

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

Issue 55 January 1986 (unwaged 20p) 30p

Crisis looms for Anglo-Irish deal

The Anglo-Irish Agreement threatens to precipitate a crisis for the Thatcher government in the Six Counties of Ireland. Furious loyalist opposition has greeted the deal, the first major step of their campaign against it being the resignation on 1 January of all the Unionist MPs at Westminster. So far however, the deal has met unanimous support from the imperialist ruling classes of Britain, USA, France, Germany and the neo-colonial Twenty Six Counties. It has been given overwhelming backing by the British House of Commons, the Labour Party and the press. In the Twenty Six Counties, Haughey's Fianna Fail party voted against the deal but said they would not impede it.

The imperialists clearly want the plan to work. Thatcher has made plain her determination to prevent loyalist opposition from wrecking the Agreement as it wrecked power sharing in 1974. What is at stake for British imperialism that it should risk its long-standing and vital alliance with the loyalists in the Six Counties?

The strengthening of partition

Despite the hysterical accusations of the loyalists, the Agreement does not represent any move towards Irish re-unification. On the contrary, as Sinn Fein has pointed out, it is aimed at strengthening partition, isolating and defeating revolutionary Republicanism and stabilising imperialist domination in Ireland, North and South. Already Northern Ireland Secretary Tom King has made this embarrassingly clear. In a speech on 3 December (for which he later had to apologise because it was too truthful) he said:

'In Northern Ireland we have signed an agreement in which the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland ... has in fact accepted that for all practical purposes and into perpetuity, there will never be a united Ireland.'

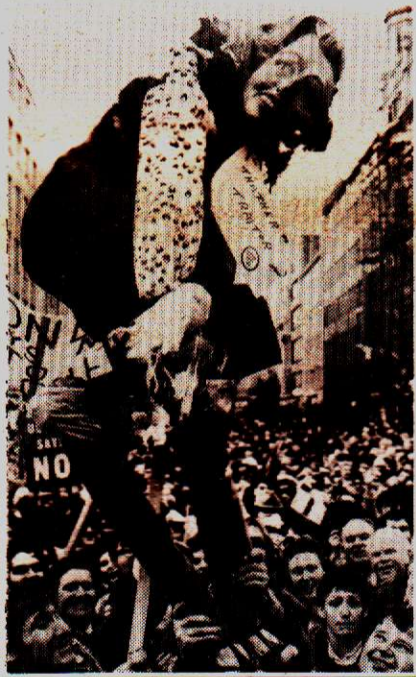
The content of the Agreement is:

- that the re-unification of Ireland can only come about with the consent of the loyalists.
- the establishment of a Conference between the British government and the Twenty Six Counties' government which will discuss Six Counties' affairs including security, cross-border collaboration, legal and social matters. The South will be able to put forward 'proposals' on these.
- the Conference will discuss 'human rights', the prevention of discrimination and a programme of measures to improve relations between the police and the nationalist community.
- that a programme of work and co-operation between the RUC and the Gardaí be instituted, training, exchange of information and technical co-operation.
- the discussion of harmonising legal arrangements - in particular extradition of Republicans from the South.

Beneath a layer of waffle about rights, the crux of the matter is that British rule in the Six Counties now has the full and open backing of the Dublin government. Both are equally determined to crush the Republican movement. It is no surprise therefore that the first concrete result was a meeting on 2 December (the first for three years) between RUC Chief Hermon and Garda Chief Wren. It is a testament to the strength and

determination of the nationalist people of the Six Counties and the Republican movement that Britain has felt it necessary to make this agreement. Despite sixteen years of armed occupation, not only has the struggle for national libera-

Loyalists burn an effigy of Thatcher



BROADWATER FARM Siege continues

For 6 weeks the police broke into homes at the rate of two a week. They used pick-axes to smash open doors and invaded homes to ransack them. In the immediate area of Tottenham and on the estate itself, nearly 100 houses have been entered and searched. Items of clothing, food, including baby food, videos and televisions, jewelry, supplementary benefits books, cheque books, photographs, passports and so on were taken away. Now the police have changed tactics and enter homes on the estate with a pass key. Up to 50 police have been involved in some raids, and no search warrants are produced. People are refused receipts and lists of items taken away. Many Tottenham people have been forced to turn to the council for immediate help because they have been made penniless and left without clothing.

The aim of the police is to terrorise the community. Young children have been questioned away from their parents, white youth have been threatened with imprisonment unless they dissociate themselves from their black friends. Parents have had their children taken into 'care' by the social services at the command of the police. These terror tactics have been carried into the local schools where pupils have been questioned, and into workplaces. Always

present are the packed police vans where the 200-400 police wait on a rota basis to constantly patrol, film and survey everyone who comes and goes on the estate. Helicopters regularly fly overhead and phones, including call boxes, are tapped. Yet despite their heavy presence, the police took 45 minutes to call for help when an old age pensioner was taken ill with a heart condition and died shortly afterwards.

