

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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The lessons of Bermondsey

The Bermondsey by-election on Thursday 24 February was a crushing defeat for the Labour Party with the Liberal Simon Hughes winning by 17,017 to Peter Tatchell's 7,698. Bermondsey was the sixth safest Labour seat in Britain. That this should happen in an overwhelmingly working class, decaying inner-city area with 18% unemployment confirms the collapse of the Labour Party as the crisis deepens.

FRFI has repeatedly exposed the reactionary corrupt pro-imperialist character of the Labour Party. Bermondsey, Labour-controlled for 60 years, with its massive crumbling estates and its poverty is testimony to the fact that Labour offers nothing to the working class, the poor, the homeless and the jobless. The bigoted ex-British soldier John O'Grady (Real Bermondsey Labour in every sense) personifies this corrupt party - first 'opposing' then joining the Tory-created profiteering London Docklands Development Corporation. In Bermondsey the rottenness of the traditional Labour Party is clear for all to see. Small wonder that thousands of workers turned their back on Labour.

The 'left', far from fighting the corruption and reaction of the Labour Party, provide a 'left' cover for it. For them loyalty to the imperialist Labour Party always comes before loyalty to the working class and oppressed. Tatchell made his 'loyalty' clear during the by-election. Before the election he signed the Troops Out Now petition, during the election he repeatedly declared his support for official Labour policy which *opposes* the right of the Irish people to self-determination and the withdrawal of troops. This cowardly retreat meant that there was little or no reason for anyone sickened by the Labour Party to vote for Tatchell. When he shook hands with arch-Loyalist Michael Foot he shook hands with the bloodstained imperialist history of the Labour Party.

Bermondsey was a debacle also for the middle class left. This constituency of traditional skilled, trade union organised workers not only spewed up the fascist hate campaign against Tatchell and gave 5 times as many votes to the NF candidate as to the CPGB and RCP candidates combined, but also elected a Liberal by a landslide. Yet these are the workers who will lead the fightback according to the middle class left. Both the main trends in the middle class left got their come-uppance in Bermondsey.

Those, like the IMG, who have gone over wholesale to the Labour Party, saw their candidate humiliated. The IMG has dissolved itself into the Labour Party, even scrapping its paper *Socialist Challenge* to replace it with the 'Labour Party and trade union' *Socialist Action*. For this section of the middle class left the Labour Party has become the elephants' graveyard of their failed hopes and dreams. The other response is the descent into ultra-left sectarianism typified by the RCP whose 'campaign', spiced with Thatcher-style anti-Soviet tirades, consisted mainly of stunts and abuse directed against Tatchell. This they call using elections for 'revolutionary propaganda'. In fact their campaign and their derisory vote of 38 (roughly a third of the 97 votes won by Monster Raving Loony Lord Sutch - a fitting comment on their intervention) only brought ridicule and contempt on the name of communism. Bermondsey shows, fortunately, that the ultra-left sectarian 'party of the future' has no future.

The role of the moneybags press with its poisonous hate-filled campaign using national chauvinism and anti-homosexual prejudice, revealed once again that there are no 'free and fair' elections in imperialist Britain. MPs are now to be appointed in the gutters of Fleet Street. This is no news for anti-imperialists and communists. Tatchell's indignation reveals only incredible naivety, and his retreat only cowardice.

The lessons of Bermondsey stand out in sharp relief to those prepared to see. The imperialist Labour Party and the middle class left - in both its right and ultra-left guises - offer no future for the working class and oppressed. The traditional 'working class' of the middle class left, far from fighting back, displays only its backwardness. The only contrast to this picture of disarray, demoralisation and defeat is to be found amongst the most oppressed sections of the working class who are actually, right now, fighting back and will form the core of a new mass revolutionary anti-imperialist movement in Britain.

Jellicoe Report on the PTA

On 15 March 1982 William Whitelaw announced in the House of Commons that the Rt Hon Earl Jellicoe DSO MC would head an inquiry into the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Lord Jellicoe is a fitting choice to 'review' the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Jellicoe is an ex-SAS officer and chairman of Tate and Lyle which uses apartheid to pay its plantation workers starvation wages (see FRFI 19 May 1982). The Parliamentary Labour Party, ignoring the terms of reference of the inquiry which stated that it would accept 'the continuing need for legislation against terrorism', seized on this 'review' as an excuse for refusing to abide by its own Party conference decision to oppose the renewal of the PTA. Now the report has been published. It contains no surprises. Jellicoe upholds the PTA in its entirety. Indeed his recommendations constitute a strengthening of the PTA.

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HANDS OFF THE YOUTH!

On every occasion so far, when angry determined people have turned out on the streets for the Roach campaign, the police have again and again harassed them or carried out arrests. In the four weeks since Colin was found dead in Stoke Newington Police Station, 58 people have been arrested.

The black community will turn out on the streets and fight for their rights, and in this fight the youth have been in the front line. As is confirmed when only a quick glance is taken at the age range of people prepared to stand up against the racist police force in this country. 17-year-olds to 27-year-olds have shown how willing they are to lead the fight back against police brutality and cover-ups, even if it means them being labelled 'criminal' by the state.

The 58 men and women were arrested on four separate occasions. The first eight arrests took place less than two days after the murder of Colin Roach. Over 100 people, led by Colin's family and friends, gathered outside Stoke Newington Police Station. The only way the police knew how to deal with the angry protestors, some of whom were holding their recently-made banners high, was to arrest them.

Undeterred, Colin's friends, the youth, were back again on Monday 17 January. Again over 100 people gathered. They knew the police would try to cover up the truth, the same way they did in the cases of Richard 'Cartoon' Campbell, Paul Worrell, Aseta Simms, Michael Ferreira and Barry Prosser. And the people were determined not to



let it happen again. And once more the police replied with arrests. As the police were beginning to feel the pressure and accompanying fear, their charge sheets became longer and longer.

Police made 22 arrests on the first demonstration called on 22 January.

Further reports on the Colin Roach campaign page 4

These all took place when the marchers had dispersed and the police felt safe to make their cowardly vicious arrests. One youth was attacked by six civil servants in blue uniforms and kicked to the ground. Three girls who protested at

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GREENHAM WOMEN DEFY THE STATE

The struggle of the Greenham Common women is escalating as all their attempts at peaceful protest are met with arrests, High Court writs and imprisonment. Meanwhile the determination and ingenuity of the women is leading to humiliating indignities for the 'invincible' British state.

So on 25 February the women displayed their contempt for authority when 6 of them broke into Holloway Prison and climbed onto the roof. The 6 then hid whilst supporters phoned the press. The prison authorities, not able to see the women, then spent the next hour denying they were there! Suddenly at 7.30am the women emerged with banners saying 'Every Woman Inside Is a Political Prisoner' and 'The Crime is Yet to Come'. They sang and danced on the prison roof whilst outside the gates other women maintained the vigil started on 17 February. By 8.30am the police finally managed to get a ladder, manhandle the women off the roof and arrest them.

Other protests have included a further blockade of Greenham Common base and a lie-down protest when

US Vice President Bush visited Britain and when Michael Heseltine visited Newbury Council. All these protests are resulting in a mounting number of arrests and court cases. On 16 February 36 women were gaoled for 14 days when they refused to be 'bound over to keep the peace'.

The repressive action now being taken against the women includes:

- At least 87 arrests arising from the latest events.
- 36 women gaoled.
- 59 women have had High Court writs issued against them for 'trespass' on Greenham Common. If the High Court agrees these women will be 'banned' from ever returning to Greenham on pain of indefinite imprisonment.
- The women in prison - including

72-year-old Nelly Logan - are being singled out for harsh treatment. They were transported to prison in 'riot' vans, each woman held singly in a cage. One woman banged her head in the van and suffered concussion but was refused medical attention until other prisoners protested. Prisoners being released from Holloway report that the women are being persecuted, split up, banned from singing and continually harassed.

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Interview with Mrs Knight

UNITED WE STAND!

In publishing this interview FRFI asks all its readers to warmly applaud the courage of Mrs Nellie Knight and her daughters in the struggle to stop police violence towards black people. On 6 November 1981, after complaining about a burglary on their home, Mrs Knight and her daughters, 19 year old Jennifer and 13 year old Janice, were dragged out of their home to Stoke Newington Police Station. They were assaulted and racially abused by the police who then charged them with six counts of Grievous Bodily Harm and Actual Bodily Harm. The Knight family fought a determined campaign against this frame-up and won. They have now started legal proceedings for damages against the Stoke Newington police. The Knight family have fully supported all the activities of the Roach Family Support Committee because they know the suffering that James and Pamela Roach are now going through.

Mrs Knight speaks the message of solidarity with all who will stand for the cause of a more just and free society. For people to come forward with their experiences of police victimisation and for us all to ensure that there will be help and support for them. For us all to carry on the fight which has begun since the death of Colin Roach. For us all to recognise the very real need to unite and fight against our oppressors. Above all, let us not have to wait for another murder to occur before opening our eyes to the truth that is all around us, that of repression, torture and murder by the racist British police.

FRFI: What happened when you were arrested?

Mrs Knight: On 6 November 1981 there was a burglary in my house. The police came to the house at night. We were dragged outside my door—the whole family. They got hold of me first. There were three policemen outside facing my door and there were 8 or 10 behind them with two dogs. The policemen included Inspector Black, another was PC Greenaway—they've both been promoted now. You can imagine we couldn't take their numbers because it was dark. We found after the case that 24 police were involved. They had plenty of meat wagons outside. Greenaway got hold of my left arm behind my back, it reached up to my neck. Inspector Black was kicking and punching me up the arse. The third policeman was on my right arm. I was dragged through the passage. I had no coat, no shoes, no warm clothing on. And my two eldest children Jennifer and Janice were dragged out too. And Joanna, she was aged six at the time, was left in the house. They dragged me to the front door. They put more pressure on my arm. I was asking them about my little girl. I asked them 'Is this the way you treat black people?' They didn't say anything. Going down the steps I was screaming. Greenaway took something from his inside pocket and hit me in the mouth with it. As he hit me I felt the blood running from my mouth, inside and outside. My glasses fell off. When he hit me I turned my head to the left and I bit him on the chest. He still continued with the pressure on my left arm. As we went through the gate I was still being held by the three police officers. I wasn't struggling. I was thrown face down into the van with my feet hanging down. They threw me in like a sack of potatoes. One of them slammed the doors on my feet.

In the van one of the police was nudging Janice in the breast with his elbow. Her nose was bleeding. Jennifer had been frogmarched by two of them with her arms twisted up behind her back to the van. I was face down in the back of the van. The police had their feet on me. They drove the van really rough to the station. When we reached the station I was still on the floor. A couple of police came up to me. I told them to get their hands off me. We went inside to the charge room. It was about twenty to three in the morning. They were calling us wogs and jungle bunnies. I never said

a word to them. They searched us. We were there for 15-20 minutes.

One police officer came in and said I needed a doctor. It took about twenty minutes for the police doctor to come. I told the doctor about the bleeding inside and outside my mouth, about the pain in my back and legs where I had been kicked, and also the pain in my arms.



He applied some stuff to my mouth with cotton wool, briefly looked at the other parts of me which ached, and said there was nothing wrong. My mouth was still bleeding. In answer to my question as to how my girls were, as they too had complained about aches and pains, I was told that they were alright. On pressing my case again to the doctor, I was told that I needed hospital treatment.

Of the three of us I alone was taken to Hackney hospital by a woman PC and a man. At the hospital, I was handed over to two black nurses and through my sobs told them of what had happened. I was taken to a ward where I was given an allergy injection on request and a stitch in my mouth. I was not attended by any doctor whilst I was at the hospital, nor was I asked for my name and address. The only people to speak to the doctors were the two police who had taken me there.

I was taken back to Stoke Newington Police Station where I was placed with my two elder daughters together in a cell. The cell was cold, and the tiny window and blanket were stained with blood. Marks to my body afterwards suggested the presence of bugs. The three of us huddled in a corner for warmth. We were all crying and, after some time, the girls started vomiting. I banged on the window with my ring which the police could not take off

when taking our other possessions. To my plea for help for my girls the police response was that if we did not keep quiet then we would just make things worse for ourselves later on.

A more sympathetic looking policeman then came in and after some pleading he allowed me to make a phone call to home. This call had previously been refused me. Jennifer had to give me the number twice, some idea of the effect the saga was having on me. Laurette, a friend of Jennifer's, told me that it was 7am and I told her that we had no coats or shoes and if possible could she please bring some slippers and also inform Mr Banerjee of our whereabouts. This she did although I did not see her at the station nor was I allowed to see Mr Banerjee of Hackney Asian Association who also came.

After pleading with another policeman about our conditions and informing him that I suffered from allergies and claustrophobia, we were moved to a slightly bigger cell but without much improvement. Jennifer once again commenced vomiting, and was refused sanitary towels when she requested them. A second doctor then came to give us each a tablet after which Jennifer fell asleep.

My strength had now run out and I was deeply hurt at the thought of a grown woman being locked away with two of her children in a cold prison, and for no reason. The slamming of those jail doors is something that will always live on in my mind.

An officer went by and informed us that someone from Scotland Yard (or CID) would be coming to see us at half past nine. But this did not happen. Eventually, someone came and took Janice and myself (leaving Jennifer asleep in the cell) to the charge room where the clock then read 2.50pm. This chap who proved to be Sergeant Piper (who had dealt with Jennifer and Laurette before) and another policeman, had already made out charge sheets without asking any questions. He filled out the forms and put his hand over them. Then told us that on signing them and on having our fingerprints and photographs taken, we could go.

Through the worries of not knowing how or where Joanna was, and what state my house was now in. I signed despite disapproval from Jennifer. On which Sergeant Piper said that we would have to appear at Highbury Corner court at half past nine on the following Monday morning. He suggested a plea of guilty on a charge of assault on the police, trying to pin the blame on Janice when it was I that had done so, and done so because of what the police had done to me.

On arrival at another room where I was to be photographed and have my fingerprints taken, I was further humiliated by the jesting over who would carry out these tasks.

After this humiliating experience of being made to feel like a criminal and being treated like an animal, we had to get a cab home where Laurette met us and paid the fare.

My pains and injuries kept me laid up for three days afterwards. Later on the police called asking me to go back to the station. As I was unwell, Jennifer went instead, much to the dissatisfaction of the police. Laurette had to call an ambulance to take me back to Hackney hospital where I was X-rayed and told that there were no bones broken.

On the Sunday, the police again phoned to say that someone would be around to see us. No mention was made of investigating the burglary. At about half past eleven someone did come to take fingerprints. But I told him that the only prints he would now find would be those of my children and anyone else who had been to the house over the weekend. The police photographers also came. They took a picture of Janice's face where she had been hit with the truncheon, asking her to smile to have the photograph taken. Further pictures were taken of my arm and face, and also of Jennifer, and these photographs were later presented in court.

FRFI: The important thing about your campaign was that it included picketing of the police station.

Mrs Knight: I cannot remember how many times we picketed the police station and we had about four marches. This I did because of the hurt of knowing that the police were now not harassing just the youth, but also grown adults and their families. I had to make a stance for myself and without the help I received from numerous people and associations I think we would have been sent to prison, convicted on police evidence which was lies. The publicity, marches, pickets and moral support from people were the things that helped the family through and led to our victory. It is important to bring such cases to the public's notice so that they would not go forgotten or unsupported as previous cases.

The principles are for black people to be treated as human beings and not like the scum of the earth. Colin Roach's death was the last straw. We have had to wait for someone to be killed for people to recognise that something must be done urgently to ease the plight of the black people. We need all the help we can get to overcome the brutal and racist treatment of the British police to black people. Especially in Stoke Newington where it has gone on for far too long. People must come out on the streets and express their solidarity in this great cause, and those in power should realise the plight of the black people and speak out against the inhumane treatment meted out to them.

FRFI: Do you see any parallels between the struggle of black people here and of oppressed peoples overseas?

Mrs Knight: What's happening here now is exactly the sort of things that people like Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King have been telling the world about for years. Nobody wants to live in a world of fighting and killing, but the oppressed people of this nation, and of the world, are being driven to just such an existence. We must fight whilst we still can, and before too many lives are wasted in what after all is a just struggle, that of justice and freedom.

The struggle for a just peace is being oppressed by the police. Later we will have to tackle groups like the NF but for now the police are presenting the major obstacle, and we must get together to win the first stage of a long and bitter struggle. Black and whites alike must speak out against the atrocities of the police, and we must all back each other.

I hope from my heart that all black people and all white people if they've got any humane feeling inside them about the prejudice and the hatred and the brutality from the police to the black community that they will come out and give us their physical support and attention. Though we've got our different prejudices we must come together. We must fight the racist police and their behaviour. For united we stand and divided we fall.

GREENHAM COMMON

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The courageous struggle of the Greenham women is allowing wider forces to learn essential political lessons. Above all they are exposing the facade of British democracy. The police are seen manhandling the women, arresting them and breaking up their demonstrations. The Courts are seen imprisoning women for the 'crime' of struggling for peace. Whilst the rulers of Britain perfect ever more deadly destructive weapons these women are imprisoned for 'breaching the peace'. The prisons into which they are thrown are seen to be viciously repressive institutions and the women constantly draw attention to the oppression of the working class, and especially the black, women in prison.

And the spirit and tactics of the women also teach lessons. Once again the pomp and majesty of the Law Courts (designed to strike fear into people) is dented as women crowd out the corridors and court grounds singing, chanting and dancing. Those arrested are not left to defend themselves. Court cases are picketed, prisons have peace camps established at their gates. Prison walls are climbed over, missile silos are climbed. Such disrespect and disregard for the oppressive institutions of the British state is truly a delight to behold! And what a contrast to the negotiation and arbitration so beloved by British trade union and Labour leaders whose respect for law and the state's institutions knows no bounds. Yet the SWP and other middle class left groups continually insist that the women should hand over their struggle to the 'Labour movement'—the very movement which, led by pro-imperialists, has failed to launch any serious struggle either for peace or for anything else!

Perhaps once, the British ruling class hoped that if they treated the peace protesters with fairly kid-glove tactics they would prevent the struggle going forward. Prevent the women from seeing the police, courts and prisons as the repressive and anti-democratic forces they are. That hope has now been abandoned. The gloves are off. Every protest is met with arrests and every ancient law is dragged up to try to crush the protest.

This determined struggle is—as all anti-ruling class struggles eventually are—being forced into 'illegality'. Soon it will start to meet 'criticism' for its militant tactics from those who once 'befriended' it. It is even more vital now that all anti-imperialist and democratic forces defend the women of Greenham Common.

Maxine Williams

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south africa

TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL MUST VETO PLESSEY

On 2 February Tower Hamlets Council in East London voted not to accept a £500,000 contract with Plessey for telephone equipment because of the extensive support Plessey gives to South Africa. This decision was won through the work of one councillor, Cosmas Desmond, with the support of 6 Labour councillors and 15 Liberals. Yet the majority of the Labour group (18 councillors, including Leader of the Council Paul Beasley) voted in favour of the contract. Because of this Cosmas Desmond resigned from the Labour Party. Now the ruling Labour group has united with shop stewards of the Electrical Engineers and Plumbers Union (EETU), Plessey Branch, to try to overturn this decision. When in opposition, the Labour Party has always made fine anti-apartheid statements, but when in a position to practically support those fighting apartheid, both at a local and national level, the Labour Party always takes the expedient way out and sides with British imperialism's oppression of the South African people.

Plessey supplies vital radar equipment to the South African Air Force (SAAF). In 1979 the British government openly admitted that Plessey was training members of the SAAF to use this equipment at its plant in Surrey. Plessey supplies the AR-3D collapsible mobile radar unit to South Africa, which is a highly sophisticated weapons system capable of controlling 4 simultaneous computer-assisted air to ground strikes. It is used by South Africa to co-ordinate its air attacks on Angola and probably also provides logistic support to the terrorist attacks of the MNR against Mozambique. Thus it is one of the clearest examples of the direct involvement of British imperialism in the murder of the people of Southern Africa.

It is against this background that the EETU branch from Plessey sent a delegation to the Finance sub-Committee of Tower Hamlets Council on 23 February to urge them to oppose the decision of the full council. Through the use of hypocrisy and lies together with the support of the Labour Party councillors, they were successful. At the next full meeting of Tower Hamlets Council on 9 March councillors will be urged to overturn the original decision and go ahead with the contract. Just as South Africa sends black sportsmen and women overseas to pretend that there is multi-racial sport in South Africa, so Plessey sent 2 black workers in their delegation of 5 to the Finance Committee meeting: furthermore they brought a banner reading 'black and white - unite and fight'.

