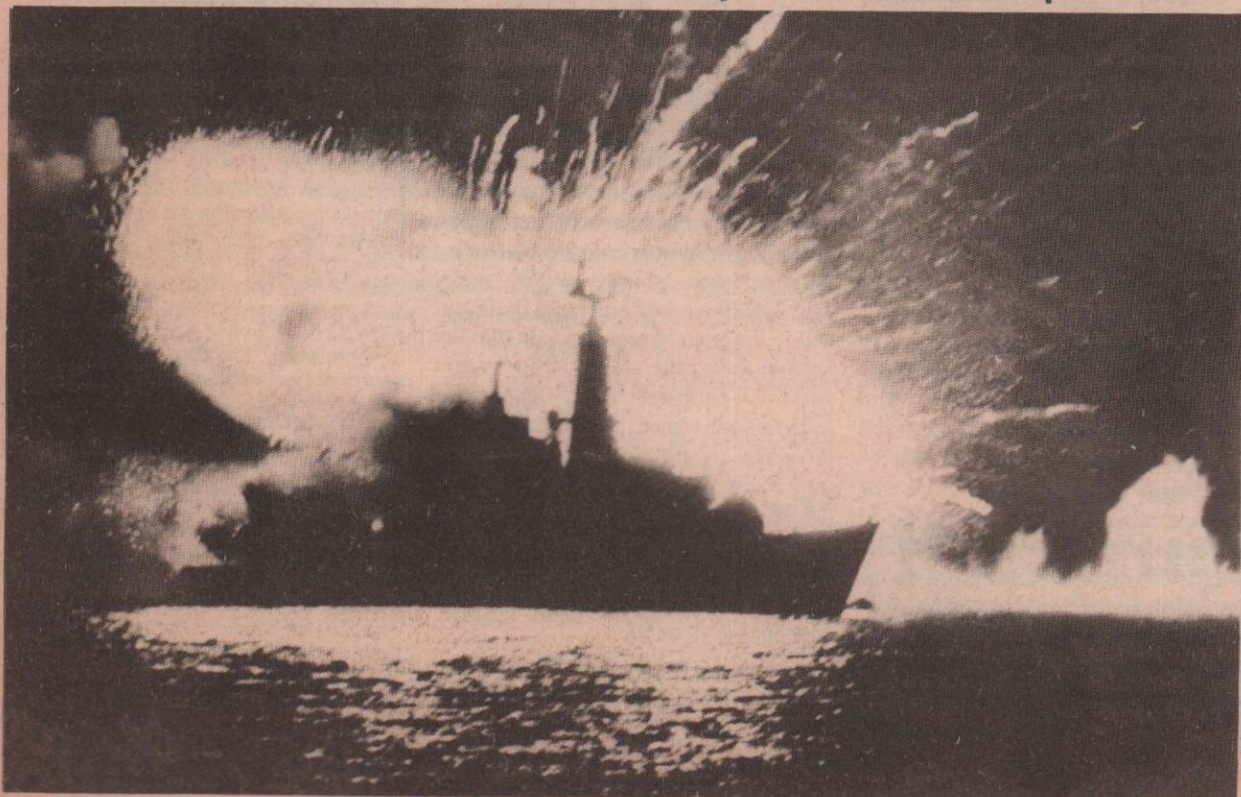


# FIGHT RACISM!

# FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

Issue No 20 June 1982 Price 20p



Malvinas/Falklands

## LABOUR BACKS THATCHER'S WAR

As we go to press British troops have begun the final assault on Port Stanley. The British imperialist war in the Malvinas/Falklands has claimed a death toll nearing 1,000 with thousands more injured. All communists and democrats must totally oppose Britain's reactionary war to conquer territory belonging to another nation. The working class and oppressed in Britain have nothing to gain from Britain's imperialist aggression. On the contrary, this war has strengthened the most reactionary and anti-democratic forces in British society. A victory for British imperialism will immeasurably strengthen the hand of Thatcher and her government, of the British military establishment, and of the British ruling class as a whole. Thatcher's ability to step up attacks on the working class and to further build up the repressive police/military apparatus of the state against the oppressed will receive an unparalleled boost from such a victory. The recent local elections in which the Tories did better than any government in mid term elections since the war is a sign of what could come.

### Labour backs imperialism

FRFI has no hesitation in placing full responsibility for these reactionary developments on the Labour Party. At every crucial moment the Labour Party has offered unstinting support for the British imperialist war drive. Labour and its decrepit leader Foot applauded and supported: the sending of the task force; the establishment of an exclusion zone round the Malvinas/Falklands; the cold-blooded and calculated torpedoing of the General Belgrano which was outside the exclusion zone - this act claimed 368 lives and was aimed at sabotaging any peace plans; the occupation of South Georgia; the relentless air and

*continued on page 2*

## KITSON PROMOTED STATE PREPARES



It will come as no surprise to readers of FRFI to learn that Major General Sir Frank Kitson is continuing his rapid climb up the ladder of Britain's military establishment. Having served in Kenya, Malaya, Muscat and Oman, Cyprus and the Six Counties of Ireland fighting brutal counter-insurgency wars against revolutionary democratic movements, he is now finally promoted to Commander-in-Chief United Kingdom Land Forces on 1 July this year.

Kitson is best known for his theories on counter-insurgency warfare. In Kenya he recruited gangsters and criminals - 'pseudo gangs' - to penetrate the Land and Freedom Army. He used these 'pseudo gangs' to commit atrocities in order to discredit the guerilla fighters. In the Six Counties of Ireland from 1970-1972, Kitson, by then a Brigadier, used the situation to test and refine his counter-insurgency tactics. Responsible for the whole interrogation operation, he directed psychological torture against internees during internment in August 1971. Britain, it should be remembered, was found guilty of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment by the European Commission of Human Rights as a result of the treatment of the internees. Kitson also introduced undercover SAS squads which carried out assassinations of Republicans as well as 'pseudo operations' to discredit the IRA.

In his book *Low Intensity Operations*, Kitson made it clear that the British army would have to be used to put down social and economic unrest amongst the British population in the not too distant future:

'If a genuine and serious grievance

arose, such as might result from a significant drop in the standard of living, all those who now dissipate their protests over a wide variety of causes might concentrate their efforts and produce a situation which was beyond the power of the police to handle. Should this happen the army would be required to restore the position rapidly. Fumbling at this juncture might have grave consequences even to the extent of undermining confidence in the whole system of government.'

After the uprisings in British cities last summer Kitson has now been called in to use his great wealth of experience against potential revolutionary developments in Britain.

He will join the newly promoted Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Kenneth Newman who is himself notorious for organising the systematic torture of 'suspects' in the interrogation centres of the Six Counties of Ireland. The appointment of these two men to head the twin forces of repression in Britain - the army and the police - signals a warning to the working class movement.

**President Reagan's visit to London on 7 June is to meet his imperialist, racist partner - Thatcher. Their aim - to strengthen their reactionary alliance against the growing forces of anti-imperialism.**



Opposition to Reagan in the USA is growing - led by the most oppressed. Commenting on the 15,000 strong Mayday march in Washington, the World Workers Party told FRFI:

'... this was the first national demonstration on general political issues to have a predominance of oppressed people in many years. We think it does confirm a general reawakening of the class struggle in the US, coming from the most oppressed and exploited sections of our class.'

The same is happening in Britain. The Thatcher government received its greatest shock from last year's uprisings led by black youth.

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## LABOUR BACKS THATCHER'S WAR

naval bombardment of Argentine positions and the 20 May landing of thousands of British troops on the East Falklands.

CND veteran and Labour leader Foot summed up Labour's prostration before British imperialism when he said of the landing:

'our first concern in the Labour Party as in the country as a whole must be for their safety and *their success*.' (emphasis added)

Let us look at the monstrosity to which Foot and the Labour Party have given their blessing.

### The price of imperialist war in the Malvinas

To prosecute this reactionary war of colonial repossession the British government is not only prepared to casually sacrifice thousands of Argentine and British lives but is also spending literally billions of pounds to achieve its ends. Whilst throughout the world millions die for want of food and while poverty is growing fast in Britain itself, the British ruling class has so far spent around £1 billion on this venture. The cost of maintaining the task force for 2½ months service is £256m. The cost of the Type 42 destroyer, two of which have been sunk is £125m each; the cost of each sea Harrier jet is £5m. The cost of each Skyhawk helicopter is £2m. The end total depends on how long and bloody the war is but the British state is willing and able to spend up to £15 billion whereas it spends only £2b on unemployment benefit.

### Censorship, lies and secret diplomacy

By blessing this imperialist expedition Foot and Co are also giving support to an apparatus of censorship, jingoism, secret diplomacy, lies and deception. The British public have not been allowed – even for one moment – to hear the truth. Whilst TV crews are present on the Canberra and Hermes – no film is allowed back. Whilst reporters throng the decks of the task force ships they are not allowed to submit reports unless vetted first by the Ministry of Defence press officers on board and then (just in case they accidentally let a shred of truth through) a Major. And the lies told by the press and MoD are beyond the imaginings of normal human beings. The Atlantic Conveyor is hit – first news of

this is suppressed, then it is said to be carrying 'supplies', then finally it leaks out – the Conveyor was packed with helicopters! And BBC reporters are told not to discuss this fact! By and large the British government has had little cause to complain about the British press coverage of this war. British journalists have plunged to new depths of sycophantic jingoism. The fascist *Sun's* headlines like 'GO GET 'EM LADS' says it all. (Except to say that *Sun* executives got a £2,000 bonus for this good work – that should keep them in alcohol for at least a month.) Even so Thatcher and Co complained bitterly when the BBC dared use the term 'British' instead of 'our' soldiers and interviewed some rather tame opponents of the conduct of this war. If sections of the ruling class merely questioning the wisdom of Thatcher's tactical moves are thus attacked imagine what will be the response to working class and revolutionary opposition. No wonder the police have felt free to swamp the small marches that have taken place in London and arrest scores of protestors.

### Imperialists back Britain

A web of imperialist alliances and secret wheeling and dealing is being spun by the British government. Whilst loudly proclaiming her opposition to the 'fascist junta' in Argentina (which before this conflict was a firm and well supplied ally) Thatcher is secretly consolidating links with the fascist junta in Chile! Were the British press not so servile many questions could be asked about the British helicopter so mysteriously found burnt out in Chile. Clearly Chile's junta is giving some form of strategic and military support to Britain. Tales of 3 crewmen 'taking to the hills' having crashed they knew not where are merely for the gullible.

And while Thatcher bleats about 'self-determination' the British government has won military and political backing from the imperialist USA which itself is responsible for massive oppression of the peoples of Central America and elsewhere. Britain also has support from French imperialism which has 10,000 troops in Africa sustaining reactionary regimes. On Monday 24 May the EEC also voted for indefinite sanctions against Argentina although this does not mean that all is peace and fraternity between the imperialist powers. Thieves that they are they frequently fall out amongst themselves and are not above extracting payment for their support for British imperialism – hence their vote to increase farm prices

throughout the EEC against strong British objections.

### The Labour Movement and the War

The thoroughgoing bankruptcy and corruption of the British Labour Movement stands starkly revealed. The leaders are nothing more than imperialist hirelings. Not for one minute has the Thatcher government had to worry about opposition 'at home'. On the contrary it has been able to rely 100% on Foot, Healey, Shore and Co in the House of Commons. The disgusting hypocrisy and criminal treachery of these labour imperialists is best summed up in the following statement:

'I don't think it right we should give in to a damnable military junta and condemn these Falkland islanders to an oppressive regime that has put thousands of people in jail and suppressed all forms of freedom.'

Who speaks thus about 'oppression' and 'thousands jailed' in order to justify the imperialist British war in the Malvinas/Falklands? The man is Roy Mason who from August 1977 to March 1979 was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the prime architect of the systematic jailing and torturing of thousands of Irish people in the Six Counties. Nobody knows more about oppression and suppression of freedom than Roy Mason who is remembered with bitterness and hatred by the Irish people.

Nor have the British trade unions given the Tories any cause for concern. No word of condemnation of the war has come from the TUC. It has been content to express 'deep concern' that there might be all-out war before the possibility of a ceasefire has been exhausted. This after over 500 people have already died. Moreover, the British TUC supports British imperialism's claim of sovereignty over the Malvinas/Falklands and calls for the withdrawal – not of the British task force – but of Argentina!

The racism and pro-imperialism that rests deep in the British trade unions is best shown by the National Union of Seamen. At their conference the NUS voted full backing for a British invasion of the Malvinas/Falklands. Assistant General Secretary Sam McCluskie (also a Labour NEC member) told the conference that the executive was saying 'Let's get in there!' and added that he would not shed a tear for any dead Argentinians. So much for working class internationalism of the British trade union movement! The NUS took its filthy support for imperialism to its logical conclusion – outright racism. It agreed to force 600 Asian (and low paid) crewmen off the Canberra and Uganda and replace them with English NUS members.

### The Labour Lefts – shamefaced imperialists

The Labour left has found itself in disarray. It cannot afford to be seen to fully back the Thatcher government. But the fact is that the Labour left does not oppose British claims of sovereignty to the Malvinas/Falklands islands. They merely object to the means of pursuing the claim. Hence Benn said:

'There is unanimity in the House on the question of opposing the aggression of the Junta. There is also unanimity on the right of self defence against aggression.'

Benn merely wants to use effective economic sanctions rather than military force to 'strangle Galtieri' and force negotiations with all cards in British imperialist hands. Under all the left's talk of 'fascist juntas' hides a shamefaced refusal to fight the real enemy of

British workers and the oppressed – the British imperialist ruling class. The Benn who today poses as a man of peace is the same Benn who supports British troops occupying the Six Counties of north east Ireland. It is the same Benn who in 1968 signed the contract with RTZ for the illegal importation of Namibian uranium into Britain. The Benn who today wants to 'strangle Galtieri' sat in the Labour government Cabinet which colluded with the apartheid regime and set its face against sanctions to 'strangle' the racist apartheid regime. It is the Benn who never raised his voice when 10 Irish hunger strikers were being murdered by British imperialism.

With such spokesmen and leaders, who have never opposed British imperialist oppression of the Irish people, of the people of South Africa and elsewhere, it is small wonder that only an insignificant movement of opposition to the imperialist war in the Malvinas/Falklands has emerged. Whilst many who have marched sincerely desire an end to the war they must realise that the Labour lefts, the trade union leaders and the Communist Party figures who lead this movement are incapable and unwilling to mobilise a genuine anti-imperialist and anti-war movement. Those who will not fight, and indeed support British imperialist oppression of the Irish people, are incapable of building an anti-war movement on the Malvinas/Falklands.

This was starkly exposed on the 23 May anti-war march in London. The organisers – the Labour Party, Communist Party and assorted allies – stood back while thousands of police swamped the march. At Hyde Park police circled it and announced that any marchers using slogans not approved of by the police would be arrested. At least 21 people were subsequently arrested. This serious attack on democratic rights amounts to police dictating what slogans can be used on working class demonstrations. Yet no protest whatsoever came from the organisers. Indeed they colluded with the police and Dame Judith Hart was heard agreeing with an inspector that no 'offensive' slogans should be used.

After the march no protest was made about the heavy arrests and thus the organisers have helped to make it 'acceptable' that the police should play an openly political role, arresting people just for shouting anti-war slogans. Indeed the organisers were so terrified of any opposition to the real enemy – the British imperialist state and its police – developing, that they called off the next march. Thus, with their assistance, the state and police achieved the desired goal – NO protests were held in the very week that Britain's war drive was massively escalating. These shamefaced imperialists gave British imperialism invaluable assistance and stopped anti-war protests when they were most vitally needed.

### If you want peace fight imperialism

There is only one way of stopping the British imperialist war machine. A movement must be built which recognises that peace, democracy, freedom and justice are incompatible with the existence of British imperialism. Such a movement will not only oppose the Thatcher government but will also fight the dangerous agencies of imperialism within the British working class movement. The Labour Party and trade union leadership have once again proved where they stand – with British imperialism against the oppressed. Those who today cling to the hope of a socialist anti-war movement coming from the Labour and trade union movement are at best fools and at worst sowers of illusions.

# SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

### ● Horror camps

Over 1900 people have so far died at the squatters camp of Onverwacht in the Orange Free State. The camp was established in June 1979 for black people who refused to go to the then newly established 'independent' Bophutatswana. It has since become a death trap for them. Not as a result of any natural disaster, but because apartheid forces them to live in disgusting conditions. Unemployment in the camp is 40% and the people live in tin shacks or mud huts. There is one health clinic with a staff of 12 catering for a population of 130,000. As a result the camp is rife with disease: gastro-enteritis, kwashiorkor, pneumonia, typhoid and many others. In the first year of the camp's existence 527 people died in a typhoid epidemic. Of the 1900 people who have died 1025 have been children, most of them under the age of 3. Every week nearly 20 people die in this horror camp.

### ● Cholera outbreak

Meanwhile, in the Valley of a Thousand Hills, in Natal, black people have been hit by cholera, a deadly disease. Rainfall washed sewage into the Umsunduzi River thus causing an epidemic hitting 1,500 people of whom 13 have died and over 240 are seriously ill. Again, this killer disease hits blacks because of apartheid. Public health officials have admitted that the outbreak occurred because of the lack of safe water supply and sanitation for blacks living in the valley. The valley is only 10 miles from the Natal capital Pietermaritzburg.

### ● British credit to apartheid

So keen is the British state to encourage investment in South Africa that the government-run Export Credits Guarantee Department is providing backing of \$300m out of a total \$500m for an order for GEC to provide the South African state-run Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM) with generators. Each such loan to ESCOM reduces the effect that oil sanctions would have on South Africa, as it allows the apartheid regime to produce electricity from its own coal, and thus ensure itself alternative supplies of energy.

### ● No to imperialist plans

On 7 May SWAPO rejected a Contact Group (the club of US, French, West German, British and Canadian imperialists) plan for a two-tier election system in Namibia which was designed to undermine SWAPO in any elections and favour puppet collaborationist forces. In any democratic election SWAPO would sweep the board, so the imperialists are seeking a rigged election system. The apartheid regime, backed by the imperialist powers, is now stepping up its war against the people of Namibia, and their ally the government of Angola. Meanwhile in Namibia, the trial began on 17 May, of three SWAPO freedom fighters, Josef Sagarias, Theophilus Jason and Lucius Malambo, under the Terrorism Act which carries a possible death sentence.

### ● Botha power sharing plan

The much heralded plan to incorporate Indian and Coloured representatives into a white dominated Cabinet whilst excluding blacks, is no more than the latest doomed scheme to divide the black masses of South Africa. Last year, South African Indians mounted a massive boycott of South African Indian Council elections. The success was absolute. As a result the apartheid regime arrested and detained 3 organisers for 5 months. At a SAIC bye-election in March 2 puppet candidates got only 91 votes out of a possible 4,000. The winner is now being paid £300 per month to act as a councillor!

### ● Minister's niece sentenced for possessing Communist Manifesto

Hanchen Fitzgerald, niece of Dr Koornhof, Minister of Co-operation and Development spent 6 months in detention under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. For possession of a copy of the Communist Manifesto and 2 books on Lenin, on 23 April she was given a suspended sentence and fined £250 or 125 days in gaol for her 'crime'.

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# SOUTH AFRICA

## SUPPORT ROWNTREE WORKERS

When the black working class organises against its slave-like conditions in South Africa, the apartheid state kills, detains and attempts to destroy its leaders and its organisations. The revolutionary South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) and especially its members in and around East London, South Africa have faced a massive attack ever since February 1981 when the British owned company Wilson-Rowntree sacked 500 striking workers. More than a year later the workers are still struggling against the company and the South African state's attempts to smash the SAAWU have so far failed.

The incident which set off the strike in February 1981 came when 3 workers were dismissed for refusing to do repair work which they had previously been reprimanded for carrying out. Within 2 weeks 500 workers had gone on strike in protest and all were sacked. Today the workers are still insistent that they will not return to work unless their demands are met:

- The unconditional reinstatement of the sacked workers.
- The recognition of SAAWU and of their democratically elected workers' committee at Wilson-Rowntree.
- The release of all those detained by South Africa and Ciskei bantustan police in the course of the dispute.