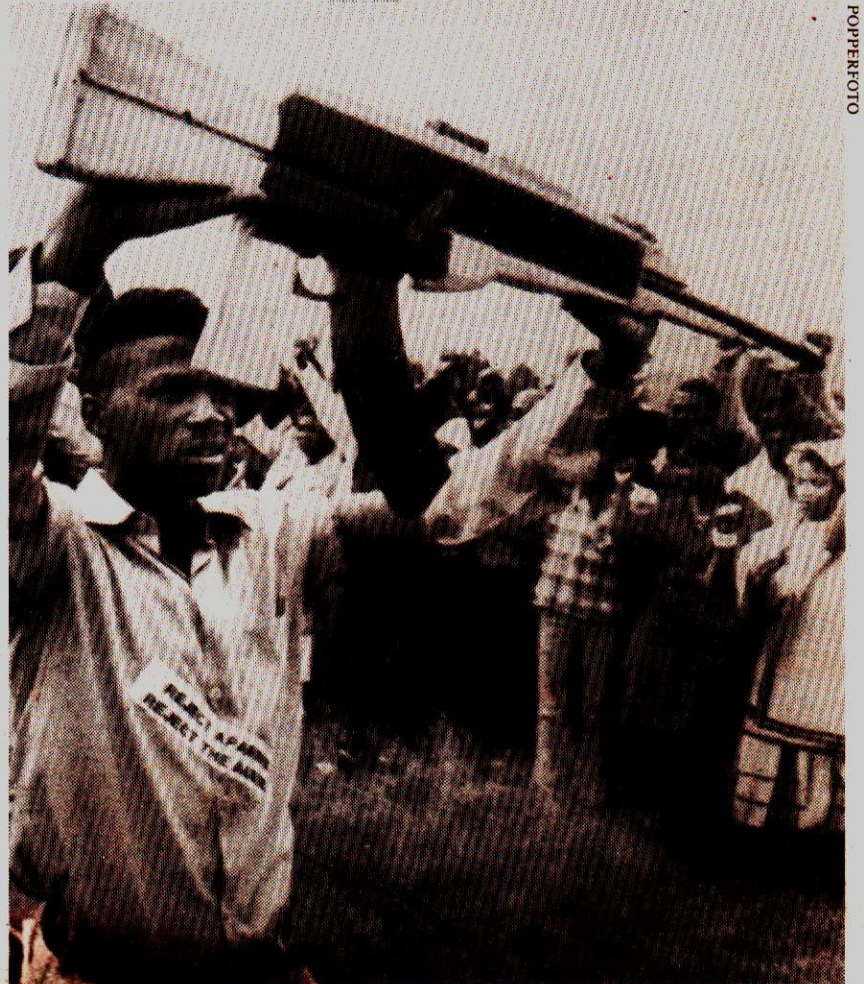
tion continued but also severe blows to British propaganda have resulted from Sinn Fein's electoral successes. They have demonstrated to the world that the Republican movement has mass popular support. In the process the middle class collaborationist politicians, the SDLP, have been shown to be increasingly irrelevant. British imperialism has thus been robbed of any veneer of democracy in its rule in Ireland. Terror, armed might, show trials and imprisonment are, and are seen to be, the only means by which Britain remains in Ireland.

Twenty Six Counties' backing for British rule in Ireland is therefore of great importance for Britain. Firstly because it gives a propaganda cover to Britain's repressive rule; secondly because it gives the appearance (without any substance) of granting some rights to the nationalist population; thirdly it is hoped by both governments that these measures will be sufficient to win middle class nationalist opinion to the deal, strengthen the SDLP and thus create a pole of constitutional nationalism which can be used politically to isolate Sinn Fein. Alongside this will go stepped up repression against Republicans.

It is the necessity for British imperialism to bolster constitutional nationalism that explains its present argument with the loyalists. The loyalists wish to see the Six Counties run on crudely sectarian lines with Britain backing up loyalist supremacy with force. For British imperialism, in this period, the excesses of loyalism - its open bigotry, fascist ideology and denial of rights to the Catholic minority - are a barrier to the isolation of the Republican movement, the development of constitutional nationalism and there-

continued on page 13

continued on page 6



7 December Queenstown: A funeral procession for 11 people murdered by the regime is led by a marcher carrying a model submachine gun representing the people's war against apartheid

Apartheid fails to quell revolt

At the beginning of November, the apartheid regime imposed a ban on all but officially-approved media coverage of any 'situations of unrest'. The reason given: that the presence of TV crews 'had proved to be a catalyst for further violence' in the black townships. The TV crews have gone, but the carnage continues. The death toll in November was the highest since the risings started over a year ago. Every single day, black people in South Africa are ruthlessly and brutally murdered by the racist police. On 21 November 13 black people (official figures) were killed when police opened fire on a peaceful demonstration, led by thousands of women. A police helicopter flying above sprayed live bullets and teargas into the crowd below, resulting in the highest number of deaths at one time since the massacre at Langa on 21 March 1985.

Now that we no longer see some of these barbarous acts on our TV screens every night, Botha feels confident in declaring that the revolutionary movement in South Africa is fast losing momentum. Yet the events of the past few weeks have shown that the reverse is true - the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed soars to new heights and gains strength. The militancy of the black urban townships has continued to spread to the smaller, rural black townships. The boycott of white-owned businesses and community resistance to forced removals has intensified. In the prisons, the detainees fight back. 400 detainees facing indefinite detention have been on hunger strike, some even refusing water. The attacks on black policemen, councillors and other collaborators continue unabated, with the level of grenade attacks on police patrols and buildings increasing dramatically.

continued on page 4

INSIDE

● VIRAJ MENDIS appeal adjourned to January page 6

● Your detailed guide to the POLICE ACT which comes into force on 1 January 1986 centre pages

BUREAUCRACY VERSUS DEMOCRACY

The AAM leadership is moving to tighten its bureaucratic control over the movement. At the AGM a motion to restrict voting rights at future AGMs to those who have been in membership for more than three months was carried. A motion to initiate a debate on the Interim Report of the Development Sub-Committee was also carried.

This report recommends: the restriction of local group membership to those who live and work in the area (designed retrospectively to justify the expulsion of City AA); the removal of voting rights for individual members; the introduction of 'weighted' voting rights so that 'big' trade unions would have more votes than 'small' local groups and affiliated organisations. These proposals will take power away from activists and hand it over to block vote wielding bureaucrats. They will remove all significant rights from individual members and allow the 'big' organisations (however inactive) to outvote grassroots members (however active). The report must be opposed by all those who want an AAM controlled by its members.

The AAM leadership had refused to support his campaign because he was in the RCG. 'Their hatred of the RCG is greater than their hatred of racist immigration laws.' The motion was passed, strengthening the possibility of engaging the active support of black people for the AAM.

Another major victory for our trend was the passing of our motion committing the AAM to oppose the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Yet again, the EC amended it hoping, by their amendment, to restrict opposition to the use of the PTA against Southern African liberation movements. When the PTA was extended in 1984 the leadership refused to oppose the Act but merely sought 'assurances' from the government that it would not be used against Southern African liberation movements. We argued then that such assurances were worthless and that the Act itself must be opposed. We were right, as David Reed pointed out when moving the motion. He argued that as the struggle intensifies in Southern Africa, so will attacks on the liberation movements. Terrorism, according to the British government, is violence for political ends. The only defence is united opposition to the PTA and defence of all - Irish, Arab, Central American, Southern African - who are attacked by it. 'An injury to one is an injury to all' he reminded delegates, quoting the SACTU slogan. Anti-apartheid activists can now mount an effective defence of the Southern African liberation movements against the PTA.