EETU shop steward Bob Eadie put Plessey's case. Firstly he argued that, if the contract was not made, jobs would be at risk in Britain and then he continued by glorifying Plessey's (bloody) record in South Africa. He stated that Plessey pay their South African workers

above the UN official poverty level: yet this only represents the level below which workers will die from starvation and thus be of no use to the capitalists and imperialists. To prove his point he described how some British trade unionists had visited South Africa and returned saying how 'satisfactory' were the conditions of the black workers! Eadie argued that the Plessey radar system wasn't really an instrument of oppression. He went on to prove otherwise when he stated that Plessey's competitor, IBM, supplies equipment to South Africa which is 'far more dangerous than radar'! One person in the public gallery was so taken aback at Eadie's chauvinism that he turned to an FRFI supporter and commented 'Plessey's management are foul, aren't they?' - he was astonished to learn that this was a representative of the trade union! Following this the Chairman refused to allow a member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement speak to counteract Eadie's racist lies, and on the vote the EETU won - with the support of the Labour councillors.

For all the fine talk of the Labour Party about sanctions against South Africa, when it has come to act, the Labour Party has always opposed practical action. It was the Labour Party which deliberately allowed the breaking of sanctions against Zimbabwe and thus ensured the continued existence of Ian Smith's racist regime. It was the Labour government which signed the RTZ contract for the rape of Namibian uranium for the benefit of British power stations and British profits. It is the same Labour Party and its trade union allies who have done absolutely nothing effective to support the workers sacked and systematically brutalised by Rowntree Mackintosh's subsidiary in South Africa. The Labour Party defends the interests of the people it represents - a

privileged section of the British working class: the labour aristocracy whose privileges are made from British imperialism's exploitation of the oppressed peoples throughout the world.

The South African people are demanding the complete isolation of the apartheid regime - they know that this will accelerate its downfall. It will also accelerate the downfall of British imperialism. We must give all possible support

to this demand whether by boycotting South African goods or by supporting the original decision of Tower Hamlets Council to refuse to make massive deals with those who arm apartheid. On 23 February 15 members and supporters of Hackney and City Anti-Apartheid Groups, FRFI and Tower Hamlets Trades Council lobbied members of the Finance Committee. 15 people was not enough, and when the final decision is made on 9 March we must have 100 people showing their hatred of apartheid and all who deal with it.

Tower Hamlets Council must veto Plessey!
Lobby the Council
at 6.30pm 9 March
Tower Hamlets Town Hall,
Cambridge Heath Rd
Bethnal Green, London E2

excuses, excuses

After attending a meeting at Red Lion Square and reading the publication by Nelson Mandela 'I am prepared to die' I felt that it is not enough to say that I support the cause of Anti-Apartheid. I had to, and continue to, fight against Apartheid. This to me means doing what ever little I can.

The response to the letter I wrote to the Prime Minister was what I had expected and doesn't really contain any real statement of support for the cause we are fighting. It only tries to convey excuses for this present situation in South Africa.

Dear Prime Minister,
I am writing to you as a British subject who holds voting rights which help determine the government which runs this country.

It has recently come to my attention that a Mr Nelson Mandela has been serving a sentence of life imprisonment in South Africa charged with sabotage. The South African regime which took it upon itself to impose such a sentence, was not then and is not now, acting in the interests of the majority of persons living in South Africa.

It is for this purpose I propose to join the fight for free rights to be granted to the majority living in South Africa which would permit them to have a say in drawing up a new constitution which governs their land.

Before I embark on this struggle I would appreciate it if Her Majesty's Government could give me an explanation of why despite the knowledge of facts contained herein, it has not succeeded in severing links with South Africa and how it could possibly justify holding interests in a country which exploits its own people and denies them their rights as men and voters.

I would be grateful if Her Majesty's Government could offer reassurance that it will do everything in its powers to act i) as a member of the United Nations Assembly and ii) as an independent nation, to curtail this exploitation of African people in South Africa, and that it will actively seek a method of ensuring the freedom of rights for the majority of inhabitants in South Africa.

I would also be interested to know what action, if any, Her Majesty's Government is pursuing in the interests of Nelson Mandela and political prisoners like himself which may help compel the South African regime to grant remission of sentence, amnesty or parole.

I believe that in order to put an end to the unfair practice in South Africa every nation throughout the world should join together and fight for the liberation of the suppressed majority.

I quote Nelson Mandela (on behalf of African people in South Africa)

'The law as it is applied, the law as it has been developed over a long period of history, and especially the law as it is written and designed by the National Government, is a law which, in our view, is immoral, unjust and intolerable. Our consciences dictate that we must protest against it, that we must oppose it and that we must attempt to alter it.'

The above is a quote from a trial held in Old Synagogue Pretoria, in which Nelson Mandela was prosecuted against and charged.

A reply would be very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

J Roberts

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Dear Ms Roberts,

30 November 1982

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 15 November to the Prime Minister about the Government's policy towards South Africa.

The Government believe in maintaining and fostering links with South Africa in order to promote dialogue and thus to encourage peaceful change in South Africa. Any move further to isolate South Africa by imposing sanctions of other kinds of ostracism would be likely to strengthen the opponents of reform (thus damaging its prospects) and push South Africa further into an attitude of resistance to change and defiance of the outside world.

The Government share your concern about the situation in South Africa and about the reports of the alleged ill-treatment and repression of individuals in South Africa for their political beliefs and activities. The Government have not been silent about the situation; this and previous British Governments have made clear their abhorrence and condemnation of apartheid; we continue to take opportunities to impress upon the South African Government the strong feelings of repugnance which the practice of political bannings and detentions arouse in this country and our continuing concern for the humane treatment of all prisoners and detainees.

Our view of Mr Mandela's case remains as indicated by our support for United Nations Security Council Resolution No 473 of 1980 which called on the South African Government to release all political prisoners including Mr Mandela and other black leaders. Our concern was recently re-emphasised when the United Kingdom supported the joint Statement which the European Community issued at the United Nations in New York on 11 October to mark the Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners in South Africa.

For a more detailed exposition of the Government's policy towards South Africa I would refer you to the Minutes of Evidence which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presented to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on 13 May 1981 (available in printed form from HMSO).

D J Chilcott

Southern African Department

SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

ANC attacks

The African National Congress's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, has started 1983 with a series of successful bombings. On 27 January, extensive damage was caused when the offices of the Community Council in New Brighton, a black township near Port Elizabeth, were bombed. Later, on the same day, a bomb also exploded under the main railway line out of Bloemfontein. The next attack, on 29 January, was the bombing of the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg, where a number of political trials have been held. Offices, including a charge office, and the offices normally used by the security police during political trials were extensively damaged. As we go to press South African authorities are investigating a fire at the nuclear power station in Pelindaba near Pretoria, which started on 23 February.

Oscar Mpetha

Oscar Mpetha, 73-year-old leader of the African Food and Canning Workers Union, who has been imprisoned since his arrest in August 1980, has been on trial on trumped-up charges of murder and terrorism for over 210 days. The State has accused him of whipping up anti-white feelings amongst the youth of Nyanga, a black township of Cape Town, who then rioted when the police attempted to break up the school and bus boycotts which were taking place. The State's case is based mainly on statements extracted from the black youth after hours of interrogation. Oscar Mpetha has testified that he has never met any of the youths before, and that he was nowhere near the riot.

Police attack squatters in Cape Town

On 25 February police and other state officials attacked the KTC squatter camp on the outskirts of Cape Town using teargas and a convoy of 45 vehicles including armoured personnel carriers. 249 black people were arrested including 50 children and their wood and plastic shelters demolished. Now 5,000 people are homeless.

Many of the squatters are the wives and children of men employed in the Cape Town area - under apartheid law they have no right to live with their husbands and fathers. South Africa's aim is to force the people out of the camps into the massive Transkei concentration camp hundreds of miles away, in line with their fascist bantustan policy. Yet the squatters are refusing to move and they are organised to defend themselves.

British collaboration: 1

Lonhro, the British multinational, has recently admitted that before buying a 50% stake in the Swiss-based transport company, Kuehne and Nagel, it had full knowledge of that company's involvement in illegal shipment of arms to South Africa. Kuehne and Nagel is now under investigation by the Swiss prosecuting authorities. In November 1981, 3 British arms dealers were imprisoned for their part in smuggling £1m worth of machine gun parts and 1,000 rifles to the South African Defence Forces. At their trial it emerged that arms were being flown to Johannesburg via a British company in Zurich, called Red Baron. The plot thickened when it was discovered that a Mr B Tinkler was not only the main director of Red Baron but of Kuehne and Nagel's British subsidiary as well. In spite of a 1977 UN Security Council Resolution imposing a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa, the British government has turned a blind eye to its flagrant violations by British companies. The Foreign Office has failed to take action against a single South African diplomat, even though it has possession of information given at the trial that 3 payments in the deal had been made by someone in the South African Embassy.

British collaboration: 2

A British firm has once again increased its stake in South Africa's nuclear power programme. The General Electricity Company (GEC) has won a £320m contract to supply and erect 6,600 megawatt turbine generators for the Majuba power station in the Transvaal. Over a quarter of GEC turbine generator orders come from South Africa, and as more are in the offing, the GEC has been building up its South African company. Ruby Khan

24 HOUR PICKETS

Free Nelson Mandela!
Free All South African Political Prisoners!

Dundee

Friday 18 March - Saturday 19 March
12.30pm-12.30pm City Square, Dundee. Called by Dundee AAM.

Leeds

Friday 18 March - Saturday 19 March
5.30pm - 5.30pm Dortmund Square, Leeds. Called by Leeds FRFI supporters.

Manchester

Friday 18 March - Saturday 19 March
5.30pm-5.30pm Piccadilly Gardens. Called by Manchester FRFI.

London

Friday 18 March - Saturday 19 March
5.30pm - 5.30pm outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square.
Called by City Anti Apartheid Group.

fight racism

ROACH FAMILY FIGHT COVER UP

'My son did not commit suicide. He had too much to live for'

James Roach

Despite their harrowing bereavement the Roach family fight on to find the truth of who killed Colin Roach. They are fighting against a reactionary alliance of the police, the Fleet Street press, and a section of Labour MPs. Their trusted allies in this fight are first and foremost the youth, together with the whole black community and other anti-racists.

As reported in FRFI 26, the *Standard* carried a front page article on 28 January 'Police Station "gun victim" Shot Himself Says Friend With Him Moments Earlier'. In a letter that we reprint in full Keith Scully rebuts the *Standard's* vicious lies that have been so hurtful to Colin's family. To date this Fleet Street rag has not even had the decency to publish Scully's letter of reply.

A second blow to the police and Fleet Street version came with the revelations of Dolores Williams, a youth worker who was taken to Stoke Newington police station on 26 January. In a sworn affidavit Dolores states:

'One plain clothes officer said, "We killed Colin Roach because he would not give us the evidence we wanted." His colleagues laughed at this remark. Ian McNeil replied, "It's no laughing matter." The same officer said, "We shot him with a sawn-off shotgun."'

No young black woman would run the risk of Stoke Newington police intimidation by making this interrogation public unless it was one hundred per cent true.

The police arrests of the youth involved in the first wave of protests, like the *Standard* report, were designed to stem the flow of anger onto the streets. Prior to the demonstration of 22 January the police had been touring local youth clubs and warning the youth that they were marked out. One youth, Karl 'Ace' Kelly who was arrested that day and who spoke out against the police treatment of his fellow detainees has been subjected to two sinister acts of intimidation - see Letters Page this issue. But the police terror tactics have failed. Once again the youth have shown their readiness to risk great sacrifices in the cause of the Roach family. The second demonstration on 12 February was even bigger than the first march.

This consistent display of support on the streets has generated a great pressure within Hackney Council. The January meeting of the council called for an independent and open inquiry, backing the call of the Roach Family Support Committee upon the Home Secretary 'to authorise an independent inquiry into the death and circumstances surrounding the death of Colin Roach', and calling for him to reply within one month. Councillor Patrick Kodikara spoke in the debate:

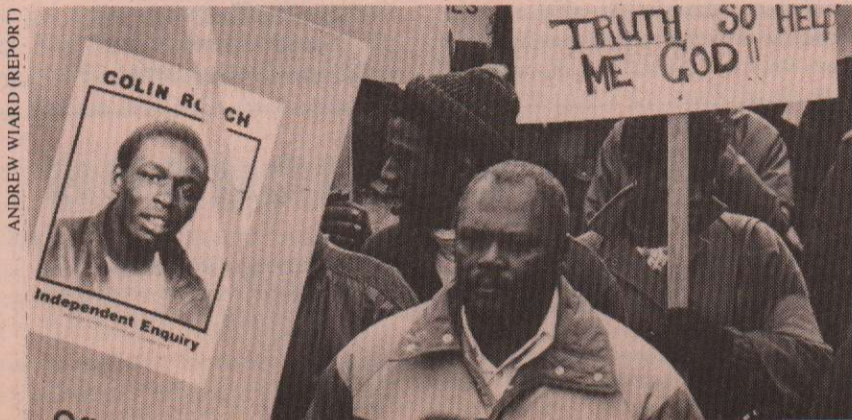
'Colin Roach did not commit suicide. Colin Roach was murdered... and the police did it.'

At its meeting on 7 February the Police Committee of the council passed a motion of No Confidence in Stoke Newington police. The committee decided by an emphatic majority to recommend to the full council that it does not collect the rates that are normally handed over to the local police - the police precept that runs to £4m - until an independent inquiry is held.

At the same time the Greater London Council's Police Committee offer of a grant of £1,500 to the Roach Family Support Committee has been sabotaged by the Conservatives.

ton police station where, as the *Caribbean Times* report continues,

'without any provocation Mr McDermott was hit from behind by one officer and punched in the face by PC Martin. Mr McDermott panicked and ran away. He was chased by six policemen. They caught him and handcuffed him with his hands



Mr Roach on demonstration

By their every action the Hackney police justify the Police Committee's No Confidence in them. When asked should there be a public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach, Commander Taylor, the head of G Division, stated that an inquest would be sufficient:

'I think that the situation in Stoke Newington, and the Hackney Borough as a whole, is such that I'm confident that we have the co-operation of the vast majority of people in those circumstances and I don't believe that a public inquiry is at all necessary.'

Does Taylor's 'majority of people' include Newton Rose, the Knight family, the White family, the bereaved relatives of Aseta Simms, Michael Ferreira, Franklin Lee and Colin Roach? Does the 'majority of people' include Dudley McDermott? Mr McDermott, on 28 May 1982, was on his way home from work when PC Martin and PC Spender stopped him for a breathalyser test that proved negative. Yet Mr McDermott was taken to Stoke Newing-

ton police station where, as the *Caribbean Times* report continues, behind his back. They then punched and kicked him to the ground. The policemen then took him up bodily and threw him onto a wire fence still handcuffed. He was pulled off the

Demonstration:
1pm Saturday 12 March, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, Hackney E8.

Pickets:
12 noon every Saturday except 12 March, Stoke Newington police station, Stoke Newington High Street, N16
Send your messages of support, donations and requests for leaflets to: Roach Family Support Committee, c/o 50 Rectory Road, N16. The petition started by local youth can be obtained from: Downs Town Youth Club, 1 Muir Road, Nightingale Estate, Downs Road, E5.

fence and in the process his flesh was ripped.

'Where he sustained cuts he had to be treated in hospital. The police officers continued to kick and punch him while he was on the ground, until he lost consciousness. He was then driven back to Stoke Newington police station.'

FORWARD EVER - BACKWARD NEVER!

On 12 February the second march called by the Roach Family Support Committee (RFSC) took place. Hundreds joined the march as it moved from the Town Hall to Stoke Newington Police Station. There was an overwhelming feeling of determination, enthusiasm and militancy that the police several times tried to break. They failed and each time the chants grew louder 'Leave the youths alone!', 'Hackney Police - Murderers!', 'Colin Roach - No Cover-Up!', 'Stoke Newington Police - Murderers!'. The police even tried to seize Mr Roach, Colin's father, but youth crowded around and the police backed away. Throughout the march and at the end there there were speeches from the RFSC and others such as Mrs Knight. FRFI supporter, Ken Hughes, spoke about Kenneth Newman's 'shoot-to-kill' policy and the need for everyone to make a stand.

As the march passed Hackney Police Station the police presence massively increased. The police tried to break up the march and prevent it reaching the Town Hall. Scuffles broke out and the crowd began chanting 'Forward Ever, Backward Never'. 6 arrests were made but the march continued to its destination. There Mr Roach spoke and once again said that Colin did not commit suicide. Even as final speeches were being made the police tried to break up the demonstration by moving in on the van which people were speaking from. Once again they failed as the marchers showed they would not be prevented from demonstrating their anger and opposition to racist police harassment.

Dawn Trent

For the racist bullying police headed by William Taylor it is quite clear that the 'vast majority of people' does not include black people at all or the 1,500 people black and white - including women, the youth, churchgoers, councillors, teachers, local government workers and the unemployed - who marched in the second massive local protest against the police. Bully-boy Taylor's claimed 'vast majority' is shrinking fast. Perhaps it is only a very small minority? 50 local businessmen have signed a petition objecting to the demonstrations. No prizes for guessing who encouraged them to do this.

In their cover-up campaign the police have found other, not unexpected, allies from the Labour opposition in Parliament - two of the borough's three Labour MPs, Ron Brown and Stanley Clinton-Davis. Unlike Ernie Roberts who has marched with the Roach family, these two disgusting renegades opposed the House of Commons motion put by Ernie Roberts and 42

COLIN ROACH BENEFIT SOCIAL

Friday 25 March 7-11pm
Casanova Band and Sound System. All proceeds to Roach Family Support Committee.
At Downs Town Youth Club, 1 Muir Road, Nightingale Estate (off Downs Rd), Clapton E5.

other MPs, which called for a public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach. Instead Stanley Clinton-Davis put a motion which called for 'sympathetic treatment' of the call for a public

inquiry but added:

... '(this House) deplores allegations made without evidence that Colin Roach was murdered by the police, believing that those making such allegations can only inflame passions dangerously in the Hackney area.'

This was signed by over 90 Labour MPs. Clinton-Davis' and Brown's betrayal of the democratic rights of their own constituents is more Judas-stained at this time when the police are escalating their harassment. In the Dalston area of G Division the police have just introduced the much vaunted new-style 'community policing' ie community repression, devised by Torturer-in-Chief of the Irish people Kenneth Newman. And Stoke Newington police have drafted in 12 extra uniformed PCs to patrol Kingsland High Street and Ridley Road market. Far from enjoying the confidence of the community, Hackney's Newman-in-training Commander Taylor has called on reinforcements to try to remove the most militant section of the community, the black and white unemployed youth.

These recent developments lend even greater significance to the words of the Roach family's solicitor Gareth Pearce, who addressed the GLC's conference in opposition to the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill with the words:

'This is an apathetic country. No political party has any commitment to civil liberties. The black community provide the moral conscience of the country, there is no other. Black people have a unique experience of racism and oppression. Black people are already leading the struggle. It is up to the rest to fall in and follow them.'

KEITH SCULLY REBUTS THE STANDARD

The Editor
The Standard
Dear Sir,

I was horrified to see my picture on the front of the 'Standard' newspaper on Friday 28th January 1983 and I was even more disturbed to see headlines saying that I had said Colin Roach had killed himself. I never said this to your newspaper, nor have I ever said this to anyone else and it has deeply hurt and angered me that you distorted your interview with me in that way. To this day I don't know how Colin died and I think it is important that everyone should realise this, including your newspaper. That is why I am writing first and foremost to your newspaper and I will be making this letter available to other sections of the press so that the record can be put straight. I only hope that this will ease some of the distress that your paper has caused not only for the Roach family but supporters of the Roach family. What really happened regarding the interview you did with me is as follows:

On Thursday 27th January I was stopped by a reporter from the Standard while I was parking my car. The reporter asked me if I was a friend of Colin Roach. I said 'Yes'. The reporter then asked to speak to me, he said that his newspaper was fighting to get a public inquiry into Colin Roach's death and that he would like a few words with me. I asked him what he wanted to know and he asked me questions like 'What had I been doing in the evening?' and 'Where had I picked Colin up?' Finally the reporter asked me if I thought Colin had killed himself and I said I didn't know.

Later that day the Standard contacted me again, the reporter said he wanted to take some photographs of me. At first I refused because of advice I had been previously given by solicitor Gareth Pearce. But the reporter persisted so much that eventually I told him to ask the permission of the solicitor and of Mr and Mrs Roach. Following that I received a call from the reporter who told me that he had spoken to Mr and Mrs Roach and that they had said it was alright to go ahead because it was in the interests of Colin. It was on this basis that I gave in and later that evening a photographer came to see me. The next day when I saw the Standard newspaper I just couldn't believe my eyes. The reporter had told me that the story was needed to further the cause of the campaign for a public inquiry into Colin's death. But the real truth was that I had been set up and they had virtually twisted everything I had said to them.