Even before the Wilson-Rowntree strike the local management and the South African state had worked closely together in their effort to smash SAAWU. In September 1980 the South African government circulated a document to companies in East London calling for urgent action 'to break the power of SAAWU and unregistered (black) unions'. Although only set up in November 1979, within 11 months SAAWU had become the most powerful union in the East London area. Nationally, SAAWU has grown to be one of the largest and most militant trade unions in South Africa. Although only established in 1979 it now has a membership of 75,000 which it has achieved under extremely difficult conditions. It has won this power through combining militancy in the workplace with opposition to the apartheid state. In East London SAAWU has been in the forefront of the struggle against the South African racist bantustan policy. The 1980 government document also urged companies to strengthen such pro-apartheid unions as the Sweet Workers Union (SWU). Before SAAWU started to organise in Rowntrees, the SWU had recruited 300 members in 20 years; SAAWU recruited 700 members in 1 month! One of the sacked Rowntree workers commented that the SWU offered workers nothing but funeral benefits!

Since the beginning of the Wilson-Rowntree strike hundreds of SAAWU members have been detained. This has included nearly all of the Wilson-Rowntree workers' committee and the local leaders of SAAWU. Thozamile Gqweta, SAAWU President, has been detained and tortured many times and during his last detention was forced into psychiatric care. His mother, uncle and girlfriend have been murdered by racists. On 6 May in a desperate bid to smash the SAAWU he, along with Sam Kikine SAAWU General Secretary and Sisa Njikelandza SAAWU National Organiser, was charged under the Terrorism

Act which carries a minimum sentence of 5 years.

This British company and its South African police are not succeeding in their effort to smash SAAWU. The Rowntrees workers have received tremendous support from the people of South Africa. The organisations supporting them include the African National Congress, South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), South African Communist Party, Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO) and many other trade unions, student organisations, church groups, and community organisations. The black workers have used this attack to build massive unity and organise a boycott of Rowntrees products which has seriously damaged their sales and profits—one South African manager estimated a drop of 25%.

Between 16 and 23 June the Anti Apartheid Movement is holding a week of action on Rowntrees—information from AAM 89 Charlotte Street London W1P 2DQ

Also, SACTU have established a strike fund for which donations would be much appreciated. Send to 38 Graham Street London N1 8JX

Chris Fraser



## SOWETO the struggle goes on

This year marks the sixth anniversary of the historic Soweto Uprising which began on Wednesday 16 June 1976 and lasted a full three months.

At 7am on that Wednesday morning, 15,000 black school students assembled in Soweto to march in protest against the apartheid regimes attempt to force black students to study in Afrikaans. The students chanting 'Down with Afrikaans! Blacks are not dustbins! Afrikaans is oppressor's language!' began to march to the Orlando Stadium when apartheid police tried to stop them. Police using teargas failed to disperse the students, so they started shooting. Hector Petersen a 13 year old black student was hit and killed. The anger of the demonstrators then exploded, it exploded against the entire structure of apartheid. They built barricades, stoned the police, put government buildings and property to flame, they burnt down all the offices of the Bantu administration including beer halls and bottle stores which are the property of the Bantu

administration. Slogans went up 'we want more schools and less beer halls' and 'less liquor, better education'. All day fierce fighting raged—unarmed but fearless youth against the armed apartheid police. By the end of the day over 25 youth lay dead.

The uprisings spread to every major town of South Africa—Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria, East London, Mafeking and elsewhere. And everywhere the picture was the same—unarmed but courageous and determined youth fought against armed police.

By the end of the uprising in September the apartheid police had shot dead over 1000 black people and wounded thousands more. The apartheid regime responded to the unarmed protest of the youth with batons, dogs, teargas and finally bullets. But the terrible sacrifices

of the Soweto Uprising have not been in vain. The Uprising has entered the annals of history as a major turning point in the modern revolutionary struggle of the black masses. It heralded the growing unity of working class, community and student struggles witnessed since Soweto 1976. It has given tremendous impetus to the growth of the ANC and its armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe. After Soweto 1976 thousands of youth left South Africa, to return as guerilla fighters against apartheid, whilst thousands of others have undertaken the struggle of underground political organisation and mobilisation.

At this very moment 3 ANC freedom fighters—youth of the days of Soweto 1976—are awaiting execution in apartheid death cells. Ncimbithi Lubisi was 22 in 1976, Naphtali Manana was 18 and Petrus Tsepo Meshigo was 14. They have taken arms to liberate their people from the clutches of apartheid which before and since Soweto 1976 has responded to the democratic aspirations of black people with brute force and murder.

In recalling the revolutionary days of Soweto in 1976 and in commemorating those who gave their lives for the cause of freedom and democracy in South Africa, we repeat the words of Karl Marx in honour of those who fell during the Paris Commune:

'Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them.'

Eddie Abrahams

## SOUTH AFRICA PLOTS AGAINST SEYCHELLES

The trial, in South Africa, of imperialist mercenary Michael Hoare is again laying bare the apartheid regime's reactionary and counter-revolutionary role in Africa. Hoare is on trial for hijacking an Air-India plane in December 1981 to flee the Seychelles island where he led an unsuccessful coup against France Albert Rene's left wing government. In 1977 Rene deposed Premier James Mancham and reversed Mancham's policy of maintaining close ties with racist South Africa. In addition Rene has introduced many progressive measures benefitting the island's population. Ever since, the South African regime has plotted and conspired to destroy the Rene government.

Immediately after the December 1981 coup attempt, Prime Minister Botha denied all knowledge or involvement. Unfortunately for the apartheid regime, the Seychellois forces captured a senior South African intelligence officer, Martin Dollinckek, who participated in the reactionary adventure. Dollinckek has admitted that top South African military and intelligence officials were involved in planning the operation. And now Michael Hoare, in South Africa of all places, is confirming these state-

ments. During his trial he produced an invoice from none other than the South African Defence Force, certifying the delivery to Hoare of 75 AK-47 assault rifles, 24,000 rounds of ammunition, 40 hand grenades, 10 rocket launchers and 100 rockets. In addition, he informed the court that his South African intelligence contact had confirmed South African cabinet approval for the coup. US imperialism's complicity has also been exposed as Hoare told the court that the CIA had been informed of the

plot. As the trial continues, Hoare is planning to call a senior South African intelligence officer as witness in his defence.

Readers will be interested to note that Nicholas Fairbairn, disgraced former Solicitor General for Scotland, is going to represent the mercenaries involved in the attempted coup, at present held by the Seychellois government, at their trial.

These revelations of South African counter-revolutionary plots against the left-wing Seychellois government, come alongside the more widely known apartheid war and destabilisation policies against the revolutionary governments of Angola and Mozambique. They prove once more that there can be no peace, justice, democracy or freedom for the peoples of Southern Africa whilst the racist imperialist South African regime survives.

Eddie Abrahams

## ANC BOMBS BP

ANC guerilla fighters from Umkhonto we Sizwe struck another blow against the apartheid regime on Friday 28 May. Using limpet mines, they bombed and set alight a British Petroleum fuel depot in the town of Hectorspruit. Simultaneously, in the same town another explosion damaged a South African Electricity Supply Commission transformer.

The racist apartheid regime, fearing the possibility of effective sanctions, is constantly attempting to reduce its dependence on outside sources of energy by rapidly developing its Electricity Supply Commission and by attempting to extract oil from coal. The ANC aware of this, has made fuel and electricity installations a major target in its escalating armed struggle.

Eddie Abrahams

# FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

## ● Britain breaches Human Rights

The European Commission of Human Rights has decided that one of Britain's immigration rules is a breach of human rights. This rule in question allows the husbands of women settled here to join them in Britain only if the woman is a British citizen who was born in or had a parent born in the UK. By contrast, any man settled in the UK is by law allowed to bring his wife here to settle with him. This racist and sexist rule causes enormous suffering to black families.

The European Commission's judgement now lays the basis for a case to be taken to the Court of Human Rights – but not until 1984. This Court has already ruled against Britain eight times – more than against any other member of the Council of Europe. So much for British 'democracy' about which we hear so much.

The British state is a racist and oppressive state which has total contempt for the rights of the working class and double contempt for the rights of black people. Even such bourgeois bodies as the European Commission are forced to recognise this fact occasionally.

## ● In the Lion's Den

Faced with the daunting task of appearing non-racist the British police force is engaged in a propaganda drive to recruit more black police.

But while police chiefs throughout the country whip up racist hysteria it is no surprise to find that the few Uncle Toms who join the police force [less than 1/2% in England and Wales] face the same disgusting racism that we normally experience from the other side. A recent *Guardian* article on Raza, a young Asian recruit to the police force gave good insight into this. His training officers referred to him as 'coon' and 'elephant boy' and fellow trainees, naturally enough, did the same. 'Get a lot of remarks like this, you will, good hardening for you' he was told. He listened to officers brag about the 'coon' they had just given a 'good hiding' to whilst in custody.

Out on the beat the racism was even more acutely visible. Raza radioed for assistance in tackling an 'angry man'. The officer who arrived watched from a distance whilst Raza made the arrest. Never would such a thing occur had the 'angry man' been black and the officer white.

Scarman recommends community policing and more black police to disguise the inherent racism of the British state and its police. Raza realised during last summer's uprisings that 'if he became involved he could be fighting his own people'. He asked himself 'was he on the wrong side?' Well if his experiences as part of the state's racist apparatus of repression haven't answered that for him – nothing will.

Ace Kelly

## ● Council's Racist Spies

FRFI has previously reported how official agencies such as hospitals frequently demand to see black peoples' passports.

Now some Council Housing departments are using these same racist spying practices. A black man who recently applied for housing from Southwark Council was asked for his passport. Subsequently Council officials passed information on him to the Home Office and he was deported for 'overstaying'. Newham Council also demands passports from overseas students applying for housing. Replying to an attack on these practices by Newham Rights Centre, the Council's Assistant Director of Housing Howard Stone said:

'... Newham Rights seem to have passports on the brain. It's become such an emotive word'.

Emotive? Perhaps Mr Stone might feel some emotion if he was forced, as many black people are, to carry a passport and produce it to satisfy the racist spies that infest official agencies and departments.

MW

# FREE PHIL ROBINS NOW

A fight has started to free Phil Robins, the black footballer shot and seriously injured by two Ferret CS gas shells fired by police in Liverpool 8 last July. On 28 April of this year, he was successfully framed on two charges of burglary, and sent down for eighteen months. His only crime was to put in a claim for compensation against the police for the terrible injuries he received. The Ferret CS gas shells are specifically designed for barricade penetration. One hit Phil in the chest, the force of the impact spinning him round so that the second struck him in the back. He was left with enormous, crater-like wounds. A doctor testified that, but for his physique, he could well have been killed.

The 'evidence' presented at his trial was grotesque. The first burglary took place at the beginning of June 1981. The evidence implicating Phil? One solitary, perfect thumbprint. But this thumbprint did not appear in the hands of forensic until 15 July, six weeks after the burglary, but significantly, after he had put in his claim for the injuries he had received just nine days before. The forensic scientist was in fact unable to specify the day he had received the print, and only admitted it was 15 July when he brought his folder on the case into the court after an adjournment. He had denied knowing Phil, or knowing that he had been shot by the police. But defence council forced him to produce the rest of the contents of his folder – and in it were photos of Phil, his injuries, and the shells which had hit him. Wherever the print came from, it was not from the burglary.

The second burglary took place on 28 October, two days after Phil had been charged on the first. A DS Wolfenden had said he had seen Phil driving a car stolen from the site of this burglary. DS Wolfenden has a particular interest in Phil. A racist to the core, he has known, hated and persecuted Phil since he was a young lad. He was perfectly prepared to be party to the frame-up of Phil, to discredit him and his claim for compensation.

The *Free Phil Robins Campaign* has been formed by his girlfriend Ann Roberts in association with *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* Ann herself is being persecuted by the police because of her relationship with Phil. She was arrested the evening after Phil was shot, when a policeman walked up to her and some friends as they were chatting by Upper Parliament Street and started to insult them in the coarsest possible way. 'The last thing that I said before I was arrested was "With your attitude, I bet you're the one that shot my feller last

night" – and that's when he said "I'm shutting you up"' When the policeman threw Ann into the meatwagon, he produced a knife and said that he was arresting her for possession of an offensive weapon, assault and threatening behaviour. Although she was acquitted on the knife charge in the



Phil Robins: badly wounded

crown court, the police are intent on pursuing the other two in the magistrates court. 'Instead of the police dropping the assault charge, they're

**LIVERPOOL Public Meeting Free Phil Robins! Wednesday 16 June Stanley House Upper Parliament Street 7.30pm Called by Free Phil Robins Campaign**

This is DC Frankland who shot Kenneth Anderson on the same night as Phil Robins was wounded. A press photographer who gave evidence at the trial told how Frankland said after shooting Anderson: 'I've just hit one of them niggers'.



# LIVERPOOL 8

## DAVID MOORE POLICE GO FREE

'There are really three laws in this country – one for the rich, one for the poor, and another for prison officers and the police'

Those were the words of Mrs Agnes Moore, mother of David Moore, after two policemen were acquitted of his manslaughter. As we said in FRFI 19, every effort would be made to ensure that this was the end result of the trial. As it happened, the defence was not even called on to present its case – the 'prosecution' had done it all for them. Police-men as 'prosecution' witnesses had explained how important it was that vans were driven at crowds of people, how it had saved policemen's lives, how the two policemen involved were splendid officers. And, at the same time, the 'prosecution' despicably portrayed David Moore as a drunk, a thief, and a rioter. With such a prosecution, small wonder that the defence could be dispensed with.

The verdict has given the police a licence to kill. They are now able to drive their armoured vans at, through and over anybody who happens to be in their way, in the knowledge that should they come to court, there will be no problem of acquittal. Not that this satisfied the Merseyside Police. At the recent Police Federation conference, the Merseyside Chairman Fred Jones called for a new Riot Act. He had referred to the two policemen, and complained that there was no law to protect police officers carrying out their duties in a riot situation. 'To say that Merseyside police officers were somewhat perturbed by this will be putting it mildly', he said. His Riot Act would dispense with the formality of trials like that of the two police officers:

'I would like to see a Riot Act where a decision would be taken, probably by the Chief Constable or a senior officer, and the Act would be read out by the Chief Constable or possibly a magistrate over loudhailers from the police command vehicle.'

Police would then warn sightseers to clear the streets as they would be using hard tactics.

'If anyone was hurt after that it would just be their hard luck. Onlookers should go home.'

A naked expression of the thuggery of the British police.

## Robert Clough

Moore, and getting away with it. There is just no choice for the people round here whatsoever. Liverpool 8 will always be a repressed area while the police are allowed to carry on the way they are doing now. One of the main reasons for the campaign is not only to get Philip out but also to prove that people are willing to fight for their rights.'

*Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* is fully committed to building the *Free Phil Robins Campaign*. We are calling for nation-wide support. There are no democratic rights for the oppressed except those that are fought for. The brutal treatment of Phil, of Kenneth Anderson and Paul Conroy proves that. Unless the campaign is built, the police will be able to frame anybody they wound or maim. A victory for Phil will be a victory won against the intensifying repression; it will be a victory for all the oppressed.

**Victory for Phil Robins!**

Robert Clough

JOHN STURROCK/NETWORK

● **Deportation threat – Mahmud Khan**

A Bradford Asian man, Mahmud Khan, has been fighting the racist Home Office for almost two years for the right to stay in this country. The Home Office falsely allege that Mr Khan's first marriage in Britain was a marriage of convenience, and he and his family could be ordered out of Britain at any time. Mahmud Khan recently told a Bradford paper of the disgusting treatment he suffered at the hands of the police in their efforts to force him to leave.

The police arrived suddenly at his home and forced him out without even allowing him to speak to his wife or parents. He was then taken to Armley gaol until the police made an attempt to deport him. He was taken to the main transport interchange where the police forced him to pay for a photo-booth picture of himself for the police files. The police even refused to let him say goodbye to his relations before they drove him down to Heathrow Airport. At the airport the police manhandled Mr Khan and pressured him to sign a statement stating that he was leaving of his own free will. The police did this with the full knowledge that at that time the Home Office had postponed the deportation. Mahmud Khan was taken back to Armley where he spent four months altogether. He is now forced to 'sign on' at the police station every day while his fate remains unknown.

The brutal treatment of Mahmud Khan shows all too clearly what the racist immigration laws mean for black people – fear, police terror and broken families. As Mahmud himself has said, 'I used to be the first person to help the police. Now I would be the last'.

**Bill Hughes**

● **Victory for Sultan Mahmood!**

After eleven years of forced separation Sultan Mahmood has finally won the fight to have his two youngest sons to live with him in Britain. Eleven years of the denial of the right to family life, of being separated from his wife and children and of finally seeing his wife die without him in Pakistan. That has been the reality of Britain's racist immigration laws for Sultan and for countless other Asian families.

This latest Appeal was the fourth which Sultan has made. The difference this time was that he had waged a militant campaign to demand his right to an ordinary family life. A support committee had organised a meeting with over 100 Asian people from Oldham attending; a demonstration with strong support from the Asian community in Oldham; pickets of the immigration Appeal hearing in Manchester. Sultan and two members of the support committee started a hunger strike outside the Appeal hearing and were determined to carry on until Sultan's children were allowed in to Britain.

The strength of support for the campaign forced the Appeal hearing to accept the overwhelming evidence in Sultan's favour which three previous hearings had seen fit to reject.

Here to Stay! Here to Fight!  
**Bob Shepherd**

● **Mother deported – children left behind**

On 18 May Nigerian-born Mrs Veronica Dongo was taken by police to Heathrow Airport and deported to Nigeria. Her three British-born children all had chickenpox and were too ill to travel. Despite this fact the Home Office and the police bundled Mrs Dongo off to the Airport and her children were simply left behind. Social workers had to arrange for them to be taken into hospital.

Mrs Dongo had lived in Britain since 1976 when she came to join her husband who subsequently left her. Her Appeal to stay in Britain was rejected on the day before she was deported. No heed was paid to the fact that she has no means of support in Nigeria or that her children were born in Britain.

Behind all ruling class talk of the sanctity of family life lies this reality – the brutal tearing apart of black families, the enforced separation of mothers from children.

**CL**

# LORD DENNING A BEWIGGED FASCIST

Lord Denning is well known for his reactionary views and legal rulings. His past has included: making the GLC's cuts in London transport fares illegal; stopping six Irish men framed for the Birmingham bombings from bringing actions for assault against the police on the grounds that their action might prove the police 'guilty of perjury... violence and threats... an appalling vista'; stating that the 'unions have grown too powerful in Britain' and attacking trade union rights in various judgements.

Now this reactionary old Judge has written a new book in which he is exposed as having the mentality of a ruling class fascist. He says that British citizens are no longer all qualified to serve on juries because:

'the English are no longer a homogeneous race. They are white and black, coloured and brown... some of them come from countries where bribery and graft are accepted... and where stealing is a virtue so long as you are not found out. They no longer share the same code of morals (or) religious beliefs'.

He goes on to say that black people were unlikely to take the word of a policeman against 'one of their own'. He draws the conclusion that jurors should be selected and tested as Magistrates are. Lord Denning wants to see only glowing pink middle class faces like his own when he looks at a jury box.

He is particularly bitter about the acquittal of those charged after the St Paul's Uprising and he attacks the jury claiming that the number of black people on it led to the acquittal. Two of the St Paul's jurors threatened legal

action about this. This has led to the book being withdrawn and an apology to the jurors from its publishers. The publishers had wrongly assumed that Lord Denning would keep within the law.

Lord Denning is often portrayed as a species of ruling class dinosaur, an isolated curiosity. He is nothing of the sort but is, on the contrary, an immensely powerful Judge who by a stroke of his pen can decree higher fares for millions of Londoners and no redress for the Irish victims of police frame-up. Now he is attacking the right of black people to serve on juries. He is no dinosaur but is a fascist in wig and robes.