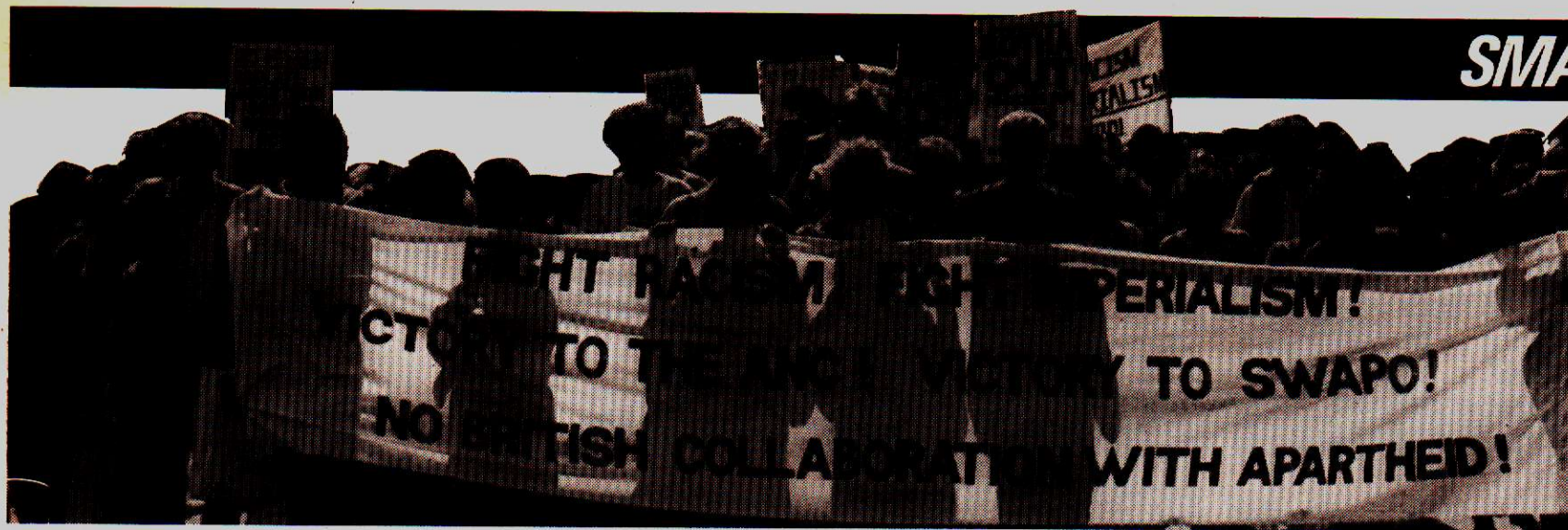
NATIONAL COMMITTEE - NO CHANGE

Of the 30 elected members of the National Committee only three were not members of the previous NC. Even this change only happened because three previous NC members stood down.

Despite representing a third of delegates voting at the AGM not one of our slate of candidates was elected.

The AGM was dominated by this dispute on the way forward. Our trend won significant victories which will strengthen the drive to turn the AAM into a people's movement winning the active support of all forces opposed to apartheid and determined to destroy British collaboration with apartheid. The political success of our trend on the day was only possible because of the central role played by the RCG as an organised communist current giving voice to the active militant elements in the AAM. This is why so much abuse is poured on the RCG. The abuse and the thuggery both failed to silence us. The RCG will continue to fight for a democratic, mass anti-apartheid movement capable of meeting the challenge set by the courageous people of South Africa.

This page was compiled by Maggie Mellon and Terry O'Halloran.



South Africa burns but for the AAM leadership its...

Business as usual

Nearly 1,000 people attended the Anti-Apartheid Movement's AGM on Sunday 1 December. This record attendance was a result of the momentous struggle in South Africa and of the political dispute in the AAM here.

Two trends confronted each other at the AGM. One wants to confine the policies and activities of the AAM to what is acceptable to their chosen constituency: the leadership of the Labour Party and trade union movement and the section of society they represent. This means concentrating on 'constitutional', 'respectable' activity; insisting that the AAM will not change despite the massive changes taking place in South Africa and in Britain. This trend in the AAM is represented by the present leadership. Their way forward lies in the election of a Labour government led by Neil Kinnock. They want to keep the membership and activities of the AAM within the limits acceptable to Kinnock and those he represents.

The other trend, represented by RCG and City AA, is fighting for change. It is fighting for a more open, effective and democratic movement. It argues that there are now new forces whose active support must be won if the AAM is to meet the challenge facing it and become a mass movement. Our trend knows that as the struggle in South Africa threatens to destroy British profiteering not only will the British state move to destroy any anti-apartheid movement in Britain, but also Kinnock & co will seek to impose a compromise which will pre-

serve British profiteering in South Africa.

Building a movement capable of dealing with this means winning black people in struggle here to the AAM; confronting British support for apartheid; defending the right to protest in face of police bans and harassment; cutting off all publicity for the regime and boycotting any debate with apartheid; encouraging rank and file action like that taken by the Dunnes workers; opposing the PTA, now extended to cover all liberation movements. These

were the political issues we raised at the AGM.

The AAM leadership, unable to defend their standpoint openly, resorted to political censorship, procedural manoeuvres and physical thuggery. They banned all leaflets and statements from the hall - except their own. Their stewards, many drawn from the obsessively anti-RCG 'Proletarian' group, acted as watchdogs for the EC's censorship and manoeuvring throughout the day. Both before and during the AGM supporters of RCG and City AA were violently attacked by these specially selected thugs. Those who cannot defend their political position inevitably resort to thuggery.

Despite the thuggery, procedural tricks and witch-hunting, four of the eleven motions supported by our trend were passed: against racist immigration laws; against the PTA; for the severance of diplomatic links; and supporting rank and file trade union action against apartheid. One calling on the AAM to follow the example of the Free South Africa Movement, including getting arrested if need be, was carried with an EC amendment to remove the reference to arrests. One supporting GLAIR's campaign to force Gay Mens Press and others to observe the cultural boycott was referred back to the National Committee.

Another re-affirming the 'no debate with apartheid' policy was dealt with by a successful EC procedural motion that there be no vote. Two were not taken for lack of time: on the Public Order Act and another calling for legal defence of anti-apartheid activists arrested. Only two - on reinstating City AA and closing the South African embassy were defeated in a vote. So much for an 'unrepresentative' and 'disruptive' minority as the EC labels us.

