less for agricultural or industrial development. Desperately needed irrigation

projects in the south, populated by Shiite peasants, were never undertaken, forcing thousands of families to flock into Beirut, there forming 'belts of misery'. Industrial development was warped as the tariff free economy sucked in foreign imports. In 1972, industrial output accounted for only 1/7 of total output. An attempt by the feeble industrial sector to impose tariffs on certain goods was stamped on in 1971 by a strike of merchants and shopkeepers. Medical treatment was beyond the reach of the poor, with 47 of Beirut's 49 hospitals in private hands. An attempt in 1970 to reduce the prices of certain medicines was stamped upon by the pharmaceutical trade. As poverty mounted, the wealthy continued to indulge in the worst excesses of conspicuous consumption. While the government built walls round the slums of Beirut, to hide the belts of misery from tourists' eyes, the ruling class's single biggest import item, 30%, consisted of jewels and precious metals.

Such were the social and economic causes of the Civil War in 1975-76. The political representatives of the Christian bourgeoisie and privileged Christian community, particularly the Phalangists, were not prepared to make any concessions to reform the sectarian statelet. Possessed of a racist and fascist ideology spawned by their privilege, they regarded themselves not as Arabs, but as Europeans with a 'civilising mission' in the backward Middle East. Akin to Zionism, the Phalangists subjected the country's 250,000 Palestinians to oppression and discrimination. Alone of the Arab states, Lebanon denied citizenship or equal status to Palestinians, refused them employment in the civil service and excluded them from state schools. Street entertainers in Beirut used to ask performing monkeys to show an audience how a Palestinian ate his food.

Whilst the Muslim bourgeoisie was prepared to accept the status quo, demanding only minor concessions, the masses were not. In alliance with the rising Palestinian resistance they pressed for the democratisation and secularisation of Lebanon. The Civil War was the explosion of these bitter class contradictions. The Lebanese National Movement and the PLO were on the verge of victory when the Syrian regime sent in its troops and trained its cannon on the revolutionary forces. Ever since, the Syrian regime has singlemindedly sought to thwart Lebanon's progressive, revolutionary movement. In this they shared the same aim as Israel determined to destroy the PLO with the 1978 and 1982 invasions. David Gilmour's account of these and of the Civil War has the merit not only of detail, but is also sympathetic to the Lebanese and Palestinian masses.

Eddie Abrahams



Beirut under aerial bombardment

**MASSACRE AT MASERU, Southern African Aggression Against Lesotho**

Fact Paper on Southern Africa No 12, 1985, 50p. Available from IDAF Publications, Canon Collins House, 64 Essex Road, London N1 8LR

On Human Rights Day, 9 December 1982, the fascist South African regime launched a bitter attack on the tiny independent state of Lesotho. 28 South African nationals and 12 Lesotho citizens, men, women and children, were butchered to death, provoking an international outcry and focussing world attention on the plight of South African refugees and those progressive countries in the Southern African region who live constantly under the horrific shadow cast by apartheid on the region.

This fact paper is an account of that raid, chronicling with the aid of facts, figures, photographs and eyewitness accounts the barbarity of the South African regime and the results of its destabilisation policy, aimed at bringing 'to heel' all progressive states in the region. It lists 38 attacks launched by South Africa on Lesotho in the year leading up to the massacre.

These attacks, together with the use of disinformation, insurgency techniques and plain blackmail (the Lesotho borders are completely surrounded by

South African territory thus rendering the Lesotho economy dependent on South Africa), constitute South Africa's foreign policy. This policy has met with heroic resistance from those it seeks to crush.

This fact paper is not in itself a complete account—nor, I am sure, is it meant to be. It doesn't, for instance, concern itself with the role British imperialism, the CIA or even the role that mercenaries play in propping up South Africa's 'Foreign Policy'. However, it is a must for all schools, colleges, libraries and all who want to know more about the extent of apartheid aggression and the heroism of those who combat it—like the young ANC cadre, who, having lost eight of his comrades in the raid stated:

'The freedom fighter is not dead. We will continue our battle until freedom is won.'

Charine James

**BATTLEFRONT NAMIBIA**

John Ya Otto. Heinemann African Writers Series 1982. £2.25 Pbk.

'One night I ran into a group of white boys playing with a dog. "Slave! Kaffir boy!" the boys yelled. They set the dog

on me. I couldn't possibly outrun the big beast, so I picked up a big rock and turned to face him.' John the youth fights off his attackers, later he is caught and beaten by the police.

Ya Otta, the young man, arrives in Windhoek on the eve of Namibia's Sharpeville. The 1959 Old Location massacre is a turning point. From 1960 SWAPO is formed with Sam Nujoma the driving force. Although Nujoma is forced into exile, Maxuillili's unbending resistance to the Boers sees SWAPO become a national movement. 1963—preparations begin for the armed struggle with attacks from 1966. Toivo Ya Toivo, Ya Otto and 33 other SWAPO leaders are tortured and tried under the new Terrorism Act brought in to smash the movement. International support comes at a crucial stage in the trial giving heart to the defendants who turn it into a platform of defiance.

Victimised, in internal exile in Ovamboland, Ya Otto patiently rebuilds. By 1971 Windhoek is brought to a halt by a strike against the contract labour system. The Ovamboland stooge chief publicly flogs SWAPO militants. In hiding, Ya Otto too has to flee the country to Angola.

Read this story of how SWAPO picked up the rock and fought back. 25 years later the South African boys and their dogs of war still ravage Namibia. We have a common aim to remove the imperialist police who are the obstacle to freedom and justice for the Namibian people.

Andy Goddard

**ANYWHERE TO ANYWHERE**

Women's Theatre Group

*Anywhere to Anywhere*, the latest offering from the Women's Theatre Group, Britain's most long-established feminist theatre company, explores the history of the women pilots who ferried aircraft between bases in the Second World War. The company is presumably worried about its reputation for tub-thumping and has, therefore, lurched to the opposite extreme and subjugated a lot of historically interesting and potentially poignant material to a cabaret style format which intersperses slightly caricatured scenes with 'appropriate' period songs.

All the performances are good, especially that of Eileen George as a Joyce Grenfell-style portrait of flying ace Pauline Gower. From an educational point of view the play is full of fascinating detail and carefully chronicles the fight against male prejudice which was eventually won to the extent that women pilots were the very first female government employees to be given pay parity with men. My major criticism is that in an attempt (and a successful one) to provide a good evening's entertainment, *Anywhere to Anywhere* avoids dealing with the issues which arise from the subject matter. The obvious point that the struggle for sexual equality was limited to the wealthy daughters of MPs and aristocrats was made implicitly but not

**NOTHING BUT THE SAME OLD STORY: THE ROOTS OF ANTI-IRISH RACISM**

Information on Ireland £1.50. Liz Curtis

This is a most readable book. Ms Curtis manages to reasonably cover almost a thousand years of Irish history relating it to various British racist theories, images and stereotypes regarding all things Irish. This is quite an achievement given the size of the book, a mere one hundred and four pages. It is well illustrated and like many GLC financially assisted publications, well-produced and researched.

Beginning with the Norman invasion of Ireland in the twelfth century (1169) Ms Curtis leads the reader down a long and bloody road of British imperialist plunder that continues today, militarily in the North and economically in the South. She traces the racism of the Normans in the writings of Gerald of Wales, through the centuries to today's disgusting racism in the press, television and radio. She shows how racism distorts the true nature of the British presence in Ireland and how it helps mislead the public. Simultaneously she details how Irish culture has been systematically denigrated and how great Irish authors like Shaw, Wilde, Swift and O'Casey are often referred to as 'British', thus encouraging a sense of false superiority among the British people.

However, while she attacks the establishment for pursuing centuries of racism and imperialism, she omits the racism of the Labour Party and labour movement. The Labour Party introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Act (1974) under which thousands of Irish people are harassed by the police. Who will ever forget the contempt shown by MPs Michael Foot and Don Concannon as Bobby Sands lay dying on hunger strike in 1981?

Her summary is not at all convincing. She urges everyone to challenge the myths surrounding the nature of the British state, the British empire and '... Britain's conduct in the north of Ireland...' This is all very well, but how this is to be done is not made clear. Politically this is a major flaw with the book. That said, this is a good simple introduction of the origins of anti-Irish racism in Britain. All anti-racists will benefit from this informative book.