I made the decision to write this letter because I realise how much distress the article has caused a lot of people and because it has falsely put words and lies into my mouth. I only hope that this will now put the record straight.

Yours faithfully
Keith Scully

Colin Roach will never be forgotten. He was a great friend to the black and white youth of Bow, Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Hundreds came to his funeral. On their own initiative the local youth have started a petition calling for an independent public inquiry. Colin lives in the hearts of all those, especially the youth, who show by their actions that they demand an end to the police violence and murder of black people. It is up to the rest to fall in and follow them - in your thousands.

Police Say Suicide - We Say Genocide!

**Colin Roach - No Cover Up!
For An Independent Public Inquiry!**

**Police Out of Stoke Newington!
Andy Goddard, Ken Hughes**

Victory for Lionel Vida

The campaign to get anti-racist teacher Lionel Vida reinstated has won a victory! On 17 February the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) School's Subcommittee agreed to his reinstatement. Lionel was sacked as a result of his anti-racist stand and consistent work in support of black pupils at Catford School. Since January the Reinstatement Lionel Vida Campaign (RLVC) has been mobilising support. The campaign has attracted wide support from anti-racist organisations and individuals, and most vital of all from black parents and pupils who know only too well the realities of racism in schools. This support has been crucial in securing a victory.

Predictably the GLC's Tory opposition has reacted with fury to this decision. They have threatened to get it overturned by the full Education Committee which meets on 22 March. The RLVC is determined to prevent the Tories from succeeding. Lionel's reinstatement will be a victory for all those fighting racism in schools. The Tories know this and are using racist propaganda to get this victory snatched away. The right-wing press is helping them by giving publicity to Mrs Kirwan, Westminster Tory representative on the ILEA. She is quoted saying:

'Had he been white he would have been slung.'

What a reversal of reality! Lionel was sacked because he is black and a vocal anti-racist and has been reinstated

because he and other anti-racists fought a public campaign. The *Standard*—renowned for its total disregard for truth—has even quoted the RLVC saying they will not accept the School Subcommittee's decision. But the *Standard* never contacted the RLVC—the quote is fiction.

Opposition from the Tories and the gutter press is to be expected. But what of Lionel Vida's union, the NUT? It produces reams of documents about 'multi-cultural education' but has refused to assist Lionel Vida in his battle for justice. It refused him legal assistance. When anti-racists in his local NUT branch tried to raise his case at two union meetings they were prevented by NUT bureaucrats. The NUT threatened legal action unless a RLVC leaflet was withdrawn. Clearly this union has a lot

to fear from the truth. For the truth exposes the NUT as a union which stands by as black teachers are given the worst jobs and black pupils are attacked and discriminated against.

Parents, pupils and ex-pupils have all aided the campaign. Support has come from FRFI, the National Convention of Black Teachers, Lewisham Black Peoples Alliance and members of Hackney Black Peoples Association, Newham Asian Association, All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism,

ASTMS Race Relations Board. Speaking to FRFI Lionel Vida said: 'I would like to say that the tremendous support given by FRFI supporters, door to door and on the streets, has greatly contributed to the campaign's victory. The FRFI report (February 1983) is an honest report in the sea of press distortion and indifference.'

The campaign has gone onto the streets to talk to local people, holding weekly street meetings and fortnightly pickets of the school. Over 1200 people

have signed the campaign's petition. At a RLVC public meeting, Mrs Smith, local black mother, spoke and said of the school authorities:

'They are something like a wild cat or a bear or a lion or tiger against the black children.'

Another black mother spoke of how her sons had been sent home from Catford School because, unable to afford regulation shoes, she had sent them to school in plimsolls. Racism in the school reflects the oppression black people suffer in all areas of life. Mrs Campbell described how the police had ransacked her home late one night demanding receipts for property. A bedroom door was kicked off. When they found nothing she asked for compensation—they refused.

The RLVC now fights on to ensure that the Tories do not overturn the decision to reinstate Lionel and is calling for continued support in the struggle against racism in education.

Ruby Khan

Picket of Lewisham NUT meeting. Monday 21 March, 5pm. St Laurence's Church Hall, 37 Bromley Road, Catford, SE6.

Demonstration/Lobby of Inner London Education Authority Education Committee Assemble County Hall, SE1. Tuesday 22 March 3pm onwards.

Lobby: Industrial Tribunal, 93 Ebury Bridge Road, SW1. 23/24/25 March

Public Meeting The Community Demands an Enquiry into Racism in Schools and Police Harassment. Tuesday 12 April, 7.30pm. St Mary's Centre, Ladywell Rd, SE13

Please send donations and requests for further information etc, to: RLVC, PO Box 30, PINNER, MIDDLESEX HA5 5HF

LEEDS ANTI-RACISTS GAOLED

On Wednesday 16 February an Appeal Court in Leeds upheld a decision to imprison Les Haw and Mohan Pipial. Les and Mohan, the first two of the Precinct Six, were appealing against their conviction and sentencing last September on charges of 'threatening and abusive behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'. Their conviction and sentencing was upheld and Les Haw now faces 6 weeks in Armley Gaol and Mohan Pipial 3 months in Gringley-on-the-Hill Detention Centre near Doncaster.

This decision shows the determination of the police and courts to make a political example of them. It also shows that black and anti-racist white youth cannot expect a fair trial in British courts.

Mohan and Les were arrested on 17 July. They were walking in a group of seven and were about to cross the Headrow when two policemen ordered them

to split up. When the youth protested one black and one white youth were singled out, handcuffed and arrested. Neither was cautioned or told why they were being arrested. The appeal was lost despite this and despite the fact that:

- At the appeal hearing police evidence was contradictory and the only witness in the case, who had not been available at the original trial, upheld Mohan and Les' correct version of events.
- In the original trial Mohan and Les were repeatedly asked political questions about their attitudes to the police and their support for 'Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!'
- Such vicious and heavy sentences on such minor charges are unprecedented.

Les and Mohan are being made an example of because they were closely involved in organising a political campaign against fascist attacks and police

Meanwhile the picket's message came over loud and clear 'Coppers—leave the youth alone!'

The youth have been given whatever fit-up charge the police could find—obstruction of the police, possession of an offensive weapon, threatening behaviour, assault on the police and actual bodily harm. These charges must be dropped. The youth were arrested for standing up against the racist police force and must be given every possible support. You can give real solidarity by coming down to the courts.

Leave the youths alone!
Drop the charges now!

Dawn Trent

harassment in Leeds city centre. The police have time and again shown their hostility to the Precinct Campaign. They have made ten arrests of six supporters of the campaign. Supporters were arrested for leafletting, collecting signatures and selling 'Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!'. The campaign has secured a total of six Not Guilty verdicts in the courts. In one trial however three supporters were found Guilty of Obstruction. It is for this reason that the Precinct Six Defence Campaign is demanding the creation of a 'Free Speech Area' in Lands Lane Precinct/Dortmund Square.

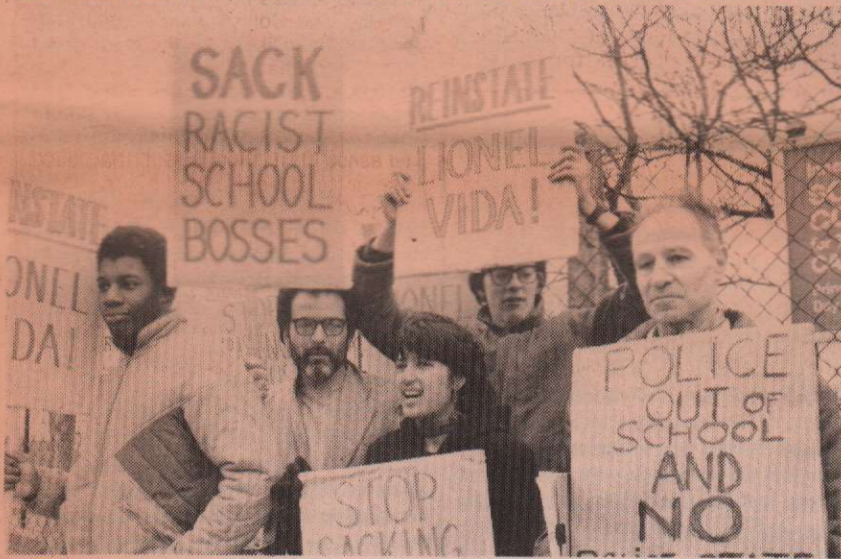
Meanwhile, the police and fascists are still mounting regular attacks on black and anti-racist white youth in the precincts of Leeds city centre. The right of the youth to walk the streets free from harassment is still under attack. The police have shown that they see a group of 5-6 black and white youth in the precincts as a breach of the peace. Take Bobby B, a black youth, who has recently been charged with 'breach of the peace' for walking through the precincts. He is to appear in court on 17 March. Yet on Saturday 5 February the police did not do anything about the 100 to 150 fascists who stampeded through the precinct screaming fascist slogans and insults as they tried to chase the youth and FRFI sellers off the precinct. What did the police do? Arrest one token fascist out of the whole group! There is no doubt whose side the police are on; they allow groups of 100 to 150 fascists to roam around, but small groups of black and white youth are split up and arrested.

We demand an end to police harassment and fascist attacks, the right to walk the street and the right to free speech in the Precinct.

**DEFEND THE PRECINCT SIX!
DEFEND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS!
STOP POLICE/FASCIST
ATTACKS!**

For further information please contact:

Precinct 6 Defence Campaign, c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2. Send donations to Precinct 6 Defence Campaign Now! Send cards/letters/solidarity messages to Les and Mohan. Send to Les Haw, HM Prison Armley, Armley Road, Leeds. Mohan Pipial, HM Detention Centre, Gringley-on-the-Hill, Doncaster DN10 4QZ
Leeds FRFI Supporters



Leave the youths alone!

continued from page 1

this treatment were also nicked. The youth was then dragged 50 yards along the street, and up several stone steps into the station. Inside the station the police called the youths insulting names and through deceit took their photographs and fingerprints. But since when have the police been concerned with official procedures when it interferes with them humiliating and brutalising the public? The Police Bill, now going through Parliament, extends the official procedures to give the police even greater powers and detainees even fewer rights.

Yet this type of treatment has only led to greater comradeship among youth being held in the prison cells. Youths who were complete strangers the previous day were now forming a bond in the overcrowded, poorly facilitated cells—youths who never regretted for one minute attending the march.

Again on the second demonstration held on 12 February, more youths were arrested. And arrested for no other reason than that the police had decided to break up the peaceful demonstration. The herd of heavies was positioned at the front of the march where the youths were arrested.

While these mass arrests take place, we hear very little from councillors and MPs. Whose interests are they supposed to be representing? Who elected them to office? Local people are asking when are they going to be seen and heard fully supporting the Roach Family Support Committee, and demanding that all the charges be

back, we were told that if the banner was put up arrests, as usual, would be made.

The next day at the court the police again made further attempts to move the picket from the court steps, saying that the steps were being 'obstructed', and pushing and shoving the picketers. When there was a brief pause in the picket, the boys in blue immediately

Every case will be picketed from 10am at Old Street Magistrates Court, Old Street (near junction with Kingsland High Road) EC1 (nearest tube: Old Street).

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Wednesday 23 February | — youths arrested 14 January |
| Tuesday 1 March | — youths arrested 17 January/22 January |
| Monday 7 March | — youths arrested 22 January |
| Tuesday 8 March | — youths arrested 12 February |
| Wednesday 23 March | — youths arrested 22 January |
| Thursday 24 March | — youths arrested 22 January |

dropped and the youth left alone?

Meanwhile there are people who are prepared to demand that the charges are dropped. There have been militant pickets of Old Street Magistrates Court attended by RFSC, FRFI, local people and other organisations. On 14 February, the police, just to keep in practice with their bully-boy tactics, stopped the traffic and pushed and forced us and other picketers across the main road. We put forward resistance and shouted 'Hands off black people!' and 'Leave the youth alone!' Once we had crossed

jumped onto the steps—obstructing the court entrance. But what's sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander, and the picketers soon resumed their original positions around the police on the stairway, chanting slogans like 'What do we want? Drop the charges!', 'Police say suicide—We say genocide!', 'Colin Roach—No Cover-up!' which could be heard over the noisy traffic. The police just stood by and watched, unwilling to make any violent move, like they did the previous day, because of the presence of the media.



Police do their homework

On December 10 1982 Superintendent Kruger of Scotland Yard reported that four envelopes containing a total of £79.96 (why?) were missing from his desk. A series of other petty thefts followed and embarrassed senior officers at Scotland Yard were forced to set a trap to catch the thief, for this was clearly an 'inside job'. Eleven days later the trap was sprung and PC Clive Collins, aged 50 and with 28 years service, was caught with his fingers in the till. At Horseferry Road court he pleaded guilty, asked for five other offences to be taken into consideration, and was fined and gaoled for three months. But the story does not end here. An interesting fact emerged in court that one of the belongings stolen from Superintendent Kruger's desk was 'a sex magazine'. Is it really necessary to go on and reveal that Kruger is an officer in the Obscene Publications Squad? Superintendent Kruger was just doing his homework!

Secret tracking force

A fact discovered by Kevin Burke of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* is worthy of wider attention in Britain. According to the *Glasgow Sunday Standard* the SAS has trained a (once) secret force within Strathclyde Constabulary. 'Members of the support unit, all arms experts, some skilled in the use of long-range high velocity sniping rifles and gas grenades, have undergone intensive training with the SAS'. 'They work to assimilate the life style of the people they are tracking' (they become poor?!). 'All this is backed up by files at the force's Criminal Intelligence Unit, which details the movements, haunts and acquaintances of the many people suspected by the police.'

Matt Dillon wanted

The Health and Safety Executive were called in to find out if the Metropolitan Police were covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act. This was done because an officer from the SPG entered the police canteen for a cup of tea, with a loaded gun. Halfway through his tea break he shot himself in the foot.

The solution to the problem was solved between the Health and Safety Executive and the Met. The SPG now have to hang up their guns before entering the canteen. Rumour has it that they are looking for a Matt Dillon or a Wild Bill Hickock to uphold the new law.

Look what I've got, Mum!

The British army treats its recruits well (a little brutalisation here and there to be sure, but the pay is good). However, a sapper of the Royal Engineers overestimated military generosity when, so proud to be a professional, he took his 50 ton tank home to show mum. At 2am on 17 February, guards at the Royal Armoured School at Bovington found the tank missing and a suspiciously large hole in the fence. The police were alerted and the first tank sighting was reported in Basingstoke, over fifty miles away. PC John Hayes followed the tank 'at a discreet distance' until the sapper parked the tank at his parents' front door. For once, the police found their quarry to be better armed than they, but rumour has it that the Hampshire police are requesting their own tanks in order to combat this 'dangerous increase in armoured crime'.

NOTES & COMMENTS

Water workers get 12%

The inquiry into the water workers strike has made an increased offer of 12% over 16 months. 'We've won, lads' were the words of the first union leader to emerge from the ACAS building – but strikers gathered outside were not impressed. The offer falls far short of the 16% demanded and the fact that it has increased at all from the original 4%, then 7.3%, has owed nothing at all to the union leaders – but is due solely to the unmistakable determination of the strikers.

The strikers' anger has mounted as managers, already well-paid, lined their pockets with as much as £1,000 per week carrying out scab duties to keep the system going, thus prolonging the strike. Ignoring strikers' warnings over pollution and lead levels in drinking water (lead can cause brain damage particularly in unborn and young children), the Water Authorities have issued numerous denials that there is any problem. The North West Water Authority suspended a scientific worker who revealed details of excessive lead levels in his area. Police, who made increasing numbers of arrests on picket lines, forced coal lorries through the pickets at Hampton pumping station which is vital for London. All these factors led to a wave of occupations by strikers of sewage and pumping plants starting in the North – Leeds, Bradford, York, Chesterfield, South Wales and Cornwall, spreading to London, the North East, the South West, Birmingham and the North of Ireland. These occupations, which marked a major upturn in the strikers' militancy, were purely local initiatives – the national leaders were keen not to be associated with such decisive actions. The occupations, the cold spell – resulting in a sharp increase in burst mains – and the entry of the skilled workers into the strike on 20 February, meant that for the first time, the strike really began to take effect.

At precisely this crucial point, the union leaders began to press for an inquiry that would be binding. Many strikers were angry and bitter and must have been sickened by the sight of their leaders, sleek and sheepskin coated, waving at TV cameras in front of the ACAS building, desperate to settle before the strikers caused them even more embarrassment. A large angry picket surrounded the building on the first day of the inquiry and a group of strikers actually forced their way into the building to stand chanting outside the negotiating room door.

As in the health workers' strike, the Thatcher government has had only one response to the water workers: arrogance and contempt for the low paid and a belief that obstinacy would solve the strike. Strikers' families had their social security stopped for days when strikers provided emergency cover for hospitals, old people, the young and kidney patients. Government ministers, earning thousands of pounds a year in fat company directorships and private businesses, sat back while millions of tons of untreated sewage – not just human waste but deadly industrial chemical waste – poured into the rivers. The Thatcher government would rather poison children and destroy the environment than pay workers a living wage for a filthy job. However, the firmness and unity of the strikers managed to push their reluctant leaders into making a large dent in Thatcher's pay policy – now more workers will follow their example. **Olivia Adamson**

Poor Law in Health approaches fast

The message we have repeated in these columns is that the rule of the Poor Law is returning to Britain, with the ruthless determination of the government to erase all 'welfare' rights for the working class. Those who have seen the grinding conditions in which Sainsbury's employ their staff will know what is in store for the NHS workers.

For Sainsbury's managing director, £55,000-a-year Roy Griffiths, has been 'loaned' free of charge to the government to prepare a report by June on how to slash the NHS. He has been told not to rule anything out and to give full reign to his vicious capitalist initiative (the kind of profit-making logic which fills Sainsbury's shelves with South African fruit and Israeli vegetables).

Without bothering to wait until June, Norman Fowler has gone on ahead to announce 'incentives' (government directives) to health authorities to rapidly expand privatisation of NHS ancillary services, like cleaning, catering, laundry etc. Under threat of even more cash penalties, authorities will be forced to put out tenders for such services, and Fowler insists they must accept 'the lowest tender'. He has instructed that redundancy money from resulting NHS staff unemployment must not be included in the comparison of costs, ie the greater the unemployment created the better. As a management sweetener, Fowler offered extra pay rises to 500 top NHS administrators of up to £1,300 – on top of the NHS general settlement, and funded from the 4.5% ancillary workers increase, reducing it to 4.4%. Some would get total rises of over £3,000 a year, more than the annual income of thousands of low paid women workers in catering and cleaning.

Meanwhile, plans to cut nearly 4,000 beds in the London and Home Counties area alone are rushing through. Whole units are being amalgamated and hospitals slashed – five hospitals in Croydon alone may close. Already many working class people literally cannot afford the fares to travel to hospital appointments. Soon it will be several miles to travel to the nearest Casualty, Eye, ENT, Neurology or Heart Unit. The Wandsworth Health Authority's medical officer, Dr Enid Vincent, regards the South London Women's Hospital as an 'anachronism', the problems being the small size and its 'limitations' – the main limitations no doubt being that, unlike Vincent, thousands of black women, mainly Asian, who form over 60% of the patients, find this hospital's services essential, including the only day-care abortion unit for miles and miles around. The real 'limitation' for this imperialist government is the very existence of the NHS, providing a service for the working class and oppressed. 37,000 private beds now exist (3,000 in NHS hospitals) already 10% of the 350,000 NHS beds. This ratio will worsen rapidly as health care for the poor is decimated. **Tony Sheridan**

SWP lunacy

At a recent Departmental meeting of NALGO social service workers in Lothian Region we debated a motion calling for a one-day strike to lobby the Tory Council's budget meeting. This budget is expected to cause massive cuts in social services and education – already severely cut in the current year's spending. Hundreds of jobs in nurseries, training centres for the mentally handicapped, children's homes, old people's homes and schools are unfilled. Meals on wheels charges have gone up and the home help service is stretched to breaking point.

The lobby of the Council was being supported by teachers, community action groups and campaigns to defend nurseries from closures. Maureen Watson, a leading Socialist Workers Party member and shop steward opposed the motion to strike on the grounds that these community groups and mothers and toddlers should not be given the illusion that they have any power – only trade unions have the power to force change. Any other organisations and movements were powerless. With this denunciation of progressive activity and praise of non-existent strength, she called on NALGO members to remain at work during a city-wide protest in defence of the very services in which NALGO members are employed.

Our SWP member sat down to shouts of 'shame' and heckling. In her reactionary search for the all-out indefinite strike she ended up on the same side as the five or so conservatives in the 160-strong audience. The meeting voted overwhelmingly to strike that day and join the users of social services in the protest.