In the debate on the re-affiliation of City AA, Mike Terry for the EC declared that the only reason for disaffiliating City AA was its alleged, never proven, failure to act as a local group and that the ANC had asked them to disband City AA. Carol Brickley, City AA Convenor, defended City AA's contribution to the AAM; denounced the leadership vendetta and demanded real unity of all forces opposed to apartheid. The seconder, from North Staffs AA, compared the witch-hunt in the AAM to similar witch-hunts in the Labour Party and CND. A GMBATU delegate was wheeled on to declare that 'his' members supported the leadership. We are convinced that GMBATU members have no more been

PAC SPEAKS

The AAM's constitution states that it will

'co-operate with and support Southern African organisations campaigning against apartheid.'

The PAC - the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania - is just such an organisation. Yet its representative in Britain, Zolile Keke, did not receive an invitation to the AGM and had to ask for speaking rights. Zolile Keke did speak at the AGM and reminded delegates that the PAC too is part of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

Building unity against Apartheid

150 people attended the pre-AGM Briefing Meeting convened by the RCG and City AA. The meeting was chaired by Rene Waller, a founding member of the AAM, and addressed by Carol Brickley, Convenor of City AA, and by David Reed for the RCG.

Carol Brickley, speaking of the undemocratic expulsion of City AA, and the attempts to destroy its work, said,

'... City Group has shown the way to build at grass-roots level against apartheid. But that presents the AAM leadership with problems. The infusion of new blood is a challenge to the political domination of the Labour Party and CPGB... They certainly do not want support from those who will directly challenge the British state whilst fighting apartheid... We have to stand against their notion of a movement which cuts out everyone to the left of Neil Kinnock.'

For the RCG, David Reed rejected charges that we are a disruptive and divisive force in the AAM.

'Those who talk of unity whilst attacking City AA and others' right to be in the movement, who subordinate the struggle against apartheid to the electoral fortunes of the Labour Party, are only interested in the unity of scabs: such 'unity' scabbed on the miners' strike, condemned black youth fighting for their rights and attacked Liverpool workers fighting for their jobs and services.'

David Reed also dealt with the one serious attack on our trend - that we

don't support the liberation movements. He emphasized that the RCG supports SWAPO and the ANC unconditionally. We place no conditions on our support for the liberation movements in their struggle against apartheid and racism in Southern Africa. If SWAPO and the ANC wish to build up good relations with a future Labour government that is their right whether we agree with this decision or not. But they do not have a right to demand that we drop our struggle against racism and opportunism in Britain in order to comply with that decision. Our struggle here against opportunism and all forms of collaboration with apartheid is a necessity if unity is to be forged between the working class here and the working class and oppressed masses fighting in South Africa. This means that we support the ANC's call for sanctions but we cannot support their call for the disbanding of City AA.

The meeting went on to discuss and plan our intervention for the next day: speakers for the motions and stewards were agreed, the National Committee elections and other motions and points of debate discussed. It was as a result of our political preparation that 26 different speakers were able to take to the floor on the day to defend and explain our standpoint.

'She didn't die at any time, She died then'

Dave Leadbetter, joint London chair of Inquest, attended the Jarrett inquest on behalf of Inquest. Many thanks to Dave for providing the following article on the issues raised in the case.

Accidental death does not have the self-evidently dramatic ring to it of other inquest verdicts – such as, for instance, unlawful killing, or even that other finding which the government would so much like to abolish, lack of care. An accident, after all, is something for which no one is responsible (unless, of course, it be God – one of whose Acts it might be).

And yet the brave and dignified family of Mrs Cynthia Jarrett are right, a thousand times right, to claim that such a verdict represents a great and famous victory. Circumstances *do* alter cases. The jurors knew when they retired that they were only entitled to bring in accidental death on the basis that one of the officers searching her home had pushed, shoved or jostled aside Mrs Jarrett. This was something that the officer in question, Detective Constable Randall, and his colleagues had consistently denied. There was no room for mistake about this. Physical contact of the kind described was something that the police had said never happened, while the family maintained that it had. By returning accidental death the jury were officially certifying that they believed the family, disbelieved the police, and that Mrs Jarrett's death was, in common parlance, No Accident.

This is why so much of the media, which devoted so many acres of newspaper and hours of TV time to the Broadwater Farm events, has given such scanty and mealy-mouthed attention to the incident which sparked them off. True believers all in the fragility of Blair Peach's skull would have had little difficulty in noticing that Mrs Jarrett had a heart condition that was likely to prove fatal (in Dr Somerville's graphic phrase a 'candidate for death') at any time. But they cannot argue away what the learned Coroner pointed out: 'She didn't die at any time; she died then.'

Why did the jury feel entitled to doubt the word of these fine, upstanding constables? Because, reader, said guardians of the law had lied with such transparent clumsiness throughout the proceedings. One lie they admitted. Sergeant Parsons let the search party into the Jarrett home with a key illicitly taken from the property of a prisoner and then proceeded to tell the family members present that he had found the door open. He did this, he says, in order to 'calm the situation' – though how he proposed to accomplish this object when the family, who were looking after small children, knew this to be false, would pass the comprehension of Mr Eldon Griffiths himself. In other lies they were caught out – by the objective evidence of the London Ambulance Service's 999 records. Of still other lies, both trivial and serious, the jury had every reason to suspect them.

Some of the last category of lies concerned the search warrant. The police were certainly equipped with one of those so useful pieces of paper – though whether before or after the search remains a very moot point. DC Bates of the Essex Constabulary, investigating the case on behalf of the Police Complaints Authority, was sent on two successive visits to the JP who issued it in an

effort to jog the magistrate's uncertain memory. (I for one would not care to come up before that particular beak; on present form he would doubtless forget the crime one was charged with long before the time came for sentence. It was at one stage proposed to call the gentleman's mother but her memory was, with perhaps greater excuse, equally uncertain.)

The inquest, though, raises other questions. It should, properly understood and acted upon, prove a turning point in the struggle for justice on behalf of those who have died in the custody – or at any rate the company – of our wonderful police force. It may be that you are reading this before breakfast. If so I will ask you kindly (and for the sake of argument only) to believe, not six, but just one impossible thing: that the police were speaking the pure unvarnished truth about the warrant. There is a space on both the warrant itself and the information which purports to justify it, for the insertion of a list of the goods for which 'Each and all the constables' of the Metropolitan Police are entitled to search. In the case of Mr Floyd Jarrett (who had been arrested, be it remembered, upon suspicion of stealing his own car) the list was brutally succinct: 'Diverse Goods' was all the description that filled the space.