Cathal



English racism in Punch 1881. A confrontation between 'good and evil'. The ape-like, aggressive and stupid Paddy confronts Britannia. Britannia in turn protects 'Hibernia', representing what the English thought the Irish should be: submissive.

explicitly. Nor, I suppose, inevitably was the question ever posed as to whether the most effective way to fight for equal recognition is to take part in a war which the play itself never portrays as a fight against fascism but always as a patriotic reaffirmation of British 'masculine' values.

Jill Bradwell

# Zionists humiliated Phalangists split

This is a rebellion of the Christian petit-bourgeoisie against its bourgeois paymaster represented by Gemayel. Explaining the roots of the difference, Geagea claimed that Gemayel had ceased to represent the Christian community, that he was depending excessively on the Syrian regime and making too many concessions to Muslim political forces. He demanded independent Phalange representation in the government. Expressing the fascist and sectarian character of the rebellion, a Geagea supporter protested that concessions to Muslims soiled Christian honour and added:

'The Christians are strong, healthy and open hearted. The Muslims are weak, cowardly and uneducated. This country was built by us and it's ours.'

The cause of such fascist outbursts is the Lebanese bourgeoisie's attempts to halt the total collapse of the economy. Real output is only 50% of its 1975 level, capital stock stands at its 1964 level, last year exports fell by 51% and invisible earnings by 32%. The Lebanese pound has collapsed, exchanging at 15 to one US dollar. State revenue covers only 30% of expenditure as billions are fleeced at checkpoints and ports beyond state control. With the state in no position to raise and collect customs and taxes, banks are ceasing to purchase Treasury Bonds to finance its deficit. This disastrous situation, intensifying social and revolutionary upheavals, is driving away the basis of the Lebanese bourgeoisie existence - imperialist banking and capital.

Under Syrian dominance, Gemayel and representatives of the Muslim bourgeoisie - Walid Jumblatt and Nabih Berri - are trying to restore the sectarian state's authority by disarming the militias and establishing 'order'. Only thus can they avert revolution and revive imperialist confidence in their role of handlers of imperialist capital. To achieve stability, Gemayel, under Syrian orders, is prepared to make concessions to the Muslim bourgeoisie and adopt the guise of a patriotic anti-Zionist. Berri and Jumblatt are using the illusory promises of reform and anti-Zionist national unity in coalition with Gemayel in an attempt to demobilise the oppressed Muslim masses. But the Christian petit-bourgeoisie is terrified lest such reforms undermine the privileges they are accustomed to receive from the state.

Geagea's revolt, currently controlled by Syrian guns, has served further to

**The split between Lebanese President Gemayel and sections of his Phalangist militia led by Samir Geagea heralds the break-up of the reactionary alliance of Christian bourgeois and petit-bourgeois forces forged by Bashir Gemayel after the 1975-76 Civil War. The conflict was precipitated in March when the President seeking to extend state authority, ordered the dismantling of a Phalange road-block on the highway to Tripoli. The road-block was a lucrative source of toll revenue for Geagea and his supporters at the expense of state coffers. Rather than submit, Geagea attempted to militarily seize control of all Christian areas.**



A woman stands in the rubble of her home destroyed by the Israeli Defence Force

weaken the sectarian state and highlights the temporary impotence of the Phalangists. Their allies, the Zionists, being driven out of Lebanon by the resistance, are in no position to offer assistance. The Syrian regime has however come to its defence. Portraying Gemayel as a symbol of national unity, it is pressing Berri and Jumblatt to speed up 'arrangements' for stability and order.

Such manoeuvres to stem the rising tide of revolutionary advance which has been spurred by increasing impoverishment can only be temporary. The impoverished masses, inspired by the resistance in south Lebanon, will not halt their struggle at the behest of bourgeois leaders. And the resistance in the south, which is humiliating the Zionists, will not content itself with replacing Zionist rule with that of the fascist Gemayel.

Eddie Abrahams

## FRENCH FASCISTS GAIN GROUND

In France's recent local elections, the National Front gained 8% of the vote in the first round, with 1,500 candidates standing in only three-quarters of the constituencies. Only the right-wing's distaste for giving public support to out-and-out fascists stopped them uniting for the second round. As a result the NF gained only one seat.

Support for this fascist party was rocketed during Mitterrand's rule. Against a background of growing unemployment the NF's blatant racism - its talk of immigrants as 'parasites' and its demands for repatriation - finds supporters.

A tribunal recently said that the NF's anti-immigration slogans are 'a permanent incitement to racism'. Indeed they are, but so too is the whole basis of the Socialists' and Communists' position: cracking down on immigration and encouraging the myth that immigrants are at least partly to blame for unemployment.

The NF's leader, Le Pen, was a para-trooper in the Algerian war, and boasted

publicly about how brutally he had interrogated freedom fighters. Not all are revolted by his being a torturer. Many 'pieds noirs' (white ex-Algerians) now live in France, and the Algerian war split France itself into two opposing camps. Le Pen has revived that whole debate and added more fuel to the anti-North African racism rife in France today.

The Communist Party had a pathetic turn-out: polling only about 12% of the vote in the first round. They cannot champion the anti-racists, with their own despicable positions taken over immigrants' housing in recent years. Their participation in the Socialist government until last July also tarred them with the brush of a harsh immigration clampdown, deportations of 'illegal' immigrants etc.

As unemployment grows and 'austerity policies' bite harder, imposed by a government that was supposed to lead the way forward to socialism, the extreme-right is likely to attract growing support.

Black people and immigrants in France certainly cannot look to the 'Socialist Party' or the 'Communist Party' to defend them from these fascists and their poisonous policies.

Sheila Marston

# Interview with Sudan People's Liberation Army

**Students and the urban poor took to the streets of Khartoum on 27 March. Fires were lit, banks, hotels, and the ruling party's headquarters were attacked as the masses demanded an end to hunger and the removal of IMF imposed food price rises. Sudanese President Nimeiri told *Newsweek* magazine that the mounting resistance 'is a big problem, and it has stopped all development in the southern part of Sudan', before he left for the USA. FRFI is pleased to have had the opportunity of interviewing Stephen Baak, the official representative of the SPLA/SPLM in London, who explained his Movement's position to Colette Levy.**

## The SPLA/SPLM

Its aim is to achieve a socialist revolution that will liberate the whole of Sudan, including the underdeveloped areas of Northern Sudan. In the past, successive oppressive minority clique regimes have sought to divide the Sudanese people, using nationality or religion to isolate liberation struggles in the north from those in the south. For this reason, in its Manifesto of July 1983 the SPLM defines the peripheral area of Khartoum and the Blue Nile, the only part which was developed by British colonialism, as containing a privileged northern elite with an interest in maintaining imperialism.

'At this stage', said Stephen Baak, 'our movement is aiming at creating its own form of socialism, adaptable to current and local conditions, looking for a united socialist Sudan, secular and non-racist, based on freedom of religion and expression and on equal opportunities of development... a broad-based movement which will include the progressive forces in the country ie the peasants, the industrial workers and the progressive professionals, not the petty bourgeoisie.'

On the same day, Thursday 21 March, that South African police shot dead 43 black people in Langa, Israeli stormtroopers raided 7 villages in south Lebanon killing 21 people. The bodies of some of the dead were mutilated, one teenager's face slashed with an axe, another's leg cut off. To suppress news of its butchery, Israeli tanks fired on journalists' vehicles killing 2 CBS cameramen.

Confronted with uncompromising resistance by the oppressed which has forced the Israeli army into a humiliating retreat, Zionism is again resorting to the methods of mass slaughter and genocide. On 1 March they burst into the main hospital in Tyre, snatching an unconscious man from the operating table. Days later they returned to arrest 28 people queueing to give blood for the victims of an Israeli bomb attack on the mosque in the village of Maarakeh. On 11 March, the village of Zrariye was stormed. 40 were left dead, 200 arrested, 40 homes destroyed and the mosque desecrated. Similar incidents occur daily in scores of south Lebanon's villages.