Maggie Mellon

Kirkcaldy demonstration

On Monday 21 February the trial of the Victoria 11 began in Kirkcaldy, Fife. The eleven are up on a 108-year-old conspiracy charge for occupying a hospital laboratory during an industrial dispute last year. Their sit-in was smashed up by police with dogs and vans in an early morning raid.

The start of the trial was marked by a demonstration of 500 workers who marched through the town for a rally outside the court. ASTMS and NUPE members travelled from London, Aberdeen, Leeds, Halifax and locally to show their opposition to the trial. The chant of 'Whose conspiracy! Police conspiracy!' was the loudest and great applause greeted a speaker who called for the Chief Constable and the Tories to be in the dock instead of the eleven. By popular assent the rally was changed to outside the court rather than hidden away in a hall in the town. The court room itself was filled to capacity and many were turned away. The demonstration marks an increasing and progressive trend of workers confronting and opposing the police and courts as living standards crumble.

Gary Cameron

RCP sectarianism in Bermondsey

The RCP's election campaign in Bermondsey revealed the extent of their sectarianism, chauvinism and anti-Sovietism. On 17 February, invited by Bermondsey CND to share a platform with Peter Tatchell, G Hannah (Ecology Party) and R Gordon (Communist Party of Great Britain), Fran Eden (Revolutionary Communist Party candidate) and her supporters indulged in one long exhibition of sectarianism. They jeered and sneered their way through the meeting, insulting and ridiculing virtually every non-RCP contribution and, indeed, the audience itself. This behaviour effectively destroyed attempts by SLISC supporters to force Tatchell to stand by his previous support for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Both at their own meeting, 16 February, and the CND meeting the RCP attacked and slandered the Greenham Common women's struggle. Fran Eden repeatedly described the Greenham Common women as a 'Queen and Country' movement. The arrests and harassment of the women by Her Majesty's police does not concern the RCP sectarians. Their lying slander was exposed at the CND meeting when one of the RCP's male supporters yelled 'Do you support Irish political prisoners?' and was dumbfounded when the Greenham Common supporter replied yes!

The RCP contempt for the Greenham Common women was followed by a display of gross and disgusting male chauvinism. In a discussion between 2 men – one an RCP supporter – and a female FRFI supporter, the RCP man ignored the FRFI supporter until suddenly, in a tone of total contempt, he said 'Now look here my pretty little girl...'. She did not bother to listen any further, it being clear that a man who treated women with such contempt could not possibly have a principled position on any other question.

The RCP did their own bit for 'Queen and Country' at their 16 February meeting when Mike Freeman editor of *the next step*, launched a vituperative attack on the Soviet Union declaring that British workers do not support the Soviet Union because they 'enjoy' a 'higher standard of living' than workers in the Soviet Union! What

nonsense! Tell that to the 4m unemployed, the homeless and the 15m people living below the official poverty line in Britain.

It comes as no surprise that this campaign earned the RCP the 'magnificent' sum of 38 votes – interestingly all the other platform speakers at the CND meeting got more votes than the anti-Soviet, anti-women, sectarian RCP.

John Andrews

Free Matt Lygate Campaign: 8 years for Robbery – 16 for Socialism

On Thursday 13 January the Free Matt Lygate Campaign was formed by 20 people including Scottish Republicans, Labour Party members, GIFAC and members of Matt's family. The RCG in Scotland was also represented and have affiliated.

The purpose of the meeting was to launch a campaign to secure the release of Scotland's best known political prisoner. The depth of feeling expressed and the breadth of opinion represented confirmed that the time is right once more to highlight the viciousness of Matt's treatment. He was sentenced to 24 years in jail in 1972 for bank robbery. Matt is a socialist and was a member of the now defunct Workers Party of Scotland at the time and as the trial and sentence were to show, he was punished for his political beliefs. The trial was a farce; Lord Dunpark dismissed the two court shorthand typists during Matt's speech from the dock and consequently from the Judge's summing up. Evidence was accepted from witnesses who identified Matt... through a mask! The Solicitor General at the time, Nicholas Fairbairn, said that Matt would 'never get out in my lifetime'. The average sentence for 'non-political' bank robbery is 6-8 years yet Matt got 3 times this. Since then he has had his appeal totally rejected and parole refused three times. At present he is held in Edinburgh's Saughton prison.

The meeting agreed to make public the nature of Matt's political sentence and to campaign for his immediate release. It was also agreed to produce a fact sheet and hold fortnightly meetings. In order to tap the undoubted sympathy which exists in many progressive and liberal circles, it was also agreed to seek the affiliation of prominent figures such as MPs, Lord Provosts etc. The meetings are open to all who genuinely wish Matt's release and are prepared to work for it. At the time of writing only a temporary address for correspondence has been arranged and those interested in further details or wishing to get involved should contact MLC c/o Box 15, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow.

Maggie Lindsay

Remember Auschwitz! It could happen here!

The exhibition 'Auschwitz – a crime against humanity' has just opened in the crypt of St George-in-the-East in London. The place is heavily guarded by stewards who thoroughly check the visitors, for there have already been threatening letters.

The exhibits come from the Auschwitz Museum in Poland. The exhibition is designed to educate teachers and school children on the danger of racism, leading to mass murders, and also to make the youth reject the easily-available racist propaganda infiltrating schools.

All along the message is clear (and I quote the catalogue): 'We must never forget that four million men, women and children died at Auschwitz. We must not forget that the situation in Britain today is not dissimilar to that in Germany fifty years ago: a world of recession is raging... This is fertile ground for extremists to gain converts'.

Colette Levy

el salvador FMLN ADVANCES

El Salvador is the smallest nation in Central America, yet its fascist government and army is the largest recipient of US aid. In the last 3 years, the US imperialists have provided the regime with over \$740m to fight its war against El Salvador's workers, peasants and their armed vanguard, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). In addition, the US army has trained three El Salvadoran batallions, and maintains an unknown number of military personnel, who are increasingly becoming involved in direct military combat against the FMLN. The upper echelons of the US government are now clamouring for a greater number of US military 'advisors' to be sent to El Salvador to operate in all areas of the country. These facts testify to the immense importance imperialism attaches to defeating the revolution in El Salvador. And they also testify to the growing strength of that revolution.

The victory of the FMLN in El Salvador and the establishment of a revolutionary peoples' government would severely undermine the power of US imperialism in the region with far-reaching consequences. The El Salvadoran masses would begin to liberate themselves from the clutches of the imperialist multinationals and their local fascist allies. In addition, US imperialist attempts to overthrow the revolutionary Sandinista government would be dealt a severe blow, and the revolutionary movement in Guatemala would receive a massive boost after recent setbacks at the hands of the US-backed Rios Montt tyranny. But most important of all would be the prospect of the revolutionary anti-imperialist movement reaching Mexico and the borders of the US. Such an eventuality, clearly envisaged by US politicians, would be a stunning blow to US imperialism for Mexico's strategic, economic and political value to imperialism is immense.

In the light of these considerations, the Reagan Administration recently certified that El Salvador was deserving of further military and economic aid because of 'improvements' in the regime's human rights record. This was despite the availability of a UN report on human rights in El Salvador revealing that in 1982 over 5,000 people were murdered 'by members of the state apparatus and violent groups of the extreme right...'. It is imperialist interest, and not human rights, which determines the supply of aid to El Salvador's fascist regime. Such aid, however, is proving quite useless in defeating the FMLN.

Since last October, the FMLN has sustained a powerful offensive in all of El Salvador's major provinces. In the last 3 months of 1982, El Salvador's army suffered over 1,080 dead or wounded, whilst for the whole of 1982 it suffered 1,269 dead and 2,500 wounded. Throughout January and February FMLN advances continued. Over 20 towns and villages have been liberated in the provinces of Chalatenango and Morazan, while significant guerrilla actions have taken place in La Paz, San Vicente, Santa Ana and San Salvador provinces. A particularly demoralising blow was delivered to the puppet army on 31 January when FMLN guerrillas captured a major town - Berlin - in the province of Usulután, a rich agricultural centre. Despite heavy air bombardment and rocketing, the guerrillas drove out 1,500 government soldiers and took

control of the town. Simultaneously, FMLN forces in Morazan brought to a halt a 6,000 strong army counter-offensive against liberated zones there. Summing up the current military position of the revolutionaries, Juan Ramon Osegueda, an FMLN/FDR representative in the USA said:

'We can say with absolute certainty that one-eighth of the territory of our country is a liberated zone.

In these liberated zones, the people not only have political control but they have established people's power, people's justice, education and health systems.

Also in 80% of the nation's territory, there is what we call a war of movement. This means that, according to the military plans of our vanguard, the Salvadorean people have the capacity to attack in that 80% of the territory.'

These advances by the FMLN and the inability of El Salvador's US-supplied and trained army to stem the revolutionary movement, has thrown imperialism and its local allies into crisis. The El Salvador army and government is split and demoralised whilst in the US, the Administration and its opponents in Congress are ever more acrimoniously debating the wisdom of current US strategy in El Salvador. Nevertheless whilst debates continue on suggestions of negotiations or contacts with the FMLN, in the hope of splitting and weakening it, US imperialism is continuing its full-scale regional offensive to isolate and defeat the FMLN. In early February US and Honduran forces held a 6-day joint exercise on Nicaragua's borders consisting of a mock invasion of Nicaragua. Honduran troops are in regular contact and collaborate with El Salvador's army against the FMLN. And in desperation US imperialism is no doubt also preparing for possible direct US military intervention in El Salvador.

The Salvadoran revolution, given its political and military advances, is today better placed than ever to deal with its enemies, particularly US imperialism. The task of revolutionaries in the imperialist countries, and particularly in the USA, is to extend solidarity to the FMLN and, in the words of Juan Ramon Osegueda, to

'take all possible steps to demand that the US government halt its intervention in Central America.'

Eddie Abrahams

Zionist COVER-UP

Behind a display of diplomatic disputes and official inquiries imperialism and Zionism are relentlessly pursuing their counter-revolutionary war against the Lebanese and Palestinian people. The British press has greeted the Israeli Kahan Commission of Inquiry into the Sabra and Chatila massacres and the resulting transfer of Defence Minister Sharon to another post in the Cabinet as proof that Israel is a civilised and democratic state. This is nothing more than vile hypocrisy. The Kahan report is window-dressing to hide the fact that Israel is pressing on with the plan, devised by Sharon and the imperialists, to transform Lebanon into a fascist dictatorship and client of imperialism.

Throughout Israeli-occupied Lebanon, Palestinian people are being subjected to a systematic terror campaign. Phalangist units, armed and trained by the Israeli army, have placed notices around the occupied town of Sidon saying 'It is the duty of every worthy Lebanese to kill at least one Palestinian'. Their aim is to drive the Palestinian people back into the devastated remains of the refugee camps. As a result, in the first two weeks of February, 15 mutilated Palestinian bodies were found on the outskirts of Sidon alone. Palestinian homes, offices and shops are regularly bombed, even within West Beirut which is patrolled by the imperialist multinational force which includes British troops. Deserted

Palestinian property which still remains intact is sold to provide funds for the fascist militias.

Meanwhile, in South Lebanon, the forces of Major Haddad, which are directly controlled by the Israeli state, have expanded their operations establishing three new garrisons in Sidon, Nabatiye and Dnaibe. The Israelis and Haddad have now de facto declared the existence of a statelet that extends north to Sidon and forms the 'twenty five mile security zone' on Lebanese territory, which the Israeli invasion had as one of its aims. Under these siege conditions, the Israeli authorities have begun forming stooge organisations like the Council of the Unified South, modelled on

the West Bank Village Leagues. These organisations, composed of traitors and collaborators, will be used to police the Lebanese and Palestinian masses.



Mass murderer Sharon

The Kahan Commission report has served only to divert attention away from the fact that Zionism, even without Sharon as Defence Minister, remains a savage and barbaric agent of imperialism in the Middle East. Their deeds cry out for the rightful revenge of Palestinian and Lebanese people. As Ektef Shalla, whose husband was butchered in the Sabra and Chatila massacre, said:

'We want to kill the ones who killed us, to drink the blood of the ones who killed us.'

This is the fire of revolutionary anger that will burn in the Palestinian people until they have destroyed forever the Zionist state and its master, imperialism.

Israeli Hands Off Lebanon!

Trevor Rayne



Reagan and Begin

Grenada - Westminster: A Trojan horse

At the end of last year the first English-speaking socialist country in the world, Peoples' Revolutionary Grenada, won a great victory when its Prime Minister Maurice Bishop attended the Caricom conference of English-speaking Caribbean countries, held in Jamaica. The arch imperialist stooges Seaga of Jamaica and Adams of Barbados attempted to follow their masters' instructions and have Grenada thrown out of Caricom if it did not agree to hold Westminster-type elections instead of peoples' revolutionary democratic rule.

The imperialists' plot failed miserably. Maurice Bishop was greeted everywhere by thousands of placard waving Jamaicans who chanted 'Hands Off Grenada' and 'Back Off Adams'. The Caribbean people can see for themselves the gains of revolution in Grenada while they still suffer under the domination of imperialist multinationals. In Jamaica 70% of women aged 14 to 24 years are unemployed, for all women it is 40% and for men about 30% and rising sharply. The women are

being forced onto street corners selling guns and cigarettes to survive. Prostitution is increasing. Meanwhile in Grenada, which has a production growth rate double that of Jamaica and which even the imperialist World Bank confesses is impressive, unemployment is falling and is the lowest of any Caricom country. Finance Minister Bernard Coard predicts a labour shortage within a few years. Before the March 1979 revolution two thirds of all Grenadan women were without work, now they are training to take on the most skilled jobs in manufacture, farming and services.

During a massive meeting of Jamaican people Maurice Bishop spelt out the con which the trojan horse of Westminster-type elections really is, wherein people get the vote for 'five seconds every five years'. 'When you are talking about "free and fair elections" and "elections free from fear" as the main human right, then where do you put the right to life (applause). For us in Grenada there is one number-one human

right, and that must be the right to life (prolonged applause)... the right not to be shot down in the night (applause). You know there are countries in the region where people are getting shot and you hear that it is an accident (applause) or you hear it's a shout-out or you hear they attack me first with a stone or a machete (standing ovation, prolonged applause and cheering)'. Over 300 people are now shot and killed each year by police in Jamaica. That figure is growing at 36% a year. Ex-slaves do not have elections to re-elect the slavemaster. On the contrary, the Grenadan people now control the gun, they have formed Peoples' Militias to ensure that the imperialists never return to Grenada whether they arrive in Yankee imperialist jets and frigates or dressed up in elections fashioned over centuries of oppression by the British ruling class. The Jamaican people saluted the victories of the Grenadan revolution.

Trevor Rayne

THE LABOUR ARISTOCRACY, OPPORTUN

Karl Marx died on 14 March 1883. One hundred years later the socialist revolution has yet to take place in any of the major industrial (imperialist) nations where it was expected to occur first. Instead of breaking out in the industrially developed capitalist countries of England, America, France, and Germany, the socialist revolution occurred first in backward Russia. And since that time all successful social revolutions have been carried out in the less industrially developed parts of the world and in the oppressed nations. However, far from contradicting the fundamental principles of the founders of Marxism, such developments were anticipated in their writings and the principles were laid down for explaining them.

Without a revolutionary situation a revolution is impossible. And further not all revolutionary situations lead to revolution. What then are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? Lenin pointed to three major ones. (1) A crisis in the ruling classes: the ruling classes are unable to maintain their rule in the old way. A crisis develops which leads to differences in policy and divisions in the ruling classes. Such divisions create an opening for the discontent and anger of the oppressed classes to burst through. (2) The suffering of the oppressed classes has grown more acute than usual. They do not want to live in the old way. (3) As a result of the above developments there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses. Driven by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the attacks of the ruling classes, the oppressed masses are drawn into independent historical action.

These objective changes are independent of the will 'not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes'. As a general rule a revolution is not possible without them. However not all revolutionary situations give rise to

revolutions. A revolution occurs when these objective changes are accompanied by a subjective change - that is 'the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break (or dislocate) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crisis, 'falls', if it is not toppled over'. (Lenin, *The Collapse of the Second International* CW Vol 1 p213-4).

The historical development of the cap-

'... no separate political working class party has existed in England since the downfall of the Chartist Party ... This is understandable in a country in which the working class has shared more than anywhere else in the advantages of the immense expansion of its large-scale industry.'

italist system has shown that, after numerous crises and two imperialist world wars, it still survives in all the major capitalist countries of Lenin's day. The subjective factor - the revolutionary class - has not been strong enough to overthrow the capitalist system. It was, in fact, *weakened from within*. Opportunist currents, holding great influence over the working class movement in the major capitalist nations, through their

positions of status and political control, have been able to hold back and undermine the independent political activity of the working class.

It was the great merit of Marx and Engels to show how such opportunist currents grew out of the special features of the development of capitalism in the most industrially advanced capitalist country of their time - Britain. Without doubt the further development of Marx and Engels' position on this question laid the foundation for the political and economic positions underlying Lenin's theory of imperialism. Lenin both acknowledged this and explained why this could be the case:

'It must be observed that in Great Britain the tendency of imperialism to split the workers, to strengthen opportunism among them and to cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, revealed itself much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries; for two important distinguishing features of imperialism were already observed in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century - vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in the world market. Marx and Engels traced this connection between opportunism in the working-class movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism systematically, during the course of several decades'. (*Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* CW Vol 22 p283 - see also *Imperialism and*

the Split in Socialism CW Vol 23 p111-2)

Since the Second Imperialist War the hold of opportunist currents over the working class movements in the imperialist countries has been significantly strengthened as a result of the years of the post-war boom. As a new imperialist crisis threatens to engulf the whole world, it is even more imperative that the influence of these opportunist currents is destroyed. The understanding Marx and Engels gave us on the development of opportunism and its relation to imperialism must be the starting point for those determined to destroy opportunism and build real forces that can finally bring about the socialist revolution in the imperialist

'... it does credit to Barry that he is not one of the so-called leaders of the English workers, since these men are more or less bribed by the bourgeoisie and the government.'

countries today. This understanding is derived from their experience of the struggles of the working class over a period of fifty years. And it is to this we now turn.

CHARTISM: A REVOLUTIONARY WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN

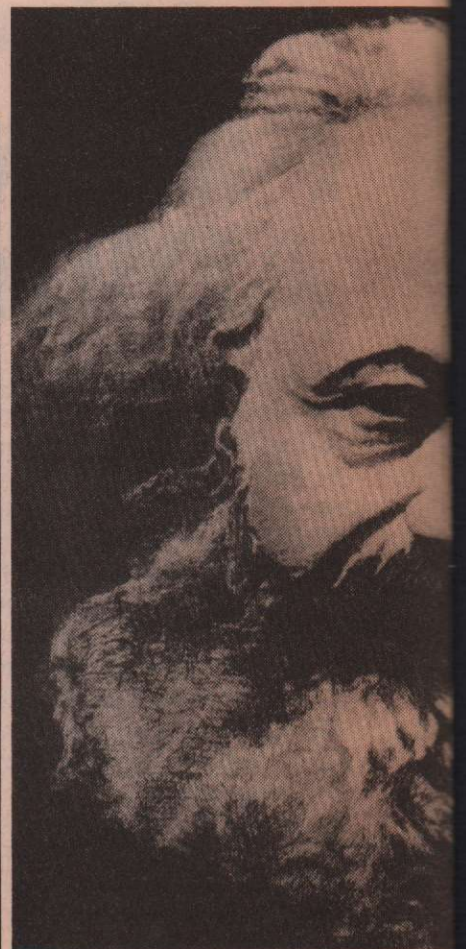
The first mass working class party in the history of the labour movement was the *National Charter Association* founded in July 1840. It had about 50,000 members in the years of the rise of the Chartist movement. Its supporters and sympathisers ran into hundreds of thousands. Chartism not only had the backing of the main body of the working class in Britain but became a militant movement which for a period of years was powerful enough to threaten revolution.

Lenin called Chartism 'the first broad, truly, mass and politically organised revolutionary movement'. (*CW* Vol 29 p309)

Chartism began as a movement against the political betrayals of the bourgeoisie by the Reform Act of 1832. This Act was directed against the political monopoly of the landed and financial aristocracy and gave representatives of the industrial bourgeoisie access to parliament. The proletariat and the petit bourgeoisie who had been the main force in the struggle for reform did not get the vote. However it was the particularly harsh economic conditions of Britain in the 1830s and 1840s which were decisive in turning Chartism into a mass militant working class movement.