What Messrs Randall, Parsons, Casey and Allan were engaged in was a 'fishing expedition' – something of which the law is thought to disapprove – and all the cover they gave themselves was that of a fishing licence. In plain words this 'warrant' was a General Warrant. We were taught in school that such abominations had gone out in the 18th century days of 'Wilkes and Liberty'. An Englishman's home was then held to be so much his castle that 'the wind may come in, the rain and snow may come in but not the King of England with all his army – unless he be invited.' We must now learn to redefine the concept of an Englishman's home so as to make it 'a place where Randall, Parsons et al can get in by using the key of a grown son who does not live there, in order to search for diverse goods'. Either that or we must re-define the role of Messrs Randall, Parsons & Co.

Nor is this all. Mrs Jarrett's inquest raises other fundamental questions, of which space only suffices to give the barest outline. The case reveals an incipient conflict between, on the one hand, the 800 year old institution of the Coroner's jury and, on the other, the elaborate, secret world of the very new-fangled Police Complaints Authority. What happened was that the Coroner's Officers were forbidden to make their usual enquiries and specifically to take statements from intending witnesses. (It is, of course, unfortunately true that these officers are members, not of the general public as Inquest and others have long argued for, but of the self same Force which was under investigation. This does not excuse the high handed way in which their functions were usurped.) Space does not permit exhaustive analysis of the deficiencies and the dilatoriness of the



PEOPLE AND POLITICS

Racism out of education

In FRFI 54 we reported on the struggle at East London's Daneford School being led by the Campaign Against Racism in Schools (CARS). On 22 November, the trial began of 12 people arrested on 16 October during a picket of the Inner London Education Authority's (ILEA) Tower Hamlets offices. The opening of the trial was marked by a mass demonstration and picket of Highbury Magistrates court, and teachers in 60 London schools struck in solidarity. Organised by the Inner London Teachers Association (NUT), the day of action, significantly, did not receive the support of the NUT Executive. It was however supported by numerous Bangladeshi, anti-racist, teachers' and other organisations including the RCG which was among the speakers at the mass rally. 2 defendants have so far been acquitted.

Some days after the trial began, Norma Hundleby, the NUT representative for Daneford and co-Chair of the Campaign Against Racism in Schools spoke to FRFI.

Norma explained why the Campaign has targetted the ILEA with a number of pickets and protests. 'We want to expose the hypocrisy of the ILEA and its paper anti-racist policy.' Frances

from educational policy, CARS is determined to build links with the community. 'We still have a long way to go as the only way we can reach the black community is to do grass-roots work. We are going round visiting parents and listening to what they have to say about their children's schools.' Building links with the community 'is the most important part of our work.'



You will have to do something to restore the credit of your shiny, new cosmetic Police Complaints Authority. Who will trust them now? Sir Michael might have yet about the prosecution of Randall & Co, (perhaps for perjury?) but you have a more direct responsibility. We are told that we need no local democratic control of London's police because you are the capital's Police Authority. They, so the theory goes, are accountable to you, you to Parliament and Parliament (very occasionally) to the rest of us. So Mr Hurd, you should take time off this Christmas – from your arduous labours in trying to impose on the people of this country the most repressive public order laws in modern history (while professing such concern about those social conditions and other causes of popular disturbance as lie outside your department's jurisdiction) – and give a Christmas present to every black person in this country and to every libertarian, by doing what it was your duty to do on Sunday 6 October: suspending Randall, Parsons and their merry men from the police force until they can be brought to trial. Anything less is an obscenity.

Dave Leadbetter

Morrell, the Labour leader of the ILEA, 'has built her shabby career' on this 'paper anti-racism'. 'Thousands and thousands of pounds are spent to get very glossy propaganda into teachers' pigeon-holes talking about multi-cultural education. But the ILEA has never addressed itself to anti-racism. By this we mean that there has never been any proper consultation on anti-racist policy with the black community in London, which has been excluded from all policy making decisions'. In addition there are 'no firm discipline codes for dealing with racist students, teachers and governors. Black teachers when appointed are given very weak contracts and treated like shit... Often the appointment of black teachers is pure tokenism. If they can say there is one black teacher in a school, they think they are anti-racist.' The ILEA 'is also notorious for working with the police, Barclays Bank and cheap, slave labour schemes.' It 'encourages the police to go into schools and has never taken a "police out of schools" position which it should.'

In contrast to the ILEA's racist exclusion of the black community and parents

Daneford School pupils, staff and supporters picket Highbury Magistrates Court.

CARS does not isolate the struggle against racism in schools from the wider struggle against racism in the community. Norma told us 'We recognise that a lot of these families are living in a state of siege, under threat of arson and other racist attacks'. She added 'As anti-racist teachers we have to be prepared to take on the law and not be intimidated by the police. What happened to us is happening to black people all the time'. As an anti-racist movement CARS recognises the connections with the struggle in South Africa: 'We see a very direct link. The people that are in the forefront fighting racism in South Africa are students. People that are fighting in Brixton and Broadwater Farm are youth who are unemployed and have had a shit education. It is the same struggle.'

In concluding the interview Norma thanked FRFI for the support it has given the struggle and appealed for all readers to join the campaign and send donations. Donations can be sent to: Daneford 12 Defence Fund, 59 Bow Road, London E3.

Criminal Evidence Act 1984 comes changes the powers of the police to **ks, detain suspects, strip search,** **ence. The Police Act was formul-** **in British cities and in reality the** **or use against workers, oppressed** **ngs normal police powers closer to** **ention of Terrorism Act (PTA). Dur-** **ent the Act met with very little** **elating to the seizure of privileged** **rs and doctors. The Labour Party is** **f they ever get elected to govern-** **cting our lives for a long time in the**

Police are only the bottom line from **ts, the Act only makes legal, prac-** **mploy on a daily basis. With the** **January, we can expect the police,** **air legal powers. Over the last six** **ave operated what they call a 'dry** **ve demonstrated, as in the case of** **the public and of detainees will be** **we have to fight for the few rights** **ause there is no other way of limit-** **This article serves only as a guide-** **ual methods which the police will** **1986.**



PAUL MATTHESSON



arrest and where you are held. The *Custody Officer* should inform you of this both verbally and in writing.