## Imperialism supports Israel's 'iron fist'

This is Zionism's 'iron fist' designed to smash all resistance south of the Litani river where it hopes to end its retreat. Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin has made clear the price of continued resistance:

'We are telling the Shiites that they have two options: either there is quiet for both sides or else... their lives won't be worth living.'

US and British imperialist support alone allows Zionism to carry out its terror and utter such threats. This year Israel will receive \$2.6 billion in aid from the

US to help it cope with an enormous economic crisis and replenish its killing machine. In the face of Israeli barbarism in Lebanon, which qualifies it for the mantle of Nazism, the US vetoed a UN resolution condemning Israeli massacres. British imperialism also refused to vote for the resolution in a display of support for the US and Israel.

Imperialist support for Israel, its terror and threats, have not succeeded in halting the resistance. Armed operations and popular protests continue to harass and hit the retreating army. Having forced the Israelis to leave Sidon and to begin retreating from the Bekaa Valley, the Lebanese National Resistance Front is determined to continue its battle until every inch of Lebanon is free of Zionist rule.

The success of the Lebanese resistance is inspiring millions in the Middle East with renewed confidence in the struggle against Zionism. For the first time in its history, Israel is being forced out of occupied Arab land - unconditionally and at the point of the gun and the mass movement. The resistance is a signal to all democratic and revolutionary forces in the Middle East that popular armed struggle and the mobilisation of the oppressed workers and peasants is the only force that can defeat Zionism.

Eddie Abrahams

Royal Dutch Shell. 'The pipeline to be laid between Port Sudan and Bentiu has been stopped, thanks to SPLA's harassment. Uranium and gold exist in the south, but have not been exploited by either foreign or Sudanese companies. Chevron is exploring for oil in the Muglad area (southern Kordofan); non-conclusive Red Sea exploration has stopped. Nimeiri sold shares to Saudi tycoons when the Americans refused to carry on exploitation in the south, because of the war'.

## Ethiopia and the SPLM

'Ethiopia supports our programme for the Sudan, not a secessionist South'. Concerning the refugees, he explained that 'the problem has been made difficult by the capitalist Gulf States who finance the movement of Eritrea on a capitalist basis and the Eritrean liberation leaders have become bourgeois orientated, which made it difficult for them to come into meaningful political arrangements with the rest of progressive Ethiopia'.

## The African refugee crisis

'The problem has been created by the CIA and the installation of reactionary forces. The solution will come', he added 'when the Organisation of African Unity comes to terms with the realities of African political, economic and socio-political problems facing them. Africa is not yet liberated. There are still forces of reaction prevailing today.'

The SPLM rejected the Addis Ababa 'Peace' Agreement of 1972, as a 'secessionist' deal between the Southern and Northern bourgeoisified bureaucratic elites (Chapter 4 SPLM manifesto) which had failed precisely because it 'ignored the real interests of the masses of the people'. Therefore, the SPLA/SPLM aims at stopping separatist movements, which only help to fragment the country and maintain Nimeiri in power, it is convinced that the conditions now exist to build a United Socialist Sudan that will rid it of Nimeiri's puppet regime and close its doors to imperialism and counter-revolutionaries.

Colette Levy



Demonstration in US against abortion clinics

## New Right terror attacks on abortion

As US imperialism intensifies its attacks on oppressed people around the world, so it is stepping up its assault on more sections of its own society and women are in the front line of this attack.

In 1984 there were thirty cases of bombings and arson attacks on abortion clinics which left six clinics destroyed and others badly damaged. On 1 January 1985 the 'East Coast Division of the Army of God' took responsibility for another bombing which wrecked a clinic in Washington. Although the Army of God has taken responsibility for 25 of the attacks the FBI has refused to make enquiries into the group, saying there is no evidence to connect them, even though bombers who have been arrested have sent out solidarity messages to each other. The threat of bombings has forced several clinics to close and some doctors to stop performing abortions altogether.

On 22 January 1985 Reagan (who when Governor of California passed legislation allowing thousands of abortions) pandered to 71,500 anti-abortion protestors outside the White House. 'I feel a great sense of solidarity with you', he said. At the same time women were forced to evacuate an abortion clinic in New York in sub-zero temperatures because of a bomb threat. Many of the women were still under the effects of the anaesthetics and were crying: four clinics had been bombed that month alone. Pro-abortion organisations have had to set up escorts outside clinics to protect women from harassment and violent abuse as they enter.

In October 1984 Congress voted to permit Medicaid funding of abortions only for cases when the woman's life is at risk. This does not include women who have been raped or victims of incest. Rape and child molestation are reaching epidemic proportions in the US. At least

six other states are pushing through similar measures.

Two further Bills have gone to Congress: one will permanently stop funds for abortion and the second will make abortion the crime of murder. In 12 states a Bill is being presented to force women under 18 to get parental consent before being allowed an abortion.

### The Silent Scream

Fiction: Inspired by Reagan's call to protect the unborn, Dr Bernard Nathanson has produced a thirty minute video of obscene anti-abortion propaganda. This video 'The Silent Scream' shows the termination of a 12 week pregnancy using an ultra sound scanner. Nathanson describes the foetus which is shown 'thumb in mouth, moving serenely in his sanctuary'. The suction instrument is then inserted which 'tears the child apart' and the foetus' head is crushed 'to facilitate removal'. Such an emotive style is interspersed with pictures of dustbins full of dead foetuses, and a doll is used to simulate a living foetus.

Fact: Nathanson says that the termination in the video is performed under anaesthetic. Medically this means the foetus is also anaesthetised. Professor Stuart Campbell of Kings College Hospital, London, has produced a film to counter the Silent Scream. He suspects that the foetal movement in the video is caused by rocking the ultra sound scanner and moving the suction instrument from side to side. He used the scan during four abortions to show what actually happens. He said, 'We did not see any foetal movement at all in any of

the operations all of which were performed at 11-12 weeks... At 11-12 weeks the diameter of the foetal head is 1-6 cms. All this business about crushing the head at this stage is absolute nonsense.'

Thousands of copies of the video are being sold in the US and it has been dubbed into six languages. In California a Bill is being proposed that would force women who want an abortion to watch the video.

In Britain the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and other anti-abortion organisations are using and distributing the video. The Gillick Judgement (that stops doctors prescribing contraceptives to women under 16 without parental consent) and the Powell Bill (Enoch Powell's Bill to ban research with embryos and clearly the first stage to an attack on abortion), together with the Silent Scream all represent part of an attack on women's fundamental rights in this country.

The anti-abortion hysteria in the US is part of the imperialist offensive against the most oppressed. While calling for 'a society where compassion is the way of life, where the old and infirm are cared for, the young and, yes, the unborn protected' Reagan introduces a budget 'freezing government spending for the next year'. In a country where already 13.4 million children live below the poverty line and 18% of teenage mothers are homeless, Reagan sides with and encourages ultra right-wing elements that will increase the misery and force working class women to seek 'back street' abortions that can cause them permanent mutilation and possible death.

Alexa Byrne

## The Nicaraguan propaganda war

It is normal practice for imperialism to bury revolutions in slander before attempting to drown them in blood. The US (mis)Information Service is currently distributing the text of a speech delivered by Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne Motley on 29 January, and a State Department booklet 'The Contadora Process', both free of charge, and worth every penny.

Motley claims that all the 'democratic institutions' that exist in Latin America are due to the beneficial influence of the US government. El Salvador, Guatemala and Grenada have all held elections and are therefore living proof that democracy is on the march behind the Star Spangled Banner in Latin America. Motley avoids the fact that in both El Salvador and Guatemala voting was not a right but an obligation, and that only parties of the landlord and capitalist classes were allowed to compete, or that in Grenada the authorities shut the electoral register several months before the elections, disenfranchising most of the

youth and supporters of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement.

Motley cites Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina and Uruguay as having returned to 'democracy' all at the behest of the US government, and all without mention of the mass working class and oppressed struggles which have forced aside the military regimes. Reluctantly, Motley interrupts his democratic daydream to mention the 'dictatorships': Cuba, Nicaragua, Suriname, Guyana, Chile, Haiti and Paraguay. This list lumps together revolutionary Cuba and Nicaragua with Suriname and Guyana, which have occasionally defied Washington, and Chile,

Haiti and Paraguay, all propped up by imperialist arms supplies in the hands of US puppets. Motley must have forgotten his script when he recently praised the 1973 coup when the 'Chilean people rejected a way of life alien to our hemisphere'. The CIA, it seems, had nothing to do with it!