Between the Reform Act of 1832 and the beginning of Chartism in 1836-7 the working classes had fought and lost two great struggles. They had struggled hard to win the ten hour day - *Sadlers Bill* - which was not to be won until 1847. They had joined trade unions in large numbers between 1820 and 1834 only to have them crushed by the combined action of the Whig government, the Law Courts and the employers. And in 1836-7 they were beginning to fight against the introduction of the *New Poor Law* in industrial areas. This *New Poor Law* denied outdoor Parish relief to all 'able bodied persons'. Relief would only now be given in the new 'workhouses' and then only under 'less eligible' conditions than those of the worst-off labourer in ordinary employment. The terms of relief were vicious, involving the splitting up of families and the segregation of the sexes under a rigid disciplinary regime. The Poor Law was administered by Boards of Guardians mainly drawn from the propertied classes. It is little wonder that it was fought by methods of mass resistance and often the houses of those who agreed to serve as Guardians came under attack. (See GDH Cole, *Chartist Portraits*)

The *People's Charter* containing the demands of the Chartists was published on 8 May 1838. The six demands of the Charter called for adult male suffrage, annual general elections, payment of MPs, vote by ballot, equal electoral distribution and the abolition of the property qualification. These demands - although very 'middle class' being 'limited to the reconstitution of the House of Commons' were opposed by the ruling class precisely because, in the conditions of industrial Britain at that time, they would have meant 'political power for the working class' (Marx).



KARL MARX

to Parliament in April 1848 (officially counted, it was said to have 2 million signatures, the Chartist leaders claimed over 5 million), sections of the Chartist movement believed it was necessary to prepare for an insurrection on the grounds that the uselessness of petitioning Parliament had already been clearly demonstrated - Parliament had overwhelmingly rejected the first two petitions. Drilling and arming went on all over the industrial areas on a scale much bigger than before.

The petition was to be presented to Parliament after a massive demonstration on Kennington Common (a large open space in a working class district in South London) and a march to the House of Commons on 10 April. The ruling class was afraid, given the events in Europe, that the demonstration would be the signal for revolution. The government prepared for a decisive battle. A Chartist Convention in session at the time was declared an illegal organisation. The march on Westminster was banned. London was turned into an armed camp - troops were brought in. Almost the whole of the upper and middle classes were enrolled as special constables (170,000 volunteers in all), or posted to other defence services.

Despite all this a crowd of over 100,000 gathered at Kennington Common. They expected revolutionary action. But most of the radical petit bourgeois leaders of the Chartists, and especially Feargus O'Connor, had only intended a vast peaceful demonstration and not the beginning of a revolution. The people were unarmed and faced with the massive display of armed strength by the government forces and the divisions in their own ranks, the Chartist leaders gave up their plans for a mass demonstration. O'Connor begged the crowd to disperse peacefully, which it did.

Throughout the rest of the year a large section of the Chartists were preparing for an armed uprising. Serious outbreaks of fighting between soldiers and Chartists actually occurred in many places in the North. But the government was now confident. It went on the offensive and many workers including Chartist leaders were arrested. The abject end to the Kennington Common demonstration broke the back of the Chartist movement.

Chartists attack Westgate Inn, Newport 1839



ENGELS

ISM & THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT



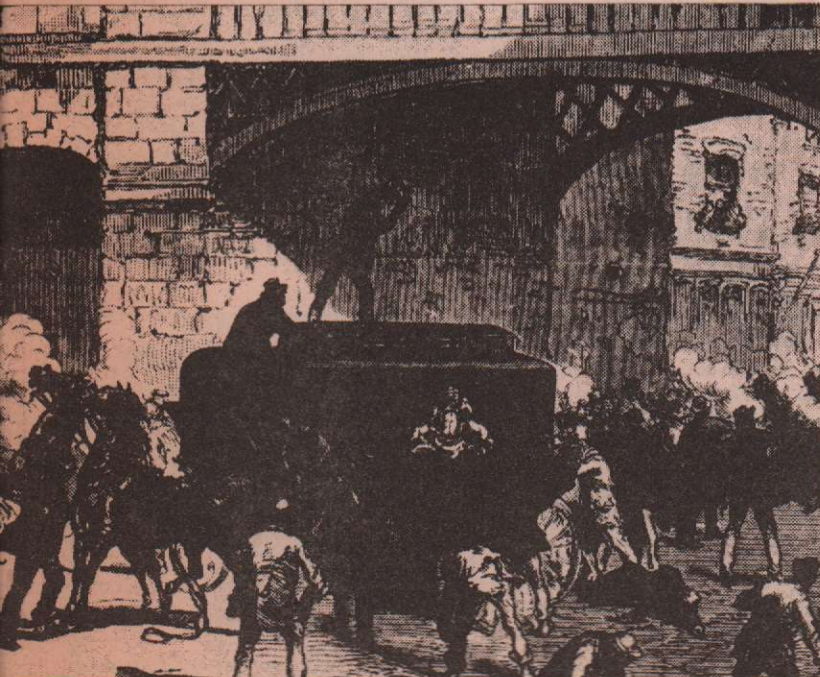
1818-1883

Chartism was a movement in decline from this period onwards and the divisions in it were not long in coming to a head. The divisions were along class lines. Marx and Engels commented on this in 1850

The present organisation of the Chartist Party is... in a state of dissolution. The members of the petty bourgeoisie who still adhere to the party, together with the labour aristocracy, form a purely democratic faction whose programme is limited to the People's Charter and a number of petty bourgeois reforms. The mass of workers who live in truly proletarian conditions belong to the revolutionary Chartist faction. The leader of the former faction is Feargus O'Connor and the leaders of the latter are Julian Harney and Ernest Jones'. (CW Vol 10 p514)

At this time the main bone of contention between the two factions was the land question. O'Connor and his party wanted to use the Charter to accommodate some of the workers on small plots of land and eventually to parcel out all the land in Great Britain as a means of improving the conditions of workers in Britain. An earlier attempt to do this by means of a joint-stock company had failed. The revolutionary faction of the

Rescue of Fenian leaders from police van, 1867



Chartists opposed this demand with one for the confiscation of all landed property and they insisted that it not be distributed but remain national property.

The Chartist movement, from the beginning had links with revolutionaries from the Continent and elsewhere. This gave a very definite internationalist content to Chartism. The second national Chartist petition presented to Parliament in 1842, for example, included a call for the repeal of the Union with Ireland. And Chartists were involved in agitation on the Irish and Polish questions in this period. Marx and Engels had made links with the revolutionary wing of Chartism especially through contacts the latter had with the Communist League. Harney's paper *The Red Republican* published the first English translation of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1850. And Marx and Engels believed that their influence on the revolutionary wing of Chartism had hastened the split between the two factions within Chartism. Nevertheless, in spite of this, by 1850 they were extremely pessimistic about future developments within Chartism:

'Despite this split and their [the revolutionary wing's] more extreme demands, the memory of the circumstances in which the abolition of the Corn Laws went through [an alliance between the working class and radical bourgeoisie against the landed aristocracy - Tories] is responsible for

... the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie.'

the Chartists' persisting notion that in the next crisis they will once again have to ally themselves with the industrial bourgeoisie, the financial reformers, and help to crush their enemies in return for which they will have to extract concessions from them for themselves. This will in any case be the Chartists' position in the approaching crisis. The revolutionary movement proper cannot begin in Britain until the Charter has been carried through...'. (ibid p515-6)

Marx and Engels' relations with Harney soon deteriorated when he took a neutral attitude to a split in the Communist League. Harney had also been arguing, since the middle of 1850, in favour of allying the National Charter Association with the expanding, non-radical Trade Union organisations and Cooperatives (see below on these). Marx and Engels' relations with Ernest Jones however became much closer. More

than any other Chartist leader Jones stressed the incompatibility of interests between capital and labour and the necessity of the conquest of political power by the working class. He was the closest politically to the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels.

Lenin has argued that the existence of a mass revolutionary socialist workers party depended on the fusion of two social movements: 'one, a spontaneous movement, a popular movement within the working class, the other, the movement of social thought in the direction of the theory of Marx and Engels...' (CW Vol 4 p260). The union of Chartism with scientific socialism was historically not to occur. For precisely at the time when scientific socialism became an influence in the Chartist movement, that movement was in decline. Not only had Chartism suffered a major defeat in 1848 but the conditions in Britain which had given rise to that movement were beginning to change.

In the third quarter of the nineteenth century (1850-75) British capitalism, with the markets of the world under its domination, rapidly expanded and was able to relax the extreme pressure upon the working class which had been ever present in the 1830s and 1840s. Wages rose and conditions improved especially for the skilled craftsmen who more and more assumed the leadership of the working class. These privileged workers turned aside from Chartism to build up their 'New Model' trade unions and their

Cooperative Societies. 'The spirit of rebellion died and proposals for radical reconstruction of society were brushed aside.' (GDH Cole op cit p338)

Although Ernest Jones continued the struggle, his following declined despite an attempt to revive the Chartist movement in 1853. More and more the Chartists argued for the need to ally themselves with the industrial bourgeoisie in order to extract concessions from them. And in 1858 when Ernest Jones called a conference to bring about collaboration between the working class and middle class reformers to achieve political reform, his relations with Marx and Engels deteriorated. Engels commented on this in a famous letter to Marx, in which he drew the connection between opportunism and Britain's monopoly of the world market.

'The business with Jones is very disgusting. He has held a meeting here and spoken along the lines of the new alliance. After this affair one is really almost driven to believe that the English proletarian movement in its old traditional Chartist form must perish completely before it can develop in a new, viable form. And yet one cannot foresee what this new form will look like. For the rest, it seems to me that Jones' new move, taken in conjunction with the former more or less successful attempts at such an alliance, is bound up with the fact that the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable. The only thing that would help here would be a few thoroughly bad years...' (7 October 1858)

Engels associates opportunism with Britain's domination of the world mar-

ket. He gives it a materialist foundation. It was a position which was to be refined and developed at a later stage.

BRITISH WORKING CLASS - TAILING THE LIBERAL PARTY

The third quarter of the nineteenth century saw annual rates of industrial expansion of 2-3% a year. Most significantly there was a much greater increase in output per head. So that while the share of wages in the national income declined after 1850, real wages rose substantially - estimates say by as much as one third. By far the greater part of these real wage increases went to a small privileged stratum of skilled workers

Alongside the rise of these 'New Model' unions emerged the Cooperative Societies. Those who joined them received a 'dividend on purchases', as well as interest on share capital. Whatever the claims of those skilled workers and others who sponsored such societies, the fact that shares were in the region of £1 each would rule out any benefits for the millions of workers earning around 15s or less a week. The skilled workers and craftsmen, the privileged layers of the working class with their 'New Model' unions and Cooperative Societies were building for themselves a stake in the capitalist system which was to have crucially important political consequences for the working class movement in Britain.

BRITISH COLONIALISM AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

It is important to record here that Marx and Engels' involvement in the Irish question also gave rise to a major change in their political assessment of the relation between the Irish national liberation struggle and the struggle of the British working class for socialism. Before 1848, Marx and Engels thought Ireland would be liberated as a result of the victory of the workers movement in Britain. They became convinced, however, that the opposite was true. The British working class would never accomplish anything until it had got rid of its present connection with Ireland. Ireland is the key to the British revolution.

They reached their new position on the basis of a concrete analysis of the relation between Britain and Ireland. That relationship significantly changed over a twenty year period. British capitalism was having a devastating effect on the development of Ireland. 'Every time Ireland was about to develop industrially, she was crushed and reconverted into a purely agricultural land' (Marx). So that when the Irish peasants were driven off the land in the interests of the British landed aristocracy, given the absence of any compensating industrial development, they were faced with a 'life-and-death struggle' to survive. As a result the national liberation movement in Ireland assumed revolutionary forms with the rise of the Fenian movement - a 'lower orders' movement based on the land. Over the same period, as we have seen above, the working class movement in Britain not only lost its revolutionary drive with the defeat of the Chartist movement in 1848, but also fell under the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie for a long period of time.

The British ruling class was most vulnerable in Ireland where the power of the landed aristocracy was being challenged by a revolutionary national movement based on the land. A defeat for the British ruling class in Ireland would open the way for the British socialist revolution. Provided, of course, the British working class made common cause with the Irish. The national emancipation of Ireland is the key to the British revolution. (See 'Marx and Engels on Ireland' *FRF 7*)

As a result of their new understanding of the Irish question, Marx and Engels began to reassess the whole effect of the international expansion of British capitalism on the countries it colonised. Whereas Marx and Engels in the 1840s and 1850s emphasised the 'revolutionary' role of British free trade in destroying the framework of the old society in these countries, 'even if actuated by the vilest interests' (Marx 1853) and in creating the basis for the development of the productive forces of the new society, by the 1880s their view had significantly changed. British colonisation of India was described in one area 'as an act of English vandalism which pushed the indigenous people not forward but backwards' (Marx to VI Zasulich, March 1881). In another case it was described as 'a bleeding process, with a vengeance' as a result of which 'serious complications, if not a general outbreak is in store for the British government' (Marx to Danielson, February 1881).

Again it can be seen that Marx and Engels were able to point to the major features of imperialism through their brilliant analysis of the expansion of British capitalism as it developed and these features emerged.

and craftsmen - the labour aristocracy.

Various estimates of the size of the labour aristocracy put it at between 10% and 15% of the working class. And weekly wages of this layer were on average between 50% and 85% higher than those of labourers. Trade unionism was mainly involved with the organisation of skilled workers and craftsmen. Those who did attempt to organise the unskilled workers in the towns complained that 'strikes had failed in consequence of the aristocracy of mechanics and artisans ignoring unpaid labourers'. It became a characteristic of these 'New Model' trade unions for the first time to have a trained staff of salaried officials. They almost always had high subscriptions - in the region of 1 shilling a week (a labour's wage was in the region of 15s or less a week) - and a series of 'friendly' benefits, such as unemployment, superannuation, sickness, accident and death allowances. They were not concerned with securing control of the entire process of production but with defending their interests and protecting their jobs. These 'New Model' unions carried out trade practices which hinged on preventing unskilled workers from getting into the trade.

The period was not without its commercial crises which are an inevitable feature of the expansion of production under the capitalist system. Such crises forced the trade unions to fight and led to some revival in working class activity. In Britain the crisis of 1858-9 and the lockouts and strike movement of the London building workers gave enormous impetus to the struggle for a nine-hour working day. In the wake of this nine-hour movement the London Trades Council (1860) was formed and in October 1861 the *Beehive* - the most influential paper of its time in the labour movement in Britain - was founded. The London Trades Council participated officially at the foundation meeting of the First International (1864) and its secretary George Odger became the first and only President of the International. The *Beehive* was later to become the first official organ of the International. And of the 27 Englishmen who were elected on the first Central (later General) Council of the International, at least eleven were from the building trade. (Collins and Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement*, 1965).

continued overleaf



continued from page 9

At the time of the founding Conference of the First International the working class movement in many countries was in its infancy and only in a few countries had it started to develop as an independent force. Such developments had to be encouraged. While it was necessary to fight against bourgeois and petit bourgeois influences in the newly developing movements, the International had to be based on real forces in those movements as well as aiding the creation of independent working class parties in many countries. The revival of the working class movement in Britain and France and the internationalist traditions, which were still a vital ingredient of these movements, offered a real foundation which could be built on. Marx put aside temporarily his work on *Capital* to involve himself in the organisation of the International. Marx wrote to Engels that he decided to take part because 'this time real "powers" were involved both on the London and Paris sides' (4 November 1864).

Marx drafted the *Inaugural Address* and the Provisional Rules so that the general principles of communism which they did contain would be in a form acceptable to those 'real powers' that made up the International - especially the English trade unions. Marx knew his task was a difficult one and he had no illusions about the English trade unions. As he wrote to Engels in summing up his task

'It is very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form acceptable from the present standpoint of the workers' movement. In a few weeks the same people will be holding meetings for the franchise with Bright and Cobden [bourgeois radicals, free traders and Liberals]. It will take time before the awakened movement allows the old boldness of speech ...' (ibid)

Marx noted in the *Inaugural Address* that the confidence of the English working class had been badly shaken by the defeat of the 1848 Revolutions, that the emigration of workers in the wake of the new gold discoveries had left an irreparable void in the ranks of the English proletariat and 'others of its formerly active members were caught by the temporary bribe of greater work and wages'.

During their efforts to hammer out a uniform tactic for the proletarian struggle of the working class in various countries Marx, and later Engels, inevitably came up against the opportunism of the English working class leaders.

The International was a major influence behind the formation of the Reform League in 1865. The League agitated around two demands of the Charter - universal male suffrage and vote by ballot. Its standing committee of 12 was composed of middle class radicals led by Edmund Beales and six workers, including Cremer, Odger and Howell, who were all members of the General Council of the International. However despite Marx's efforts to prevent the Reform League falling under the influence of the middle-class reformers, the English trade union leaders were soon to take this path of compromise with the radical bourgeoisie.

The League was financed by 'far-sighted' industrial capitalists and their political representatives. Between 10 November 1866 and 17 April 1867, for example, 10 Liberal politicians and manufacturers, headed by Samuel Morley and Titus Salt, made contributions

totalling £1,150 to the League. Not surprisingly the Reform League qualified its demand for male suffrage with the phrase 'registered and residential', so deliberately excluding the large mass of labourers, casual workers and unemployed. Marx wrote to Becker on 31 August 1866 'Cremer and Odger have both betrayed us in the Reform League where against our wishes they have made compromises with the bourgeoisie'.

In 1866 the Reform League led massive and militant demonstrations in Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park. At one of these the gates of Hyde Park were closed by the police. Beales, at the head of the demonstration, departed with his followers after making a formal protest to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square. However the working class demonstrators broke down the railings and entered the park. A year later in March 1867 another demonstration in Hyde Park was banned by the government. Many wanted to call it off. But despite government threats of bringing in soldiers etc the demonstration went ahead. Between 100,000 and 150,000 people entered Hyde Park - the largest demonstration since the days of the Chartists - and the government did nothing at all.



Frederick Engels



George Julian Harney



Ernest Jones

As a result of this militant agitation, various amendments and a 'lodger clause' were inserted in the Reform Bill and the franchise was increased in 1867, almost four times as much as was originally intended, with a large section of the urban working class getting the vote. After the passage of the Reform Act however the English trade union leaders in the Reform League worked secretly, in exchange for payment and Home Office bribes, to mobilise the working class vote behind the Liberal Party in the 1868 general election. Working class leaders, such as Cremer and Howell, were paid electioneering expenses and £10 a head to canvass for the Liberals and to draw up reports in the constituencies. The Reform League discouraged working class representatives from standing. Money was never forthcoming from the Reform League to support such candidates. Where they stood, the Reform League conducted a campaign against them (see R Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, 1965). Marx's remarks, in support of the mandate of Maltman Barry to the Hague Congress of the International in September 1872 were clearly justified

'... it does credit to Barry that he is not one of the so-called leaders of the English workers, since these men are more or less bribed by the bourgeoisie and the government'.

They had indeed sold out to 'Gladstone, Morley, Dilke and others' (Marx).

In a speech on the trade unions to the London Conference of the International in 1871 Marx again pointed to the limitations of the English trade unions. They constituted an 'aristocratic minority'. The poor workers could not belong to them. The same applied to workers born in the East End of London where one out of ten belonged to the trade unions. Marx argued that the trade unions in themselves were powerless - they would remain a minority. They did not have the mass of proletarians behind them whereas the International could directly influence the workers. It was the only association the workers fully trusted.

Marx and Engels' position on the Irish question, adopted by the International, also forced them into conflict with the English trade union leaders. After Marx had defended the Fenian movement in the International in 1869 and attacked Gladstone for his brutal policies, as well as his hypocrisy, English trade union representatives such as Odger and Mottershead strongly objected and defended Gladstone. Three English trade unions left the International because of its principled position on Ireland. Nevertheless the International was still able to organise massive demonstrations in support of Irish prisoners (see 'Marx and Engels on Ireland', *FRFI* 7). Engels was certainly justified in saying some time later;



Engels on platform in Hyde Park, May Day 1892

when asked about the attitude of English workers to the Irish movement, 'the masses are for the Irish. The organisations and labour aristocracy in general, follow Gladstone and the liberal bourgeoisie and do not go further than these'. (See also box on page 9)

Marx and Engels also came into conflict with these same leaders over the *Paris Commune*. After the workers of Paris had seized power in March 1871 for a period of two months, Marx wrote a brilliant defence of their heroic action on behalf of the International - the *Civil War in France*. Odger and Lucraft, influential trade union leaders and members of the General Council, were severely attacked in British newspapers because of this. As a result they decided to resign from the General Council.

The rapid expansion of British capitalism in the period after 1850 was based on Britain's domination of the world market and it had allowed the bourgeoisie to make some concessions to the working class without fear of losing political and economic power. The leaders of the British working class were all too ready to accept. As Engels wrote, in 1874 in an article 'The English Elections':

'As regards the workers it must be stated, to begin with, that no separate political working class party has existed in England since the downfall of the Chartist Party in the fifties. This is understandable in a country in which the working class has shared more than anywhere else in the advantages of the immense expansion of its large-scale industry. Nor could it have been otherwise in an England that ruled the world market; and certainly not in a country where the ruling classes have set themselves the task of carrying

out, parallel with other concessions, one point of the Chartists' programme, the People's Charter, after another ...

Wherever the workers lately took part in general politics in particular organisations they did so almost exclusively as the extreme left wing of the "great Liberal Party" ...

In order to get into Parliament the "Labour leaders" had recourse, in the first place, to the votes and money of the bourgeoisie and only in the second place to the votes of the workers themselves. But by doing so they ceased to be workers' candidates and turned themselves into bourgeois candidates. They did not appeal to a working class party that still had to be formed but to the bourgeois "great Liberal Party" ...

The British ruling class would have little to fear even from a separate political party - a 'bourgeois' Labour Party - led by such people when eventually it was formed.

'SOCIALISM AGAIN IN ENGLAND?'

If the political dormancy of the British working class during the third quarter of the nineteenth century was rooted in Britain's monopoly of the world market, then the breaking up of that monopoly would see a revival of the fighting spirit of the British working class. Since 1879 American and German competition had been putting an end to the English monopoly of the world market. A chronic state of stagnation had existed in all the dominant branches of industry since 1876.

'That immense haunt of misery is no longer the stagnant pool it was six years ago. It has shaken off its torpid despair, has returned to life, and has become the home of what is called the "New Unionism"; that is to say, of the organisation of the great mass of "unskilled" workers. This organisation may to a great extent adopt the form of the old Unions of "skilled" workers, but it is essentially different in character. The old Unions preserve the traditions of the time when they were founded, and look upon the wages system as a once for all established, final fact, which they at best can modify in the interest of their members. The new Unions were founded at a time when the faith in the eternity of the wages system was severely shaken; their founders and promoters were Socialists either consciously or by feeling; the masses, whose adhesion gave them strength, were rough, neglected, looked down upon by the working-class aristocracy; but they had this immense advantage, that their minds were virgin soil, entirely free from the inherited "respectable" bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better situated "old" Unionists. And thus we see now these new Unions taking the lead of the working-class movement generally, and more and more taking in tow the rich and proud "old" Unions.

Undoubtedly, the East Enders have committed colossal blunders; so have their predecessors, and so do the doctrinaire Socialists who pooh-pooh them. A large class, like a great nation, never learns better or quicker than by undergoing the consequences of its own mistakes. And for all the faults committed in past, present, and future, the revival of the East End of London remains one of the greatest and most fruitful facts of this *fin de siècle*, and glad and proud I am to have lived to see it.'

Engels died in 1895. His revolutionary optimism eventually proved unjustified. The English working class had definitely awoken and the new unions won major victories against the old unions and the employers. But in the end leaders such as John Burns, Ben Tillett, Keir Hardie were not able to resist the opportunism of the old union structure with its army of paid and bought off officials. While individuals from the socialist organisations helped to build and lead the new unions, revolutionary socialist organisations like the Social Democratic Federation proved to be too divisive and sectarian to seize the opportunity that confronted them. Engels spoke of this in a letter to Sorge

'The Social Democratic Federation ... have contrived to reduce the Marxist theory of development to a rigid orthodoxy. This theory is to be forced down the throats of the workers at once and without development as articles of faith, instead of making the workers raise themselves to its level by dint of their own class instinct.' (12 May 1894)

That is why, Engels went on, it remains a mere sect and, as Hegel says, it comes 'from nothing, through nothing, to nothing'.

Once again in Britain the fusion of the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels with the popular movement within the working class was not to occur. One hundred years after Marx's death that task still remains.

David Reed
February 1983

SUGGESTED READING

Marx and Engels, *On Britain*
Lenin, *Imperialism and the split in socialism* (pamphlet)
Lenin, *Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism* (pamphlet)
Engels, 1892 Preface to *The condition of the working class in England in 1844*
David Reed 'Marx and Engels on Ireland' in *FRFI* 7.

Se desconoce a los culpables
**AYA CUCHO:
ASESINAN 8
PERIODISTAS**



Dear FRFI,
On Saturday morning I received a copy of the 'Diario de Marka', a Peruvian daily. The cover story told of the violent death of a friend of mine, a journalist, along with seven others while investigating the police versus left-wing guerrilla situation in a remote province in the Andes. I was saddened by the deaths and wrote the enclosed letter, which you may wish to publish. It reflects the feelings of one Peruvian about his country.
Yours faithfully,
Jorge M. Aliaga

LETTER TO PEDRO

Pedro, comrade, you didn't die. Yesterday I received the *Diario* from Peru and was shocked to learn about your disappearance. My soul reeled with pain. You were on the front page and the caption read 'Ayacucho - Eight Journalists Killed'. On the next page was the article which told of your death, together with the other journalists, when you tried to arrive at the zones of Iquicha and Uchuraccay in the province of Huanta, in the Peruvian Andes, attempting to verify stories given out by the police stating that people living in those localities had killed many members of the armed group called 'Sendero Luminoso'.

In order to arrive at the place, after a long bus ride from Lima, you and your companions began a long journey of eight hours horseback. In attempting to find out the truth and to carry out your job you were all brutally killed.

For you, like all your colleagues, your camera was your only weapon, but the killers had no compassion and you were all massacred. Trying to tell the truth in Peru can cost you your life now, Pedro.

There are contradictory versions of what happened. Some say you were killed by peasants, others that you were killed by the police. But you knew, Pedro, that often the police will disguise themselves as peasants in order to kill.

Other hands will pick up your camera, Pedro, and in your name will publish the images of truth. I remember when we used to meet at workers' meetings in Lima. You used to click away with your camera during the demonstrations and if you took a shot of me it was accompanied by a downward look, and a timid smile. Those smiles came from your soul, Pedro. Comrade, you didn't die. You live in the few exquisite smiles of Peruvian children, in the growing struggles of our people and in the spirit of the party.

Come. Shoot your cameras, reporters of the world. Let people know that in Peru the most basic human rights are violated. Peasants are killed. Women and children are abused and left-wing members of parliament are brutally punished. Shoot with pens and your cameras. Pedro Sanchez, Eduardo de la Piniella, Felix Gavilan, Jorge Mendivil, Willy Retto, Jorge Sedano, Amador Garcia and Octavio Infante have been killed.

Jorge Aliaga

'BUTCHER OF LYONS' UNDER US PROTECTION

The return of Klaus Barbie, the 'butcher of Lyons' to France where he will face charges of 'crimes against humanity' is revealing a picture of the festering and rampant decay that dying imperialism breeds. Barbie, a Nazi war criminal, was awarded the Iron Cross for killing 4,324 French patriots and Jewish people and sending 7,591 others to Nazi concentration camps. Following the defeat of German imperialism after the second imperialist war, the US imperialists recognised the value of Barbie's murderous talents. They gave him shelter and a substantial income in exchange for his help in the imperialists' attempts to destroy the Soviet Union and eastern European peoples' struggles. In 1951 Barbie and many other Nazi war criminals were rewarded with a passage to America where they were given employment with the CIA or intelligence agencies in the oppressed nations. As a US army officer says 'They were glad to be in American hands'.

Klaus Barbie ended up in Bolivia where he served as security adviser to the fascist military regime. Alongside this task he organised an auxiliary death squad called the Fiances of Death. The Fiances of Death with Barbie at its head ran a multi-million dollar cocaine trade catering to the decadent habits of the imperialist heartlands. In the process they expelled peasants from their lands, enslaved others and tortured and killed any opposition. In his work Barbie had European partners who included representatives of the Italian mafia and fascist paramilitary groups.

The drug trade that Barbie was involved in is part of a massive international trade now run as giant corporations with hundreds of thousands of employees and which, in the USA, nets an estimated \$40bn a year profit. Only the US arms industry surpasses the profits of this particular branch of capitalist enterprise. The Fiances of Death are just one example of the joint operations of the imperialist intelligence



Barbie

agencies and organised crime. Barbie's removal from the scene will not remove the cancer of which he is part. That task will be accomplished by the oppressed peoples and workers of the world in the course of their struggle against imperialism and all its decaying manifestations of which Barbie and the Fiances of Death are only a small part.

Trevor Rayne

USA

State of Black America

The annual 'State of Black America' report produced by the National Urban League (NUL) was published last month. This detailed statistical analysis shows beyond doubt that 'As bad as things were for White America in 1982, they were worse for Black America'.

NUL president John Jacobs stated that the 'terrible situation' confronting Blacks in 1981 had intensified in 1982. 'The ranks of the Black poor sharply increased. About half a million more adult Blacks are jobless. Unemployment is now 25% higher than a year

ago. Millions of poor people have been forced off welfare rolls, off food stamp rolls, off nutrition, school lunch and health programmes'.

The budget cuts of the Reagan administration 'were those that more directly affected the poor... Medicaid made a real difference to the health of the poor. Aid to education improved basic skills

IF EACH BUSINESS IN THE
COUNTRY HIRES JUST ONE
WORKER - WE CAN LICK
UNEMPLOYMENT



achievement by poor children. Food stamps virtually ended the scandal of hunger in America. Job programs put the jobless to work.'

With this cushioning against the effects of capitalism gone, Jacob proposes that Reagan and Congress declare a 'state of national economic emergency'. So horrifying is the repression and poverty in America, that even the

'moderate' NUL proposes action before mass starvation in the USA scandalises the world.

The Shopping Bag Ladies of New York

Two books have just been published in the US, 'The Shopping Bag Ladies of New York' by Joan Roth and 'Shopping Bag Ladies' by Ann-Marie Rousseau. Both are 'photographic essays' with a text largely of interviews of the women pictured. 'Shopping Bag Ladies' are the solitary women who carry their few possessions around with them in carrier bags, scavenging and sleeping in the open, spending the days on the move for fear of the law. Both books thoroughly,

AND IF EVERY CITIZEN
SENDS ME JUST \$1,000 -
WE CAN BALANCE THE
BUDGET



and we hope finally, end the speculation of New York liberals who have watched the ever-increasing phenomenon of shopping bag ladies emerging onto the streets and public places of the city, that these women have voluntarily opted out of society.

The interviews tell the story of a viciously capitalistic society that discriminates against women. A society which is based upon the cash nexus and where 'losers' pay an enormous price. As one woman put it, 'I don't understand why people are afraid of me. I am all alone... without someone to talk to. Nevertheless, I am a wife and a mother. I have the right to live with integrity; to be treated like a decent human being. I am so insulted, so degraded, so humiliated.'

Sue Davidson

C'MON AMERICA!
YOU CAN DO IT.



WASSERMAN/AMERICAN GUARDIAN

● East Timor - the struggle continues

The heroic people of East Timor continue to fight against the imperialist-backed Indonesian invasion and illegal occupation of their country. Indonesia, fully supported by the US and British imperialists and multi-nationals, has carried out the genocidal killing of over 200,000 Timorese in its campaign to wipe out the freedom fighters of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN).

Britain's stance on the Indonesian invasion stands in sharp contrast to its loud cries for 'self-determination' for the Falkland Islands. Indeed Britain has remained a major diplomatic and military supporter of Indonesia. A secret government report, recently obtained by the New Statesman, has shown that Britain is planning to sell Indonesia Hawk ground-attack aircraft, Sea Wolf missile launchers, armoured security vehicles and a frigate. British trade and exports to Indonesia have also expanded considerably in recent months after top-level delegations led by John Nott and Lord Carrington secured lucrative contracts.

Yet intensified armed resistance by FRETILIN is increasingly becoming a threat to the imperialist designs. FRETILIN Central Committee members recently informed journalists that the resistance has been revitalised and reorganised under a new guerrilla command - the Revolutionary Council of National Resistance. Led by the veteran revolutionary leader Sha Na Na, the FRETILIN resistance now comprises six regular companies (around 6,800 men), and is extending its operations on new fronts.

Communists, democrats and progressives in Britain must give their fullest support to the East Timorese people, and must condemn and expose all British complicity in the genocidal war against them.

Victory to FRETILIN!

Bill Hughes

● Bombay textile strike - one year on

On 18 January 1983, the strike by the workers of the Bombay textile mills became one year old (see FRFI 20). The 250,000 workers have mounted one of India's most militant ever strikes for major improvements in pay rates and working conditions, and also to kick the scab unions - the Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS) - out of their lives once and for all. For a whole year the strikers have braved many attempts to break the strike. Dozens of their leaders have been arrested under the repressive National Security Act. Meetings and marches have been banned yet the strikers remain defiant.

The mill workers are solid in their support for the Maharashtra Girmi Kamgar Union led by Datta Samant. Datta Samant's militant and uncompromising methods have won him the allegiance of hundreds of thousands of workers in Bombay's other industries, where workers have won increases of 40-60%. The RMMS, by contrast, is corrupt, has never organised a strike and has acted as a surrogate manager over the workforce.

Over three-quarters of the strikers have now returned to their villages outside Bombay. The impressive organisation and leadership of the strike has ensured that sufficient rice, wheat and money is collected in the city for distribution to the strikers and their families, who are determined to hold out until victory. As one striker put it: 'This strike means everything to me now - nobody else in India will be allowed to go on strike if we fail'.

Bill Hughes

● Brazil

According to the daily *O Globo* it was discovered by the state secretariat for agriculture that some 50 farmers in the Southern state of Parana, had committed suicide by drinking chemical products used in the fields. The officials, the paper went on, blamed the deaths 'in most cases' on the farmers' inability to pay their debts. Parana is Brazil's largest coffee-producing state.

On the other hand, an AFP dispatch reported that some 500 Brazilian farm workers, who were starving and out of a job, stormed a food market in the town of Triunfo, northern Brazil, afflicted by a serious drought. This was the second time the market in Triunfo had been looted in one week. Mayor Julio Ramos pointed to the dramatic situation for the region's rural workers. There were no jobs and no food, and not even fodder for the cattle. (From *Granma* - Cuba)

IF EACH HOUSEHOLD
ADOPTS JUST HALF AN
OLD PERSON - WE CAN
SOLVE THE SOCIAL
SECURITY
CRISIS



Battle of Algiers

The film *Battle of Algiers* has recently been re-released in this country. It is a film which made an impact when it was first released in the 1960s – so much so that it was banned in France – but which today has even more impact on its viewers because of its parallels with the liberation war in Ireland. It accurately shows, without apology or sensationalism, the revolutionary violence of the oppressed Algerian people in their struggle against French imperialism in the 1950s and 60s, and the cowardly and vindictive revenge exacted on them by the torturers of the French army and the armed mobs of settlers.

Algeria had been a French colony since 1830. It followed the classic pattern of an oppressed nation with a privileged settler minority – very much like Ireland, though without formally being partitioned. An official French report of 1955 showed that one in eight of the total Muslim population (of 8 million) was totally or partially unemployed – another 2 million were seriously underemployed; whereas there was virtually no unemployment among the settler population (called the *pieds noirs*). The average earnings of the *pieds noirs* were 30 times higher than average Algerian earnings. The political system was weighted to protect this system of vicious exploitation – the one million *pieds noirs* had as much voting power as the eight million Muslims. Algiers, the capital city where the action of the film takes place, followed the pattern of the country as a whole, 80,000 Algerians lived in utter squalor in the Casbah, while the Europeans lived in comparative luxury.

The film opens with the recruitment of a young Algerian, Ali-la-Pointe to the ranks of the OS (Secret Organisation), a forerunner of the FLN (National Liberation Front). In prison for petty 'crime' after being assaulted and racially abused by *pieds noirs*, he meets nationalist political prisoners and sees the execution of one of their number. At the same time as carrying out a series of successful armed attacks against the police, the military and French officials, the FLN begins to organise the people. We see Ali-la-Pointe and his comrades spreading the FLN's message to the people, and enforcing a ban on smoking or drinking – this was an economic sanction against the *pied noir* tobacco and vine growers. Throughout the film we see the close links between the national liberation army and the people: carrying and hiding guns for the fighters, concealing them when on the run from the security forces, and continually protesting against the French occupation of their country. Especially notable in the Algerian revolution was the role of women, who played a prominent part both in the armed struggle and in organising the people.



Less than three years after beginning to organise in Algiers, the FLN constituted a serious military and political threat to French imperialism. The central episode of the film shows one of the decisive trials of strength from January to March 1957. In order to draw international attention to their struggle, the FLN called a general strike in Algiers for one week in January. The strike was solidly supported by all sections of the Algerian population. Realising that this was a decisive moment, the French army used every method to break the strike – from forcing Algerians at gunpoint into lorries to go to work, to using steel hawsers attached to lorries to break open shop doors. Mass arrests in the Casbah were commonplace during the Battle, between 30-40% of the entire male population of the Casbah was arrested at some time or other. The French army used the period of the general strike to arrest thousands of people, to question them under torture and to use the information gained in order to build up information about FLN membership. Exactly the tactics used by the British army in the period of internment in the north of Ireland in 1971.

The episode in which the French paratrooper Colonel Mathieu justifies the use of torture is one of the most revealing in the whole film. Questioned by a reporter as to the methods the *paras* were using, Mathieu replies: 'Despite all shades of difference, every newspaper, including *L'Humanité* (the French Communist Party's paper) said that the rebellion should be put down'. That was quite true – when the armed struggle in Algeria was launched in November 1954, it was condemned by the French Communist Party. On 5 November so-called socialist Mitterrand, then Minister of the Interior, said in the French Parliament that in Algeria 'the only possible negotiation is war', and he followed this on 12 November by his

REVIEWS

statement that 'Algeria is France. And who among you, ladies and gentlemen, would hesitate to employ every means to preserve France?'

This unholy alliance of forces gave the political and legal sanction which made torture possible – just as it has in Ireland. The key passage of the Special Powers Act (a familiar name!) gave the government 'the most extensive powers for undertaking any exceptional measure required by circumstances with a view to the reestablishment of order, the protection of persons and property and the safeguard of the territory'. This legislation was promoted by the Socialist Government, and supported by the French Communist Party. In taking the 'exceptional measure' of torture, Colonel Mathieu rightly felt that he had the backing of the French Socialists and Communists!

In fact during the entire Battle, a Socialist Government, loyally supported by the Communists was in power. The Governor-General was a Socialist who ordered 4,600 paratroops into Algiers. His view of the electric shock torture, shown graphically in the film, was that it was 'nothing serious. Just connecting little electrodes. And the *paras* were after all fun-loving lads!'. Overall, by means of conscription the Socialist Government increased the number of troops in Algiers as a whole from 100,000 in May 1955 to over 400,000 (roughly one soldier for every 20 Algerians) in 1957. Yet during the entire period it refused to recognise that a war was going on. The French Socialists and Communists presented the same pro-imperialist combination against the Algerian people as the British Labour and Communist Parties do against the Irish.

By these barbaric methods, the army was able to inflict a defeat in the Casbah on the FLN. We see the members of the liberation army hunted down one by one, until the last leading member, Ali-la-Pointe and his comrades prefer to be blown up rather than surrender. Indicative of the French army's contempt for human life (though not shown in the film) is that in fact the *paras* 'forgot' to evacuate neighbouring houses and 17 innocent Algerians lost their lives.

Though they lost the Battle, the FLN won the war. The armed struggle continued elsewhere in Algeria, and there was a growing opposition movement in France, which the Communist Party refused to join. A final, short episode in the film shows the mass demonstrations organised by the FLN to counter the visit of De Gaulle. From 11 to 21 December 1960, massive demonstrations confirmed the support of the people for the FLN and its armed wing. Maintaining a relentless pressure, the Algerian people forced a humiliating defeat on French imperialism. The Evian agreement of 8 March 1962 conceded all the Algerians' demands for self-determination. This film is a truthful record of their struggle – SEE IT!

Patrick Newman

Akin to Slavery: Prison labour in South Africa

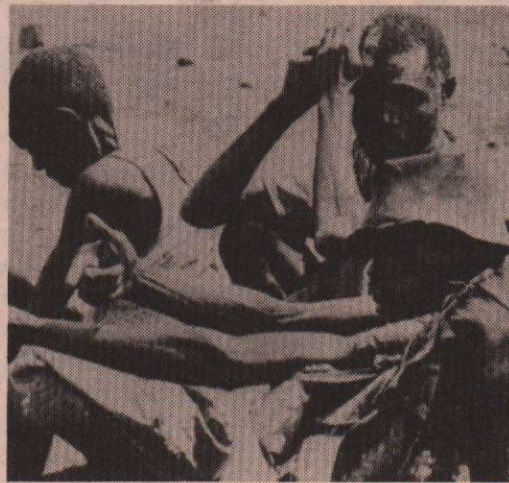
Allen Cook, *International Defence & Aid Fund*, 1982, 50p 80pp

It was recently reported that two black prisoners had died on a farm in South Africa. The reason given was exposure to high temperatures, but it was admitted that the prisoners had been ill treated. Behind these bare facts reported in the press, lies the barbaric truth of forced prison labour in South Africa. The real facts are never reported because in 1959 the apartheid regime made it illegal to publish information about prisons and prisoners. The real fact is that slavery exists in South Africa today and *Akin to Slavery* tells us about it.