- Reasons for delay of this right up to 36 hours are the same as for delay in consulting a solicitor. You do not have this right if arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.
- If the person you wish to be notified cannot be contacted then you can have two alternative choices. After that, it is at the discretion of the *Custody Officer*.
- If you are a juvenile (under 17) the police are obliged to contact your parents or another responsible adult and ask them to come to the police station to see you. This applies even under the PTA.
- If you are a foreign national you have the absolute right to contact your High Commission, Embassy or Consulate. This is additional to the rights above.

REVIEWS OF DETENTION

- If you are detained for more than 6 hours, a police officer of at least the rank of an Inspector must review your detention. This review must take place every nine hours thereafter. Note these times because the Inspector must give you or your solicitor a chance to make oral or written representation before the decision to continue the detention is made. Reviews may, however, be delay-

The Public Order Bill A legal straightjacket for the oppressed

On 5 December the Public Order Bill was published. The Bill represents a major threat to democratic rights to assemble and protest. It is aimed at criminalising any effective protest against the government and its policies. Alongside the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (see this page), the Bill will give the police unprecedented powers to harass, arrest and criminalise anyone seen as a threat by this government.

All marches must have seven days written notice which must be delivered by hand to the police station in each area the march passes through. The name and address of an organiser must be included in the notice. Any deviation from the time, date and assembly details – unless by police instruction – will be an arrestable criminal offence. The police will have power to alter any conditions – assembly, time, route, finishing point – at any stage including during the march itself. Organising (3 months/£1,000), participating in (£400) or inciting (3 months/£1,000) any breach of any of these conditions will be an arrestable criminal offence (maximum penalties in brackets), as will be organising (3 months/£1,000) participating in (£400) or inciting any person to participate in (3 months/£1,000) a banned march.

The police will have power to control the size, location and duration of static demonstrations – for instance pickets

outside the South African Embassy. Organising (3 months /£1,000), participating in (£400) or inciting (3 months/£1,000) any breach of any police conditions will be an arrestable criminal offence.

The offence of riot (life) will apply where 12 or more people use or threaten violence to property or people; violent disorder (5 years) where three or more people use or threaten violence to property or people; affray (3 years) where 2 or more people use or threaten violence to people. No violence need actually be used for violent disorder or affray. The Riot and violent disorder charges could be applied to 12 or more Greenham women cutting fences in concert.

The new offence of disorderly conduct (£400) is defined so widely as to act as a new 'sus' law. Any conduct likely – according to the police – to 'alarm, distress or harass' will be disorderly conduct. No one need in fact be alarmed for

this offence to be committed. It will be an arrestable criminal offence. Watching and besetting, aimed at trade union action against scabs, will be an arrestable offence.

Between the White Paper in June and the publication of the Bill in December, the government has increased the maximum penalty for riot from 10 years to life and broadened the scope of, and increased the maximum penalty for, disorderly conduct (from £100 to £400).

The failure to mount effective opposition to the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act has opened the way for this new Public Order Bill. They are all part of a set pattern of repression and the government is already promising a new Criminal Justice Bill for 1986/87. We have only a matter of months in which to organise against this new Bill. All sections of people who oppose the British state are threatened by its provisions. The time to act is now!

Terry O'Halloran

For more information on the Public Order Bill and how to fight it contact: CROWD 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1 0AP. Telephone: 833 2701 or 734 5831

ed, but the reason for the delay must be recorded in the *Custody Record*.

- If the police decide to detain you beyond 6 hours they must inform you of the reasons and these must be recorded in the *Custody Record*.

OTHER RIGHTS

- You are entitled to writing materials – ask for them. The police are entitled to read any letters you write except to your solicitor. As well as writing letters to your loved-ones, write down everything that happens to you and all the requests you make to the police, with the time if you can. Later you can compare this with the police *Custody Record*.
- You should be cautioned that anything you say in a letter, phone call or message may be given in evidence. The police should not listen to a phone call to your solicitor.
- All visits are at the discretion of the *Custody Officer*.

DETENTION AFTER CHARGE

- The police can decide to detain you further after they have charged you if: a) your name or address is unknown or doubted.

b) for the protection of yourself or others from injury, or for the protection of property.

c) they do not believe that you will answer to bail or they believe you will interfere with the course of justice.

- The police must record the reasons for continuing to detain you and they must inform you of the reasons. You are not entitled to representation from a solicitor at this point.
- The police must take you to court at the next sitting.

STRIP SEARCHES AND INTIMATE SEARCHES

- The police have powers to strip search you, using 'reasonable' force if necessary.
- The search must be carried out by someone of the same sex unless s/he is a doctor. And only those necessary to be present for the search, should remain in the room.
- The police are not allowed to take away your clothing or property unless: a) it may be used to cause personal injury b) it may be used to cause damage to property c) it may be used to interfere with evidence d) it may assist you to escape.

These exceptions probably cover everything you are likely to have on you.

- The police have the powers to carry out intimate body searches – ears, nose, mouth, anus, vagina in order to search for either *drugs* or *an object which could be used to cause injury to yourself or others*. The search must be authorised by an officer of at least the rank of Superintendent. If the police are searching for drugs then the search must be carried out by a 'suitably qualified person' eg a doctor or nurse, and must be carried out in a doctor's surgery or similar place. If, however, the police are searching for some other item then the search may be carried out by a police officer if it is not considered 'practicable' to use a doctor or nurse, and such a search may take place in the police station.
- By law, the police are not allowed to carry out intimate body searches to look for evidence. But, since intimate body searches are used mainly to degrade and intimidate prisoners and detainees, presumably the police will invent the belief that you have offensive weapons hidden inside your body in order to justify a search.
- The police have to inform you before a strip search or an intimate search, why they are carrying this out.

They can use 'reasonable' force.

- If you are a juvenile or mentally handicapped, such searches can only take place in the presence of a parent or responsible adult.

FINGERPRINTS

- Police have the right to take fingerprints with or without your consent and to use 'reasonable' force. You must be given the reasons for fingerprinting and these must be recorded in the *Custody Record*. If you are arrested under the PTA you are not covered by any safeguards.
- Fingerprints or any body samples must be destroyed if you are not prosecuted. You have the right to be present to witness destruction and the police do not have the right to destroy them without informing you that you can be present. Under the PTA, the police have the right to retain fingerprints whether you are prosecuted or not.