### \$14 million for the Contras?

Having established to his own satisfaction the creditable role of US imperialism in Latin America, Motley turns to the business of getting the US Congress to allocate \$14 million to the Contra war against Nicaragua's people. Congress stopped all donations to Reagan's favourite charity last June following outrage over Contra brutalities and CIA involvement in bombing Nicaraguan ports. Underterred by a US human rights report accusing the Contras of 'a pattern of brutality against largely unarmed civilians, including rape, torture, kidnappings and other abuses', Reagan recently lauded the mercenaries as 'the moral equal of our Founding Fathers and the

## General Walters UN mission

General Vernon Walters' typical company is an assortment of gangsters, hit-men, fascists and psychopaths. That President Reagan should propose him to replace Jeane Kirkpatrick as US ambassador to the United Nations comes as little surprise. The US government illustrated what it thinks of the UN on 31 December by withdrawing from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. UNESCO's purpose is to combat racism and illiteracy and promote disarmament and peaceful relations between nations. Hardly the principles which guide US imperialism in its dealings with its own or other peoples. The British government has threatened to follow the US out of UNESCO unless 'it mends its ways'.

Walters' qualifications for the UN job were acquired with the CIA, where he was considered to be one of the cream, or rather scum, of its agents. He demonstrated his principles by announcing that the USA is ready to work with anyone as long as they are anti-communist and by declaring the US attacks on Vietnam to be 'one of the noblest and most unselfish wars' in US history.

### The 'Brazilian Experiment'

During World War Two, Walters served as a teacher of prisoner-of-war interrogation techniques in North Africa. Following the 1943 Allied landing in Italy, Walters acted as a liaison officer between the Anglo-American forces and a Brazilian Expeditionary Corps. As an intelligence officer Walters' tasks were extended from torture to establishing links with the Mafia and Freemasons as a bulwark against the Italian communists.

Walters' Brazilian contacts came in useful to US imperialism when the 1961 reformist government of President Joao Goulart put restrictions on the transnational corporations' exports of profits out of Brazil, began nationalising mineral resources, and opposed the 1961 Bay of Pigs attempted invasion of Cuba. Walters was appointed military attaché to the US embassy in Rio de Janeiro. He set to work organising fascist terror outfits like the Death Squadron and Anti-Communist Movement. On the morning of 31 March 1963 Walters breakfasted with his old friend from the Expeditionary Corps, General Castelo Branco. Later that day the coup was launched. General Branco was appointed President of the military regime, and Walters' exercise became known as the 'Brazilian Experiment', to be reapplied in Guatemala, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile etc.

### Chile

In 1968 Walters was drafted into Chile where he began organising local fascists and gangsters in the event of an electoral victory for Salvador Allende's Popular Unity Coalition. Allende won the 1970

election and the following year President Nixon promoted Walters to Deputy Directorship of the CIA. The coup was executed in September 1973. Walters is reported to have acted as overseer of the DINA security forces inflicting Pinochet's terror: 20,000 people were killed and many more arrested and tortured in the first four months of the Junta's rule.

Walters was still with the CIA in 1976 when Allende's friend, and former ambassador to the US, Orlando Letelier, was killed by Chilean secret police and a US electronics expert in New York. Letelier had been campaigning for trade sanctions against Chile for its human rights abuses. One of the organisers of the hit-team implicated Walters in the assassination. Unabashed, Walters proceeded to tell the US Congress that it must not apply sanctions as a retaliatory measure. The assassin Ismael Alan Acevedo, former DINA member, was later given a post with the security services at the US embassy in Madrid.

### And So On...

Walters' other qualifications for the UN include attempting to recruit Argentinian troops for the Contra bandits against Nicaragua, serving as a go-between for the oil transnationals and the Guatemalan fascist rulers, arranging massive arms sales to Morocco and taking a \$300,000 commission for it, training agents-provocateurs to intervene in the Paris 1968 uprising, and helping Nixon to cover up his 'dirty-tricks' at Watergate in the name of safeguarding CIA operations.

More recently FRFI readers may recall his missions to El Salvador, where Walters' talents were used to bring the death squads into line behind US front man Napoleon Duarte, and to Sri Lanka, when the scale and momentum of the Tamil struggle for independence began to dawn upon the imperialists. Truly, General Walters personifies the contempt imperialism has for the rights of other nations, and its arrogance in proposing to elevate such a criminal into the world's foremost forum.

Trevor Rayne

brave men and women of the French Resistance'.

A Congressional vote for the \$14m to the Contras would represent a united US ruling class behind Reagan's all out attempt to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution, a green light for any escapade or invasion. Motley is prepared to tell any lie to get that light, thus the Contra leaders 'are without exception men who opposed Somoza'. The high command of the Contra Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) are all 'without exception' former Somoza National Guardsmen.

As to their moral credibility, one of Reagan's FDN 'freedom fighters' boasts 'come the counterrevolution there will be a massacre in Nicaragua. We have a lot of scores to settle. There will be bodies from the border to Managua' (Newsweek, 8 November 1982). In the name of democracy the FDN programme promises to roll back the Nicaraguan agricultural reforms and return properties to their former Somozaist landlords. Motley's only truthful comment is to compare the Contras with the Afghan rebels and the Polish Solidarity movement, all

tools in the same imperialist hands.

Less glaring, but equally insidious lies are told in the booklet 'The Contadora Process'. It purports to give a chronology of Washington's calls for peace in Central America, carefully avoiding every bellicose war-cry of its cowboy Commander-in-Chief. The eagle coos like a dove.

The booklet attempts to explain why the US is for the Contadora Process, promoting peace between Central American nations, but against joining Nicaragua in signing the Contadora Act. This commitment is impossible unless the Sandinistas negotiate with the Contras, cease their support for the FMLN/FDR forces in El Salvador, and meanwhile accept the right of the US to continue supplying the El Salvadorian regime with weapons and to continue military manoeuvres along the Nicaraguan border. In other words the peace treaty is to become a surrender treaty for the whole Central American revolution.

Mike Webber



Aftermath of the Oxford Street Wimpey Bar explosion in 1981 — no real evidence linked it to Kavanagh or Quigley.

## Trial by speculation

The trial of Paul Kavanagh and Tommy Quigley ended on 7 March at the Old Bailey. The prosecution case was the usual mixture for Irish political trials: a little bit of evidence backed up by enormous amounts of speculation, innuendo and emotional propaganda about bombings.

The only substantial evidence produced was the discovery of fingerprints of the two men on items found at the Pangbourne arms dump in October 1983. Paul Kavanagh's fingerprints were found on two plastic bags and a receipt for a motor-cycle. Tommy Quigley's were found on a reel of wire, a transmitter and some paperwork. In short, the prosecution could show that at some time the two men had touched the items, innocent in themselves, which were eventually discovered in an arms dump. Working on the principle that a little evidence can be made to go a long way in Irish political trials, the prosecution used these fingerprints to 'link' the two men with the 1981 IRA bombings in Britain.

The only 'link' they could establish was that wire found at the Chelsea Barracks bombing in 1981 was of the same kind as wire found with Tommy Quig-

ley's fingerprints on two years later in Pangbourne. The wire in question is produced in large quantities. This 'link' with one of the bombings was then used, by pure assertion, to 'link' the two men with all the other bombings in 1981.

There was no evidence to show that either man had been anywhere near any of the bombings; no evidence to show that either man had even been in England at the relevant time. Tommy Quigley's family testified that he had been in Ireland at the time of the bombings. Despite the extremely tenuous character of the prosecution case, the jury, after three days deliberation, convicted both men on all but one of the charges: attempted murder of Stuart Pringle.

The judge, Justice McCowan, of course did all he could to 'help' the jury convict. The jury were forced to ask him if a conviction on possession would mean that they had to convict on mur-

der. McCowan had to say no but went on to speculate, as the prosecution had done throughout (with the aid of the ever-faithful media), on what role the two men might have played as part of an IRA ASU.

Paul Kavanagh and Tommy Quigley received three life sentences each for murder as well as other sentences for possession and causing explosions. McCowan recommended that they serve at least 35 years. Natalino Vella, who pleaded guilty, was given 15 years for possession.

So the Anti-Terrorist Squad can close its books on the 1981 bombings. Three more Irishmen are condemned to the hell-hole of English prisons. 'Being Irish means you're guilty' goes the song...

FRFI extends greetings and solidarity to Paul Kavanagh, Tommy Quigley and their families and friends. We wish Paul Kavanagh every success in his appeal.

Malcolm Ellis and  
Pauline Sellars

## Brutal regime at Albany exposed

**Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** recently received information from prisoners at Albany gaol which exposed vicious beatings and increased repression against prisoners there.

Prisoners told us that two men, Danny Grimes and Martin Long, were recently badly beaten in the segregation unit at Albany,

'Danny Grimes was beaten so bad he was taken to Parkhurst hospital... he has a broken nose and his ribs are cracked or very badly bruised.'

This assault on Danny Grimes was witnessed by Martin Long — he protested. Another prisoner described what happened to him,

'Martin Long banged his cell door with his chamber pot in protest... the screws charged into his cell and beat him up, they then left him in agony after kicking him in the groin. They then went back into him two hours later to check up on him. When they saw how bad he was (ie vomiting blood) they threw him in another strong box and charged him with assault on a screw.'

The prison officers involved sport 'shiny boots and slashed peaks' and have been recently transferred from Wandsworth gaol to Albany. There,

have been repeated assaults on prisoners in Wandsworth (see FRFI 37) and Danny Grimes was one of the dozens of prisoners beaten up in Wandsworth. He was also assaulted in Maidstone prison last December.

The regime at Albany has been extremely repressive ever since the major protest there in May 1983. The prisoners are kept in small groups 'never more than 25 in one place' even in the exercise yard and they are guarded by large numbers of prison officers.

FRFI called an emergency picket of the Home Office, London, on Monday 25 March in protest and to highlight the brutal regime in Albany, Wandsworth and other British prisons. The picket, supported by two ex-prisoners, demanded an end to the assaults in Albany, an end to the victimisation of Danny Grimes and the immediate removal of prison officers 'Brian Niesby and Jones' and any others involved in assaulting prisoners in Albany. The press ignored the event, but the Home Office were unable to — they complained to the forces of 'law and order' about the noise — a sure sign of the message being driven home!

## PORTLAOISE VICTORY

For almost a year the Republican prisoners in Portlaoise prison, aided by a militant campaign by the Portlaoise Prisoners Relatives Action Committee, have been fighting to put an end to the barbaric regime in the prison. On 28 February the prison authorities finally admitted defeat and conceded the prisoners' major demands — an end to strip searching and the provision of nine open visits a year.

The Republican prisoners in Portlaoise have suffered great brutality and repression — closed visits, degrading body searches and beatings. Closed visits conducted through screens have meant that some prisoners have not touched their relatives for 10 years. The provision of open visits will mean some prisoners touching their eight or nine year old children for the first time. During the struggle for their demands two prisoners, Eddie Gallagher and Pascal Holmes, went on lengthy hunger strikes.

The campaign by the Portlaoise Prisoners Relatives Action Committee has been extremely effective and brought embarrassment and fear to the politicians of the Twenty Six Counties. The Committee's direct action tactics included: blocking roads and bridges, invading soccer pitches, picketing the homes of politicians and street protests and demonstrations of all kinds. They and the prisoners have emphasised that vigilance is needed to ensure that the authorities do not renege on the deal. They are continuing their campaign for the release of Mick Kinsella, whose health is in danger and also for a release date for all life prisoners.

Maxine Williams

## FREE STATE HANGINGS

On Thursday 28 March the non-jury Special Criminal Court in Dublin sentenced Thomas Eccles, Brian McShane and Patrick McPhillips to death. The three had been convicted of capital murder of Garda officer Frank Hand during an armed Post Office raid at Drumree last August. Patrick Duffy was convicted of common murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. Noel McCabe, who pleaded guilty to robbery, was given a ten year suspended sentence.

The reactionary Free State regime has retained judicial murder — hanging — for the killing of police officers, prison officers and diplomats (not, of course, for the murder of people fighting for Irish freedom). No one has been hung since 1954. The death penalty is invariably commuted to forty years imprisonment without remission.

Three men now face 40 years in the intolerable, inhuman conditions of Free State prisons. The raid, according to press reports, was carried out to raise funds for the IRA.

FRFI condemns the savage sentences against these comrades and urges readers to protest to the Irish Embassy, Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1.

We send greetings and solidarity to the imprisoned men.  
Terry Marlowe

FRFI asks everyone to send letters of protest to the Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, House of Commons, London SW1 and to the Prison Department, Home Office, Petty France, London SW1. Solidarity with the prisoners as this repression intensifies is vital. They must not be left to fight alone.

**Defend Prisoners Rights!  
End the beatings and solitary  
Now!**

Pauline Sellars

## PRISONERS BIRTHDAYS

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

Eddie Butler, 338637, HM Prison, Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 7AJ. 17 April

Patrick Hackett, 342603, HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX. 28 April

Eddie Byrne, 873453, HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 5TZ. 2 May

Joe O'Connell, 338635, HM Prison Parkhurst (see above). 15 May

Britain has been found guilty of violating the European Convention of Human Rights more often than any other signatory. Many of the convictions have been for violating the rights of prisoners. Not surprisingly then it is Britain which is blocking every attempt to reform the Convention. Swiss proposals to fuse the Commission and the Court of Human Rights would have speeded up cases taken to Europe, which often take six or more years. Britain has opposed these changes. Other proposals to increase legal aid and to speed up the cases by introducing time limits, both clearly in the interests of the plaintiffs, were also opposed by Britain. Britain has no intention of making any easier the arduous task prisoners and other plaintiffs have of proving violations of human rights by British imperialism through the European Court.

Leaked internal prison documents from the confidential file of ex-prisoner Stephen Raymond, publicised in *The Observer*, prove the systematic abuse of the prison rules by the Albany regime and the Home Office. They show that officials:

- \* illegally copied confidential correspondence between the prisoner and his lawyers;
- \* allowed a senior official (Assistant Governor at Albany, Mr H T Bagshaw) to investigate and rule on a complaint about his own behaviour;
- \* misled the Parliamentary Ombudsman when he tried to investigate Raymond's grievance;
- \* by-passed the Board of Visitors to keep Raymond in prolonged solitary confinement.

The possible legal actions, now being considered by Raymond and the NCCL, constitute an important opportunity to confront the abuse of prisoners' rights by the Home Office.

The results of Brittan's 1983 parole restrictions are now coming to light. For example, of prisoners sentenced to five or more years for crimes of violence or drug trafficking, only 13 were given parole before final review in the first 6 months of 1984, compared to 113 in the same period in 1983.

Brittan is pushing for a new assault on sentencing: to allow the Attorney General to refer 'over-lenient' sentences for review in the Court of Appeal. This would not alter the individual sentence referred but would lead to directives from the Appeal Court to lower courts to stiffen sentencing policy. So far the House of Lords has rejected this move. Britain already has the most reactionary policy in Europe.

The 'short, sharp, shock' youth detention centre regime was extended on 6 March to all 18 detention centres in England and Wales, affecting 1,500 prisoners aged between 14 and 20. The regime has killed 6 in Scotland's Glenochil YDC alone since 1981.

In a letter to FRFI James Farrell says that four of the Ealing 5 still in prison have been refused the right to attend their own appeal which began on 25 March. The fifth, Guy Maggioni, who was released on compassionate parole told FRFI at the High Court on the fifth day of the appeal that the evidence was all going their way, but that there was so much at stake for the establishment that he was sure the judges had already had their orders to re-convict. The five were sentenced eight years ago to 15-17 years for bank robbery, in what is now known to have been an infamous police frame-up. Widespread media coverage has helped expose the frame-up. A professor of glass technology proved that the police must have planted glass fragments from the scene of the robbery onto the shoes and clothing of the five. An undercover police watch videoed Farrell and Maggioni by chance, thereby proving their alibi, only for the tape to have been crudely erased by the time of the trial. We wish James Farrell and the others every success in their appeal and continued efforts to expose the hypocrisy of British 'justice'.