In 1905 British imperialism introduced the leasing of black male prisoners for work in the gold mines in the Transvaal. Forced prison labour has existed ever since. At first this labour was restricted to the mines. In 1911 the South African Prison and Reformatories Act authorised the leasing of black male prisoners for public works – building roads etc. Both these systems of forced labour allowed the prison department to remain accountable in some degree for the treatment of prisoners. The introduction of farm labour schemes, however, in 1931 put the prisoners completely in the hands of private individuals – farmers. The '6d-a-day scheme' delivered the prisoner into the hands of a farmer who could use him as he wished. The 6d-a-day was paid to the prison department, not the prisoner, and the prisoner had no further contact with the prison. This scheme continued until 1947 when it was replaced by the 9d-a-day scheme and the introduction of farm jails directly administered by the prison authorities. All these schemes applied to 'short-term' prisoners who were supposed to be given the choice of farm labour instead of prison. The reality was they were seldom given the option.

By 1958 over 200,000 Africans per year were sent to work on the farms. The Director of Prisons in 1959 said: 'Lack of labour is the farmers' greatest problem. The Department of Prisons has become the focal point for the farmer, from the Limpopo to the Cape. They all want labour from us, but we cannot supply it all, but we are doing everything in our power to meet the emergency'. The police formed 'ghost squads' of specially disguised policemen to enable them to trap

Africans in droves, not caring if they were guilty of any offence or not. Men would simply disappear on their way to work, having been arrested by the police press-gangs. The courts operated to railroad the men out to the farms to meet the demand for labour.



In 1959 the whole scandal of prison slavery was exposed by journalists and lawyers in South Africa. James Musa Sadika, a black prisoner sent to work on a farm even though all his papers were in order when he applied for a replacement pass book, told of the conditions on the farm:

'We slept in a small prison which has only one door on the outside consisting of iron bars and which locks from the outside. The premises were filthy and infested with vermin. There were no sanitary arrangements other than two drums which were placed within the prison to be used as lavatories. The space available was not enough for us to move about and our bedding consisted of dirty sacks and dilapidated blankets. Most of the workers slept on the cement floor although there were a few beds. We were locked in daily from sunset to sunrise during the weekdays and from Saturday evening to Monday morning each week.

We were fed with porridge and coffee three times a day and received a piece of meat on Sundays for lunch. After my clothes had been taken away from me I was given a sack with armholes to wear and also again some sacks to use as blankets.

During the whole period that I worked on the farm from the first day... assaults were committed on me or one of the other workers regularly and daily.

The doctor who examined him on his release said 'In my opinion the examination and findings are consistent with repeated severe assaults with a blunt instrument. The linear scars on the arms and left ankle being consistent with assault with a thin or possibly sharp instrument. His nutritional state suggests severe deprivation of food during recent months.' It was following publicity of this case and others that the apartheid regime prevented any further reporting on prison conditions.

In 1975 a further scandal was unearthed. It was found that a business group, Smith Mitchell, was running mental hospitals mainly for black people with the aid of a government subsidy. The state mental hospitals for black people in South Africa are totally inadequate and the 'commercial' mental hospitals were used as an 'overflow'. The 'patients' included anyone the police picked up and considered 'in need of care'. In reality the mental hospitals were work compounds. One compound of prefabricated huts housed 3,200 patients. The total medical staff consisted of one part-time psychiatrist, one part-time medical officer and 42 nurses. Smith Mitchell were paid £1,500,000 of government money in 1974 as a subsidy. The patients were hired out as labour to companies like Standard Telephone Cables, Cape Asbestos and Metal Box, who paid piece work rates to Smith Mitchell. The patients were paid between £1 and £5 a month, often in sweets and cigarettes, not money. Black patients slept on mats and went barefoot. Costs were kept down by foregoing the use of anaesthetics for Africans undergoing treatment on the grounds that 'Africans appear to be more susceptible to the effects and because we treat more Africans than whites we would have to double our staff if we used anaesthetics.'

After the scandal the apartheid regime introduced an act to prevent the publication of 'false information' about mental health institutions, just as they had done with the prisons.

Akin to Slavery documents the schemes for prison labour which followed the 1959 Act. It shows that the use of prison labour by private individuals and state departments has not stopped; it remains an integral part of the apartheid system. In 1981 the daily average prison population in South Africa was 104,622, and it does not include prisoners in the bantustans or Namibia. Many thousands of these people, and many more unaccounted for, are living their lives as slaves. Carol Brown

The Longest War: Northern Ireland and the IRA

Kevin Kelley, Zed Press, 1982, £6.95 pb, pp366

'Without this key [scientific socialism] to the meaning of events, this clue to unravel the actions of "great men", Irish history is but a welter of unrelated facts, a hopeless chaos of sporadic outbreaks, treacheries, intrigues, massacres, murders, and purposeless warfare. With this key all things become understandable and traceable to their primary origin...' (James Connolly, *Labour in Irish History*, New Books, 1973, p135)

Kevin Kelley, early on in this book, proclaims his desire to explain the struggle in Ireland and his sympathy with the cause of Irish self-determination, but at the same time declares 'I belong to no party and would have great difficulty in finding any term to which an "ist" suffix could be added to describe my own political beliefs.' (p135). It is this that underlies the weaknesses in an otherwise well-written, well-researched and useful account of the war in Ireland over the last 14 years.

This lack of a coherent political perspective leads to extraordinary omissions. For example in dealing with the period leading up to the Easter 1916 Rising Kelley leaves out of account altogether the Dublin 1913 Lockout which inevitably means that he is unable to understand the development of the Irish Citizen Army and Connolly's role in the Rising. Further here, as later, he cannot explain splits in the Republican movement because he has no basis for explaining them. However it is in the contemporary period that the problem becomes really serious.

Although sympathetic to the national liberation struggle Kelley, like many such 'radical critics', cannot grasp that the revolutionary character of the Provisionals does not depend on this or that aspect of their programme nor on the use of this or that military tactic. The revolutionary character of the Provisionals is defined by the fact that they are leading the struggle for national liberation to free Ireland from British rule. So long as they conduct that struggle they are a revolutionary movement. This is why the split between the Provisionals and the Officials was a split between revolutionary nationalism and reactionary pro-imperialism. The subsequent evolution of both organisations has confirmed this. Yet Kelley agonises over the 'anti-communism' of the early Provos and displays sympathy for the reactionary anti-national mock-socialist 'stages theory' nonsense peddled by the Officials (see pp87-90 and pp 128-131).

Lacking any 'key to the meaning of events' Kelley falls into the trap of 'judging' individual IRA actions in a rather lofty and moralising manner, placing IRA retaliation for Loyalist sectarian killings on the same level as the sectarian killings themselves (see pp237-239) and treating the armed battles between the Officials and Provisionals in late 1975 as nothing but a maniac outbreak of violence, incidentally accusing the Provisionals of starting the battles, and accusing both the Officials and the Provisionals of 'a Stalinist mentality' (p240). Kelley here descends to standard bourgeois journalist references to 'sectarian slaughter', 'massacre' etc.

THE LONGEST WAR

Northern Ireland and the IRA



Kevin Kelley

Later Kelley's inability to grasp the real cause of events is again displayed in his consistent over-estimation of the role of non-Republican fringe elements such as Peoples Democracy and his apparent ignorance of the role of the Relatives Action Committees in building a mass prisoner campaign. Thus he claims that by autumn 1979 there was still no mass campaign for political status. Yet in 1978 the RACs had built massive marches in support of the prisoners – some many times larger than the original Civil Rights marches.

These weaknesses, at times leading to positively reactionary attacks on the IRA, undermine what is otherwise a worthwhile book. Also Kelley sometimes uses a kind of idiot journalese reminding the reader of the bourgeois press – as for example the description of Daithi O'Connell as a 'lean and steely-eyed Provo!' (p201). With these points in mind, however, it is worth reading alongside, but not instead of, the Communist Tradition on Ireland.

Terry Marlowe

POWs attacked - North and South

An Phoblacht/Republican News (10 and 17 February 1983) reports attacks on Republican POWs in Armagh women's prison and in the Free State Portlaoise prison. AP/RN quotes Sinn Fein elected representative for Mid-Ulster, Danny Morrison, who visited Armagh prison on Wednesday 9 February. Danny Morrison says:

'Yesterday I was told how Catherine Moore was forcibly stripped by warders as she returned from a remand court hearing on Tuesday. She was thrown to the ground and punched and kicked.

When she was returned to the wing, a Derry prisoner, Philomena Lyttle, saw how bruised she was and demanded to see Governor Murtagh. He appeared with a large number of male and female warders and I have been told that he was personally involved in forcing Philomena Lyttle back into her cell. She has injuries, the extent of which it is difficult to establish as she is locked up as punishment.'

Danny Morrison also reports that former hunger striker Mairead Farrell, who is O/C Republican POWs Armagh, is being singled out for 'parti-

cular attention' by being put on report and subjected to other restrictions such as loss of remission, parcels and visits.

The Free State is not lagging behind British imperialism in attacking Republican POWs. In February a number of POWs were severely beaten during strip-searching in Portlaoise prison. Beaten prisoners include Paul Magee, Angelo Fusco, Eugene Fanning, Michael McKee, George McDermott, Joe Whelan, Garry McGrath, Declan O'Leary and Patrick McVeigh. Angelo Fusco is now sentenced to two months solitary confinement without visits.

The similarity of the barbaric treatment meted out to POWs in England, the 6 Counties and 26 Counties is eloquent testimony to the united British imperialist/Free State attempt to crush the Republican movement.

Terry Marlowe

RUC ASSAULTS INCREASE

Throughout the past 13 years British imperialism has continued its barbaric rule through the use of beatings, torture and cold blooded murder to crush the resistance of the nationalist people. In 1978 Britain was found guilty by the European Commission on Human Rights of the torture of nationalist people during internment without trial. In 1978 an Amnesty International report exposed the torture, or 'maltreatment' as they called it, of Republicans - torture to gain false confessions followed by long prison sentences. The Bennett report in 1979 confirmed that torture is the way the RUC get their results.

Despite this exposure and the attempts to play down the truth about British rule with the promise of reforms, the recent Jellicoe report shows that far from ending torture in interrogation centres, torture and beatings are increasing. These figures show a marked increase in assault by the RUC but they do not give the full picture. Many nationalists do not report assaults and harassment by the British army/RUC because of fear that it will happen again or because they know it will have no effect. In the words of Sinn Fein representative Gerry Adams, who was arrested in Belfast on 27 January, 'I did not make a formal complaint. In my view it is pointless making a formal complaint and asking the RUC to investigate itself'.

Complaints of assault during inter- Alan James

IN BRIEF

● Supergrass trial

The trial of 38 nationalists charged with 184 'terrorist offences' on the 'evidence' of an informer - Christopher Black - is now in its second month. The trial is crucial for British imperialism because it is the first of the mass trials based on the evidence of touts and traitors. Every effort is being taken to ensure its 'success'.

Christopher Black was arrested in November 1981 and became an informer after being promised immunity and money. He was moved to England and denied all contact with his family. While in England, he and the RUC prepared his testimony against the 38 defendants. When the trial opened on 12 January, Christopher Black's mother, Margaret, shouted out to him not to give any evidence until he had spoken to his family. Margaret Black was thrown out of the court and threatened with 2 years imprisonment. Margaret was allowed to return to court on 17 January and the day after she suffered a heart attack. Black has now completed his testimony and returned to his hiding place in England while the trial continues.

Black's testimony, riddled with contradictions, errors and lies, will be quite sufficient for the court, as the 38 are being tried in a juryless Diplock court. 38 people now face the possibility of long sentences of imprisonment on the word of a tout. Black's evidence has in addition incited Loyalist gangs to attack 'The Hole in the Wall' pub in Newington after Black had referred to a pub with this name being IRA controlled.

Such is British 'justice' - dependent on the concocted tales of a traitor bought by greed and fear in a court 'freed' of any jury to weigh the so-called 'evidence'.

James Martin

● IRA resistance

In the last week of February, the IRA launched a series of successful attacks against the Six Counties 'security forces'. On Sunday 20 February the IRA shot dead an RUC reservist in Warrenpoint. The following day, in Armagh city, a remote control bomb on an RUC patrol killed a sergeant in the RUC Divisional Mobile Support Unit. On Tuesday 22 February an RUC officer and UDR soldier were wounded in an IRA ambush in Co Tyrone. Finally on Friday 25 February an IRA unit shot dead a UDR soldier in Dungannon bringing the total for the week to 3 members of the 'security forces' killed and 2 wounded.

This series of attacks indicates once again the ability of the IRA to hit back at the occupying forces and in particular, to respond to the 'shoot-to-kill' operations of the RUC/British army. The recent resurgence of IRA attacks has led once again to threats by Loyalist paramilitary gangs. The Rev(?) Ivan Foster has declared that the so-called Third Force - launched by Ian Paisley last year - will take action. If put into effect this means another round of Loyalist sectarian murders of nationalist civilians. Such threats, as with the 'shoot-to-kill' policy, will not and cannot hold back the national liberation struggle of the Irish people.

John Andrews

● RUC death threats against IRSP

In a press conference on Tuesday 22 February Belfast IRSP chairperson Jimmy Brown revealed that during interrogation in Castlereagh barracks he had been threatened with assassination by RUC officers. During the 18th of 22 interviews in the 6 days he was detained, Jimmy Brown says that two unidentified men entered the interview room and that one of his interrogators said that these men were members of the RUC shoot-to-kill squad who had been trained by the SAS and were operating with the sanction of the British Home Office. The two men said that they were coming to Belfast to kill Jimmy Brown. Other IRSP members detained in the same swoop confirmed Jimmy Brown's statement.

John Andrews

STOP PRESS PRISON STRIKE

The national prison strike started on Monday 28 February with protests in three top security prisons - Albany, Parkhurst and Wakefield. First reports indicate that 650 prisoners have refused to do prison work in support of their demands which include the right to wear their own clothes, weekly visits and 50% remission - in line with prisoners in the north of Ireland.

FRFI sends its greeting and solidarity to the prisoners and pledges its support for their just struggle against the barbarous British prison system.

MORE REPRESSION MORE POVERTY IN 26 COUNTIES

When the new Fine Gael/Labour Party coalition came to power, we said in FRFI 25 that Labour's treacherous collaboration would allow the neo-colonialist bourgeoisie to launch an all-out attack on the working class and oppressed in the 26 Counties. The recent budget shows that this attack is well under way.

There is to be no reduction in PAYE income tax to compensate for inflation; instead a new 1% levy has been introduced. The unemployed will not get a

10% increase in benefit until June, by which time the overall cost of living will have risen almost 20%.

The VAT rate is to rise 5% and there is to be a new special 5% tax on basic fuels. There will be no pay increase at all for public sector workers and public expenditure cuts as a whole will top £200m. So much for the Labour Party's 'independent socialist' promises: more poverty, more unemployment. Indeed, the dole figures were announced on the eve of the budget: 187,000 out of work at the beginning of February plus an estimated 20,000 youngsters who do not qualify to be included on the register. Over the last couple of months jobs have been lost at the rate of 2,000 per week. By the end of March there will be well over 200,000 jobless which is more than the total number of people working in manufacturing industry! And of those still in work, more than 13,000 are on short-time.

Since its birth from the womb of British rule, the neo-colonialist Free State has always imprisoned and harassed Republicans like Paul Magee and Angelo Fusco, severely beaten in Portlaoise prison in February, and now it is preparing similar repression against the whole working class. Gardai have already been used to break strikes and now shop stewards opposing redundan-

cies by planning to occupy the Rank flour mill in Dublin have been served 'notices of motion' warning them that they will be arrested.

In fact the goings of Rank's workers began on Thursday 10 February when shop stewards Harry Fleming and Alan Trimble refused to abide by an injunction barring them from the mill. Since then 12 more Rank workers have been thrown into jail. The Rank workers are having to fight not only their Fine Gael/Labour Party gofers but also the ITGWU which has withdrawn official recognition from the Rank flour mill dispute. Supporters of the workers have been picketing the prison, the mill and Liberty Hall - Headquarters of the ITGWU - underlining the alliance of reactionary Free State forces ranged against them.

The rich and corrupt Free State bourgeoisie and its privileged Labour allies know that a revolutionary fight back against them will develop. The beginnings were seen during the 1981 H-Block hunger strike when the dispossessed youth from Dublin slums, chanting 'Gardai-RUC!', fought their oppressors with stones and petrol bombs. And in January this year 300 youths took on the Free State police in Limerick. Forces have emerged which will unite with the risen nationalist people of the occupied north-east in their struggle to drive British imperialism and its local guarantors from the whole of Ireland - for ever.

G Johnson

Irish POWs silenced

It is well known that the British imperialist prison system regularly uses transfers of Irish POWs in England in an effort to harass the POWs, break up prison organisation and to break links between the them and other prisoners. However, now transfers of three Irish POWs in Hull prison have been used in an attempt to silence the prisoners.

The BBC planned to film in Hull prison and interview prisoners there for 'Newsnight'. Richard Glenholmes, Eddie O'Neill and John McCluskey all put their names down for interview by the BBC. Subsequently all three were transferred out - to Leeds, Durham and Liverpool - under the infamous 'Good Order and Discipline' (GOD) rule. Good order and discipline, it seems, is not compatible with Irish POWs being granted the right to speak to a BBC film crew supposedly investigating condi-

tions in Hull prison!

Richard Glenholmes, who was transferred on 30 January, is in the strong box at Walton Prison in 24-hour solitary confinement and is being denied exercise and correspondence. An Phoblacht/Republican News (17 February 1983) states that this treatment is being meted out because Richard Glenholmes refuses to wear a degrading uniform covered in yellow patches. He is currently wearing only a towel.

Terry Marlowe

LETTERS

Please note our address is, FRFI BCM Box 5909 London WC1 3XX. SEND US YOUR LETTERS. We welcome letters from readers but please keep them as short as you can

Hangings in Malaysia

Dear FRFI
On Tuesday 18 January, two more people were hanged in Malaysia despite appeals and protests from individuals, organisations and governments. They were hanged after undergoing extraordinary trials (the ESCAR trials) which had been the subject of much criticism both in Malaysia and abroad. To date, at least 33 people have been hanged under the ESCAR, and at least another 30 more are awaiting to be hanged.

The case of the two men last Tuesday (Tan Chay Wa and Chiow Thian Guan) were particularly tragic. Not only was there an on-going campaign to stop the hangings, supported by even the EEC, UN Sec-Gen. and 189 British MPs, but both had been offered asylum by humanitarian organisations outside Malaysia – offers which had been rejected by the Malaysian Government.

The Malaysian Government justified its actions by stating that the two had been convicted by a 'court of law'. What had not been stated was that the ESCAR trials were conducted using special regulations which, amongst other things, allowed hearsay evidence, restrictions to cross-examine prosecution witnesses and a mandatory death sentence for some charges passed by a lone judge. A Malaysian judge commenting on the ESCAR trials suggested that 'the accused be better shot immediately' than to go through such trials, as they would merely lend an air of respectability to trials which were for all intents and purposes not trials at all.

There have been cases of clear

cut attempts to frame-up the accused under the ESCAR trials. In the case of Tan Chay Wa, the lone judge imposed the mandatory death sentence despite the fact that the gun he was alleged to have was different from the one produced in court. Also, he was tortured to the point that he attempted to take his life whilst in detention. Indeed, a delegation of seven internationally renowned lawyers from the UK, France, Japan and the USA who visited Malaysia recently to investigate the ESCAR and other 'security laws' reported the widespread use of torture during interrogation. They also reported that such laws were not only unnecessary but also unjustifiable in the Malaysian context.

Such hangings have been resumed at a time when the present Government has been trying to portray a 'liberal' image of itself by releasing some political detainees. Their attempts to present such an image had been seriously undermined, and their intentions, questioned in the light of the recent hangings and the report of the building of a new detention centre in Johore (Malaysia) to hold at least another 1,500 detainees.

What I feel we Malaysians require from you is support and solidarity, and from ourselves, the courage to commit ourselves to the task of building a better and more just Malaysia. A concerned Malaysian
Anyone interested in knowing more about the issue should contact FUEMSSO (Federation of UK & Eire Malaysian and Singaporean Students Organisation), c/o NUS London.

Harassment in Lambeth

Dear FRFI,
Since being arrested on the 22 January demonstration demanding an enquiry into the death of Colin Roach at Stoke Newington police station, I have suffered various harassment and intimidation. Once taken to Stoke Newington police station I was threatened by a policeman who was bleeding. I received special attention due to the fact that I advised others arrested as to their rights.