PHOTOGRAPHS

With certain exceptions the police do not have the right to photograph you. With certain exceptions the police do not have the right to photograph you without your consent. For political the photo is necessary to establish who arrested you, or the time and place. The police, however, may not use force to photograph you. Our past experience is that the police often attempt to take polaroid photos as you enter a police station with the arresting officer. Be prepared for this and hide your face if you can. If they do manage to get a photo of you, ask for it to be destroyed and inform your solicitor.

WHEN YOU ARE RELEASED...

Ask for a copy of the *Custody Record*. You are entitled to a copy, and that entitlement continues for 12 months. Read it and give a copy to your solicitor. It is a vital document because it will record all the details of your custody. If any are omitted or inaccurate inform your solicitor. This could be vital to your court case or the possibility of taking action against the police if they have maltreated you.

IF YOU HAVE A FRIEND IN POLICE CUSTODY...

Organise to get them released. Phone the police station or better still go round to the police station, preferably with others. Ask to speak to the *Custody Officer*. Ask if a solicitor has been informed. Ask for the reasons for their detention. Ask for a visit. If you have reason to believe that the detainee has not been able to phone a solicitor, then phone one yourself and ask them to get in touch with the police station. Keep asking questions and do not be intimidated.

Carol Brickley

1985 was above all the year which divided Britain, not just between the industrially depressed North and the affluent South, but between semi-detached home owners and council estate tenants, between strikers and scabs, between the employed and the unemployed, and between the privileged and the oppressed. Throughout 1985 the Thatcher government defended finance capital – the imperialist banks and the City of London. That was to be expected. 1985 also conclusively showed that Kinnock's Labour Party will only defend the interests of privileged sections of the working class. But most of all during 1985 a growing proportion of British people, the unemployed, the oppressed, the poor and those prepared to oppose Thatcher's onslaught were left to fight alone.

Divided Britain 1985

SCABS BETRAY MINERS

On 3 March 1985 the striking miners were forced back to work after a year challenging the Thatcher government's plans to decimate the coal industry. The reason for their defeat was the scabbing and treacherous response of Kinnock's Labour Party, the TUC leadership and sections of the trade union movement. The miners had spent a year fighting the scab working miners, fighting police brutality and media censorship, only to be stabbed in the back by 'fellow' workers who crossed the picket lines and by the so-called party of the working class – the Labour Party. This defeat and the divisions it exposed reverberated throughout the rest of the year.

The miners left to fight alone were eventually isolated and forced back to work. But every defeat carries in its wake important political lessons for the future. Trade unionists who want to fight have to build new alliances capable of destroying the opportunist bloc of Kinnock's Labour Party, the TUC leadership and the privileged workers they represent. Those alliances cannot be built within the confines of the Labour Party and the trade union movement. That is why FRFI in January 1985 called on the striking miners to 'go out to the people'. We said then that:

'...the support of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people already sympathetic to the striking miners must now be organised into a political force that can decisively break the impasse and take forward not only the miners' strike but the entire working class. The striking miners must go out to the people!'

But the NUM leadership was unable to break its political ties to the Labour Party and trade union movement. It did not take this course. On the contrary as soon as the strike ended many were quick to rebuild old alliances with the Labour leadership that had so openly betrayed the strike. Over the next nine

months, Arthur Scargill, one of the few trade union leaders to stand by his class, was increasingly isolated. The union split and despite a victory against Kinnock on the issue of amnesty for sacked and imprisoned miners at the Labour Party conference in September, Scargill's political influence has waned.

Despite these developments, the political gains of the strike and the lessons learned are vital for the future. In April 1985 FRFI published a book on the miners' strike *Miners' Strike 1984-85: People versus State*, which gave a political history of the strike. In it we argue that the miners' strike has produced a wealth of political gains: the leading role of the working class women; the new class organisations thrown up in the mining areas, towns and cities; and the recognition of the common interest of striking miners with people oppressed by British imperialism – Irish people, black people in Britain and the people of Southern Africa fighting to destroy the racist apartheid state. It also produced important political lessons; the split in the working class movement; the disastrous influence of the leadership of the Labour and trade union movement; and the class character of the state, its police, law and courts.

LABOUR TAKES SIDES

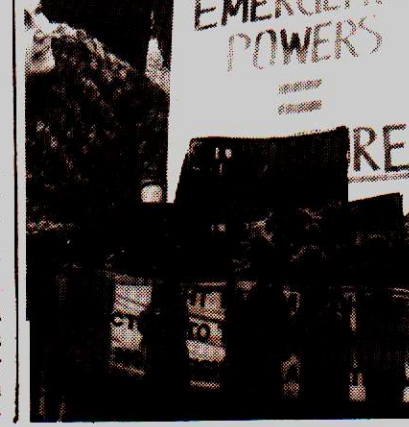
The defeat of the miners' strike consolidated Neil Kinnock's hold on the Labour Party. From now any struggle which interfered with the election prospects of a future Labour government would be attacked. A bid had to be made to win votes back to Labour from the Tories and the Alliance. In Kinnock's words:

'The only way to help the poor, the only way to help the unemployed... the only way to help the victimised is to get the support of those who are not poor, those who are not unemployed and those who are not victimised.'

This appeal to the social backbone of semi-detached Britain means Labour resolutely turning its back on the poor and the oppressed. First of all Kinnock decided to clean up the Labour Party itself, hence the witch-hunt against Militant. Kinnock was venomous in his treatment of the Militant-led Liverpool council in the midst of the fight against rate-capping. At the 1985 Labour conference Kinnock opposed black sections, attacked the miners, poured scorn on his Party's left-wing, calling them 'loud-mouthed' minorities and most crucially attacked the violence of the people of Brixton, out on the streets protesting against the police shooting of Mrs Cherry Groce. This theme of Labour 'law and order' was later applied even more vigorously to the Tottenham uprising and to Bernie Grant who spoke out in support of the black youth. This is the price of the turn to middle-class electoral support. Under Neil Kinnock's Labour Party the poor, the unemployed and the victimised can only expect a thrashing.

BLACK PEOPLE FIGHT BACK

From 9 September to 6 October, in Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham, the dispossessed led by black youth rose up in anger against racist police terror in their communities. In Tottenham the fighting was the fiercest yet seen in Britain. Again, these developments confirmed the revolutionary vanguard role of black people. They immediately identified their rising with black youth in South Africa. Like the black people of South Africa, they were met with organised state repression. Tottenham was placed under siege. The raids, arrests and intimidation have continued ever since. Commissioner of Police, Kenneth Newman, threatened London with plas-



tic bullets and CS gas. The repressive methods used in Ireland were, once again, in 1985 being used in Britain.