Tony Sheridan

**Join the ISM**

IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

The ISM campaigns on the basis of 'Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Right of Repatriation for all Irish POWs!'. Last year the ISM held hundreds of events in protest at the informers strategy, plastic bullets, strip-searches in Armagh gaol, the PTA and all aspects of repression used against the Irish people. The ISM consistently campaigns in solidarity with Irish POWs in English gaols. Last October the ISM held a major Irish Solidarity Weekend culminating in a conference which saw John McCuskey, ex-Irish POW; Malcolm Pitt, President of Kent NUM and David Reed, author of 'Ireland: the Key to the British Revolution' and leading RCG member stand together on the platform 'Belfast, Brixton, Orgeave, An Injury to One is an Injury to All'. Such unity must be built on — we need YOU to join the ISM and take part in the work to build a strong and significant solidarity movement that can make common cause with the struggle of the Irish people for freedom from British rule!

Fill in the form and send it off NOW (affiliation — £5/£2 unwaged for individuals/£20 for political organisations).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: ISM, BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX

**Thanks! VMDC and FRFI**

Dear Campaign members, I am very grateful to you and your campaign members who supported and helped my campaign, especially Duncan, Chris, Anwar,

Malik and Terry who devoted their precious time in collecting the petition and made my campaign very strong.

I do thank all the members of FRFI.

Yours sincerely

Mohammed Aslam

**Miner – half-innocent**

Dear FRFI, My name is Paddy O'Neill, a miner, who stood by the strike 100%. On 21 March I went to court with a broken leg which had 2 pins in it. I broke my leg in an argument over the strike. I was charged with assault on PC Overton along with another miner, and also breach of the peace. What happened to me in court just showed the sort of justice that we are still getting under Thatcher.

PC Overton, when asked in court how many people had been in the street when he was supposedly assaulted, said that dozens were. He could not give a reason why he could not get a witness; he said 'I didn't think to ask anyone their name and address.' He claimed that I pushed a copy of the Yorkshire Miner newspaper down his tunic. When asked by the defence where the paper was he said he didn't know and that he must have thrown it on the floor in rage. The defence then asked if there was a waste paper bin handy! He did not remember and could not explain why he had not kept such a vital piece of evidence.

Overton claimed to know the other miner's address and the defence asked why he could not explain why he didn't go there. He claimed that he did, with Sgt Mumby, and knocked on the door. When Mumby got in the dock he was asked how many addresses he went to; he said only one, the house of a miner who had been horrifically beaten by the police weeks before. When asked if he's been to other houses, Mumby said he hadn't but he couldn't speak for Overton – he'd previously stated that Overton had been to no house but the one mentioned. When Overton was asked where he had made his notes up, he claimed that he had done it in the clerical office at Hemsforth Police Station, on his own, so there could be no collusion. When Mumby was asked

the same question, he said that he had written his notes in the sergeant's office, explaining that there is no clerical office at Hemsforth.

When DC Foster got in the stand and was asked where he had got the information that PC Overton was pushed against a fence, he said that this was in his book, which must have been given to him by PC Overton. The defence said that Overton had never claimed to have been pushed against a fence.

I was initially charged with ABH, and because it would have gone to Crown Court I would have walked away due to the evidence; it was dropped to assault. I had 8 witnesses and the pig had only one – himself.

On the assault charge, when I gave myself up after 20 police and 2 dogs had come to my house, DC Foster said 'Mr O'Neill, why did you go out the back door when we only wanted to talk to you?' I replied: 'all 20 of you and the dog aren't that good at talking'.

Knowing that there was little chance of conviction they charged me with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, which I still have to appear for.

I got found not guilty of assault, but guilty of causing a breach of the peace – they had never explained how a breach of the peace had taken place.

I am definitely appealing against conviction, and knowing what a great country this is, I will get justice and I will get a real Left-wing judge. Paddy O'Neill, Fitzwilliam, West Yorkshire

**Attempted murder at GLC**

Dear FRFI I am writing to tell you the truth of what happened on Tuesday evening, 26 March, at the GLC. The Ethnic Minorities Unit was blasted apart by

at least three incendiary devices. They were concentrated in the entrance to the unit to ensure that the main means of escape was blocked off and the fire spread so rapidly that within thirteen minutes that section of the office was devastated. This could only have been a murder attempt. I and other representatives from the Lesbian and Gay Black Group were meeting with an officer of the Unit. Lights were on and voices could be heard. It would have been impossible to avoid knowing the office was occupied. Everyone should realise that this was not some little itty-bitty fire. There were three of us trapped on the sixth floor tucked away at the back of the building with no way of getting out. We had heard no fire alarm and were unable to raise the alarm ourselves as there was none in the room. Luckily I was able to reach a phone and alert people to our situation before we were forced by the smoke to retreat to the window. We then had to wait while black toxic smoke continued to pour into the room making even our position at the window precarious. The effects of the fumes on ourselves and on the firemen who rescued us were such that hospitalisation was necessary. Had the rescue by the Fire Brigade been delayed much longer the murder attempt would have been successful. Yet *The Guardian*, a national paper, omitted to mention in its scant coverage that any lives were endangered. A very serious omission from my standpoint. Are they of the opinion that attacks on black people's lives are after all unimportant? What sort of response would the Press have had if Councillors in a full council meeting that night had been the ones in danger of burning alive? Irresponsible reporting which omits the fact that three black people nearly burnt to death is only part of a process of creating a climate of 'respectable racism' which makes such attacks more acceptable. It can be no coincidence that this attack was

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.

directed against the major source of funding in the Greater London area for black communities. Particularly in the light of racist threatening letters to the EMU, NF stickers plastered on their door and a number of fire alarms over the past two weeks at the GLC. Even more disturbing is the fact that these threats did not prompt adequate internal security and adequate protection for black people as I discovered to my cost.

It remains to be seen what real action the GLC intends to take in defence of black people. However, we do not intend to hold our breath while waiting. We intend to defend ourselves as we have done against racist attacks, racist courts, racist police, racist immigration laws and racist deportations. And if 'respectable racists' think that they can let fascists do their dirty work for them by not acting against such attacks – my reply is:

BLACK PEOPLE – HERE TO STAY, HERE TO FIGHT!  
In sisterhood and solidarity  
Timibe Olofimiha



PAUL MATTSSON

**FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS**

meet regularly in the following areas to plan and carry out our work – education, discussion, funds, sales and campaigns are all on the agenda.

JOIN US! in EDINBURGH, DUNDEE, GLASGOW, LEEDS, BRADFORD, BRISTOL, MANCHESTER, LIVERPOOL, DUNFERMLINE, NORTH, SOUTH AND CENTRAL LONDON.

For details of your local group, (or if you want to help set one up in your area) see your local FRFI sellers, or write to BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX or phone 01-837 1688

**FUND DRIVE: WE NEED £500 A MONTH MARCH: £282.78**

We use the FRFI Fund to subsidise the unwaged rate of the paper. Last month it only raised just over half the sum we need. So for April we urge you to dig deep into your pockets for any coins and notes you want to go towards spreading the message of our paper to all who want to read it. Maybe you could do a collection round your friends?

Also, why not contact one of our supporter groups who regularly organise fundraising events – you can find out where they meet on this page. Last month they raised: in London £165.85, Dundee £30.80, Edinburgh £26.79, Manchester £23.50, Leeds £13, Bradford £10, Glasgow £5.40. In addition, we received £5 from Dorothy in London and £2.64 from various readers.

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

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

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

**SPECIAL FUND**

**HELP US BUY OUR OWN TYPESETTING EQUIPMENT COST £6,000 – £732 STILL TO GO!**

We have now raised £5,268 towards the fund to set up our own production unit. But to complete the work we must raise the £6,000. Our book on the miners' strike will be out this month. But we cannot rest there. We want to publish pamphlets on plastic bullets, British collaboration with apartheid, the struggle of prisoners in British gaols and others. We can only do so if we raise the £6,000 for our production unit.

We appeal to you, urgently, to make a donation. Fill in the form below!

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

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

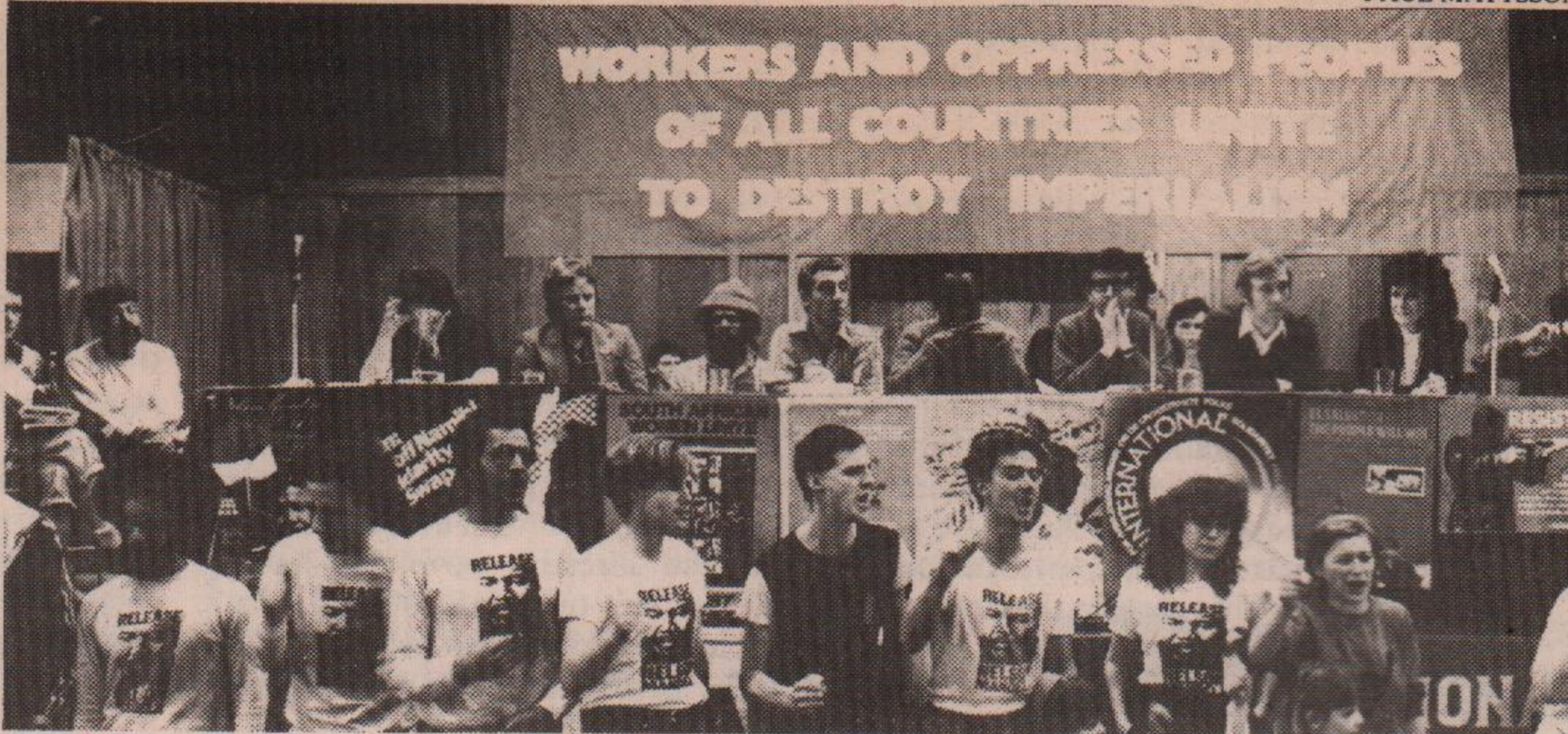
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I do/do not want you to mention my name/organisation

**Unite to fight racism and imperialism! Anti-imperialist Weekend Saturday/Sunday – 29/30 June 1985, London People versus State!**

After a year of tremendous struggle by the mining communities and their supporters, we call on you to unite to build a strong anti-imperialist movement in Britain – a movement which fights for democratic rights, against racism and repression; a movement which will make common cause with liberation movements worldwide.

PAUL MATTSSON



**Saturday 29 June**

**Street Activities**

- Picket the racist embassy! Smash British collaboration with apartheid! 12 noon-3.00 outside the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Square.
- People Versus State: Celebrate a year of struggle against imperialism! Street rally with speakers, street theatre, music and singing. 12 noon-2.30pm, Free Speech Area, Wood Green Library, N22

**Evening Rally**

Speakers from liberation movements, anti-racist organisations, miners, peace movement and many others. Stalls, singing and exhibitions. Large Hall, Conway Hall, WC1, 7-10pm

**Sunday 30 June**

**Revolutionary Communist Group Dayschool**

Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, N19 9.30-5.30  
Workshops on the revolutionary upsurge in South Africa; lessons of the miners' strike; the fight against racism and deportations; political economy of imperialism; political prisoners – the struggle in Kenya and Uganda; is Ireland the key to the British revolution? Films, exhibitions and plenary session introduced by David Reed.

Special advance price for the whole weekend	£3.00, £1.50 unwaged
Dayschool only	£2.50, £1.50 unwaged
Rally only	£1.00, £0.50 unwaged

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

Donation £ \_\_\_\_\_ to help towards the cost

I want leaflets and posters to help build the events \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to Larkin Publications and return slip to FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

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# HANDS OFF IRELAND

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SOLIDARITY AT HOLLOWAY PRISON

On Sunday 10 March the Irish Solidarity Committees in London held a successful picket of Holloway Prison called to mark International Women's Day. The picket highlighted the continuing strip searching of women Republican prisoners of war in Armagh jail and the forcible druggings of hundreds of women in British jails, mainly working class and many of them black. Women POWs in Armagh have been subjected to over 2,000 strip searches since November 1982. In Holloway in 1982 82,140 doses of psychiatric drugs, 247 per prisoner, were administered.

The well-attended picket as well as chanting militant slogans, heard speeches from a Greenham woman who had been held in Holloway, a woman from South London Women's Hospital, City Anti-Apartheid Group and speakers from the ISCs and Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

The Greenham woman gave a harrowing account of her own detention during which she was strip searched and subjected to systematic humiliation. She assured the picket that the prisoners would be able to hear our chanting. 1-2-3-4 Smash down the Armagh door; 5-6-7-8 Open up the Holloway Gate.

A number of people visiting relatives joined the picket. Leaflets on prisoners' rights and copies of FRFI were eagerly received.

Victory to the Armagh women!  
Stop the strip searches! End the druggings of women prisoners!  
Fight for prisoners' rights!  
Sian Bond

## NO MORE FRAME-UPS! UNITE TO FIGHT THE PTA!

The Irish Solidarity Movement is holding a public meeting in London on 2 April as part of its efforts to get a united campaign against the PTA off the ground, following charges of conspiracy being brought against six people. The call for a united campaign, which went out from the successful 26 February meeting reported in March FRFI, has yet to be acted upon seriously by the national organisations based in London. A meeting on 29 March, to which all organisations behind the 26 February meeting (TOM, LCI, IBRG, IRSP, Peace Through Democracy, Young Liberals, Information on Ireland and the ISM) were to have brought proposals, was only attended by the ISM, the IBRG and PTD. It was agreed to contact all the other groups in a continued effort to get a united campaign. Other efforts have been made in Birmingham and Manchester and it is to be hoped that these initiatives cooperate with each other. At the 2 April meeting an excellent platform will line up behind the slogans 'No more frameups, Free the Guildford 4! Defend the Liverpool PTA victims, Drop the charges now!' The speakers include: Dr Maire O'Shea (one of the six facing charges); Michael Holden (ACTT shop steward and ex-PTA detainee); David Reed (FRFI, author of *Ireland: the key to the British revolution*); Ron Brown, MP; the IBRG; a sacked Kent miner; and the ISM.

### PUBLIC MEETING 'BRITAIN'S POLITICAL PRISONERS'

Video on the frame-up of the Guildford 4 Speakers invited - Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee, a miner, Greenham women, FRFI and others. The meeting will hear a first-hand account of this year's picket outside Armagh gaol to mark International Women's Day. Thursday 18 April 7-9pm  
Details of venue from EISC, Box 110, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.  
Called by Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee.



## 'The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland'

an uprising at this time, Irish revolutionaries were not only attempting to free Ireland but to give impetus to the revolutionary struggle worldwide. Shortly before his execution Connolly said:

'They (the socialists) will never understand why I am here... They will all forget I am an Irishman.'

He was proved right. The socialist movement in Britain and Europe was almost unanimous in its condemnation, regarding the Rising as 'fanaticism' or 'backwardness'. This response was a

# The Easter Rising

On Easter Monday 24 April 1916, 1,200 Irish men and women seized strategic buildings in Dublin and declared the foundation of the Irish Republic. Outside the GPO Padraic Pearse read out the Proclamation setting out the revolutionary democratic aims of the Irish Republic:

'We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and inalienable ...

'The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences, carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past'.

Less than one week later, faced with overwhelming odds and naked British terror, including the shelling and destruction of entire buildings, Pearse and James Connolly signed the surrender document. 500 people had been killed and 3,000 wounded. In the repression that followed over 3,000 people were arrested and more than 1,800 were deported to internment camps in Britain. The leaders of the Rising, including Pearse and Connolly, were executed by the British. But the defeat of the Rising did not mark the end of the struggle. On the contrary the Easter Rising represented the birth of the modern revolutionary nationalist movement in Ireland. And the leading role played by the great socialist leader James Connolly was a measure of the participation of the Irish working class in the revolutionary struggle to free Ireland from British imperialism.

The Easter Rising united two revolutionary forces, the Irish nationalist petit bourgeoisie and the Irish working class. It came at a crucial historical moment when British imperialism was engaged in a world war and revolutionaries in Ireland saw that Britain's difficulty should be Ireland's opportunity. British imperialism had been trying to solve its crisis in Ireland by giving limited independence to the Irish bourgeoisie and allowing the exclusion of Ulster which would remain under direct British rule. Connolly above all recognised that in partitioning Ireland Britain would succeed in retaining its hold over all Ireland, deepening the division in the Irish working class and paralysing all progressive developments. The Irish bourgeoisie had already shown its hand when, on the outbreak of war, its leaders had called on Irish people to enlist in the British army. In deciding on

measure not of the 'advanced' character of the socialist movement but rather its opposite... backward and reactionary opportunism. Opportunism which had two years earlier triumphed to the degree that the major European socialist parties had supported their own ruling classes in the imperialist slaughter of the 1914-18 war.

In Britain the Labour Party not only opposed the Rising, it participated in the Cabinet which organised its suppression. When the news reached Westminster that the wounded James Connolly had been tied to a chair and shot, Labour leader Arthur Henderson led the MPs' applause. The political heirs of Henderson still run the Labour Party today and it was in the same spirit that Don Concannon visited Bobby Sands on his death bed and told him that the British Labour Party did not support the hunger strikers.

Lenin spoke out against the 'socialists' who refused to understand the revolutionary significance of the Rising:

'The centuries-old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interests... manifested itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petit bourgeoisie and a section of the workers... Whoever calls such a rebellion a "putsch" is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon.'

Connolly's position was clearly understood and supported by the revolution-

ary wing of the socialist movement.

Yet still today, sixty nine years later, the same arguments are taking place concerning the relationship between socialism and the national struggle. Connolly's name and heritage are claimed by some who in 1916 would have been as horrified by the Rising as were the opportunists of that day. Recently an extended debate has taken place on this issue in the Letters page of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* and the Socialist Workers Movement (the Irish version of the British SWP) has attempted to use Connolly to defend its own bankrupt political position. Thus on behalf of the SWM a correspondent wrote:

'...rather than downgrading the national question in Ireland, the SWM stands with Connolly when he argued:

"The Irish working class must emancipate itself and in emancipating itself must perforce free its country."

This version of Connolly, quoted out of the context of his battle against the bourgeois betrayers of the national struggle, is used by the SWM in Ireland and the SWP in Britain to argue that the national struggle must be subordinated to the class struggle and that in Ireland the working class should be united around 'working class' issues into a socialist movement. In fact the British SWP take this position to its logical conclusion and denounces the armed struggle to liberate Ireland from British imperialism, separating the national question and the struggle for socialism:

'While the IRA have bombed factories in Northern Ireland as part of their struggle, as part of ours we campaign for the workers to take over those factories, a completely different approach.'

The 'Connolly' that these people talk about in fact did not exist and it is important to rescue the real heritage of Connolly from these opportunists. Both in his writings and his actions Connolly took a revolutionary stand which offers lessons for socialists today. He conducted a two sided struggle - against those would-be socialists who refused to recognise the centrality of the national struggle and against those 'nationalists' who hoped that 'when Ireland is free of foreign domination, the green-coated Irish soldiers will guard the fraudulent gains of the capitalists... just as remorselessly... as the scarlet-coated emissaries of Britain today.'

Connolly believed that the national struggle and the struggle for socialism were complementary; that only by driving imperialism out of Ireland could the Irish working class lay the basis for emancipating itself.

'The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of Labour. They cannot be severed... is it not well and fitting that we of the working class should fight for the freedom of the nation from foreign rule, as the first requisite for the free development of the national powers needed for our class? It is so fitting.'

It is also fitting that socialists today should not only remember and honour the memory of James Connolly but that they should follow his example. Genuine socialists will support the struggle of the Republican Movement recognising that a victory in Ireland will be a major victory both for the Irish working class and the British working class.

### Maxine Williams

The book *Ireland: the key to the British revolution* by David Reed was invaluable in writing this article. The book can be obtained from Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London, WC1N 3XX. Cheque/PO for £3.95 + 65p p&p. Also from bookshops and libraries. If your local bookshop or library does not stock the book - ORDER IT!

## RUC torturers

Following the IRA's devastating attack on Newry police barracks on 28 February the RUC have retaliated with wide-scale arrests of nationalists.

In their attempt to secure 'confessions' the RUC have resorted to beatings, threats and intense psychological pressure in Gough Barracks and Castlereagh Interrogation Centre. Eamon Collins was pressurised into incriminating 12 men and turning informer. The RUC refused his own solicitor access to him and appointed their own solicitor, from a firm headed by a member of the RUC Police Authority! However even the magistrate at Collins' remand hearing criticised this move and refused a legal aid certificate to the firm. On Wednesday 20 March Collins retracted his evidence against the 12 men he had initially incriminated.

Meanwhile reports of torture under interrogation by the RUC are coming to

light. Those arrested after the Newry attack were subjected to physical and psychological pressure - John Jones held in Gough Barracks was threatened with his life, beaten up and suffered a perforated eardrum; Conor Murphy received two black eyes, was dragged around the floor by his hair and threats were made against his life and that of his family. Amnesty International has taken up the case of Paul Caruana who, whilst held under the PTA in Castle-reagh last August, had his head forced between his legs and plastic bags placed over his head until he almost fainted.

The RUC, as always, are prepared to use any barbaric method to incriminate nationalist people - indeed they appear to have been given the green light to get on with it. As Conor Murphy said 'they (RUC) said the gloves were off and they could do what they liked'. The IRA Newry attack showed otherwise!

Pauline Sellars

## SAS MAN TAKES OVER IN SIX COUNTIES

The commanding officer of the 22nd SAS Regiment which fought a vicious counter-insurgency campaign against the national liberation movement in Oman from 1970-76 has been promoted to the post of Commander of Land Forces in the Six Counties, the British Army's No 2. Major General (his new title) Anthony Jeapes follows in the footsteps of Frank Kitson, who became Chief Commander of UK Land Forces and another 'authority' on British imperialist plunder and oppression throughout the world using the well-perfected methods of counter-insurgency - cold-blooded murder, torture and repression. Jeapes, in his book 'SAS: Operation Oman' said 'You have to be a certain kind of person to like the kind of thing we were doing'. He joins the ranks of other such paid terrorists in the Six Counties - the RUC, UDR and British Army. The nationalist people know his type only too well with their shoot-to-kill operations and other barbaric methods of repression. What Jeapes will discover, as did his predecessor, is that a people fighting for freedom will ultimately achieve freedom!