The following Wednesday (26 January) in Camberwell where I often stay with a friend, 'someone' white in a brown mini, three times attempts to run me down. The next night (Thursday 27) at 2am my attention was called to the sight of a police rover on the spot where I stopped my would-be assailant by throwing my bicycle at his car.

Monday 31 January walking up Denmark Hill, Camberwell, I am stopped by two Brixton policemen – L171 and L647 – who

are by no stretch of the imagination 'young coppers'. After refusing to be intimidated by these gentlemen, I'm arrested for 'suspicion of theft'. I have in my possession my reel to reel tape recorder, which is nearly twenty years old, which I have just collected from a friend's flat. My two friends tell me that the 'reasonable ground for my arrest' is that I (a Black youth) am 'out too late' (11.45pm) in this area. At Brixton Police Station I am denied my right to make a phone call simply because I have not earned that 'privilege' by co-operating, according to Sergeant L2.

At 3am I'm taken to see a woman inspector, who refused to give her name to me. When I demanded to be charged or released, and stated that the only ground for my arrest was my colour, she informed me that 'I'm not a racist, I'm married to a Nigerian man, there's millions of decent blacks in this country and

if you don't like it, you should get out and go make your revolution somewhere else'. Referring to my political persuasions – how did she know? This inspector went on to tell me (after being locked away for 3 hours) that I would be released without charge and also without my tape machine, which they admitted they knew was not stolen. 26th & 27th January, coincidence? Maybe! but...

... there can be no doubts that this is another clear case of harassment. When taken to Brixton station I also had in my possession a pair of fairly new headphones, these were not mentioned once. Indeed they were returned with my property when I left the station that night. The tape was merely used as the focus for my harassment, arrest and detention. I am told by the police that if I want it returned I must go through the courts. I intend at the very least to lodge a formal complaint and hope to be able to prosecute the police for illegal detention and wrongful arrest. I ask that you write to Brixton police condemning their actions and demanding the return of my property.

K Ace Kelly

Students against imperialism

Dear FRFI,
Some of us in Edinburgh are trying to set up a nationwide movement inside schools to tell people what happens in the world. The name of this group is called 'Students Against Imperialism', its function is basically trying to tell people about the racism against the Irish and Black community in Britain, the apartheid regime in South Africa greatly supported by the British government, British imperialism and its oppression in Ireland, Falklands etc.

We are hoping that those people who know about the things mentioned above will build up a group inside their school and tell the facts to those people who know nothing or very little about the situations mentioned.

SAI can be contacted at: Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh. William Coyle

Irish solidarity

Dear Comrades,
I have enclosed a £2.50 cheque to renew my subscription from issue 27. Keep up the great work which you are doing for the cause of Irish freedom.

The Brits think they can crush the Irish people into submission by their terror and oppression. They may have the tanks, the plastic bullets, the army, the RUC, the UDR, concentration camps but the Irish Republican Army will eventually win through to establish a 32 county Socialist Republic. We've had 800 years of English oppression but the struggle will go on until Ireland is free and united.

It is good to see a British left-wing group support Ireland's fight so strongly. All of the other Brit left organisations aren't up to much as far as Ireland is concerned.

Wishing you all the best. Keep up the good work.

Victory to the Irish People!
Victory to the Provisional IRA, the people's Army.
Yours fraternally,
JLL
London

CPSA – all or nothing?

Dear FRFI,
Your correspondents in 'CPSA – All or Nothing' in FRFI 26 seem to have missed the basic point in my article 'CPSA spurns the unemployed' – that the CPSA organises in state institutions which directly and indirectly oppress the working class. That must be the starting point for any consideration about the action it takes as a union. Where the union is involved in actions which confront the oppressive roles of these institutions – as in the proposed race checks in the UBOs – or which are of some tangible benefit to the oppressed – as in the fight in Birmingham over staffing levels in DHSS – there

is no problem. As both Nigel Doyle and your Edinburgh correspondent pointed out, the so-called 'Broad Left' National Executive attempted to undermine the first struggle, and completely sold out the second. The problem does come with the proposed pay claim strategy, because the CPSA has deliberately chosen to attack the unemployed and oppressed, and indeed regards this as the strongest card it can play. How this can be described as 'progressive' is beyond me. My point was not that staff in DE and DHSS should not be involved, but how they should be involved. That is what the Runcorn DE HQ branch motion

took up – and which no other branch did. There was a way in which members in these two most militant sections could have been involved which would have been of direct benefit to claimants, by paying out all claims made without investigation. But this was never considered.

I do not think, as your correspondents seem to, that there is anything intrinsically progressive about the action called by the CPSA special conference. Instead, it shows how narrow, self-interested trade unionism can reinforce existing divisions within the working class. The sort of working class unity to which your correspondents refer can only be achieved through direct struggle against the state.
Robert Clough

Oil and banking collapse?

Dear Sir,
I read David Reed's article *Oil crisis threatens international banking collapse* in FRFI 26 with great interest. While the collapse of OPEC does threaten the British economy, and the economies of other imperialist countries with disruption, there is another side to the question.

The greatest single cause of the present world depression is the revolt of the peoples against the whole system of world imperialism. And the leaders of this revolt have been the peoples of the Third World, who, from Iran to Nicaragua, from Zimbabwe to Palestine, have brought on a general crisis of the imperialist system.

OPEC represented the most important economic struggle launched by the Third World. The whole imperialist economy was brought to the verge of collapse by the blows aimed by OPEC, for after 1945 an almost entirely oil- and motor-car-centred economy was created in the Western World.

The collapse of OPEC, far from being a sign of the further collapse of the Western system, is a sign of its recovery and stabilization.

All Western countries have worked hard to bring about the collapse of OPEC. The huge

efforts to save oil are familiar to us all even if only in the save energy campaigns. The car itself has been re-designed to abolish the 'gas-guzzler' so beloved of the Americans at the height of the boom. North Sea Oil, and many other oil fields were developed primarily to torpedo OPEC. The collapse of OPEC is welcomed by Thatcher and Reagan.

Coming as it does at a time of the world-wide offensive by the United States to smash the revolts of the peoples in such places as El Salvador and Southern Africa, the fall of OPEC cannot but be welcome news.

And the collapse of OPEC will, in effect, solve the world-wide crisis of Capitalism at the expense of the Third World. The crisis will be transferred from the advanced countries to places like Saudi Arabia and Nigeria. The recent mass deportations from Nigeria are a taste of the suffering to be inflicted on the mass of oppressed people when the few bright spots in the Third World are reduced to the general poverty. It is no wonder that Thatcher is delighted, when she knows the misery in store for so many.

If there is a silver lining, it is that this deepening of the crisis in the Third World will increase

the fightback against the system among the masses in those countries. Will regimes like those in Saudi Arabia last long when all the money is gone?

The disruption to the banking system referred to by David Reed is certainly important, but it will soon be overcome. The prospects of the stabilization of imperialism in the mid-1980s are, however, far more significant. Yours sincerely,
Dr A N May

David Reed writes: Dr May refuses to acknowledge that the crisis of imperialism arises from the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system – at its root is a falling rate of profit. The resulting depression in the major capitalist economies has dramatically reduced the demand for oil. The collapse of OPEC results from this. Whether this is 'welcome' or not is beside the point. The imperialist countries will attempt to solve the crisis on the backs of their own working class and the oppressed masses throughout the world whatever happens. Both will fight back and that is what we support and welcome. The 'solving' of the crisis of imperialism and the resulting banking crisis can only occur if those fighting back are defeated.

This is not some abstract, academic issue but a question of the strength of anti-imperialist forces.

Replies to last month's letter on Scottish nationalism have not been printed for reasons of space. We hope to include them in the next issue.

WINTER FUND DRIVE

FRFI NEEDS £500 PER ISSUE

The Winter Fund Drive did not do too well in February: only £270.72 of the £500 we need each month. Had it not been for the £91.65 sent in by individual supporters – £25 from Germany, £50 from Canada and £16.65 from various others – the Fund would well and truly have done badly. Our special thanks to these supporters.

The not-so-organised effort of our FRFI Supporter Groups with socials, benefits and other fund raising events this month only brought: in North London £57.14, South London £40.35, Manchester £32.95, Edinburgh £23.63, Dundee £14.42, Liverpool £5.60, Bradford £4.80 and nil in Leeds, Glasgow and Bristol.

Keeping the price of FRFI down to 20p is not a one-off effort, comrades! We need £500 regularly every month to do this. We know it requires hard work to organise fund raising events and often sacrifices from those who donate out of their own pockets. However, if we were forced to put up the price of the paper, many FRFI readers could no longer afford to buy it. Act now by subsidising FRFI! Send us your donations or hand it to your FRFI seller. Organise fund raising events – socials, jumble sales, collections.

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

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

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

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BECOME A FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! SUPPORTER

If you are willing to help the work which FRFI is doing, become an FRFI supporter.

We need more people to sell FRFI and to involve others in the fightback. We need more people writing for FRFI about their local struggles and campaigns.

Fill in your name and address on the form below, and send £5. You will receive a supporter card, a year's subscription to FRFI and details of all our activities in your area and nationally. (Postal orders and cheques payable to Larkin Publications)

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BCM Box 5909 London WC1N 3XX

HANDS OFF IRELAND

BUILDING AN IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now!

Saturday 12 March 1983

Assemble 1.00pm at Bidborough Street
(nearest rail and tube station Kings Cross/St Pancras)

Write for leaflets and posters to CC BISM

BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX

Organised by 20 November Building an Irish Solidarity Movement Conference

Speakers include: Helen O'Brien (relative of an Irish POW), Michael Holden (Sinn Fein member and shop steward), Keith Veness (Islington Labour councillor).

Irish POWs supporting the demonstration: Ray McLaughlin, Kevin Dunphy, Paul Hill, Brendan Dowd, Eddie Byrne, John McCluskey, James Bennet, Paul Norney, Anthony Clarke, Roy Walsh, Stephen Blake, Vince Donnelly, Patrick Hackett, Bobby Campbell, Gerry MacLochlainn (in a personal capacity).

Sponsors include: Peter Wardlaw (Scottish political prisoner), Jimmy Anderson, Graham Little, Ricky Wrethman (prisoners), Kashmiri Independence Movement, Ierland Komitee Nijmegen (Netherlands), Bangladesh Workers Association - London, African Peoples Socialist Party (USA), Workers Communist Party - Marxist-Leninist (Norway), International Solidarity Front-Iran (Glasgow branch), Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh (founding member of Civil Rights), Connolly/Keegan Sinn Fein Cumann, Alastair Logan (lawyer), Dafydd Elis Thomas MP (Plaid Cymru), East Twickenham and Clerkenwell Labour Party Wards, Bristol Troops Out Movement, ACTT - Hemel Hempstead Branch, Keith Veness, Bob Crossman, Charlie Rossi, Anna Bowman, Maurice Barnes, Peter Pendsay (LP Councillors), RCG, RCL, Irish Solidarity Committees and others.

Irish Solidarity Committees throughout the country are now going all out to make the 12 March National demonstration a powerful show of support for the liberation struggle in Ireland. The demonstration has already won widespread and broad support. Particularly enthusiastic support has come from both Irish POWs and other prisoners held in British gaols. One prisoner writes:

'The conference in November was in itself a resounding success in that it brought together all the groups and individuals who are genuinely concerned about the "Irish Question"; and this march on 12-3-1983 given all the support it deserves and is entitled to will show to our imperialistic Warlords in Westminster that their days are numbered.'

Irish POWs in Albany prison on the Isle of Wight have also declared their support for the demonstration. A letter from one of them reads:

'Well you have my fullest support for the 12th March and also ALL (emphasis in original) the POWs here without exception have asked me to also pledge their fullest support.'

The Irish Solidarity Committees and other organisations affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee for Building an Irish Solidarity Movement have mobilised far and wide to ensure the success of the demonstration. Support for the march has been obtained not only from

individuals, but also organisations such as East Twickenham and Clerkenwell Labour Party wards, the ACTT in Hemel Hempstead, the Bangladesh Workers Association - London, and many others. Bristol TOM, which is affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee has, like many other ISCs, organised a public meeting to mobilise for the demonstration. Estates, community centres, clubs and colleges have been visited and street meetings held in working class areas of all major cities.

The list of sponsors shows the broad support the demonstration has won, not only from organisations and individuals in Britain but internationally too. The African People's Socialist Party in the USA explain why they are unable to attend the demonstration and state:

'It is unfortunate for it would be an excellent opportunity to show the strong solidarity of the anti-colonial struggle of African people in the US for the anti-colonial struggle of the Irish.'

FRFI urges all its readers and supporters to join the demonstration, to work for it and to come to London on 12 March. Transport for the demonstration is being organised from Scotland, Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Bristol and other places. Make the demonstration a success! Come to London to demonstrate against British imperialism and for Victory to the Irish People!

Jellicoe Report on the PTA

continued from page 1

Jellicoe calls for the PTA's use to be extended to cover 'suspected international terrorists of any group, cause or nationality' (para 77). Jellicoe's repeated references to 'Middle East' 'terrorism' make it clear who he has in mind. In other words the racist anti-Irish PTA should also be a racist anti-PLO Act or anti-anybody else that British imperialism wishes to attack. With cool hypocrisy Jellicoe justifies this reactionary recommendation as a response to the accusation that the PTA is anti-Irish!

Jellicoe is a man who likes to speak the plain truth. So, confronted by the fact that the 'Temporary Provisions' are still in force after 9 years, he replies 'I recommend that "Temporary Provisions" be removed from the title of the new Act' and also that the PTA should be enacted for five years and then replaced by a new Act if necessary. These recommendations amount to openly admitting and strengthening the permanent character of the PTA.

Jellicoe also clearly underlines the true purpose of the PTA: intelligence-gathering and political censorship. Thus in para 60 he defends 7 day detentions by stating that 'the intelligence-gathering aspect of interrogation is vital'. In defending the proscription of the IRA and INLA he reveals the role of the PTA as an instrument of censorship. Proscription, he says, has been 'most successful' in the respect that 'there have been apparently few demonstrations or open displays of support by or on behalf of either the IRA or INLA' (para 208). Jellicoe further demonstrates his 'understanding' of the use of proscription by ruling out the proscription of sectarian Loyalist paramilitary gangs - 'I do not believe that a search for "symmetry" between... Republican and Loyalist terrorist groups, is sufficient reason for adding to the list [of proscribed organisations]' (para 211). Thus Jellicoe underlines the role of the PTA as a weapon

in British imperialism's war against the right of the Irish people to self-determination in general and against Irish Republicanism in particular.

Of course Jellicoe understands the necessity to give a 'democratic' gloss to the viciously reactionary PTA. So he recommends a whole series of guidelines to 'protect' detainees - all without any legal force. He recommends automatic access to solicitors after 48 hours, but if, for example, legal access might 'seriously prejudice the gathering of intelligence', the police can insist that any interview between a solicitor and a detainee take place within sight and hearing of a police officer (para 111). Some access! All of his 'liberal' recommendations are of the same character, designed to present a humane face to British imperialist repression. On ex 'clusions, for example, Jellicoe recommends that persons settled for three years in any one part of the UK should not be eligible for exclusion from that part of the UK. At present the residence qualification is 20 years. This recommendation would leave exclusion intact as a weapon, especially given that in the last few years very few people resident longer than three years in any one part of the UK have in fact been excluded. It remains as a form of 'internal exile' allowing the government to exclude not only individuals but also their families. It remains as a means of preventing Republican representatives from coming to Britain as in the exclusion last year of Gerry Adams and his comrades.

The Jellicoe report on the one hand strengthens and renders more permanent this racist anti-Irish censorship Act, and on the other proposes a series of cosmetic 'reforms' which will leave its repressive character intact. Jellicoe's report confirms that there can be no question of reforming or amending the PTA. It must be abolished.

Terry Marlowe

BRITISH TERROR

The harassment of Noel White and his family by the British Army/RUC took a sadistic turn last week when they murdered the family dog. Noel who comes from Ard Ross, Crossmaglen, has faced almost daily harassment from the day he was released from the H-Blocks in May last year. Only a few days after his release he was taken to the interrogation centre in Gough Barracks where he was beaten before being charged with assaulting an RUC officer.

During the Christmas period Noel received a death threat from a British soldier while he was making a phone call. Two weeks ago the White family's dog 'Darkie' was found dead, poisoned by the British Army. The sadistic murderers returned again on 13 February when Noel White's mother found a cat that had its throat cut tied to the back door. Another dead cat was found later, jammed between the iron of the front gate.

Sinn Fein's representative Jim McAllister said of the incident, 'The brutality suffered by Noel White, and the callous nature of the RUC and British Army harassment of the White family, are, for the people of South Armagh, potent reminders of the sectarianism of the RUC and the inhumanity of the British Army. Such actions serve to reinforce the determination of the South Armagh people to reject British imperialism and all its agents'.

In yet another brutal attack, 21-year-old John Burns from the New Lodge area of Belfast, was set upon by two undercover RUC men on 4 February. Burns was walking home in the early hours of the morning with a friend when a red Cortina pulled up in front of them and two men jumped out, fearing for their lives. John and his friend ran off. One of the RUC men called 'police, stop'. John Burns stopped and went to look at their identification; he was then set upon by the two RUC men who beat him about the head with their pistols. He was then taken to Fort William RUC station. Fifteen hours later, John was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital where he was found to have a broken jaw. Part of the jaw was later removed and replaced by a metal disc, such was the extent of the beating. John Burns spent the next six days in hospital and will need long-term

medical treatment if he is to recover from this incident.

This is just one assault in many that the nationalist people suffer on a daily basis while the British occupy Ireland.

In another act aimed at terrorising the nationalist people, a force of 'several hundred' British Army/RUC carried out a mass dawn raid on the homes of Republicans in Derry on January 26.

Five women and seven men were arrested under section 12 of the PTA, taken to Castlereagh and held under the seven day order. One of the women arrested was Donna Maguire whose husband, IRA Volunteer Charles 'Pop' Maguire was killed with Volunteer George McBreaty by a British Army undercover squad in May 1981.

Commenting on another attempt by British imperialism to undermine the success of the Republican movement, Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein said 'These arrests are part of a concentrated attempt by the British, aided and abetted by the Catholic hierarchy and the panic-stricken SDLP, to smash the Republican movement's principled opposition to British rule in Ireland. I am confident not only will they not succeed but that their actions will have the opposite effect and further strengthen our position'.

The British Army murder squads claimed another victim with their shoot-to-kill policy on the night of 2 February. The undercover squad murdered 24-year-old INLA volunteer Neil McMonagle and seriously injured Liam Duffy in the Shantallow area of Derry.

As usual, the RUC issued their now familiar lies in an attempt to cover up for murder. They claimed that McMonagle was armed despite the fact that no arms were found near the body. During a so-called follow-up operation some distance away a rifle and a pistol were conveniently found in an attempt to confuse the fact that the British Army murdered a well-known Republican who had received many death threats from the forces of terror. Only last October McMonagle's brother John was arrested and during interrogation was told his brother would be left in a bog.

Sinn Fein's Derry representative, Martin McGuinness, spoke out on the

attempts to confuse the fact that McMonagle was murdered by stating, 'People should not be blinded to the fact that no member of the British forces has any right - moral, legal or political - to kill Irish people in Ireland'.

McMonagle's murder and the murders of other nationalist people over the past three months are not isolated incidents but a plan of terror by British imperialism to crush the resistance of the Irish people following the recent election victory. British imperialism's response to the democratic wishes of an oppressed nation has always been the same - outright terror. This terror will only end when the Irish people drive imperialism from Ireland.

Relatives of the six victims of the British Army/RUC shoot-to-kill policy murdered in Co Armagh held a demonstration on Sunday 6 February in Lurgan to show their disgust at the policy of murder reintroduced by British imperialism. The demonstration was led by 50 relatives of the victims carrying placards with the portraits of their murdered loved ones, Gervase McKerr, Eugene Toman, Sean Burns, Michael Tighe, Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew.

The demonstration marched past the spot where IRA volunteers McKerr, Toman and Burns were murdered and on past the RUC barracks in North Street, where they held a rally addressed by the brothers of two of the victims. Throughout the 2-mile route the RUC shouted abuse and threats of arrest to the demonstrators. In another attempt at intimidation a British Army helicopter flew in low over the heads of the marchers.

During the rally Malachy Toman dismissed the claim by James Prior that he had no knowledge of the shoot-to-kill policy, by pointing out the number of people who had been murdered over the past few months. Noel Carroll pointed out that the murder of his brother Roddy was 'A deliberate conspiracy by the RUC. They can't hide the truth behind their dirty propaganda. Is being a Republican a capital offence? Can a police car chase a secondhand Allegro for five miles and not catch it? Does an unarmed man crash through a road block? You have answered those questions by being here today - it was murder'.

Alan James