IRELAND – NO REFORM

In 1985 Britain's occupation of Ireland once more began to have a direct impact on the British government. The success of Sinn Fein in local elections in May clearly indicated popular support for the Republican Movement. The local elections were followed by systematic disruption by the loyalists of any councils with Sinn Fein representation. In this process the SDLP – the constitutional nationalists – are becoming increasingly irrelevant. The Anglo-Irish Agreement signed at the end of November is yet another attempt by the British government to isolate the Republican Movement and strengthen constitutional nationalism, this time with the backing of the Free State government. The Agreement will flounder, like similar efforts before, because in reality the Six County statelet is irreformable.

PTA – STATE TERROR

In 1985, the PTA was used increasingly against the Irish, against Southern African, Indian and Arab freedom movements. The failure of the British working class movement to oppose this racist law when its use was confined to the harassment and intimidation of the Irish, allowed the British state to extend its use to any liberation movement or its supporters which threaten the interests of British imperialism anywhere in the world. In September 1985 the Chief Representative in Europe of SWAPO was detained under the PTA for questioning at Heathrow Airport, despite assurances from the British government to the AAM leadership that the PTA would not be used against the legitimate liberation movements of Southern Africa. Such assurances are worthless because British imperialism stands in direct opposition to liberation in Southern Africa.

APARTHEID TREMBLES

1985 was the year when Britain stood increasingly alone in support of the apartheid regime. Despite world-wide condemnation of apartheid, Mrs Thatcher would concede only a 'tiny little bit'. In July the State of Emergency was imposed and in October rigid press censorship. Yet in spite of the massacres of black people, every funeral was turned into a political demonstration against apartheid. Despite the mass detentions of political activists, the people have organised to boycott the businesses of whites and collaborators, and the workers in the factories have organised to support the struggle. In 1985 the black people of South Africa have turned the tables on the apartheid regime.

BANS AND PROSCRIPTIONS

On 19 October, at the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group 'Surround the Embassy', two thousand people actively chose to protest outside the South African Embassy rather than be led away from it by the National Union of Students Executive and the AAM. 322 people were arrested in a mass sit-down. On 2 November, two weeks later, the AAM held its largest demonstration ever against apartheid. The demonstration ended with police charges and mass arrests. But what should have been a year of united struggle against British support for apartheid was marred by the sectarianism of the AAM leadership. In February City Group was expelled from the AAM. City Group's worst sin was to criticise the AAM's Executive for its collaboration with the police and its back-stabbing activities during the South African Embassy Picket Campaign in 1984. Not content with drumming City Group out of the movement, the AAM Executive is now extending its

witch-hunt to the RCG. Along with Divided Britain, go the politics of bans and proscriptions against the left. In our pamphlet *South Africa: Britain out of Apartheid, Apartheid out of Britain* we showed exactly why the AAM leadership holds back the struggle against British collaboration with apartheid.

STAMPING OUT OPPOSITION

In Divided Britain suppression of democracy is necessary on two fronts. It is necessary for the opportunists – the Labour and trade union leaders and their followers – to stamp out all opposition to their back-sliding compromise with British imperialism. That is why Militant have been witch-hunted in Liverpool, that is why City Group was expelled from the AAM. Repression is also a vital tool of the British state – to stamp out all opposition to its rule. That is why the police rampaged through the mining communities, that is why Broadwater Farm is still under police seige. To add to its armoury of laws Thatcher's government has introduced the Police and Criminal Evidence Act and the new Public Order Bill to ensure that the oppressed, black people, unemployed, and strikers are firmly kept in their place. 150 years ago the Tolpuddle Martyrs were transported for forming a union. In 1986 political activists will be imprisoned for long periods under the new repressive laws. The test of any political party which calls itself the Party of the working class will be its ability to support those who oppose British imperialism. In 1985 the British Labour Party abandoned workers and oppressed to fight alone.

NO IMMIGRATION CONTROLS

During 1985 black people were deported from Britain at the rate of 50 a week. A supporter of FRFI, Viraj Mendis, faces deportation to Sri Lanka. If he is deported he will face certain persecution and possibly death at the hands of the British-backed regime. Thousands of other black people in Britain face the same prospect simply because there is no united movement which will stand firmly against immigration controls.

ORGANISE TO DEFEAT OPPORTUNISM

In 1986 we have a hard task before us if the combined assault of Kinnock and Thatcher are to be defeated. The Divided Britain of 1985 showed what the sides are in the coming battle. Forces emerged which can, if they are organised, combine to defeat Thatcher and Kinnock and all they represent. Organisation is the key issue before us in 1986.

The miners' strike and the events at Broadwater Farm show the problem which faces communists in Britain. The miners fought a heroic battle against Thatcher, the NCB and the police. But because the NUM leadership could not break from the Labour leaders who had betrayed them, it was easier for the state to criminalise the strikers and force pit closures and redundancies. The uprising at Broadwater Farm showed that black people will not tolerate racist repression from the police and British state. But the police have been able to hold the estate under siege ever since. Winston Silcott and many others are held in prison. Why? Simply because there is no organisation able to defend the community from the savage revenge of the state.

In 1986 we have to build the organisation which will defend the people. 1985 demonstrates that only a communist perspective can defend the rights of the oppressed and the working class. Only communist organisation can defeat the opportunists who are betraying the struggle. That is why you must join the RCG now.

Carol Brickley and David Reed



JOIN THE RCG!

Take the side of all those struggling against imperialism—Join the RCG!
A movement must be built in Britain in solidarity with the struggling peoples of Ireland, South Africa, Palestine, Central America. Help us do this—Join the RCG!

A movement must be built here in Britain which stands with the oppressed fighting racism, repression and poverty. Help us build this movement—Join the RCG!!

A movement must be built which challenges and defeats the treachery of the opportunist leaders of Britain's Labour and trade union movement—Join the RCG!

Help us build a revolutionary anti-imperialist alternative. Work with us in our anti-racist, Irish solidarity, anti-apartheid and other struggles—Join the RCG!

I wish to join/receive more information about the RCG

Name _____

Address _____

Tel. _____

Return to: FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX