

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

ANTI-IMPERIALIST PAPER OF THE
REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP

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UNITE



Bobby Sands, Hunger Striker

against the British State

The imperialist system is in a deep and uncontrollable crisis. Within the imperialist nations millions of workers are facing massive unemployment and growing poverty. Faith in the ability of the capitalist system to satisfy the basic social and economic needs of the working class is being severely undermined.

Within the imperialist nations the most oppressed sections of the working class, black and immigrant workers, have taken the revolutionary path which the rest of the working class will have to follow if they are to defend themselves.

Within the oppressed nations the brutal oppression and exploitation of the masses is the other side of the relative prosperity that the working class in the imperialist nations previously have taken for granted. The oppressed masses have intensified their revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

This rotten, parasitical and decadent imperialist system is facing increasing opposition from the mass of workers and peasants throughout the world.

British imperialism is no exception to these developments. Millions of workers are unemployed. Families are being driven into poverty. Social services are being run down. The threat of real resistance to these developments is looming. But more importantly, the most oppressed section of the British working class, black workers, are increasingly showing the way. With no illusions in Parliament, the police and the state, they are taking their fightback onto the streets.

British imperialism faces its most immediate political threat from abroad, from the nationalist working class in the Six Counties. For over twelve years the IRA, its armed vanguard, has kept at bay the British army, the most highly trained counter-insurgency force in the world.

The British ruling class faces the growing prospect of serious battles in Britain at the same time as fighting a war in Ireland. What terrifies the ruling class even more is the prospect of unity developing between these struggles. Every form of terror and anti-Irish propaganda has been used to break the will of the IRA and the nationalist people. It has totally failed. The IRA cannot be defeated militarily, therefore Britain is seeking the political means to isolate it from its mass support in the Nationalist community.

This is what lies behind the Thatcher/Haughey talks. To do this they are attempting to gain the collaboration of middle class and petit bourgeois reformist elements in the nationalist community, using the bait of those talks. The precise form of agreement does not really matter. How big or small the bait is depends on the strength of the opposing forces involved. Paisley, recognising this has begun the process of taking his forces onto the streets. Parliament and constitutionality are only for duping fools, as Paisley well understands. And as Lenin said of Carson's activities in 1912 'Real class rule lies outside Parliament.'

This strategy of British imperialism to isolate the revolutionary forces of Republicanism can only be defeated by the mobilisation of the nationalist forces in Ireland supported by significant sections of the working class in Britain.

With the ending of the last hunger strike we have already seen the dangers of collaborators with British imperialism both in Ireland and in Britain. The Irish prisoners' statement on announcing a new hunger strike clearly recognises this:

Our last hunger strikers were morally blackmailed by a number of people and politicians who called upon them to end the fast and allow the resolution of the protest. The hunger strikes ended seven weeks ago and in the absence of any movement from the British we have not seen or heard from these people since. It needs to be asked openly of the Irish bishops, of Cardinal O'Fiaich and politicians like John Hume, what did your recommending the ending of the last hunger strike gain for us?

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NEW CROSS

13 DEAD-NOTHING SAID

REPORT ON THE CAMPAIGN AND THE
BLACK PEOPLE'S DAY OF ACTION.

Pages 4 and 5

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MONTHLY PAPER!
SELL FRFI!
SEND US
MONEY
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THE
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UNITE against the British state

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The answer is of course that it gained nothing and was designed to gain nothing. Nothing except the lifting of the tremendous pressure which the mass mobilisation in Ireland and world attention was putting on the British state. The Irish collaborators at no time wanted to support the prisoners' struggle and have consistently opposed the Irish liberation war. These are the same forces who will promote whatever deal is being cooked up between Thatcher and Haughey in their talks. The same people and similar elements who worked to isolate the prisoners' struggle for political status will seize the opportunity of the Thatcher/Haughey talks to isolate the revolutionary forces of Republicanism.

In Britain, collaborators in British imperialist trickery were thick on the ground. We might address the same question, which the prisoners asked O'Fiaich, to the assorted Labour MPs who signed a statement calling on the British Government to make concessions to the prisoners. They too were motivated by one consideration – the preservation of British imperialism. They too have uttered not one word during the past eight weeks when it has been clear that the agreement was the usual shabby manoeuvre by British imperialism.