**Maxine Williams  
STOP PRESS**

The controversy provoked by his book and the legal action against it by the St Paul's jurors, has met with a happy ending – Lord Denning has announced that he will retire in July. This announcement is said to be 'earlier' than expected (he is only 83). But it's none too soon for his victims, for the working class and oppressed.

**FRFI says GOOD RIDDANCE to Lord Denning**

# PUPILS FRAMED

The trial of five black youths in South London is yet another example of a blatant racist police frame-up. On Friday 19 March 'rumours' of a fight between two schools and the alleged finding of 14 petrol bombs 'led' Superintendent Staplin of Peckham Police Station to deploy more than 30 police including SPG men, outside Kingsdale School, Dulwich. Police claim that 200 school children had gathered in the streets and refused to disperse. From a school which is 80% white it is no surprise to find that 100% of the nine arrested were black.

In fact the nine were arrested quite arbitrarily while walking to or waiting at bus stops on the way home from school or the unemployed centre which is on the same site. They were assaulted and subjected to racial abuse. For the Campbell family this must be horrific as Keith (one of the nine) is a cousin of murdered Richard 'Cartoon' Campbell. One of the youth at a public meeting held to protest at the arrests reported overhearing one PC say to another: 'Let's get another two', 'We've got two already how many more do you want'.

The youths are charged with obstruction and threatening behaviour. Their trial is being held in a small building at Lambeth Magistrates Court usually reserved for high security hearings. Friends and relatives are fenced off behind a reinforced glass screen. Superintendent Staplin quite happily admitted that none of the youths had anything to do with the petrol bombs police claim to have found. Yet by manufacturing fears of 'serious disturbances' and linking them to these arrests the police are trying to ensure that the youth are convicted. The trial continues on 8 June.

**Ace Kelly**

**CGB**

# BRADFORD 12 SHOW TRIAL UNDERWAY

As FRFI goes to press the trial of the Bradford 12 will have entered its sixth week at Leeds Crown Court. So far it has had all the elements of a political show trial – lying police officers, scraps of evidence and the introduction of evidence on the defendants' political views and activities.

The trial began with the final selection of the jury. It now comprises five blacks – none of them from Bradford and only two being Asian out of a jury panel of 131 people.

The prosecution opened their case against the 12 by alleging that on 11 July of last year the 12 conspired to make petrol bombs to be used against the police and big stores in the centre of Bradford. They were not used, say the prosecution, as four of the so-called 'ringleaders' were arrested in Bradford city centre. The prosecution then dutifully produced a series of police officers who had clearly conspired amongst themselves to produce statements depicting these four to be as violent and as riotous as possible.

The real events of July 11 were carefully covered up. On that day the black community prepared for an impending attack by fascist skinheads, the police themselves having ordered shopkeepers to board-up. Hundreds of youth came onto the streets to defend the communities from attack, as in Southall only days before.

The prosecution case rests mainly on the so-called 'voluntary confessions' that the 12 made while in custody. These confessions were extracted by the police after the 12 had been refused solicitors for 3 days, and had been subjected to threats, intimidation and assaults.

As part of their evidence the prosecution showed to the jury their own totally concocted and prejudicial film of petrol bombs exploding. A book by Malcolm X and political magazines including the *New Statesman*, removed from the house of Tarlochan Gata-aura, have been introduced as evidence of his extreme political views. The role of the Special Branch in conducting political

interrogations with the defendants has also emerged throughout the trial.

A succession of police officers in the witness box have gone to all lengths possible to deny any knowledge of racist attacks in Bradford and the recent upsurge of fascist activity. In a well rehearsed fashion they have all claimed not to know of the attacks, assaults and murders that have taken place. When defence barrister Sigbat Kadri's cross examination began to expose the police, Judge Beaumont became visibly uneasy, then barked at Kadri to sit down. Later Judge Beaumont suspended the court proceedings to give the defence counsels a rebuke in his room.

Judge Beaumont is always at hand to stop defence questioning when it puts the police into a tight spot. When defendant Massood Malik's father tragically died of a heart attack during the trial, he refused to adjourn the proceedings as the trial was 'costing too much money'.

With the police evidence now completed, defence barristers will be making legal submissions to get the charges thrown out. Outside the court it is essential that large and noisy pickets are maintained throughout the trial. The six supporters arrested on the first national picket of Leeds Crown Court have had their cases adjourned to 21 June.

**Self Defence is No Offence!  
Free the Bradford 12!**

**Bill Hughes**

**STOP PRESS**

After legal submissions all charges against Jayesh Amin were dropped. The first charge of 'making an explosive substance with intent to endanger life and property' was also dropped against Saeed Hussain and Sabir Hussain.

# SCHOOL STRIKE

The struggle of the youth does not just begin on the streets, it also brews in the schools. The teachers and the oppressor work hand in hand, they try to get you and pick you off like strawberries unless you organise and fight back. I realised that organising was the only way to win when we went on strike at my school.

I arrived at school on a Monday morning to find the heating had broken down. The teachers told us school was to carry on even though it was freezing. I was about to take a stroll off home as it was so cold when a couple of girls came up to me and suggested that we should go on strike. Without wasting any time I ran up to my class room and gathered a few of my friends together and told them the outlook of the situation. We said to everyone that they were either with us or with the teachers and if they sided with the teachers they would have to grin and bear the cold and that they were viewed as traitors in our eyes.

During Registration we decided to act calmly and keep unnoticed until we were all together and acted as one. We had to be together and organised or they would have picked us off. When Registration was over we all walked out together as a clan to the playground. While this was happening one of us phoned the local papers to tell them what was happening because we knew that the more people that knew what we were doing the more chance we had of winning.

The teachers realised that we weren't going to be moved because of the way we acted as one. Some of the teachers tried to control us by man-handling us and as a result a boilerhouse window was smashed as an act of defiance. The

head of the senior school came back and told us to come inside the class rooms that were warm. We discussed this and a majority decided that they would as we knew that we had made our point.

After, the teachers went back to their old ways and tried to pick on the weaker ones to get information. The teachers also called up the ringleaders to frame them up for smashing the window. They never got anyone because none of us grassed even though they tried to divide us. The gains of our action was the school fixing the heating quicker than they would have done. We achieved success because of organisation, solidarity and trust amongst us. We stood up for our rights and the school knows that there is always the threat of us all coming out again if anything happens again.

## POLICE FILE



### ● Who dunnit?

The astonishing saga of James Goodwin continues. His fourth successive trial on burglary charges has been stopped and a new trial ordered. The trial was stopped when it became known that an attempt to bribe a juror (if not the whole jury) had been made. The fascinating point about all this is that the judge, in stopping the trial, said that the bribe could as much have come from someone acting for the prosecution (ie the police) as for the defence!

So far Goodwin's trials have been more revealing about police corruption than about Goodwin's supposed crimes. During this latest trial, the Supergrass brought in to testify against Goodwin, retracted his evidence in the witness box, instead fingering the police for corruption.

This sort of revelation is nothing new - Goodwin's third trial was stopped when tapes apparently showing detectives taking bribes were produced.

Who knows what will emerge in Trial No5.

### ● A new craze?

Has a new craze begun amongst Carmarthen police, locals are asking. Can it be true that they are beating each other up. The speculation arises from the case of PC Jones. He arrested a 15 year old youth who was then charged with assaulting PC Jones. The only problem with this was that PC Jones was unmarked (not surprising since the youth had not assaulted him). Using all the skill obtained in Police Initiative Training, PC Jones overcame this slight problem by arranging for one PC Rowlands to punch him in the face.

But the plot came unstuck and the truth emerged at the youth's trial. Jones and Rowlands were later charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. Predictably they were acquitted.

There is no truth in the rumour that PC Jones, emerging triumphant from the court, viciously set about himself with punches and kicks.

### ● Community policing kills

According to Mr Desmond Queen of the Scottish Police Federation, two of his colleagues left a man to freeze to death in deserted Edinburgh countryside as 'an act of consideration for him and his wife'.

Anthony Wilson, a scaffolder from Edinburgh, died from exposure, hypothermia, and alcohol intoxication when two police, PCs Haliday and Deas, arrested him at his home following a domestic disturbance. This foul pair then dumped Wilson on a side road off the A8 Edinburgh-Glasgow road. The temperature was well below zero, and on January 12, Wilson's frozen body was found in a field near Sighthill Industrial Estate.

It was at the inquest into the death that Mr Queen offered his bizarre explanation of police action. It was said to be 'community policing gone wrong', a misguided attempt at kindness by the police, who had dropped the man off instead of charging him - he just died instead!

The Sheriff-Principal presiding over the inquest seemed perfectly happy with the explanation. In fact his main preoccupation was to tell the jury how wonderful the police were for being so kind as to answer questions when they were under no

# NOTES and COMMENTS.

### ■ NUPE hypocrisy

So NUPE are against oppression - abroad. Through the TUC they urge the British government to 'intervene with the Turkish military regime to secure the release of the 52 trade unionists and other prisoners held without charge'. (NUPE Journal No3 1982).

NUPE also gave £50 to the Chile Solidarity Campaign in Britain and donated £100 for the production of a film on the lessons to be learned by trade unionists from the overthrow of the Allende government.

Earlier this year in Singapore for the Public Services International Conference, Alan Fisher (NUPE General Secretary) proposed a motion calling for a world free from poverty and exploitation, where everyone could live in peace. NUPE later boycotted a civil function given by a representative of the Singapore government because of its anti-union practices.

It seems that oppression and anti-trade union activity cannot take place anywhere in the world without NUPE publicising and condemning it.

But alas on the Six Counties of Ireland (as much a part of Britain as Yorkshire so the politicians would have us believe) NUPE has been silent. Silent on the second highest ratio of political prisoners per head of population anywhere in the world, and many of these prisoners are members of British unions. Not a word from Alan Fisher on the continued occupation of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, by the British army.

Silence too on the Prevention of Terrorism Act which since 1974 has been used against many NUPE members. Only last Christmas a branch secretary and his son were held for many days under the PTA. Yet the nearest NUPE leadership came to discussing Ireland was in February when they sponsored a Labour Movement Conference on Ireland under the title 'Ireland: time for Tory policies to go', which seems to have achieved little or nothing.

While correctly condemning oppression in Turkey and Chile, NUPE ignores British imperialism in Ireland, its oppression, terror, torture and murder. Sadly it appears that Alan Fisher is partially guilty of British war crimes in Ireland, as he refuses to condemn British atrocities and call for victory to the Irish people, troops out now!

Let him prove me wrong, by speaking out. I, as a rank and file member, eagerly await that day (if it ever comes).

Cathal

### ■ The Bombay textile strike

Since 18 January, some 225,000 textile workers have been on strike in the Indian city of Bombay. The workers and their families - who account for more than one million of the city's 8 million inhabitants - receive no strike pay, have used up their savings, are forced to pawn family ornaments, and are driven in to the arms of greedy money-lenders. Yet despite all this, more days have already been lost in this strike than in the whole of India last year, and the workers say they will stay out as long as it takes them to win.

The reasons for the strike are obvious: the workers are paid £8 per week, working conditions are appalling, tuberculosis and other diseases are rife. Many of the workers are migrants who leave their families behind in their villages in order to work in the mills and live 60 to a room, sleeping in shifts.

Most unions in India are aligned with political parties and corruption is widespread. The Rashtriya Mill Mazdur Sangh Union, an arm of the ruling Congress Party and recognised by the bosses, opposes the strike. In desperation at the Union's indifference to their plight the workers have rejected the old union and turned to Dr Datta Samant for leadership. Samant has a record of successful struggles in other industries where

40-60%. While other unions only fight the capitalists in the courts (often reaching a dirty compromise), Samant shows open contempt for the bosses and backs any methods which bring results.

The struggle will be a decisive one: independent unions have grown rapidly, Samant claims 1.5m workers in his union. The Bombay capitalists, the Congress government and the old unions hate and fear the new unionism. Police and goon squads from other unions battle the pickets on the streets of the city. Yet support for the strike grows. On 20 April, hundreds of thousands of Bombay workers supported a solidarity strike. The strikers are forging links with agricultural workers. The grip of opportunism on the workers' movement is being broken, foreshadowing the future growth of an Indian revolutionary movement.

Steven Palmer

### ■ Solidarity with the Aborigine people of Australia

The Aborigine people have become the invisible, unseen and unheard people of Australia. They do not share in the prosperity of Australia. Australia is the land of the ancestors of the present Aborigines, yet they were dispossessed of their land, along with their human and historical rights.

The Aborigine people of the Australian continent have gone through life alienated, deceived, discriminated against, manipulated and persecuted. They lead lives scarred by the brutality of the British colonialists, the insatiable hunger of the graziers and the large landowners, and the greed of the foreign and local multinational companies which evict them from every place where any minerals exist. Oil and Uranium are today's prime targets of international greed, as was the recent example in Western Australia's Kimberley region known as the Noonkanbah station, where oil drilling was carried out in an area of great sacred value to the Aborigine people.

The resistance of the Aborigine people to the invasion of their lands by British colonialists has been long and bitter, marked by the resistance of the Aborigines to private land ownership. The history of the Aborigine people in Australia clearly confirms the link between slavery, private property and the exploitation of man by man, marking the start of an era 'in which the prosperity and well being of some came at the expense of the suffering and repression of others...'

The Aborigine cry for the recovery of their robbed humanity expresses itself through several clearly enunciated demands. Primary among these demands is that of land rights for all Aborigines from Sydney to Darwin, Perth to Brisbane, and among the remotest communities. When the Aborigine people talk of land rights, they mean the right of the land to own them (not the other way around, as in the bourgeois capitalist view of ownership). Land for the Aborigine people is their spiritual heritage. It is part of their being a people with a history ranging over 40,000 years, before the invasion of European colonists and settlers. The expropriation, erosion, plundering, misuse or spoil amounts to the destruction of the Aborigines' cultural and spiritual heritage; in contemporary understanding, it amounts to cultural genocide.

Australia, like South Africa, provides its white people with a high standard of living. Whereas the Aborigines suffer extreme poverty, high birth rates and high population growth combined with high mortality rates (both adult and infant), as well as high levels of illiteracy and unemployment, and a high incidence of morbidity, largely of an infectious nature like trachoma, leprosy, tuberculosis, otitis media, bronchitis, pneumonia, gastroenteritis: all of which are demographic conditions found in oppressed nations.

The following facts speak for themselves:

in prison than non-Aborigines. ● Aborigines are 8 times more likely to become blind than non-Aborigines. 90% of the Aboriginal blindness is caused mostly by chronic infections like trachoma and other forms of conjunctivitis, which are either preventable or curable. ● Aborigines are 10 times more likely to have otitis media (ear disease) than non-Aboriginal children. ● The infant mortality rate amongst Aboriginal children in 1978 is 3 times more than that for non-Aboriginals (53 per 1000). Peri-natal mortality rates are worse. ● Aborigine health services only receive a small proportion of the millions spent for health by state governments. ● 90% of all unemployed Aborigine people are unskilled. ● From a total of about 60,000 Aboriginal children, approximately 15% are currently studying at secondary school. Only 2% proceed beyond Grade 9, compared with 24% for non-Aboriginal children. ● There are only 6 Aboriginal lawyers in Australia, and no doctors or dentists, for an Aboriginal population of 300,000. For a non-Aboriginal population of 15m there are 30,000 doctors. ● At the beginning of 1981, over 17,000 Aborigines were registered as unemployed, representing an unemployment rate of 37% of the estimated Aboriginal workforce. This unemployment rate is 6 times that of the general workforce. 47% of Aboriginal unemployed are under 25 years of age.

To quote Gary Foley, one of the leading activists in the Aborigine struggle, who aptly summed up the systematic oppression and brutal repression of nearly 200 years, 'the only basic rights Aborigines have are to be imprisoned by the notorious apartheid laws in Queensland, suffer from the highest Leprosy attack rate in the world, the highest rate of curable blindness in the world and an infant mortality rate that is second only to two impoverished nations in Africa'.

### ■ 4% for nurses: 21% for judges

On 19 May health workers held a one day national strike against the insulting 4% pay increase which the government is offering them. The support for the strike was tremendous, and further action is planned. For many nurses the price of their hospital accommodation is increased at the time of a pay rise - by more than the rise itself! For cleaners the 4% offer can mean as little as 79p extra per week. The government says that it does not have enough money! Where does it find the money for its massive imperialist adventure in the Falklands/Malvinas? Where does it find the money for its 31,500 armed forces in Ireland? Where does it find the money for more equipment for more British police? It has enough money to increase the pay of generals and High Court judges by 21%, as announced by Mrs Thatcher on 12 May. Lord Denning's pay increase is £7,000 - roughly twice the yearly pay of a nurse! It takes him to £48,250 a year. The British state is making sure that those who serve it remain loyal whilst it prepares for a greater offensive against the working class in this country. Lord Denning is amongst those contributing to ruling class preparations.

He has written a new book 'What next in the law' in which he argues for more state control over the selection of jurors. The jury is only useful to the ruling class if it can be relied upon to give the right verdict - ie to side with the police. According to Denning the St Pauls acquittals, because of black jurors, were 'wrong' - ie the frame-up failed. In Denning's words statistical chances are 'loaded heavily against the jurors being the sensible and responsible members of the community'. He says that the English no longer share a code of morals or respect for the law: 'Many people openly defy it. They attack its representatives - the police'. Denning particularly wishes to exclude black people from juries

some British people come from countries 'where bribery and graft are accepted as an integral part of life'.

Jurors are already selected. Lord Denning now suggests that they should be interviewed before attending court, and a list drawn up by local magistrates. It is interesting that when Irish freedom fighters plead in court that they are being tried for political offences the judges reply that British courts are not involved in politics. When a leading British judge argues for the scrapping of fundamental rights no moves are made to sack him: in Britain there is only democracy for the rich - repression for the poor.

Chris Fraser



### ■ American state in racist attack

100 years ago the United States of America added to the heritage of racism and repression which gave birth to the American capitalist State. On top of a foundation of African slave labour, genocide of the Indian nation, ruthless profiteering and vicious industrialisation, the American ruling class started to legislate against its immigrant population. The Chinese Exclusion Act which prohibited Oriental immigration and barred Chinese from voting was passed by Congress in 1882 and was the first of many immigration laws.

After this the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) was set up to act as an agent of control and oppression. It has made a consistent effort to keep immigrants under surveillance and persecution. The INS has also set itself the major task of maintaining divisions within the working class along racist lines keeping alive the myth that it is black and immigrant workers who cause poverty and unemployment.

The United States Immigration and Naturalisation Service chose 26 April this year to launch its so-called 'Operation Employment' in Washington, Tucson, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York and San Diego. The aim of these immigration raids - a search for illegal immigrants - according to INS spokesman Duke Artin was to 'arrest up to 300 "wetbacks"' (an insulting reference to Mexicans who cross the Rio Grande River to enter the US in search of work) and expel them from the USA under the pretext of making their jobs available to US citizens.

The INS agents arrested 5,400 suspected illegal immigrants, 80% of whom were Mexican. In the process they terrified and abused many communities, separating parents from children and seizing men from their place of work.

The reason for this vicious activity is twofold. In the first place it serves, like the 'filing-raids' conducted by the British Police, to instill fear and to humiliate workers of overseas origin. Above all it keeps them from demanding civil rights and trades union protection for fear of deportation. Secondly, 'Operation Employment' launched against a background of rising poverty and unemployment in the USA reported in FRFI 19. With 10 million of fully unemployed in America the Reagan administration is blaming illegal immigration as a cause of the current depression.

The INS declared that it would send only 'highly paid' areas of employment. In fact it arrested people who were earning minimum wages at hard and menial work under the worst conditions. Chicken slaughterhouses, fish-gutting plants and humid unhealthy mushroom tanks were the objects of state raids. The foreman of one of the plants expressed his annoyance at losing his workforce in this way. Only 20 of the vacancies created by the deportation of Mexican workers had been filled 5 days afterwards. 'Americans do not want to fish,' he said.

Susan Davidson

# INSTITUTIONALISED TORTURE 1976-79

Merlyn Rees' term of office as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had laid the basis for 'Ulsterisation'. Judicial internment replaced detention without trial after the last internees were released from Long Kesh in December 1975. Special interrogation centres were being constructed at Castle-reagh, Belfast (operating last half of 1976) and Gough Barracks, Armagh (opened November 1977). New cellular prisons – the H-Blocks – were being built and the first two blocks were completed by the time Rees left office. Four more were completed in 1977. In May 1976 Kenneth Newman became Chief Constable of the RUC. In August 1976 Roy Mason replaced Merlyn Rees as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. And in October 1977 Roy Mason appointed Major General Timothy Creasey as Commanding Officer of British Troops in the Six Counties of Ireland. The backgrounds of Mason, Newman and Creasey show clearly that the British Labour government was now prepared to sanction a regime of terror directed at the nationalist minority.

The Labour Prime Minister, Callaghan, sent Roy Mason to the Six Counties of Ireland because the failure of the 'power sharing' strategy to isolate the IRA left him with no other policy than outright repression to defeat the nationalist threat to British imperialism's interests in Ireland. Roy Mason was the man for the job. As Minister of Defence in the Labour government he had close links with the military. Mason was typical of the racist-imperialist element in the Labour Party – privileged labour aristocracy – which had come up through the ranks of the working class. Arrogant, ambitious, full of his own self-importance and obviously totally ignorant of Irish history, he was sent to Ireland to defeat 'terrorism'. The Labour Party has a long history of brutalising oppressed peoples and Roy Mason would get on with the job. And he was soon to be working with two men eminently suitable for the task in hand.

Chief Constable Kenneth Newman began his colonial experience as a detective in the Palestine Police from 1946-1948 – the period in which the racist Zionist Israeli state was established on the backs of the dispossessed Palestinian people. He returned to join the Metropolitan police and as a young Chief Superintendent was in charge of organising police tactics to contain the huge anti-Vietnam War demonstration outside the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square in 1968. He was then put in charge of 'Community Relations'. He became an expert in the new police technology of repression aimed at controlling urban unrest. In 1973 he was sent to the Six Counties as Deputy Chief Constable and given the major responsibility for reorganising the detective and intelligence gathering work of the RUC.

Major General Timothy Creasey had impeccable credentials for commanding the British army of occupation in the Six Counties of Ireland. He had a long record of colonial repression against guerrilla armies fighting for self-determination. He was briefly involved in fighting the IRA during the border campaign in 1956. He was a brigade major during Britain's brutal war against the Mau Mau – Land and Freedom Army – in Kenya. He commanded a battalion in the war in Aden. And from 1972-1975 in Oman he had been 'on contract' as Commander-in-Chief of the army of the British imperialist puppet, the Sultan of Oman. There he led a mixed force of SAS men, regular British soldiers, 'contract' officers and locally recruited mercenaries and temporarily defeated the guerrilla army of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman. The PFLO complained to Amnesty International that during Creasey's period as Commander torture had been used against prisoners. They

**Nothing has exposed the moral and political bankruptcy of the British Labour and Trade Union movement more sharply than its collaboration with the regime of terror administered by the British Labour government in the Six Counties of Ireland from 1976-1979. The Labour government's 'Ulsterisation' strategy required that side by side with responsibility for 'security' being passed to the loyalist 'security forces', the RUC and UDR, went the attempt to 'criminalise' the revolutionary national struggle to free Ireland from British rule. It was this latter aspect of British imperialist strategy which was to institutionalise torture and make the fight against 'criminalisation' the dominant political issue for nearly six years.**

gave examples: plucking out hair, teeth and nails; burning with cigarettes and gas torches; electric shock treatment; persons being put in sacks and dipped alternatively in very hot and very cold water; keeping prisoners in shackles; and deprivation of sleep. This then was the man Mason and the British Labour government chose to command the British army during a period of systematic brutality and repression directed against the nationalist minority.

Mason, Newman and Creasey were to use torture in order to get results. While torture was nothing new in this latest phase of the war in Ireland, in the period 1976-9 it became a crucial component of judicial internment – the 'conveyor belt' process of arrest, systematic torture in police cells, forced 'confessions', long remands, Diplock Courts, and imprisonment in specially built concentration camps, the H-Blocks.

## Newman's reorganisation of the RUC

Newman was responsible for reorganising the detective and intelligence-gathering work of the RUC. By the time he was Chief Constable this work was complete. He instituted three major changes.

First, he centralised intelligence by establishing a Criminal Intelligence Section at RUC headquarters, Knock, near Belfast. Three new intelligence units – North, South and Belfast – were set up, subdivided into 16 Divisions, each with similar units. All units fed information into the central system at Criminal Intelligence Headquarters with each unit having access to it. In addition, the RUC had access to the central army computer at The Royal Barracks Lisburn with details of over half the population of the Six Counties and the Metropolitan Police's Special Branch computer, believed to have records of 1.3 million people.

Second, he reorganised the CID adding four Regional Crime Squads to the existing Divisional CID – one at RUC Headquarters, the other three based at Derry, Armagh and Castlereagh. These Squads with nearly ninety detectives were Newman's torture squads for smashing the Provisional IRA. Their task, in Newman's words, was 'to target the most active members of terrorist organisations'. They carried out most of the interrogations – the majority of which took place at Castlereagh.

Third, a change of the utmost importance which was never announced as such. Newman made Castlereagh a full-time, centralised, specialist interrogation centre. What Peter Taylor, in his important book on interrogation in the Six Counties, *Beating the Terrorists?*, called 'the synthesis of his reorgan-

isation of Intelligence and the CID'. Castlereagh became the critical link in the 'conveyor belt' process that made up judicial internment. Peter Taylor describes the process in the following passage:

'The Criminal Intelligence Unit collated the information, passed it on to the Regional Crime Squads, who interrogated terrorist suspects detained at Castlereagh under the emergency legislation for two to seven days. Here, held incommunicado, without access to solicitors or relatives, suspects made the confessions and signed the statements which were the only evidence offered by the prosecution in the majority of cases that came before the new Diplock Courts. Castlereagh was to be the cutting edge of the government's new policy'.

There can be little doubt that the effectiveness of the 'criminalisation' strategy would decisively rest on 'confessions' made by suspects at the specialist interrogation centre at Castlereagh. In other words the torture of suspects was no aberration but a vital component of the Labour government's 'Ulsterisation' strategy.

## Arrest

Under the emergency legislation in the Six Counties the 'security forces' have a totally unrestrained right to detain and arrest someone for questioning. The main legislation used is the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1973, 1978 (we refer to sections of the 1978 Act).

Section 14 of the Act allows a soldier to arrest without warrant and detain for up to four hours anyone suspected of committing, having committed or about to commit any offence. Section 18 allows someone to be held for up to four hours 'for the purpose of establishing his identity' and makes it an offence to refuse or fail to answer questions about identity, movements or knowledge of any recent life-endangering incident. The main purpose of the four hour detention is mass intelligence-gathering, 'screening' and harassment of the nationalist population.

Section 11 of the Act allows any constable to 'arrest without warrant any person who he suspects of being a terrorist'. The constable may enter any place to make the arrest and the person arrested can be held for up to 72 hours. The decision to arrest depends on the subjective opinion of an RUC constable and no grounds of 'reasonableness' are required. Section 11 is used to make most arrests as it gives the RUC an unrestrained right to arrest for questioning any person for up to 72 hours.

Further provision for arrest exists under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. It has the advantage of allowing the RUC up to seven days, when granted a 5 day 'extension', to force a 'confession' out of a suspect. Of the 955 arrested in the Six Counties under the PTA between 29 November 1974 and 31 December 1980, 786 extended detentions (82%) were allowed. Only two applications were refused. The RUC have total control.

In the Six Counties the percentage of those arrested under the PTA and charged with an offence is 46% (November 1974 to September 1979) compared with less than 7% in Britain. The reason for this contrast is clear. In Britain the PTA is primarily used as a means of harassment and political censorship directed at the Irish community and others in Britain, active in support of the Irish people's struggle for freedom. In the Six Counties most arrests are made under the EPA – over 90% between 1 September 1977 and 31 August 1978, but the PTA is seen as a more powerful instrument to put Republicans and their supporters behind prison bars. The extra time of detention permitted – seven days as opposed to three under the EPA – gives the RUC a greater opportunity to force a 'confession' out of those arrested. The *Bennett Report* (see below) went some way to acknowledging this when it said that one clear advantage to the police of arrests under the PTA is 'to give them more time in which to carry out their investigations' and that it is expected that the PTA 'should be used primarily for cases in which detention for a longer period is likely to be thought necessary'.

The PTA is also used to remove key political figures out of circulation in crucial periods of political conflict. 30 H-Block activists for example, were rounded up under the PTA at the end of April 1981, just one week before the death of Bobby Sands MP on hunger strike. No charges were brought in spite of the 'extended' detentions.

The arrest and questioning procedure allowed by the emergency legislation is used both as an oppressive instrument for gathering intelligence and also as a means to harass and terrorise the nationalist minority into giving up their struggle for freedom. When the Ballymurphy priest Father Desmond Wilson claimed damages for false imprisonment by the British army in October 1979 it was thrown out of a Belfast court. The claim failed in spite of the fact that the British army admitted the arrest was a 'mistake' and he had received a letter of apology from the Army. The judge ruled that the law required only that the 'arresting officer' should have 'an honest suspicion, however unreasonable'. This makes clear that the practical effect of the EPA is to give the RUC and British army a totally unrestrained right to arrest for questioning. No 'reasonable' grounds for arrest are necessary.

The statistics reflect this. The vast majority of those arrested are never charged. Between 1 September 1977 and 31 August 1978 of the 2,960 held for more than four hours only 1,029 or 35% were charged with an offence. The main police centres where 'suspects' were held were Castlereagh, Gough and Strand Road.

## Arrests 1 September 1977-31 August 1978, Main Police Centres

Centre	Held under EPA/PTA	Number charged	% charged
Castlereagh	1,619	601	37
Gough	375	103	27
Strand Road	502	122	24

The scale on which interrogations take place in the Six Counties is shown by the number of arrests from 1975 to 1978 under section 11 EPA 1978 (or continued overleaf

corresponding section EPA 1973), section 12 PTA 1976, or for a 'scheduled offence' under section 2 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 (those punishable by 5 or more years imprisonment). In this period there were 12,605 people arrested and questioned by the RUC for serious offences, most of them related to the struggle of the nationalist minority to free Ireland from British rule. The equivalent figure for arrests in Britain would be nearly 10,000. Nothing has changed. The loyalist statelet of the Six Counties of Ireland under British occupation always has been and still is a police state.

## Torture

The torture of prisoners has been a continual feature of the latest phase of the war conducted by British imperialism in the Six Counties of Ireland. On 16 December 1971 the 26 Counties government took the British government to the European Commission of Human Rights at Strasbourg for violations during the internment operation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (see FRFI 15). After a case which dragged on for five years, with little cooperation and at times wilful obstruction by the British government, the Commission found Britain guilty of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment. This was modified later on appeal to the European Court of Human Rights when the 'torture' verdict was dropped. Both the Commission and Court had found that the ill-treatment of suspects constituted an 'administrative practice', that is to say, the authorities knew about it and condoned it.

Despite assurances to both the British Parliament (Heath in March 1972) and the European Court (Labour Attorney-General Sam Silkin in February 1977) that the 'five techniques' used during the internment operation (see FRFI 15) would not be used again as an aid to interrogation, the torture and ill-treatment of suspects went on. Between August 1971 and November 1974 there were 1,105 complaints of assault and maltreatment lodged against the RUC and 1,078 against the Army. Nearly 800 civil court actions alleging assault by members of the 'security forces' were brought between August 1971 and September 1975. In October 1975 over £420,000 had been paid out in compensation by the British government with 167 cases still outstanding. The European Commission and Court were to publish their findings in 1976 and 1978 respectively in a period when the British government was again attempting to deny irrefutable new evidence of torture and ill-treatment of suspects.

It is important to note that with the ending of internment in December 1975 the torture of suspects took on a much more organised and systematic character. Torture was to become an integral part of the 'conveyor belt' process of judicial internment. There could be no question of random brutality here. The torture of suspects was aimed at getting specific results—either a 'confession' or a guilty plea or an agreement to sign a statement already prepared by the police. Something that could be added to the police statistics of 'solved' crimes.

Following a weekend of successful IRA operations in May 1976, during which 4 RUC men and a reserve policeman were killed and a number of others injured, wholesale arrests were made. Merwyn Rees signed seven-day detention orders on eighteen of the men arrested. One of them was the 21-year-old Terry Magill.

Terry Magill was arrested at 4am by the police and army at his mother's council house in Belfast's Turf Lodge district. Magill was interrogated at Castlereagh by a team of 12 detectives working in teams of six for more than 19 hours during the 80 hours he was held in police custody. He signed four statements, two admitting murders and two involving the bombing of hotels. Magill admitted nothing until the last two-hour interview. During the interrogations he had his hair pulled and had been slapped about the face. He was burned with a cigarette on the wrist, between the fingers, on his arms, on his back and on his private parts. He was threatened with electric shocks and told he would be handed over to the UVF. The doctor who examined him when he was being charged at Townhall Street police station noted burn marks on his body. His case came to court a year later. On 8 June 1977 Judge McGrath acquitted him on the grounds that the prosecution had not proved beyond reasonable doubt that inhuman and degrading treatment had not been used and that the statements made were voluntary. What happened to Terry Magill during

interrogation was soon to set the pattern for the treatment of the vast majority of so-called 'terrorist' suspects.

Terry Magill's case however was unusual in one respect only—he was acquitted on the basis of statements ruled inadmissible by the judge. According to the *Bennett Report* from 1 July 1976 to 1 July 1978, 2,293 persons appeared at the Belfast City Commission charged with 'terrorist' offences. In that period statements made by only 15 persons were ruled inadmissible in court and a further 11 statements were suspect enough for the Director of Public Prosecutions not to proceed with a prosecution. Once charged and brought before a Diplock Court (non-jury court) there is a near certainty of conviction. From 1975 to 1979 between 93% and 96% of cases brought before Diplock Courts resulted in convictions. And most significantly between 70% and 90% of the convictions are based wholly or mainly on an admission of guilt—'confessions' made to the police during interrogation. For the period January to April 1979 the actual figure was 86%. All the available evidence therefore suggests that statements forced out of suspects during interrogation were all that was needed to bring about an almost certain conviction and often a long prison sentence.

The Diplock Report (1972) opened the way for this development. Its main recommendations were incorporated in the EPA 1973 (1978). It was concerned to find a method of putting so-called 'terrorists' behind prison bars other than by internment without trial. Diplock recommended not only non-jury courts for 'terrorist' offences and changing the onus of proof in the case of possession of firearms and explosives so that the accused had to prove his/her innocence, but significantly called for the admissibility of confessions unless obtained by torture, inhuman or degrading treatment. This latter recommendation is incorporated in Section 6 of the EPA 1973 (section 8 EPA 1978). It throws aside the common law principle that statements admitted as evidence should be 'voluntary', that is made as a result of free will and not as a result of undue police pressure. Secondly it breaks with guidelines laid out by the so-called Judges Rules:

'That it is a fundamental condition of the admissibility in evidence against any person, equally of any oral answer given by that person to a question put by a police officer and of any statement made by that person, that it shall have been voluntary, in the sense that it has not been obtained from him by fear of prejudice or hope of advantage, exercised or held out by a person in authority or by oppression...

Non-conformity with these Rules may render answers and statements liable to be excluded from evidence in subsequent criminal proceedings.'

The Diplock Report made a fundamental attack on the way the Judges Rules were interpreted in the Six Counties

'We consider that the detailed technical rules and practice as to the "admissibility" of inculpatory statements by the accused as they are currently applied in Northern Ireland are hampering the course of justice in the case of terrorist crimes...' (para 87)

Diplock then went on to recommend the suspension of the current technical rules etc on the admissibility of confessions 'for the duration of the emergency' and argued they should be replaced by a simple legislative provision, that a confession would be admissible unless 'it is proved on a balance of probabilities that it was obtained by subjecting the accused to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment...'. He then went on to spell out clearly what that would mean:

'It would not render inadmissible statements obtained as a result of building up a psychological atmosphere in which the initial desire of the person to remain silent is replaced by an urge to confide in the questioner, or statements preceded by promises of favours or indications of the consequences which might follow if the person questioned persisted in refusing to answer.' (para 90).

Any methods short of those coming under the category torture, inhuman and degrading treatment—the definition of which would be left to the judiciary not the police—were now acceptable to get suspects to confess. Methods permissible would presumably also include threats of torture etc so long as they were not carried out. By raising the threshold of 'admissibility' in this way Diplock had

opened the way for the actual torture of suspects in interrogation centres like Castlereagh. As soon as the Labour government embarked on its 'criminalisation' strategy the torture of suspects necessarily became a systematic 'administrative practice'. Newman and Mason sanctioned it precisely because it was the only way they could achieve the results demanded by the Labour government.

## Getting results

On 26 July 1976 Chief Constable Newman issued a new directive to all Divisional Commanders. It was coded SB16/13 and marked 'secret'. It made it clear that from then on responsibility for the command and control of the interrogation system lay with the Chief Constable himself. Peter Taylor argues that the importance of the directive was the distinction it made between an 'interview'—the result of which criminal charges were to be preferred—and an 'interrogation' conducted for the purpose of gaining intelligence. The directive, while stipulating that Judges Rules applied to an 'interview', clearly implied that they did not apply to an 'interrogation'. CID and Special Branch officers were ordered to decide whether a suspect should be interviewed or interrogated on entering police custody. Section 6 of the EPA 1973 had already given the RUC much greater latitude on the questioning of suspects. And as far as access to solicitors was concerned, a right which the Judges Rules give prisoners 'as long as no unreasonable delay or hindrance is caused', the Rules did not apply to either an 'interview' or an 'interrogation'. At Castlereagh and Gough—the main interrogation centres—solicitors were denied access to their clients as a matter of practice. The significance of the directive is that it shows that Newman took direct responsibility for the interrogation system and that he had given his detectives even more reason to assume that the 'maltreatment' of suspects during 'interrogation' had been given the go-ahead.

Of more significance are a number of meetings Newman had with members of the New Regional Crime Squads. Peter Taylor reports on one meeting held in the early summer of 1976 at Castlereagh, Belfast. There were around 100 CID and Special Branch men present of all ranks. At this meeting Newman outlined the significance of his reorganisation of the RUC. He told his men that the only way to defeat the IRA was the rigorous application of the law to put them behind bars. He said he wanted results within the law and said that those who got them would enhance their chances of promotion. At other meetings he made the same point. The pressure was on to get the results, which meant getting 'confessions' and the latitude which both the emergency laws and Newman's directives gave his men would necessarily lead to the torture of suspects during interrogation.

Every month the RUC compiled statistics which they used to demonstrate their progress in the fight against 'terrorism'. At the end of 1976 Newman announced that the new Regional Crime Squads had successfully eliminated complete 'terrorist' units in various parts of the Six Counties. Charges against the Provisional IRA were more than double those in 1975; charges for murder and attempted murder increased by 7 per cent, use and possession of explosives by 115 per cent; miscellaneous charges—hijacking, arson and membership of illegal organisations—by 187 per cent. However complaints of assault during interview also more than doubled from 180 in 1975 to 384 in 1976. By the end of 1977 they had doubled again to 671.

## Torturers' Charter

In May 1977, Lord Justice McGonigal, a former Second World War commando and founder member of the SAS, made a notorious decision which clearly removed any remaining protection suspects might still have had from maltreatment by the police.

In a judgement after a lengthy trial he stated that Parliament had taken the wordings and standards of section 6 of the EPA from Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. He then went on to define the terms, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment according to the definitions given in a case brought against the Greek Colonels. Having done this he said that the Commission distinguished between acts prohibited in Article 3 and what was called 'a certain roughness of treatment'. He cited as example 'slaps or blows of the hand on the head or face'. He then gave his interpretation of section 6 of the EPA.



Picket of Amnesty International Offices, May 1978

'...it appears to accept a degree of physical violence which could never be tolerated by the courts under the common law test and if the words in section 6 are to be construed in the same sense as the words used in Article 3, it leaves an interviewer open to use a moderate degree of physical maltreatment for the purpose of inducing a person to make a statement'.

Using devious legal jargon, no doubt to conceal the fact that he had given a judicial go-ahead for torture, he then goes on to say

'That does not mean, however, that these courts will tolerate or permit physical maltreatment of a lesser degree deliberately carried out for the purpose of or which has the effect of inducing a person interviewed to make a statement'.

and points to Judges' 'discretionary powers' which provide an extra statutory control over the way in which statements are induced and obtained. However he made it clear that such powers should not be used 'so as to defeat the will of Parliament' as expressed in section 6. That is, if a degree of ill-treatment falling short of that required by section 6 (which had to be gross) was used to induce a statement, the judge did not automatically have to use his 'discretion' to exclude it. Judicial niceties aside, in the words of Amnesty International, 'the interpretation of section 6 given by McGonigal LJ erodes the protection of suspects from maltreatment by the police'. For one of the Six Counties most senior judges had stated clearly that interrogators could ill-treat suspects within the framework of section 6. Among some sections of the legal profession the McGonigal judgement became known as the torturers' charter. McGonigal had served his masters well. He had interpreted the law in the spirit of the Labour government's 'criminalisation' strategy.

## A catalogue of horror

Mason took over from Rees in Autumn 1976 and the pace of RUC brutality quickened. Two priests Fr Denis Faul and Fr Raymond Murray were soon to produce a closely-typed 200 page catalogue of horrors, *The Castlereagh File*, with example after example of brutal torture carried out at Castlereagh interrogation centre. From July 1976 to November 1979 5,067 suspects were questioned at Castlereagh—1,964 were charged and 3,103 were released. The brutal interrogation of suspects was normal practice at Castlereagh. Fr Faul and Fr Murray have listed 20 methods of brutality used in Castlereagh and other RUC interrogation centres in 1976-77—mainly designed not to leave marks:

- ☆ Hair pulling
- ☆ Punching to back of head. Heavy slaps across the face and head.
- ☆ Simultaneous slapping of ears with both hands sometimes perforating eardrums.
- ☆ Strangling neck. Chops to the throat. Gripping and pulling of Adam's apple. Pushing fingers into pressure points of neck.
- ☆ Punches and kicks to stomach, buttocks, kidneys, spine. Stiff finger prodding to ribs.
- ☆ Manual squeezing of testicles, punching and kicking testicles; lifting naked prisoner by placing stick between his legs.
- ☆ Arm twisting. Bending wrist backwards both above and below arm. Finger twisting.
- ☆ Positions of stress-search position against wall, sitting on non-existent chair, squatting on hunkers.
- ☆ Press-ups to point of exhaustion; super press-ups; legs on chair, hands on ground. Running on the spot to point of exhaustion.
- ☆ Wrestling holds until prisoner vomits.
- ☆ Strangling neck and forcing head down to the point of asphyxiation.
- ☆ Trailing along floor; prone on floor while personnel stand and jump on back riding prisoner like a horse.
- ☆ Made to lie centre back across a table or chair face upwards.





Interrogators then jump on legs causing intense pain to back. ☆ Placing plastic bag, hood, jacket, or underpants, over head to restrict flow of air. ☆ Throwing prisoner from one interrogator to another. ☆ Simulated execution by clicking gun behind the head; simulated electrocution by putting plug into mouth and putting on switch. ☆ Singeing skin with matches and cigarettes. ☆ Degradations - making prisoner lick water or vomit off floor; behave like a dog; spitting in the face; stripping prisoner naked and making obscene remarks about his body, his wife, his children. ☆ Pouring liquid into ears. ☆ Threats to shoot prisoner in lonely place, hand over to UVF, threats to parents.

Additionally statements in *The Castlereagh File* show that women were also sexually abused and threatened with rape.

Bernard O'Connor a middle-class schoolteacher and scoutmaster from Enniskillen was arrested at 5.30am on the morning of Thursday, 20 January 1977 by an Army/RUC patrol. His experiences at Castlereagh became widely known because on 2 March 1977 the BBC 'Tonight' programme broadcast an interview in which Bernard O'Connor told his story.

He was arrested under section 12 of the PTA which meant he could be interrogated for seven days. He was taken to Castlereagh on Thursday morning. He refused a full medical examination but signed a report written by the police doctor from his appearance. The first session of interrogation by two detectives lasted 3½ to 4 hours. He was forced to stand on his toes, bend his knees and hold his hands out in front of him. When his heels touched the ground, or he lost balance, or he tried to wipe the sweat off his forehead he was struck in the face. They tried to get him to admit to taking part in bombings and shooting in Enniskillen. Every time he denied his involvement he was struck in the face. After an hour's break and some food the next session began. This time there were three detectives and they took a 'soft' approach trying to get him to agree to lesser charges to avoid 35 years in gaol. They questioned him for 4 hours but got nowhere. Back to the cell for tea and then another session with interrogators who made out they were very angry with him for not accepting help from the previous interrogators. They said that he was a top man in the Provisional IRA and he was going to be cracked.

With the next session the brutality and torture really began. It lasted well into the next morning. He was beaten up, forced to do strenuous exercises, press-ups and sit-ups, stripped naked and made to continue with the exercises. His track-suit top was placed over his head and his nose and mouth were blocked off. He heard a detective say 'choke the bastard' and he thinks he might have fainted. At one stage he was made to strip and his underpants, severely soiled with sweat and excretion, were placed over his head and he was made to run round the room while the detectives mocked him about his private parts. He was made to pick up the contents of a wastepaper basket the detectives had thrown on the floor. The cigarette butts had to be picked up with his mouth one by one while the interrogators kicked him. He was made to lick water up off the floor. Finally he was threatened with being driven to the top of the Shankill Road and handed over to the UVF.

Bernard O'Connor admitted nothing. He was again assaulted during interrogation on the Friday. On Saturday he underwent intense questioning and was asked by a senior detective to sign a written statement admitting murder of a police constable. He refused. At tea time on Saturday he saw his own doctor and had a medical examination. After the examination his interrogators continued with different teams of detectives until 5am Sunday morning. It began again at 3pm Sunday and continued until 3am Monday morning. Interrogation continued Monday late morning until tea when he was released. No charges were made.

The TV programme with the interview went out in spite of pressure to delay it. It stirred a hornet's nest of defenders of RUC torture. Roy Mason accused the programme of being one-sided. Airey Neave, then Conservative spokesman for Northern Ireland, later to be assassinated by INLA, accused the BBC of losing sight of its responsibilities in Northern Ireland and said that the programme had damaged the morale of the RUC. The truth clearly did not matter. The Senior Deputy Chief Constable Harry Baillie said:

'It is quite clear that there is a renewed and orchestrated campaign to blacken the RUC in the eyes of the local community and the world at large. I believe, however, that a sufficiently large number of people are now wise enough to recognise the terrorist lie and to see the RUC for what it truly is'.

Bernard O'Connor filled in a complaint form against the police. The Complaints and Discipline Branch of the RUC investigated the complaint and submitted the papers to the Director of Public Prosecutions as was the practice. The DPP directed no prosecution. O'Connor took out a civil action for damages against the Chief Constable, Sir Kenneth Newman. It finally came to court in June 1980. The hearing lasted 21 days. Mr Justice Murray awarded O'Connor 'exemplary' damages of £5,000 and cited a previous case in which Lord Devlin had awarded 'exemplary' damages because of 'oppressive, arbitrary or unconstitutional acts by a servant of the Government'. The case did show 'the RUC for what it truly is' however the 'servant of the Government' has never been prosecuted for his crimes.

The catalogue of horror on RUC interrogation in the Six Counties grew and grew as Newman and Mason more and more vigorously denied torture was taking place. Attempts by the RUC to explain suspects' severe injuries and in one case death as a result of interrogation began to resemble those 'explanations' so frequently used by the police in the racist South African police state.

Eddie Rooney was arrested on Monday morning 28 February 1977 after a dawn swoop on his flat. He was taken to Springfield Road RUC Barracks, processed, and handed over to the RUC Special Branch for interrogation. The next thing that was heard was that a serious 'accident' had taken place at the Barracks on Monday evening. In an official statement the RUC claimed that Eddie Rooney had taken 'two detectives completely by surprise by leaping from his seat and diving through a glass window'. The window was in the top floor of the barracks. Eddie was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital where he lay unconscious for several days in intensive care. His injuries included a fractured skull, a collapsed lung, a bad eye injury, a busted nose, severe chest and arm bruising and knuckles on one hand badly damaged.

The injuries sustained suggest a quite different version of events than that given by the RUC. In a statement *Republican News* (5 March 1977) said 'We believe that twenty-five year old Eddie Rooney... after being beaten unconscious and his face left a bloody pulp, was thrown out of the top storey window at the back of Springfield Road RUC Barracks late last Monday night in a fake "suicide" attempt.' Eddie miraculously survived. He told his father during a hospital visit that he had been beaten for 12 hours before being taken to a window and threatened. His father said that he had passed out and could not remember anything else after the beating.

Brian Maguire was a 27 year old electronics engineer who worked at Strathearn Audio plant in Andersonstown. He was secretary of his factory branch of the Technical and Supervisory section of the AUEW and an activist in the Trade Union Campaign against Repression. Brian was arrested at 6am on Tuesday 9 May 1978 and taken to Castlereagh. He was interrogated in connection with the shooting of an RUC man. According to the police he made a statement on the same afternoon confessing to hiding a gun assumed to have killed the RUC man. Next morning, according to the police, he was found dead, hanging in his cell at 7.30am. Between 7.15am when the electric light above his cell door had been switched on from the outside and 7.30am when breakfast was brought to his cell he was supposed to have torn a strip from the sheet on his bed fastened one end to the ventilation grille, the other round his neck and hanged himself - and have done this undetected. Family and friends of Brian Maguire, needless to say, didn't believe the story. *Republican News* (20 May 1978) said 'all pointers indicate that the RUC Special Branch had,

this time, gone so far with the "mock" strangulation of one of their victims that they killed him'. As in the case of the supposed 'suicide' of trade union leader Dr Neil Aggett in a South African police cell in February 1982 no one could have any doubts that responsibility for his death lay directly with his police interrogators. Brian Maguire was murdered. His death was the result of institutionalised torture in interrogation centres like Castlereagh.

Buried on the same day as Brian Maguire was an IRA volunteer Jake McMahon. He was last seen alive at Musgrave Street RUC barracks on 18 January 1978. His badly decomposed body was recovered from the River Lagan at York Dock at the beginning of May - some four months later.

Peter McGrath, aged 64, was arrested at his home on 6 June 1977. This elderly man was taken to Castlereagh for interrogation. He attempted to defend himself after being physically assaulted by his interrogators. He ended up spending six weeks in a psychiatric hospital after his experience in Castlereagh. Many of those interrogated suffered severe mental damage and required psychiatric treatment sometimes for a number of years.

## Torturers exposed

By autumn 1977 allegations of torture were becoming so widespread that many outside the nationalist minority were no longer prepared to regard them as mere 'Provisional IRA propaganda'. On 27 October 1977 ITV's 'This Week' programme under the title 'Inhuman and Degrading Treatment' investigated ten cases whose complaints and medical reports were summarised. A Catholic GP, two men tortured at Castlereagh, a solicitor, a legal expert and a councillor on the Police Authority's Complaints Committee were interviewed. Newman



Eddie Rooney in intensive care

refused to be interviewed. A few hours before the programme went out, Newman said he was placing his men 'on red alert' as he believed the programme likely to put their lives at risk. In a prerecorded statement on the programme - a management condition for its transmission - Newman said

'Finally let me make it quite clear, there is no policy or toleration of ill-treatment in this Force. Quite the contrary. And this Force is vitally concerned with the most fundamental right of all, the right to live.'

Tell that to Brian Maguire's family!

The programme raised a storm of protest especially from politicians at Westminster. These well-known defenders of 'democracy' were concerned not with the torture but its exposure. Roy Mason had the nerve to accuse the programme of being 'riddled with unsubstantiated allegations' and the programme makers of 'cheque-book television' and of making a series of programmes unhelpful to the security forces. That he could go on the offensive in this way, says a great deal about the corrupt character of the Labour government and Labour Party to which he belonged.

The programme however did force people to take notice. In the week following its transmission Amnesty International announced that it was sending a mission to investigate the allegations. Roy Mason announced that Amnesty would be afforded every facility, but said that no individual cases could be discussed as they were *sub judice* - the excuse everyone in authority conveniently uses to try to prevent people investigating or commenting on police crimes. The degree to which the RUC were confident that Mason, Newman et al would sanction their crimes and cover up for them is measured by the fact that even now, with public concern increasing, the complaints of assault during interview also increased. They only dropped significantly in the month when Amnesty International arrived in the Six Counties to carry out its investigations. The other times when they

were very low were the month the *Amnesty Report* was published and the month following the *Bennett Report*. Torture could be turned on and off like a tap.

Amnesty International visited the Six Counties from 28 November to 6 December 1977 and examined 78 cases (41 had been released without charge). Besides direct testimony from 52 complainants, they interviewed many people in authority, including the Chief Constable, the DPP, members of the Police Federation, Police Authority, doctors under the Authority, head of RUC Complaints branch and so on. They met civil rights organisations, lawyers, GPs and politicians at the local and national level. The mission was not however 'afforded every facility' by the Secretary of State, Roy Mason. It was denied access to the most important information of all: the medical reports compiled by the Police Surgeons and the Senior Medical Officers at Castlereagh and Gough. The Police Authority, which employed all the doctors, had instructions from the Secretary of State not to make them available to the mission. The Police Surgeons had no objections to Amnesty seeing their reports but the Secretary of State stood firm. Roy Mason had something to hide. The official medical reports contained the most damaging testimony of all - they confirmed local GP's findings and showed there was systematic maltreatment of suspects interrogated at Castlereagh and other police centres.

Amnesty International sent its report to Roy Mason on 2 May 1978. It had found the allegations of what it called 'maltreatment' to be substantiated

'Amnesty International believes that maltreatment of suspected terrorists by the RUC has taken place with sufficient frequency to warrant the establishment of a public inquiry to investigate it.' (p70)

Amnesty's findings confirmed the use of the torture techniques listed by Fr Faul and Fr Murray (see above). On 26 May 1978 Roy Mason wrote to Amnesty International asking its International Executive to postpone publication. He asked Amnesty to identify its 78 cases so they could be investigated. This delaying tactic however did not work.

On 30 May a picket called by the Prisoners Aid Committee, and supported by Sinn Fein, RCG, Release, Haringay UTOM took place outside Amnesty International's London office. It drew attention to the inordinate delay over the publication of its Report and to the failure of Amnesty to investigate torture in the H-Blocks and English prisons.

Other forces were also at work. The report was soon leaked and on 5 June the *Irish Times* carried a brief resumé of the Report, and on 7 June BBC-TV's 'Tonight' programme gave details of it. ITV's 'This Week' planned to put out a programme on the Report which included an interview with councillor Jack Hassard of the Police Authority's Complaints Committee in which he said that the Chief Constable and the Secretary of State had known all along what was happening. The programme was banned by the IBA. Extracts of it were however shown on the BBC-TV's 'Nationwide' programme.

There was now a widespread call for a public inquiry to examine the allegations. Roy Mason and the Labour government resisted this, and instead, to cover up for their crimes, set up 'an independent and impartial' inquiry to 'examine police procedures and practice' in relation to interrogation. There was no mention of investigating the allegations in the terms of reference. The Chairman of the inquiry was Judge Harry Bennett, and it was to investigate, in *private*, the police procedures. It was not empowered to take evidence on oath or enforce attendance of witnesses or the production of documents. So much, or so little, for the much vaunted British 'democracy'. Many individuals and organisations who had given evidence to Amnesty boycotted the Bennett Inquiry on the grounds it was a private inquiry and did not address itself to the specific question of ill-treatment.

A week before the *Bennett Report* was published LWT's 'Weekend World' carried a dramatic interview by Mary Holland with Dr Irwin one of the main police surgeons responsible for medically examining 'suspects' before and after 'interrogation'. For over two years Dr Irwin had with other colleagues informed the Police Authority, the Chief Medical Officer at the DHSS and Chief Constable Newman of their concern at the 'ill-treatment' taking place but to no avail. Now he decided

## COMMUNIST TRADITION ON IRELAND

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to speak out. On the programme he said that over the past three years he had seen roughly between 150 and 160 cases in which he was not satisfied that the injuries were self-inflicted. This reference to injuries not being 'self-inflicted' was in answer to the propaganda put out by Newman and Mason that prisoners were injuring themselves as part of an IRA propaganda campaign against the police. Indeed, as accusations of torture mounted, Newman, far from telling his police thugs to stop the torture, issued instructions to them to 'take precautions to prevent self-inflicted injuries by prisoners' (*Guardian* 25 June 1977).



Kenneth Newman

The television programme caused the predictable form of protest – again not against torture but against its exposure. A particularly nasty smear campaign was directed at Dr Irwin. The Northern Ireland Office and the RUC leaked the fact that his wife had been raped, possibly by a soldier, and suggested that Dr Irwin had harboured a grudge against the RUC ever since for failing to catch the assailant. The aim of the 'leak' was to question Dr Irwin's motives in order to undermine his damaging accusations. However it backfired. Such a tactic was not even acceptable to the Fleet Street gutter press.

The *Bennett Report* was published on 16 March 1979. Among much talk of a 'campaign to discredit the police', 'inventing allegations against the police', 'tragedies inflicted on the RUC' it was forced to admit that in the case of certain injuries on 'suspects'

'There can, however, whatever the precise explanation, be no doubt that the injuries in this last class were not self-inflicted and were sustained during the period of detention at a police office'.

The *Bennett Report* made certain recommendations for future procedures as regards interrogation on the understanding that they did not impair 'the efficiency of the interrogation in obtaining evidence leading to the conviction of criminals'. These included access to solicitors every 48 hours, a medical examination offered every 24 hours, closed circuit television in the interview rooms so uniformed members of the RUC could monitor interrogations etc. All this however was clearly 'cosmetic'. The RUC is a sectarian force, an indigenous arm of British repression in Ireland. The British government sanctioned torture. Public 'concern' might force the RUC to reduce the ill-treatment and torture of prisoners for a period of time but it will inevitably return. Indeed only the week after the *Bennett Report* was published one of the Senior Medical Officers based at Gough Barracks, Dr Elliot, finally resigned after a dispute with detectives about the interrogation of two youths whose mental condition Dr Elliot was very concerned about. In his letter of resignation he said that his experiences had shown him two things: that results were expected and were to be obtained even if a certain degree of ill-treatment were necessary, and that a degree of ill-treatment was condoned at a high level.

### Torture – an 'administrative practice'

In 1978 more than 1,000 complaints files, covering all police activities, were submitted to the DPP. In the 826 cases in which a decision was made the DPP ordered that no proceedings be instituted against the police officers concerned in no less than 787 cases (97%). The *Bennett Report* found that

between 1972 and the end of 1979 no final conviction of a police officer was recorded in any case of ill-treatment during interrogation. This in spite of the fact that compensation has been paid out to victims of torture and ill-treatment in a whole number of cases during that period. The police complaints machinery gives almost 100% protection to police officers torturing 'suspects'.

However, in addition to this, torture was condoned by the Labour government, Secretary of State Mason and Chief Constable Newman. There is ample evidence to show they were aware of what was going on, and from their numerous crude attempts to cover up for it, it becomes obvious that they clearly sanctioned it.

The Police Surgeons had offered evidence to their Association concerning the ill-treatment of suspects as early as March 1977. The Police Authority were informed of this in April 1977. Dr Irwin had also written to the Chief Medical Officer at the DHSS about 'an increasing number of persons alleging assault in custody' in April 1977. He also said that clinical evidence showed various degrees of injuries. The Chief Constable was almost certainly informed by summer 1977 of Dr Irwin's concern and asked for an explanation of the injuries. A letter had been sent to the Police Authority in July 1977 by the Police Surgeons requesting a meeting with the Chief Constable. In October 1977 the Police Surgeons were forced to issue a press statement saying they had requested a meeting with the Chief Constable but he had not replied after Newman had denied receiving a communication from them. On 11 October 1977 the Police Surgeons finally met the Chief Constable at RUC headquarters. He said he would investigate the cases. In November 1977 the Police Complaints Committee saw Newman. Nothing was done.

By March 1978 after the visit of Amnesty International, the Police Surgeons told a secret meeting of the Complaints Committee that they would speak out publicly if things didn't improve. On 21 March 1978 a meeting between the Chief Constable, the Complaints Committee and the doctors was finally held. There was a blazing row but Newman refused to yield ground and did nothing. And so it went on.

Amnesty reports that a group of solicitors doing over 90% of all cases, after a meeting in November 1977, approached Mason and told him of their conviction that 'ill-treatment of suspects by police officers, with the object of obtaining confessions, is now common practice'. The solicitors in fact considered a total withdrawal from practice in non-injury courts.

The Labour government was also made aware of what was going on. As early as November 1977 the DPP put in writing to the Chief Constable his concern at the increasing number of complaints alleging assault in police custody. He gave the Chief Constable all the necessary statistics and, in 30 cases, medical evidence showing assault had taken place. Newman was told that the courts were not the place to deal with the matter as prosecutions would not be successful. As usual he promised he would investigate. In the same month the Labour Attorney-General Sam Silkin sent a confidential minute to the Prime Minister, James Callaghan, describing the contents of the DPP's letter to the Chief Constable. So before the Amnesty mission set foot in the Six Counties the British Labour government knew that suspects had been tortured during interrogation.

Newman left the Six Counties in December 1979. British strategy was by this time in disarray and fully exposed. Nevertheless he received a knighthood for he had served British imperialism well and consistently covered up for its crimes. It is no coincidence that this man, who sanctioned torture in the Six Counties, has, one year after the uprisings in British cities, been made Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. But, needless to say, the Labour and Trade Union movement which refused to oppose torture in Ireland has also refused to protest against Newman's appointment.

The Labour government's 'criminalisation' strategy demanded torture. Faithful as ever to British imperialism the Labour government sanctioned it. But it did not end in the interrogation centres. The torture and brutalisation of prisoners carried on in the prisons. The H-Blocks had after all been built to hold those who had been tortured into signing 'confessions'.

David Reed  
May 1982

To be continued



## Sean Mac Stiofain ON FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

### Opinion of FRFI

I indicated to you from your very first issue of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* that it's a tremendously significant step forward for the revolutionary movement in Britain, in England itself, that there is such a paper, and that there are people there in your group who've had the foresight to publish a paper that stood up against racialism, against imperialism. You connected the fight against racialism in Britain which is of course a fight against prejudice spawned by capitalism, to the fight against imperialism which is another disease spawned by capitalism. I thought then, and I still think, that it's a very, very significant step forward. And certainly I take great pleasure in receiving the paper and I'm sending you a cheque to cover renewal of subscription.

I very carefully read everything you publish. I find your paper very informative, very educational and certainly it must be a tremendous help to young people who are maybe feeling their way, beginning to feel revolutionary. Certainly I think your treatment of the situation in South Africa is excellent. And your treatment of the situation in Ireland is absolutely first class.

### The Communist Tradition on Ireland

I want to compliment whoever it is who's been writing the series of articles on the revolutionary war in Ireland. (*The Communist Tradition on Ireland* by David Reed) They're first class. I notice I've been quoted myself on a number of occasions and I recognise that whoever wrote the articles obviously studied my book very carefully. And I hope he continues to do so.

Now in relation to that article, I want to make one point for the information of the person who's writing them. Now in your recent issue (FRFI 15), you refer to the bombing operation carried out by the Stickers or the so-called Officials at Aldershot. What you may not know is that I was contacted by I think the *Daily Express* or someone from the imperialist newspapers for comment. And my comment may be useful to this writer or to yourselves at some later stage. What I said was: 'We were not involved, but we appreciate the motives of those who were. This was a strike against British troops and we welcome action against British military regardless of the organisation involved.' Now that was my comment in March '72 when the Sticks carried out that operation in Aldershot. I refer to it, because of the point that you may like to make some time: if that had been a Provisional IRA operation that had gone wrong (obviously that operation did go wrong), if we had carried out that operation the Stickers would have violently condemned it. And in fact the late Seamus Costello told me that some of them wanted to issue a denial and blame us for it. But the operations officer that the Sticks had at the time issued a statement immediately he got news that the operation had taken place, so they were unable to do that. But he was severely reprimanded by the leadership of the Sticks in '72 and part of the reason for the reprimand was that if he hadn't accepted responsibility on their behalf for that job, then they could have blamed it on to us. Since then, and even before then, the Sticks have violently condemned IRA operations which have gone wrong. When I say gone wrong I mean an operation which has inadvertently, accidentally led to the death of innocent civilians. Now please tell David Reed to use that comment if he wishes before he finishes his series of articles. But please give him my compliments – it's a very fine series of articles and I enjoy them very much. And I'm quite sure that people both young and old – workers, students, the unemployed in England who buy and read the paper, and indeed a lot of your ordinary members, will find them most informative and very helpful in assisting them to understand the situation here.

I hope we can remain in contact, remain in dialogue, and that your paper will go from success to success. Because I feel that you can play, and that you should play, a very very significant part in helping the English working class to understand the situation in Ireland. This is important on two counts: first of all by explaining the situation in Ireland you're helping the revolutionary movement in Ireland – but you're also sharpening the political consciousness of the English workers themselves. And that is very important. I for one look forward to the day when the revolution will eventually come to England itself, and, as you have again rightly pointed out that the Uprisings in Liverpool, Bristol and elsewhere is the beginning. Now it's going to intensify as it carries on.

The only way I've got of keeping in touch with events in Britain, particularly finding out the truth of what is happening in Britain, is through your own newspaper. You're providing a very good information service to revolutionaries all over the world. And I hope its appreciated and that certainly in *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* we can read facts that we just don't get anywhere else, even in the other revolutionary papers. So, whatever you do, keep up your good work and I just hope that you're getting more recruits and more people to sell the paper. And that the circulation will improve drastically and that you'll be able to come out more frequently.

### Communism and the Irish struggle

If there's anything that you don't agree with – then let us discuss it and debate it. I'm extremely interested in maintaining contact with your group and as I say it's a pity that there wasn't a group like your group and a paper like your paper in existence in London thirty-odd years ago. Certainly when I was a young man of twenty, twenty-one I'd have been extremely interested. In fact if there had been such a group and such a paper, it would have shown us that there were genuine revolutionary communists in Britain – something we despaired of. Because any communist members that we met in those days – they were extremely revolutionary until you mentioned the Irish situation and the IRA and immediately their attitude changed. They became reactionary.

I notice that on page 12 you've got a small piece there 'CPGB/CPI line' it's about the reactionary campaign against the liberation movement in Ireland. And again, that kind of revolutionary journalism, showing up the reactionary attitudes of the CPGB and the CPI towards the armed struggle in Ireland, towards the liberation movement, by the people like the RCG, it shows that you're right there. You call them 'so-called' communists and that real communists are not deceived by their tactics. That kind of line being put across 30 years ago it would've made a big difference to a lot of people.

Certainly it would have promoted revolutionary socialism in Britain a lot better if people like yourselves had been around in the late 40s and the early 50s. It would have laid the basis for much closer cooperation between the revolutionary communist movement and the revolutionary movement in Ireland. And it would have helped Republicans in many ways – though as you know, there would have been ideological differences but at the least there would have been a dialogue – and with dialogue comes better understanding of peoples' position and a better appreciation of the reasons why they take different positions. And I think you all know that would have been a very good thing. I think the revolutionary movement in Ireland would have been better off, the revolutionary nuclei in Britain itself would have been much much better off, and perhaps the international revolutionary struggle would have been promoted that much better if *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* had been published.

According to the report one of the main causes of the riot was the tension created by a struggle for power within the wing between the Irish political prisoners, the black prisoners and a group of London prisoners known as Table 4. This is a blatant lie as the event itself proved. To discover the truth, events in the weeks and months preceding the riot have to be investigated.

During the previous six months the prison regime, sensing a threat to its authority because prisoners were generally co-operating with each other – unity amongst prisoners is the greatest threat to any regime's authority – slowly but surely tightened its grip on the wing. Petty rules which the staff used to turn a blind eye to were now enforced. An increasing number of prisoners found themselves charged with breaches of prison discipline for which they were given bigger fines, spent more days in the block or lost more remission than before. Basically a repressive campaign was run by the staff to reinforce and increase their power. This campaign was led by Senior Officer Thomlinson and it produced a number of disputes between individual prisoners and the staff which in turn created a lot of dissatisfaction and tension on the wing. Although the screws realised this they continued to aggravate prisoners and conditions deteriorated still further.

On Sunday 19 August, two weeks before the riot, some prisoners returned from their visits bitterly complaining that their visiting period had been cut by 45 minutes for no specific reason. Word soon spread around the wing and there was general agreement that this latest act of repression was far too serious to ignore. Something had to be done to show the authorities that prisoners would no longer tolerate their aggressive and abusive conduct. It was agreed that a strike would take place the next day.

The following Monday morning when the order was given to go to work out of about 260 prisoners on the wing at the time only 17 obeyed. The authorities were caught unawares and while they panicked in confusion, prisoners quickly organised themselves, picked three representatives, one from each of the main groups – the Irish, the blacks, and Table 4 – and demanded to see the governor, Norman Honey. Although the authorities were initially surprised by the strike they recovered quickly and so being the black representative I realised, as most other prisoners did, that they would be extremely vindictive if after the strike ended we did not retain some form of unity. The strike itself lasted only an hour as it was soon agreed with an assistant governor that the three representatives – Gerry, Tony and myself – would meet with the governor that afternoon. During the dinner period we drew up a list of demands that we would present to the governor. The things we wanted to discuss were: the closure of the 'college' which meant there had not been any educational classes for a year, the poor standard of the food, an improvement in the cooking facilities, higher wages, Sunday visits for Irish political prisoners (according to the authorities the Irish were not allowed Sunday visits for security reasons, all other prisoners could have them), the racism of certain officers, and most important of all we wanted to voice our opinions about the basic cause of the strike ie the serious deterioration in the general relationship between prisoners and staff. We would demand the immediate removal of Thomlinson from the wing as we considered him to be the chief protagonist in the repressive campaign carried out by the screws.

The meeting was a dismal failure. Honey, surrounded by the chief security

# MUFTI RIOT AT WORMWOOD SCRUBS

## a prisoner's account

*The following is an account, written for FRFI, of the August 1979 Wormwood Scrubs prisoners' protest and the prison authorities' brutal suppression of that protest. It is an eloquent answer to the recent whitewash report for the Home Office. The author, Shujaa Moshesh is serving 18 years and was a participant in the protest*

**The recently published Home Office report about the riot in D Wing Wormwood Scrubs on Friday 31 August 1979, failed to give a proper account of the prisoners' version of the event. As a result the report is biased and therefore unobjective. It clearly lay most of the blame for the trouble on the prisoners. To this extent the report is only following a time-honoured Home Office tradition of protecting prison officers who assault prisoners.**

officer and seven other high-ranking members of staff, the industrial manager and the canteen manager, engaged in an exercise of verbal gymnastics. He gave ambiguous excuses to nearly every point we put to him and, fully supported by his subordinates, who interrupted every so often to give their advice, he was able to clearly state his opinions without ever understanding most of ours. The only concessions he made was to allow the Irish political prisoners from then on to have Sunday visits and he promised the working facilities would be improved as soon as possible. To most of our other demands he took several minutes to loquaciously express either one of the two standard official answers governors give when prisoners make requests: 'I'll look into it' or 'For security reasons this isn't allowed.' The only points he gave frank and simple answers to concerned the racism of certain officers, and the cause of the strike, the bad relationship between prisoners and staff. He flatly denied that any of his staff were racist and he just as stringently denied that any of his staff were engaged in any campaign against prisoners.

When we demanded that Thomlinson be removed from the wing he bluntly told us that he was not prepared to discuss with us any individual member of staff. Our final demands were that there should be no retaliatory action by the authorities for breaches of discipline concerning the strike, and neither should anybody be suddenly moved out, 'shanghaied', from the prison. We were expecting some prisoners to be moved, particularly any one or all three of us. To the former Honey agreed, because, he said, it had been a peaceful protest. To the latter he first gave the all encompassing excuse of 'security reasons' for failing to give us a positive answer, but after we insisted he said nobody would be moved.

The meeting lasted three hours. As we had not expected much from it from the start we were not surprised or disappointed that we had gained so little at the end. The official Home Office view that dissenting prisoners should never be seen gaining any advantage from their rebellious actions dictated Honey's role when negotiating with us. Although minor concessions had been made the

basic issues remained unresolved – nothing had changed.

We returned to the wing to tell the other prisoners about the meeting. Most responded angrily but because Honey had said he would look into most of our demands it was agreed that we would allow him two weeks to do so. If by then we were not satisfied by what had been done to meet our demands we would protest again.

Any illusions that any prisoner may have had that the authorities would relax their grip on the wing as a result of the strike were quickly dispelled the following Friday when four Table 4 prisoners were moved, in contravention of what Honey had said at the meeting. Some of us, including myself, wanted an immediate sit-down to protest about the moves but it was generally decided to wait until the two-week deadline was up before any action should take place.

Exactly one week later, on 31 August rumours spread through the wing that some of the Irish men would be moved over the weekend (this is verified in the report) in an effort to prevent a strike the following Monday. Everybody had long since realised that another strike was necessary, it was plain for all to see that the authorities had contemptuously refused to fulfil our demands. Instead they were intent on enforcing discipline as the moves of the four men on the previous week had proved. The only thing we could do to prevent the same thing happening again was to bring the strike forward from the Monday to that day. And that is what we did.

At 5pm when the usual order was given to prisoners to return to their cells over 200 of us refused. Instead we had a sit-down. This time the authorities were not caught by surprise as they were with our last protest action and they responded immediately by locking away those who did not want to participate and locking all the other cells. Shortly afterwards Assistant-Governor Ritchie came and asked us to end the protest. We told him that we wanted to see either the governor or a representative of the Home Office and we would not move at least until that minimum demand had been met. It soon became apparent that Ritchie and another AG, who was also on duty that night, Gregory-Smith, would have some difficulty meeting our

demand but we were determined to see that it was met.

The sit-down started off as a reasonably light-hearted affair but after a couple of hours without receiving a positive response from the authorities some prisoners dropped out and returned to their cells. Although the sit-down was peaceful throughout, tension began to rise when it was noticed that every five minutes or so two screws would come into the wing and take up a position around each landing office. Although our numbers had whittled away there was still about 130 of us situated at one end of the wing but distributed on all four landings. We all could see the screws collecting around the landing offices. Some prisoners strongly felt that if we did not end the sit-down soon they would attack us. Others argued that as it had been peaceful throughout and as long as it remained so the screws had no reason to attack. Despite the arguments, as their numbers grew tension increased. Eventually another prisoner and myself went to Gregory-Smith and told him that those screws should be moved out of the wing as their presence was intimidating and they were only making an already tense situation worse. He replied that their function was to escort prisoners who wanted to return to their cells safely and without being hurt by others who did not want the sit-down to end. We told him that his answer was ridiculous because prisoners had been dropping out of the sit-down all night and not one of them had been troubled in any way. Those who continued with the protest understood the feelings of those who no longer wanted to participate, and besides that, the screws standing around the offices had not escorted any prisoners back to their cells. This was being done by a few who were patrolling the landings. We stressed that we were engaged in a peaceful protest and it would remain so if we were not attacked, which was the true purpose of the screws being there. He denied this. As he had already told several prisoners that Home Office representatives would arrive shortly to see us, we asked him what time would they be coming. He looked at his watch – it was 9.50pm – and replied, 'They'll be here at ten.' He was right.

Ten minutes later there was a loud crash and the Mufti squad came charging in. Wearing specially made thick padded overalls, helmets with visors and padded gloves, and carrying four foot long wooden staves and riot shields they brutally assaulted every prisoner who had the extreme misfortune of being caught within their range. Within seconds the wing was in chaos, uproar and confusion as a peaceful sit-down became a one-sided bloody battle. As the Mufti squad waded into prisoners lashing out with their staves and kicking anybody who fell to the ground, the shouts and screams of beaten men echoed around the prison. A group of about sixty of us had been on the three landing when the Mufti came in but when they rushed up the central stairs, passing the screws around the offices, who then followed behind, we ran up the end stairs to the fours. They came

down both sides of the landing and we were forced to retreat until we were effectively trapped in a corner, then they attacked us. When that stopped they formed a gauntlet and we were punched, kicked and hit with batons as small groups of us were forced into cells along the landing. A few minutes later each cell was unlocked and we were told we had to return to our own cells, one at a time. Again each of us had to run the gauntlet of screws and again we were assaulted. Some time later, every prisoner had been locked in his own cell and the 350 screws who participated in the attack were fully satisfied that they had the wing under control. Then for about five minutes they loudly banged their batons on the railings and let out wild screams, yells and cheers of victory.

As a result of the Mufti squad riot 69 men required stitches for wounds sustained, one man needed 22 stitches for a head wound, another 15, another suffered a broken collar-bone and one man nearly lost an eye. 122 men were charged with disciplinary offences.

In the report, the Home Office had to highlight on the divisions between prisoners because it wanted to blame us for what happened to cover up the serious acts of criminal assault the Mufti squad committed. There is no doubt that divisions did exist between different groups, but they did not bring about violent conflict and there certainly was not any struggle for power within the wing – no sensible prisoner seeks power within prison, his only interest is to get out of it. The simple truth is that there would never have been a strike, neither would the sit-down have taken place, if the prisoners were as divided as the report suggests we were. Both protest actions needed and demanded unity amongst prisoners, and it was so well achieved that the authorities could only respond to it with a terrifying display of institutionalised criminal violence.

The report criticises the Irish political prisoners more than other prisoners, because they are the most politically active and always prepared to defend not only their own rights but the rights of others also. The authorities are well aware of this and they particularly victimise Irish POWs who have been subject to many vicious assaults, excessive durations of isolation and much psychological intimidation in the attempt to crush their resistance. The strong determination of the POWs to resist the innately oppressive policies of the prison system has been a powerful source of inspiration to many others, including myself.

In the official investigation following the Mufti squad riot, the Home Office concluded that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute any of the screws, despite the many injuries inflicted on prisoners – a typical cover up.

Theoretically the acronym Mufti stands for Minimum Use of Force Tactical Intervention, but anybody who was there that night and a victim of their maniacal violence knows that it could only mean Maximum Use of Force, Terror and Intimidation.

Shujaa Moshesh

## CENTRAL AMERICA IN BRIEF

### ● El Salvador Junta prepares new offensive

The El Salvador junta is preparing a new offensive against FMLN strongholds. Their last major offensive on the Guazapa volcano ended in humiliating failure with retreating junta soldiers being told by their officers 'You are perhaps most lucky just to be alive.' Junta hopes for the coming offensive rest on the Ramon Bellosa Battalion which in the first week of May returned from the United States after a 90 day training course at Fort Bragg. This offensive is unlikely to fare any better than previous ones. Even disregarding the FMLN's proven ability to repulse US trained troops the battalion is quite unprepared to engage in battle against any large guerilla force. Supposedly a 'ready reaction' force it has no trucks to transport its troops and the entire army only has 17 helicopters, capable of carrying only 10 soldiers each, whose services are needed by other army units as well. US imperialism is however working fast to improve the technical and organisational efficiency of the Salvadoran army. It will provide it with 12 new aircraft by the end of this year including cargo planes, spotter planes and fighter jets for ground attack. In addition the US government is planning to increase the Salvadoran army helicopter fleet from its current 17 to 40 Huey helicopters, and is continuing its training programmes for junta troops.