The Labour Party and its supporters have always aided British imperialist manoeuvres to maintain British rule in Ireland. They enthusiastically endorsed the dirty deal of 1921, the Partition of Ireland. No doubt they will enthusiastically endorse whatever dirty deal is cooked up today, sixty years later. The petit bourgeois socialists, today as then, will cover up for the Labour Party. All of the petit bourgeois socialist organisations have not only refused to build a campaign in support of political status they have actively sabotaged any attempt to do so. In this their prime concern has been to prevent exposure of the reactionary, anti-Irish stand of their allies in the Labour Party. Accordingly, they have chosen to reduce the campaign on the Irish prisoners to a level that even some Labour MPs find acceptable – that of pleading with British imperialism for more humane treatment for the Irish prisoners. With a new hunger strike underway their demand is: 'The British Government must be made to keep

its word'. So it is not surprising that the Troops Out Movement, a front of the SWP/IMG, should enthusiastically hail the Thatcher/Haughey talks as a 'decisive crumbling' of the guarantee that the Six Counties should remain part of the UK. For these middle class socialists what is significant about the Thatcher/Haughey talks is that the 'question of Northern Ireland is being treated in a new and more hopeful terrain.'

Illusions in the ability of British imperialism to rule Ireland by peaceful non-coercive means in the interests of the Irish people have long been at the centre of petit bourgeois socialist politics. Right back to the days when the SWP welcomed the introduction of British troops into Ireland in 1969.

Unlike our middle class socialists the oppressed and the revolutionary forces in the working class, on the receiving end of British imperialist oppression and exploitation, have no choice but to fight back. These forces alone can be won to support the revolutionary struggle of the Irish people for self-determination. Today that means full support for the Irish prisoners fight for political status.

As another hunger strike gets underway the Revolutionary Communist Group refuses to tolerate the attempts of the collaborators in Britain to prevent any campaign in support of political status. The Labour Party, Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, International Marxist Group et al, have demonstrated time and again, that they will not build a movement of solidarity with the revolutionary struggle in Ireland.

Communists in Britain must turn to the *real* allies of the Irish people's struggle in Britain. We will find them among the black working class who took to the streets in St. Paul's and New Cross, among the Republican workers in Glasgow and among those workers who, from bitter experience of the growing crisis are being forced to turn away from the rotten, official organisations of the British working class.

We urge the newly emerging revolutionary forces in the British working class to unite with their Irish brothers and sisters to defeat British imperialism. Our immediate task is to get out onto the streets in full support of the Irish prisoners struggle for political status.

**VICTORY TO THE
HUNGER STRIKERS!
POLITICAL STATUS NOW!**

IMG, SWP BETRAY IRISH PRISONERS

During the last hunger strike the massive mobilisation in Ireland supporting Republican prisoners contained the threat of a revolutionary insurrection against British imperialism. The same will occur again during this hunger strike. This prospect terrifies not only the British ruling class, but the petit bourgeoisie too.

That is why the IMG and SWP are now, just as they did during the last hunger strike, desperately seeking a path of *compromise* between British imperialism and the Irish liberation forces. They are as before, *refusing* to campaign for victory for the hunger strikers on the slogan of Political Status Now! Instead their slogan is 'Make the Government Keep Its Word!' Once again they claim that only a 'humanitarian' campaign in alliance with the 'broad forces' of the Labour Left and 'liberal' sections of the petit bourgeoisie can mobilise support for the prisoners and can persuade the government to compromise. This *despite* the experience of the last hunger strike during which those 'broad forces' did *nothing* and mobilised *nobody*.

It was in the interests of their alliance with the Labour Lefts etc, that at the National Ad Hoc Hunger Strike Committee, the combined forces of the British petit bourgeois socialists (excluding the RCT) defeated the RCG's proposal that the campaign in Britain be built on the basis of 'Victory to the Hunger Strikers! Political Status Now!' Indeed so concerned were they to silence the revolutionary position that the Committee's first meeting was held in secret – without inviting the RCG. On failing to keep the RCG out of the Committee, the Chairman, on 18 February, proposed the RCG's expulsion. Fitzpatrick of the SWP thought this premature and declared 'We don't need that kind of thing at this stage.'

In *Manchester* his colleagues did not agree. They enthusiastically supported a proposal on 25 February to expel the RCG from the Manchester Hunger Strike Committee.

Failing to exclude or silence our revolutionary views, the petit bourgeois left has tried all means to sabotage a revolutionary campaign.

In *Glasgow* the most criminal step so far, was the petit bourgeois left's attempt to liquidate the Hunger Strike Committee into a 'Labour Movement' Committee. They no doubt objected to the committee's highly successful work of mobilising 1500 working class people in support of the Republican movement on the demonstration of 14 February. That is why they all *opposed* the RCG's proposal for a further march to be held in Glasgow. Fortunately in this case their sabotage failed.

In *Liverpool*, we have seen the clearest exposure of the bankruptcy of the 'broad forces' strategy. A delegation from the Liverpool Hunger Strike Committee visited Eric Heffer to demand his support for the Irish prisoners. He told them he *opposed* political status, that he *supported* the withdrawal of special category status in 1976, that he would not speak up publicly even on 'humanitarian' demands and that he could not commit himself to voting against the renewal of the PTA. Yet when the RCG proposed a picket of Heffer the IMG and SWP defeated this proposal on the grounds that it would 'alienate Heffer'. How much more alienated from the working class and from any revolutionary spirit can Heffer, spokesman for the 'broad forces', be?

Only two weeks into the new hunger strike, the SWP and IMG have already shown that they are working hand in glove with any and every opportunist ally, including the British Government to sabotage the mobilisation of revolutionary sections of the British working class in support of the struggle of Irish prisoners and the revolutionary Republican movement.

The petit bourgeois left is not only failing to mobilise *any* campaign, not only trying to sabotage the only effective campaign, but is now telling lie after lie to prevent the truth about its activities from emerging. Whilst the SWP, throughout the country, is *opposing* Political Status, the SWP's newspaper *Socialist Worker* is printing articles saying:

'Every socialist must support the renewed struggle for political status for republican prisoners in the six counties.'

We address a question to the SWP and its leaders. If that is your position why do you allow Fitzpatrick to argue and vote against it on the National Ad Hoc Committee. Are you going to expel this scoundrel and scab? Why did Glasgow SWP refuse to support and attend the 14 February demonstration calling for political status? Will you expel the Branch's leaders? Of course not, you are using false words in your newspaper to deceive workers in Britain and the Irish people. These attempts at deception will fail. Revolutionary forces are not deceived and will expose you for what you are – petit bourgeois compromisers and cowards.

Victory to the hunger strikers Political Status Now! PUBLIC MEETINGS

Edinburgh

Wednesday 1 April
7.30pm
Edinburgh Trades Council,
Picardy Place

Glasgow

Thursday 26 March
7.30pm
Room 4, City Halls
Albion Street

Dumfermline

Wednesday 18 March
7.30pm
Netherton Institute
Netherton Broad Street

Leeds

Tuesday 14 April
7.30pm
Leeds Trades Hall, Saville Mount
(Also FILM *The Patriot Game*)

Liverpool

Wednesday 1 April
7.30pm
AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant
(Also FILM *The Patriot Game*)

Manchester

Details from your local FRFI sellers

South London

Tuesday 24 March
7.30pm
Lower Hall, Lambeth Town Hall (nearest
tube Brixton)

North London

Thursday 19 March
7.30pm
John Barnes Library
Camden Road

Bradford

Thursday 26 March
7pm
Queens Hall, Morley Street
(Also FILM *The Patriot Game*)

EDINBURGH 8 RALLY

**End Police censorship!
Defend the Glasgow 2!
Defend the Edinburgh 8**

Saturday 28 March
Edinburgh Trades Council
Picardy Place

**Speakers: Ron Brown MP, SCCL,
Glasgow 2**

Also the Billy Reid Flute Band

ANL OPPOSE SINN FEIN

Provisional Sinn Fein decided to hold their annual Bloody Sunday Commemoration March in Cardiff this year.

On 10 January 1981 the National Front announced that they would hold a counter march and would mobilise 1000 supporters from all over the country. In the *Western Mail* (24 January) Webster said, 'They were holding a "Smash the IRA" march and rally in Cardiff to protest at the Sinn Fein demonstration.'

On the NF's march their placards read 'Hang IRA scum' and their speeches were all anti-IRA, anti-Sinn Fein speeches. It was quite obvious that NF were marching against Sinn Fein and that they had no intention of marching through areas of Cardiff where large black communities live.

On the same day as the NF announced their intention of marching, the Cardiff organiser of the ANL, Terry James, said they would hold a separate counter-demonstration to the NF. The South Wales Organiser for PSF stated that Sinn Fein was opposed to an ANL counter mobilisation. Terry James responded that the ANL was not a political party and couldn't ask its members to support a Sinn Fein march, or form

a separate contingent, that it was out of the question. He said he thought the NF would be marching through 'immigrant' areas of Cardiff and it was up to the ANL to protect these communities. Terry James didn't admit that the NF march was an anti-Sinn Fein one and that they were attacking the Irish this time not the blacks.

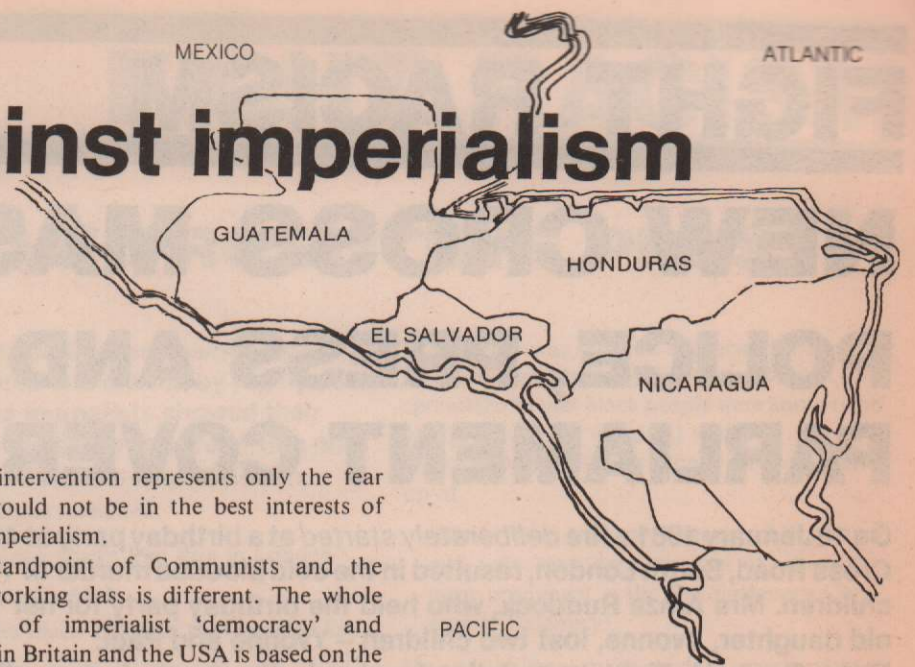
Terry James nevertheless promised that any publicity they produced would advertise the venue and time of the SF march. At no time did the ANL do this. Furthermore they made no attempt to explain the reason for the Sinn Fein march or that the NF was marching against Sinn Fein. In this way they avoided explaining the common struggle of Irish republicans and black people living in this country.

The little energy that the local SWP have was directed into building support for the ANL mobilisation, and ignoring and detracting from the Sinn Fein march. The SWP(ANL) have no intention of building support for the Irish liberation struggle and their arrogance is in turn exposed in believing the ANL to be the only body capable of defending black communities in Cardiff.

Cardiff Correspondent

CENTRAL AMERICA

Oppressed fight back against imperialism



The wave of revolution engulfing Central America is an uprising against imperialism. It is yet another front in the glorious international anti-imperialist war being waged in Iran and Palestine, Ireland, South Africa and elsewhere.

US imperialism has been the main oppressor and exploiter of the peoples of Central (and Latin) America. But its ruthless oppression and exploitation has always been supported by British imperialism. Since 1945 all the major imperialist powers have joined in an alliance to defeat all revolutionary movements of the oppressed. In February, Thatcher told President Reagan:

'The responsibility for freedom (to plunder and murder!) is ours to share. In Britain you will find an ally, valiant, staunch and true.'

This has always been the content of British relations with US imperialism—a pledge to defend each other against revolution. In supporting US oppression in the region, the British state is also defending its own vast economic

El Salvador

The anti-imperialist movement of millions of oppressed workers and peasants in Central America has reached its highest point in El Salvador. There, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) is mounting the strongest, most resolute and courageous challenge by the oppressed to US imperialism today.