### ● Childhood under imperialism

'In the capitalist world, millions of children's lives consist of a daily clash with cruelty, neglect, solitude, indifference, poverty and hunger.' These words are from an article in Granma (Weekly Review of the Official Organ of the Communist Party of Cuba). The horrifying truth of this statement is shown by a few of the facts cited in the article. 20% of children born in the Brazilian countryside die in their first year from diarrhoea; medical attention is available to only 1 out of every 20,000 children in Asia and Africa; 55,000 children die in Colombia every year due to epidemics; a million children under 5 die every year in Latin America as a result of disease and hunger; 6 million children died in the dependent underdeveloped countries for lack of vaccines in 1980; 15 million children under 5 starved to death in the world in 1978; 15 out of every 100 children in the world die of starvation and 20 suffer from resultant diseases such as blindness and brain trauma.

### ● Imperialist plans for the Caribbean

US imperialism has announced details of its much vaunted Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI): the 'Marshall Plan for the Caribbean'. In the guise of economic aid this initiative has earmarked \$350 million for the development of so-called 'free market' economies in the region. Consequently, a large part of this money is to be made available to the El Salvador junta and the CIA-backed reactionary Seaga regime in Jamaica, while Grenada, Cuba and Nicaragua are to receive nothing. This \$350 million is just a fraction of what the US and British imperialists take from the region each year. More than this sum is paid annually to US banks alone, servicing the region's \$150 billion debts. In just three days US multinational firms can expect to make \$350 million from their murderous exploitation of the oppressed throughout the world.

Included in the initiative, as a condition for the receipt of the 'aid', is agreement to free trade with the US. As most Caribbean countries can already export goods freely to the USA the real effect of this clause will be to allow US multinationals to swamp Caribbean economies with cheap goods that cannot be sold elsewhere, thereby further destroying Caribbean economies in the interests of further imperialist exploitation.

Trevor Rayne

# EAST TIMOR IMPERIALIST GENOCIDE

Since December 1975, Indonesia, with the full support of British and American imperialism, has been carrying out a systematic war of murder, terror and repression against the people of East Timor. Over 200,000 people have died, (almost one third of the population), many thousands of them from malnutrition and starvation.

The eastern part of the island of Timor, which lies in the group of islands between Asia and Australia, was bloodily seized by the Portuguese colonialists in 1904. The people suffered under the yoke of the Portuguese - the country was kept economically backward, there was a 50% mortality rate for children under 5 and the highest TB rate in the world. There was an almost total lack of health care and basic education. All political activity was outlawed.

In 1974, when the liberation wars of the peoples in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau brought down the Portuguese fascist regime, the people of East Timor began to organise. The most popular organisation that emerged was the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) - a democratic national liberation front.

Neighbouring Indonesia, led by the brutal anti-communist Suharto, began to undermine the Timorese struggle for independence and instigated a coup in August 1975. FRETILIN fought off these attempts successfully, and with the impending threat of an Indonesian invasion declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor in November 1975.

An independent East Timor represented a grave threat to imperialist interests in South-East Asia, who after the US defeat in Vietnam armed and supported Indonesia as the policeman of the area. The straits alongside Timor are important for the passage of American submarines and the multinationals wished to plunder the reserves of oil to be found in the area.

The anti-imperialist programme of FRETILIN was a further threat to imperialism. Revolutionary Brigades and a popular militia was set up by FRETILIN, and health and literacy schemes started.

Indonesia invaded in December 1975 just after Ford and Kissinger had visited them to supply more arms. 90% of Indonesian weapons were supplied by the US.

FRETILIN guerrillas resisted the invasion heroically and with considerable success. But the invaders murdered, razed villages and committed atrocities that are now well-documented. US-supplied Bronco OV10 planes saturation bombed and napalmed FRETILIN-held areas, while soldiers raped women and massacred whole families. As a Timorese priest said at the time in a smuggled letter, 'The world ignores us and it is a pity. We are on the way to genocide'.

It is only through imperialist military aid that Indonesia has been able to continue its bloody war; without it FRETILIN would have been victorious. The US has continued to supply sophisticated aircraft, along with advisors, pilots, technicians and mercenaries. British imperialism has also backed the genocide - in 1978 British Aerospace supplied 8 Hawk ground/attack/training aircraft in a £25m deal. The Hawk was particularly well-suited to counter-insurgency operations against FRETILIN forces.

The lucrative imperialist profits, not the tears and suffering of the innocent Timorese, were well to the fore in the mind of the Managing Director of British Aerospace who said, 'The Indonesian contract is superb news... It is an important breakthrough into the South-East Asian market which is one of great potential'. This deal took place under a Labour government. To this day British firms such as Dunlop and Balfour Beatty continue to make huge profits in Indonesia.

Famine now rages in East Timor, the peasants' crops and farms having been destroyed by defoliants. Captured FRETILIN supporters are horribly tortured in prisons and concentration camps, before being beheaded or shot.

Despite the appalling loss of life, FRETILIN forces continue to hold large areas of East Timor. Their valour and revolutionary sacrifices stand as moving examples of a peoples' resistance to imperialist terror. It is not surprising, then, that the 'free press' of the rich countries have been so silent about East Timor. To have even begun to mention the genocide there would have exposed their sordid concern for 'human rights' as the big lie that it really is.

**Victory to FRETILIN!  
Long live the democratic  
republic of East Timor!**

Bill Hughes

# GUATEMALA BORN AGAIN FASCIST

The 23 March military coup in Guatemala raised a born again Christian, General Efraim Rios Montt, to the head of the country's fascist junta. Montt's alleged Christian principles and his frequent quoting of the Bible has delighted the US imperialists. Montt's reforming talk has been seized on by the State Department as the 'democratic' wrapping for a resumption of US military aid and economic assistance to the junta. The US Government is now planning a \$4m sale of spare parts for US built helicopters, it has set aside \$250,000 to train Guatemalan officers and intends to add another \$50,000 to this fund. It is also preparing a \$50m aid package for 1983 and hopes to rapidly resume direct US military supplies to the junta.

With the Guatemalan working class and peasantry firmly behind the Guatemalan Revolutionary Union (URNG) the junta can only survive through increased imperialist aid. However Montt also recognises that to stem the anti-imperialist revolution he needs to retain some social support from the Guatemalan middle classes. To this end he has sacked some minor officials, arraigned others for corruption and attempted to prevent the fascist death squads operating in middle class areas of the major cities. To lull and reassure the middle classes he has declared:

'We need a policy of beans and rifles to help the people develop.'

The reality is that the junta has only a 'policy of rifles' for the working class and peasantry with the massacres in the working class districts of the cities and the countryside continuing unabated.

On 12 May, 13 Indian peasants from the western highlands occupied the Brazilian Embassy in Guatemala City to draw attention to the unceasing genocide against the Indian peasantry. In a statement made before successfully leaving the Embassy for Mexico, the revolutionaries said:

'We have been persecuted and bombed by the government...'

23 March coup 'has not changed anything... They keep burning our corn, our beans, our houses... We ask for solidarity from the people of the world because we need food and clothes, because our houses have been burned.'

The reality of this statement has been repeatedly confirmed by reports of junta burnings and massacres in Huehuetenango, Ixcán Grande and El Quiché provinces. In El Quiché, the Guerilla Army of the Poor (EGP) has revealed that the junta is using scorched earth tactics in its war against the Indian peasants. Just one day before the occupation of the Brazilian Embassy, junta soldiers murdered 15 men, 3 women and 2 children in the village of Salacium and burnt down 20 homes. On the same day 13 peasants were murdered in another village near the Mexican border.

The Guatemalan anti-imperialists were not deceived by Montt's talk, they saw his actions. The URNG has declared its intention to continue the armed struggle until the junta and its entire state apparatus is destroyed and replaced by a revolutionary democratic government.

Eddie Abrahams

# PALESTINIAN PRISONERS IN ZIONIST GAOLS

Palestinian political prisoners held in Zionist gaols are subjected to the same prison brutality and criminalisation policy that British imperialism metes out to Irish political prisoners held in the H-Blocks, Armagh and English prisons. A glimpse of Zionist prison repression and Palestinian resistance is shown in the article below reprinted from the PFLP Bulletin (English language journal of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine). A magnificent demonstration of the internationalism of the Palestinian resistance and the solidarity between Palestinian and Irish political prisoners occurred during the Irish prisoners' hunger strike last year. Then, mothers of Palestinian political prisoners in Jerusalem held protests to express their solidarity with the Irish hunger strikers using the slogan 'Nafha/H-Blocks/Armagh One Struggle!'

## PRISON UPDATE

An article published in *Al Ittihad* the first week of February has revealed some details of the December 21st assault against prisoners in the notorious Ashkelon prison. A letter smuggled out by a prisoner states that on that day, guards attacked the inmates with tear gas bombs, plastic bullets and water hoses. Various forms of collective punishment were then imposed. Since then, Ashkelon prisoners have not been

allowed visitors and their allowances have been stopped. The attack came in response to the prisoners' demands for an end to the chronic overcrowding and collective punishment. The prisoners have formed resistance committees in an attempt to counter this aggression, and their families and supporters have been active in staging numerous sit-ins and demonstrations, mainly directed to the International Red Cross. In a recent protest, the families declared that they have received information that conditions have worsened: water is cut for

days at a time, winter clothing confiscated, blankets forbidden, the food is atrocious and there is virtually no medical treatment available.

There is a general consensus in the occupied land that prison conditions, already notoriously bad, have deteriorated this past year. In January, hunger strikes were announced in Nafha and Bir Sabe prisons. Twenty prisoners in Moscobiah also declared a hunger strike; the twenty are all youths aged 14-17, who had been arrested in Duheisha camp this past December on charges of throwing Molotov cocktails. News of the progress of these strikes has not been forthcoming, due to the isolation imposed by the authorities. However, we can expect the harshest measures, as seen in the martyrdom of three militants by barbaric forced feeding during the heroic hunger strike at Nafha prison in August 1980. An open letter sent by Nafha inmates at that time still speaks for the struggle of all Palestinian political prisoners: 'The staunchest and most modern Zionist and imperialist prisons and the whole world will realise that we shall win the battle of hunger as we won the battle of determination.'

# SIX COUNTIES SECTARIAN STATE

  
**OFFICIAL**

In 1976, in an effort to show that they were 'doing something' about discrimination against Catholics in the six counties, the British government set up the Fair Employment Agency for Northern Ireland. The absurdity of pretending that this Agency can eliminate (or even reduce) discrimination in a state which was established and is maintained on the basis of sectarian discrimination is reflected in the annual reports of the Agency which in a ritualistic fashion every year express regret at the Agency's lack of success so far in combating discrimination combined with vague hopes that it will be more successful in the future. In its recently published fifth report, however, the strain of trying to present a hopeful picture after five years of total lack of success begins to show. The report expresses the Agency's 'disappointment' at the continued lack of commitment by employers and trade unions to reducing discrimination and it openly admits that there is likely to be even less equality of opportunity as unemployment increases.

The report also summarises the findings of two studies commissioned by the Agency into employment opportunities for school-leavers in Belfast and Derry. Both studies confirm that patterns of discrimination have remained unchanged. The Belfast study found that despite obtaining at least as good exam results as Protestant children Catholic school-leavers were less likely to have found employment five months after leaving school and less likely to have found employment which permitted further training. The main reason for this disparity was, according to the authors of the study, that Protestants were able to obtain employment through 'informal networks' of family and friends. As the authors put it: 'The higher levels of Catholic unemployment may mean that Catholic boys have a less extensive network of employed family members and friends on whom to draw for help in finding work'. The study carried out in Derry reached the same conclusion. The report states: 'It was found that Catholics had fewer influential contacts in the job market due to higher degrees of unemployment and were more inclined to seek their jobs through the employment exchange or the Careers Officer'.

The report therefore admits in general terms that the patterns of discrimination remain as entrenched as ever and it endorses the conclusion of the authors of the Belfast study that

'unless commitments to this goal (equality of opportunity) from Government, employers and the trade unions are followed by major positive actions then equality of opportunity in employment will remain nothing more than a distant goal to which all can, when required, express sympathy'.

Needless to say there is no chance whatever of such 'major positive actions' being forthcoming since they would undermine the very sectarian foundations on which the state of 'Northern Ireland' is built.

The most damning evidence of the Agency's total ineffectiveness, however, is contained not in the official report but in a series of unpublished studies carried out by the Agency which were recently leaked to the *Irish Times*. These studies focussed on skilled jobs in major engineering firms in Belfast - relatively highly paid jobs which have traditionally been reserved for

Loyalists. The studies aimed to find out whether this pattern of discrimination had changed at all over the past few years. The conclusion, predictably, was that it had not. In the Harland and Wolff shipyard it was found that not a single Catholic was employed in a skilled occupation. In Shorts aircraft factory it was estimated that between 4.5% and 8% of the skilled workers were Catholics. In two other large engineering factories the proportion of Catholics in skilled occupations was found to be about 10%. Another major engineering firms employed no Catholics at all. A similar pattern of discrimination was found in the Northern Ireland Electricity Service. Only about 3% of the Service's senior directors and managers were Catholics, while less than 10% of the Service's engineers and 12.6% of its administrative staff were Catholics. In the light of such blatant discrimination the Agency asked all these employers for written undertakings that they would in future pursue an equal-opportunity policy - not one complied with this request. All the 'education', 'advice' and 'discussion' by the Fair Employment Agency over the past five years has therefore produced what it was always intended to produce - the appearance of concern over discrimination coupled with a total failure to do anything about it.

## Irish correspondent

### ● CPI and SFWP back Prior's Plan

The British imperialist plan recently proposed by Jim Prior to steamroll Stormont Mark IV on to the political arena in the Six Counties has received formal backing at the annual conferences of both the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) and Sinn Fein the Workers Party (SFWP). This should not be surprising.

The CPI showed a complete indifference to the H-Block issue and did next to nothing to prevent the British imperialist murder of the ten Hunger Strikers. So embarrassed were SFWP members at any revolutionary associations, they decided at their conference to delete the words 'Sinn Fein' from their name, leaving a thoroughly respectable 'Workers Party'. The 'Workers Party' stands fully behind imperialist plans to reestablish Stormont and Loyalist rule. But then it also believes that jobs will be created by enlightened multinational companies. No doubt just like De Lorean for example!

Morrigan

# THE LABOUR PARTY AND IRELAND

The following is a contribution from an FRFI reader to a discussion on the Labour Party. We welcome debate on the subject.

Like many thousands of Irish people in this country I believed that the Labour Party stood for democracy and the natural rights of all ordinary law-abiding citizens. This, however, was a fool's dream. Following the last Labour Party Conference, it became Labour Party policy to repeal the notoriously fascist Prevention of Terrorism Act and to 'pursue its repeal while they are in opposition.'

Apart from their own NEC statement to Conference, many representations by groups and individuals, were made to Labour MPs (and to the other two main parties) pointing out that it was Labour Party policy to repeal the PTA - but when it came to the vote - the Labour Party abstained and thus allowed this fascist legislation to be renewed without opposition. In other words, these so-called Democratic Socialists refused to oppose fascism.

The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1974 is, by its very nature both racist and fascist. It is racist in that it is used indiscriminately against one race of people - the Irish. It is fascist in that it takes away basic civil liberties and freedom.

Since the introduction of this notorious Act by the Labour Party in 1974:

5251 persons were detained. Of these 4865 persons were released without any charge being preferred 85 persons were charged with offences under the Act, and 21 persons were charged with conspiracy to commit an offence under the Act.

280 persons were charged with offences NOT related to the Act (official Home Office statistics up to 1981)

It can be seen that the vast majority of those detained have been proven innocent. Of those who have been charged, the charges have been trivial, eg refusing to complete an embarkation card.

Having suffered the terror of detention where people are held incommunicado for periods of up to 7 days, they are forcibly photographed and fingerprinted, allowed little sleep, suffer disorientation, allowed food and drink at odd times only, sometimes in the middle of the night, are not given medical attention when they are ill, threatened and abused, and not allowed the right to silence even though they have nothing to say. When they are finally released, innocent of any crime, their photographs and fingerprints remain on central police computer records. The family and friends of those people detained under the PTA are also punished, left distressed not knowing whether those detained are alive or dead - because they are never informed about their detention. Frequently, when these innocent people are released, they find they have lost their jobs and often have to move house because of the widespread discrimination against them by their neighbours etc. Families are broken up and some are deported without being told why and without being allowed to question their deportation. Those held under the PTA are threatened that if they should disclose what happened to them while detained, or complain in any way, they will be re-arrested. This causes widespread terror, and they are afraid to say anything.

The PTA also makes many thousands of Irish people afraid to travel freely to visit their relatives in Ireland, because so many of them are stopped, questioned, or detained at the points of entry and

exit. The PTA also makes Irish people afraid to take part in social, cultural and legitimate political activities. It makes them terrified of expressing their genuinely-held views. The Labour Party knows all about the workings of the PTA and that is why the NEC statement to Conference was carried and why it became LP policy to repeal it. Many individuals and groups supplied them with evidence, and in an extract from the Secretary of the Parliamentary Labour Party, it states 'we have a number of people monitoring the Act very carefully.'

Yet, because the Tory Party Government promised an enquiry into the workings of the PTA, the Labour Party saw their opportunity as an excuse for failing to keep to their policy and abstained from opposing this fascist legislation. That, we are told is Democracy and Socialism.

Prior to the vote for renewal/repeal, Mr Foot, was asked about the Labour Party's stand on the PTA. His assurance in writing was 'that the policy to be pursued by the Parliamentary Labour Party in the House of Commons, would be that agreed by the last Labour Conference.' and another reply stated 'we will pursue the repeal of the PTA while we are in opposition.' So much for the leader of Democracy and Socialism.

Irish People who have and still are supporting the Labour Party must now realise that the Labour Party are in favour of RACISM and FASCISM when it comes to the Irish people.

Any Irish person who supports the Labour Party in any way whatsoever, is helping to degrade and brutalise their own people.

## D Bree

### ● Eviction plans against nationalist families

80 families in nationalist West Belfast and possibly another 200 in other nationalist areas of Belfast face imminent eviction from their homes. Hardest hit will be families in the Andersonstown area and particularly the Twinbrook estate, where despite the fact that legal tenancies have been given to most families, there are still 180 with only 'use and occupation' (ie squatters) rent books. The evictions are aimed even at those families who are not in arrears for rent or heating bills.

Squatting as a social phenomenon in Belfast began after the Loyalist pogroms in 1969 which drove thousands of nationalists from their homes to take refuge in other parts of the city. Now the loyalist Housing Executive with active assistance from the RUC and British army troops is preparing to make these families homeless once again. A 'hit-list' of the first families was drawn up two months ago at Stormont by the Northern Ireland Office and the Housing Executive. The NIO has promised a large force of specially instructed and equipped RUC men to back up the bailiffs. The nationalist community is resisting the planned evictions and is mounting a vigorous campaign in the affected areas.

Ace Kelly

## IN BRIEF



### ● 26 County collaboration

26 County collaboration with British rule in Ireland took an unprecedented turn on 17 May when the trial of Owen McCarton Smyth was moved from Belfast to Dublin, complete with loyalist British judge Mr Justice Hutton.

The Free State regime, founded with the aid of British guns, has already stepped up its use of the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act which abolishes any pretence of an 'independent' Republic by allowing for people to be tried in the 26 Counties for 'offences' committed in the Six Counties. Now it is allowing Diplock court judges to operate in the 26 Counties. The depth of 26 County collaboration is clear for all to see.

Owen McCarton Smyth has spent 14 months in custody on remand already. He is pleading not guilty. He will now have the 'pleasure' of being held in custody in the 'independent' 26 Counties.

### ● FitzGerald wants more

In a lecture on BBC on 20 May ex-Prime Minister Garrett FitzGerald called for yet more collaboration with British imperialism. Former Prime Minister FitzGerald is distinguished from present Prime Minister Haughey only by his more blatant subservience to British imperialist dictates.

FitzGerald called for an all-Ireland judicial system and police authority. Given the operation of the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act, given the Garda attacks on and frame-ups of Republicans and given the Republicans incarcerated in Portlaoise, FitzGerald is only asking for the further development of the all-Ireland judicial system and police authority which already exists.

Indeed this is the only 'united Ireland' that interests the bourgeois pro-imperialist Free State traitors: a bourgeois Ireland 'united' against the Republican movement and Irish working class. James Martin

### ● Impoverishment of working class in 26 Counties

Workers and small farmers in the 26 Counties are extremely oppressed by the mechanics of capitalism. Class oppression is endemic, self-perpetuating and becoming more pronounced. The property owners, big farmers, wealthy businessmen and capitalists become more privileged on account of structured inequality. And the government imposition of tax and education policies reinforce structured inequality. These are the major findings of a report entitled 'The Distribution of Income in the Republic of Ireland: a study of social class and family cycle inequalities'.

The report highlights the growing impoverishment of the working class. It reveals that 7% of the Republic's population has a disposable income below the paltry unemployment benefit, and that 25% of the population lives below the poverty line. Income disparity between classes is reflected in facts such as 20% of the population receives only 1.2% of total income, whilst the top 10% of income earners get 29% of total income. In the field of education, statistics for 1978 show that less than 1% of unskilled manual workers' children, and only 5% of semi-skilled workers' children enter university. In contrast to 65% of children from 'professional' middle class families.

With reference to farmers, one of the report's authors, Prof Damien Hannon, said that since 26 County absorption into the EEC in 1973, the disparity between the rich, large farmer and poor, small farmer has widened - EEC policies assist to enrich the big farmer at the expense of the small.

Morrigan

# RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up

# DEFEND MAY DAY 2 & TOOTING 3

## 8 May Irish Demonstration

On Saturday 8 May, in a demonstration organised by the May 8 Organising Committee, 3,000 people marched through London to commemorate the murder of Bobby Sands and his nine IRA/INLA comrades. Led by a Glasgow flute band and supported by Sinn Fein, IRSP, TOM, Armagh Womens Group, RCG/FRFI, NLISC and SLISC, GIFAC and others the march went from Hyde Park to Jubilee Gardens in South London.

The rally at Jubilee Gardens, chaired by Ernie Roberts MP, heard speeches from Owen Carron MP, Ken Livingstone, Indian Workers Association, IRSP and others. In a moving speech Mrs Lily Hill, mother of framed Irish POW Paul Hill, declared 'Bobby Sands and his comrades died for freedom. They will never be forgotten.'

## Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee

Supporters of the Irish liberation struggle in Bradford are going ahead to organise solidarity work by the setting up of Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee. A petition will be launched shortly and other activities including a public meeting are planned. Anyone interested in attending the committee meetings and helping with solidarity work should write to:

**Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee**  
c/o Fourth Idea Bookshop  
14 Southgate  
Bradford 1

## Black flag vigil - Glasgow 22 May - 5 arrested

On Saturday 22 May, GIFAC supporters went to the Royston Road area of Glasgow (where the previous week we held a 400 strong Hunger Strike Commemoration march) to hold a one hour long black flag vigil to commemorate the deaths of Raymond McCresh and Patsy O'Hara. After 20 minutes and without any warning the police pounced on the GIFAC supporters and made 5 arrests. Those arrested were subsequently charged with 'behaviour likely to provoke a breach of the peace'.

The GIFAC is determined to fight this police attack and have the charges against our 5 supporters dropped. We urge you to write to the Chief Constable, Patrick Hamill, Pitt Street, Glasgow, condemning the arrests and to the Procurator Fiscal demanding that the charges against the 5 be dropped.

We also ask that you send us copies of any correspondence you enter into. Messages of support and donations will also be most welcome (cheques payable to H/A Committee).

The GIFAC believes that the Irish people deserve as much support as we in Britain can offer. We refuse to be intimidated or silenced by British imperial-

ism's henchmen - the boys in blue. We look forward to your support for our campaign.

*K Clarke (for GIFAC)*

## North London Irish Solidarity Committee

On the recent 8 May Demonstration the NLISC organised a 'Victory to the Irish People!' contingent. It received support from SLISC, RCG/FRFI, RCL and many workers on the march. Altogether 200 people in the contingent kept up non-stop slogan chanting from Hyde Park to Jubilee Gardens, and the contingent grew because of its marked militancy.

Regularly the NLISC holds committee meetings of 20 or more people, larger than some public meetings! The principled stand which the NLISC has set itself has meant growing success. Steve Bundred, a local GLC Councillor, has affiliated to NLISC and will be one of the speakers at our 17 June public meeting.

At a recent street meeting in Archway over twenty supporters of NLISC gave out hundreds of leaflets and received widespread support for the petition and the speeches being made by supporters. Copies of FRFI and *An Phoblacht*/Republican News were being snapped up by an eager audience. FRFI supporters sold over 110 papers.

Meanwhile, the NLISC petition calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland continues to gain hundreds of working class signatures. It has also been signed by Owen Carron MP and Dafydd Ellis Thomas MP, although no Labour MPs have signed the petition. Write for your petitions to NLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

The NLISC is proving in practice that a solidarity movement, based on unconditional support for the liberation struggle, *can and will be built!*

Support the NLISC in its work. A victory for the Irish people will be our victory. Write to  
**NLISC, BM Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX**  
*Mark Peters*

## London Marathon helps FRFI

As FRFI readers will know, we sponsored a runner in this year's London Marathon on 9 May. Our runner turned in a splendid performance completing the 26 mile run in 2 hours and 48 minutes beating over 15,000 other runners. His efforts have helped FRFI to the tune of £324 already collected and a further £170 promised.

Readers who have sponsor forms or money collected for the runner should send it down immediately - we need it. We wish to thank all those who helped us raise much needed funds for FRFI.

Make your cheques and Postal Orders payable to Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

As reported in FRFI 19, 2 supporters of FRFI - Terry O'Halloran and Chris Procter - were arrested on the South London Irish Solidarity Committee contingent on the May Day march in London on Saturday 1 May. Their offence, according to Inspector Summers of Stoke Newington police, was to chant the slogan 'British army murderers out!' Summers, declaring that his son was in the army (like father like son!), sent his police to arrest the two.

The police attacked the SLISC contingent because it was raising the issue of Ireland on the march. Summers' ignorant racist thugs soon showed their 'impartiality' with racist sexist abuse against passers-by and threats to the two such as 'The sergeant at Bow Road is EX-RUC. He'll like you two' and 'If we had a police state we could clear s--t like you off the streets'. One PC even blurted out the truth saying 'What's British law? There's no law!'

Chris and Terry were arrested at 2.30pm and threatened with being held until the following Monday. It was only pressure exerted by supporters outside with lawyers, four MPs - Jo Richardson, Joan Maynard, Alf Dubs and Bob McTaggart - and the press making telephone enquiries that forced them to release the two at midnight after holding them for some ten hours.

Supported by a lively picket of nearly 20 supporters loudly chanting 'Police censorship out! Dismiss Inspector Summers now!' Chris and Terry appeared in court on Wednesday 19 May. The case was adjourned to 12/13 October at Well Street Court W1.

## Tooting Street Meeting attacked

Two weeks after the arrest of the May Day 2 the police swooped again. This time they attacked a SLISC street meeting at Tooting Broadway on Saturday 15 May and arrested 3 FRFI supporters - Maxine Walker, Adrian Pyke and Mark Sealey.

Tooting police have long hated and harassed the highly successful SLISC street meetings in Tooting. Previously they claimed that the bookstall was an obstruction. On 15 May SLISC used a specially-constructed stand-up bookstall which could not obstruct the pavement. Foiled, they decided that the megaphone was illegal. Shown a copy of the law proving the use of the megaphone to be legal, Inspector Newark, stinking of drink, fell back on the old stand-by obstruction. He claimed that the use of the megaphone was causing an obstruction and had Mark Sealey and then Adrian Pyke arrested.

A large crowd of local people, black and white, gathered condemning the police. Maxine Walker walked up and down speaking to the crowd without a megaphone. She too was arrested! It seems that, with or without amplification, it is a 'crime' to speak out on Ireland or police repression. The local people gave great support, 40 came forward to act as witnesses and nearly 100 immediately signed a petition supporting SLISC's right to hold street meetings.

The police attacked the street meeting because of its success. People were stopping and listening to the speeches. A serving soldier took petition sheets for

immediate withdrawal and started collecting signatures. Another bought FRFI and described the IRA as 'revolutionaries'. The early part of the meeting was filmed by Venezuelan TV! All this was too much for the police who moved to break up the meeting in a doomed effort to silence SLISC.

Maxine, Adrian and Mark were carted off to Tooting Police Station. Within an hour supporters had a solicitor at the station and an angry picket outside demanding the release of the three comrades. All three were released after three hours and charged with obstruction. The case on Monday 17 May was adjourned to 29 June when it is expected to be adjourned again to early September.

## Defend democratic rights

Support and money is already coming in for the May Day 2 and Tooting 3. 750 people have signed the petition demanding the dropping of the charges. Those supporting this demand include: Dafydd Wigley MP, Ron Brown MP, Dennis Skinner MP, Ken Livingstone,

Steve Bundred (GLC), Bob Wright (Assistant General Secretary AUEW) and RCL.

SLISC have announced a campaign of marches in Tooting starting on Saturday 5 June. Both SLISC and NLISC are holding public meetings to fight this police censorship.

The police campaign against any opposition to British imperialism - as the massive policing of the Falklands march in London on Sunday 23 May showed - is growing rapidly. The appointment of ex-torturer Newman to head of the Metropolitan Police means that the police attack on the working class and democratic rights will be accelerated. The time to fight against police censorship and harassment is now!

**Join the campaign! Send us urgently needed money! Gather signatures for the petition! Support the march on 5 June! Act Now!**

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

**Terry Marlowe**

## EVENTS

### DEADLINE FOR FRFI 21: 28.6.82

#### 5 - 11 JUNE

##### SOUTH LONDON

Demonstration **Smash Police Censorship on Ireland!** Sat 5 June 1982. Assemble Tooting Broadway Tube 1.45pm. South London Irish Solidarity Committee

#### 12 - 18 JUNE

##### SOUTH LONDON

Leafletting, Saturday 12 June 1982, Sat 19 June 1982. Tooting Broadway Tube 1.45pm. South London Irish Solidarity Committee

##### NORTH LONDON

North London Irish Solidarity Committee **Street Meeting** Archway Tube Saturday 12 June 2.00pm

##### BRADFORD

**Public Forum Stop Police Harassment!** Defend Bill Bolloten! Thursday 17 June, Conference Room, Queens Hall, Morley St 7.30pm. Called by FRFI

##### NORTH LONDON

Public Meeting **Smash Police Censorship on Ireland!** Speakers include: Steve Bundred (GLC Councillor), Alistair Logan (Solicitor), NLISC, Sinn Fein, Mayday 2. Thursday June 17, 7.30pm, North Library, Manor Gardens, off Holloway Road, N7. Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee

#### 19 - 25 JUNE

##### SOUTH LONDON

Public Meeting **Smash Police Censorship on Ireland!** Defend the Tooting 3! Drop the Charges! Victory to the Irish People! Friday 25 June 1982. Lola Jones Hall (Small Hall) 7.30pm, Tooting Swimming Baths, Garrett Lane, Tooting SW17 (Nearest Tube - Tooting Broadway) Admission 50p on door. South London Irish Solidarity Committee



**TOOTING 3: Top: Inspector Newark orders arrest at Tooting. Middle: Second speaker arrested. Bottom: Third arrest**



# HANDS OFF IRELAND

## FREE SEAN McKENNA

The vindictive cruelty of British imperialism is once again revealed in the case of Sean McKenna who is being kept hovering between life and death in Long Kesh prison hospital.

Sean McKenna was one of seven imprisoned freedom fighters who went on hunger strike for political status on 27 October 1980. That hunger strike ended on 19 December with Sean McKenna only hours away from death after 53 days on hunger strike.

Sean McKenna's mother, Brigid, has described Sean's present condition:

'His eyesight... is almost totally gone. He has difficulty in balancing himself and has to hold on to something. He cannot stand for any length of time and most of the time is totally incoherent, not knowing who is visiting him or what they are talking about.'

This is 16 months after Sean ended his hunger strike. Apart from a short period immediately following the end of his hunger strike Sean has not received adequate medical treatment. Long Kesh prison hospital does not have facilities to treat Sean properly. The British prison administration knows this but refuses to move Sean to a civilian hospital. Sean McKenna is condemned to a living death.

Sean's mother summed up the position:

'If he doesn't receive proper medical



attention soon, not just vitamin injections, then I fear he will rapidly deteriorate. It is only a matter of time.'

North London Irish Solidarity Committee and South London Irish Solidarity Committee have started a campaign of letters to MPs and others demanding Sean's release. Joan Maynard MP has written back to NLISC stating that she has written to the Home Office requesting Sean's release on compassionate grounds. All readers are urged to write to their local MP and to the Home Office Prison Department demanding his immediate release.

Terry Marlowe

## STRASBOURG BANS PLASTIC BULLETS

The international campaign against the use of the anti-civilian 'riot control' plastic bullet is growing. On Thursday 13 May the European parliament voted by 110 votes to 43 to ban the use of plastic bullets within the EEC. Despite this overwhelming vote the British government has every intention of ignoring the ban.

There is no surprise in this. The imperialist ruling class has always ignored its own bourgeois democracy when that democracy goes against its interests. In 1918 when 75% of the Irish people voted for self-determination that vote was drowned in blood by the British imperialists. In April 1981 when IRA volunteer Bobby Sands was elected in Fermanagh/South Tyrone the British ruling class changed its own rules to prevent any further POWs being elected. Now the European Parliament votes against the use of plastic bullets and that vote too is ignored.

The British ruling class has every intention of continuing to use plastic bullets. Following the murder of Stephen McConomy James Prior declared: 'I don't believe that it would be right to bring about a change of policy' in the use of plastic bullets. Prior knows that the murder of Stephen McConomy was no accident. In the Six Counties 14 people, 7 of them children, have so far been murdered by plastic and rubber bullets. And now British police have

been supplied with at least 5000 plastic bullets for use against the black and white working class youth in this country in the event of any further risings. The murderous intent of the ruling class is clear. So is the cowardly treachery of the Labour Party.

Don Concannon, Labour Party Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, said of the Strasbourg ruling 'I am surprised at this decision, obviously taken



by groups of people who have never been on the receiving end of a riot, with Molotov cocktails, stones and the gunmen behind'. Concannon 'forgets' that most of the people killed by plastic bullets were nowhere near any riot. Only the week before Concannon spoke the inquest into the murder of 12 year old Carol-Ann Kelly proved that she was not involved in any riot at the time of her murder. This abject creature of the ruling class intends to defend the use of plastic bullets against anyone who opposes the imperialist system which his party protects. A motion in the House of Commons, proposed by Jock Stallard, to ban the use of plastic bullets in the Six Counties has so far the support of only 24 Labour MPs. What a miserable record from the 'democratic' 'socialist' party!

Plastic bullets are one weapon in the armoury of British imperialist terror. Their purpose is to maim and kill. In ignoring the European Parliament ban on plastic bullets British 'democracy' is once again exposed for the sham it is. British 'democracy' can only survive by the use of vicious murderous anti-civilian weapons such as plastic bullets.

Terry Marlowe

## CLYDESIDE TOM CALLS POLICE

In a shameful and despicable episode, Clydeside TOM and its reactionary allies called in the police to remove an FRFI banner from a march in Hamilton on 22 May.

This outrage took place on a march jointly called by Clydeside TOM, Glasgow Sinn Fein and the Scottish Republican Band Alliance. Prior to the march in a disgustingly sectarian manner, the organisers had voted to ban the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee (GIFAC) and its banner from the march. It is understood that Sinn Fein abstained on this decision. The organisers then made it known that if a GIFAC banner appeared it would be physically removed.

GIFAC, in pursuit of its non-sectarian policy of supporting all marches in support of the Irish struggle, nevertheless decided to attend the march with their banner. However, on the morning of the march, 5 GIFAC supporters were arrested whilst holding a black flag vigil in Royston. With 5 supporters and both GIFAC banners in police custody, other supporters from outside Glasgow attended the TOM march. FRFI supporters placed their banner on the march. Then, in what is TOM's most outrageous and anti-working class action to date, a leading TOM member and a band steward called over the police and asked them to remove the FRFI banner from the march. The police were only too happy to oblige.

The march itself proved a dismal and abject affair. Between 4-500 people marched through the back streets of

Hamilton - no chants, no militancy, no speeches, no rally at either end. It took 20 minutes to reach its destination then dispersed onto waiting buses leaving FRFI supporters and others alone and vulnerable in a heavily policed area in which Loyalists had earlier abused the march. Organised secretly and undemocratically, the march was an insult to the many people on it who genuinely support the Irish struggle. The contrast with GIFAC's open, public and democratic work is a clear one.

Clydeside TOM is running scared - hence its stooping to the gutter level of using the police against anti-imperialists. It is scared that its days as a petty clique controlling all Irish solidarity work in Glasgow are numbered.

FRFI has no hesitation in calling Clydeside TOM's behaviour pro-imperialist, pro-police and a disgrace to the Irish solidarity movement. We urge all activists in Glasgow to protest in the strongest terms to the March organisers. We urge all those who wish to do genuine work in support of the Irish people to turn their backs on reactionary Clydeside TOM. We further call on the TOM nationally to expel their Clydeside branch. If TOM chooses to take no action against their Clydeside branch we will assume that they approve of this disgraceful behaviour.

Maggie Lindsay

## UDA THREATS

The arrest of several UDA leaders in April was widely interpreted at the time as a purely sham exercise by the British government designed to present a picture of 'even handedness' as it launched its latest 'political initiative' rather than as a serious move against the UDA.

That interpretation has been fully vindicated by subsequent developments. Not only did Jim Prior re-emphasise immediately after the arrests that there was no question of banning the UDA but just three weeks later his own officials met the replacement UDA leaders and were told by them that they intended to escalate their campaign of sectarian violence in the run-up to the Assembly elections.

As if to underline the fact that this was no idle threat a few days after the meeting a loyalist gang shot dead a young Catholic man in North Belfast. On the day of his funeral the Lord Chief Justice obligingly released two of the arrested UDA leaders on bail. The excuse used was that several Protestant clergymen and loyalist politicians had provided good references for these two men - leaders of an organisation whose members have been responsible for countless murders of Catholics over the past few years. A few days later the other arrested UDA leaders were also released on bail - set free to plan the UDA's threatened campaign of violence.

Irish correspondent



Glasgow march, 15 May

## GLASGOW MARCH

On 15 May the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee held its most successful demonstration yet. Over 400 people marched through the streets of Royston and Blackhill in an angry commemoration of the deaths on hunger strike of the ten Irish POWs last year. The Wolfe Tone Band from Wishaw played throughout the march accompanied by chants of 'Victory to Ireland's Freedom Fighters! Troops Out Now! Bobby Sands MP! Volunteer!' and even a spontaneous shout of 'Viva Argentina! Brits Out Now!'

The route of the demonstration was decorated with slogans and paintings and local people waved from doors and windows, many joining the march as it went along. Over 100 FRFI were sold, with great interest being shown in the article 'Fascist upsurge against Pope's Visit' which showed that real communists understand and oppose the fascist, anti-working class nature of British imperialism's loyalist thugs. Earlier local youth had chased a mob of Loyalists who had entered the area intent on violence and disruption. Spirits were high as Glasgow's streets became the property of the 'people of no property' asserting their solidarity with the Irish people and their opposition to the British state.

The rally at the end of the march

heard messages of support from solidarity groups in Quebec (Canada), Amsterdam (Holland), Tyneside, North London Irish Solidarity Committee and South London Irish Solidarity Committee. All pledged support. The Irish Republican Socialist Party also sponsored the demonstration. Speeches were heard from GIFAC, FRFI, and Dundee supporters.

All sincere people who oppose British imperialism in Ireland should work with FRFI and build successful demonstrations such as this one. The Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee is intent on stepping up its work, and all those interested in helping should contact - GIFAC, c/o Box 15, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.