On the occasion of the Paris Commune in 1871, Karl Marx wrote:

'The civilisation and justice of bourgeois order comes out in its lurid light whenever the slaves and drudges of that order rise against their masters. Then this civilisation and justice stand forth as undisguised savagery and lawless revenge.'

In El Salvador, US imperialism is proving the terrible truth of this statement. In 1980, the US backed military regime massacred over 10,000 revolutionary workers and peasants. No opposition, democratic or revolutionary, is exempted from the terror—teachers, journalists, students, priests and nuns are all slain in defence of imperialist order and 'civilisation'. On 27 November 1980 6 leading members of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), the political wing of the revolutionary movement, were kidnapped and murdered by state forces. On 2 December 1980, three American nuns and a lay sister working amongst the poor, were abducted, raped and murdered. The response of US imperialism revealed its cynical hypocrisy: the Carter Administration expressing sentiments of outrage, banned all further military aid to the murderous regime, only to resume it with a \$5m credit when the revolutionary forces of the FMLN launched their general offensive to topple that same murderous regime. Since President Reagan's inauguration, El Salvador's butchers have received a further \$10m military aid. And the torture, the killings, the rape—the obscene savagery of imperialism defending its wealth and property continues. Every night at least 15 people are shot dead, and the officially organised fascist death squad ORDEN continues its campaign of brutal murder, leaving disembowelled and mutilated bodies of workers and revolutionaries by the roadsides.

Despite these terrible sacrifices, the revolutionaries remain unbending. On 11 January 1981, the FMLN launched the first stage of its general military offensive to finally crush the reactionary regime. Within days they had seized control of numerous villages and towns in the provinces Chaletenango, Morazan, San Vicente and Usulután. After two and a half weeks fighting, the first stage of the offensive is completed.

The FMLN is now in control of large parts of El Salvador and has virtually surrounded its major cities. In this first stage, the FMLN has also given thousands of new soldiers battle experience.

Confronted with this growing and successful tide of revolution in El Salvador, the US government is preparing to step up its intervention. Already 200 US counter revolutionary

interests there. Over 80 British multi-nationals and banks—Barclays, Midlands, Rio Tinto Zinc, Courtaulds amongst them—profit from the appalling poverty and suffering which US imperialism is responsible for upholding.

Thatcher does not need to show outright support for US military intervention in El Salvador. All that is required is that the US is free to secure US and British imperialist interests in the area.

The condemnation of possible US military intervention by the Labour Party is deceitful hypocrisy. The Labour Party has never opposed British imperialism, let alone US imperialism. It is an imperialist party and both in opposition and when in government it has waged war against the Republican movement in Ireland. We should also recall that the Labour Government fully supported the US war against the Vietnamese people. Its 'concern' for US

'experts' are advising the butcher army. Under US instruction the Honduran air force attacked FMLN posts in El Salvador and 1000 Guatemalan troops are massed on her borders to invade the country, while 500 ex-Somoza National Guards are already in El Salvador fighting against the revolution. Simultaneously, Mr Eagleburger deputy US Secretary of State has been touring European imperialist capitals to drum up support for US intervention. With documents allegedly proving that Cuba and the USSR are supplying arms to the FMLN, Eagleburger is trying to block European food aid to El Salvador refugees. These documents and allegations have proved to be lies. Foreign journalists in El Salvador have been hounded out by death threats because neither the right wing regime nor the USA want the real situation to be known. The few journalists who remain are forced to tell the truth: that the right wing ORDEN is an integral

military intervention represents only the fear that it would not be in the best interests of British imperialism.

The standpoint of Communists and the British working class is different. The whole structure of imperialist 'democracy' and privilege in Britain and the USA is based on the toil and blood of the oppressed in El Salvador, Central America, and throughout the world. Liberation fighters are our allies in the common anti-imperialist struggle. They are the anti-imperialist forces of democracy and progress with which communists declare unconditional solidarity in the war against US and British imperialism.

part of the army and that camps of refugee women, children and the elderly are massacred at will by these forces.

All these lies by the USA are but steps in preparation for direct US military intervention. This is not a prospect that frightens the FMLN; they are ready and prepared for any such intervention. Salvador Cayetano Carpio, the main leader of the FMLN has declared:

'If the US intervenes in El Salvador, it will become another Vietnam and the tomb of Yankee Marines.'

Communists in Britain demand—No US Intervention in El Salvador! We demand an end to any British Government negotiation or discussion with US imperialism. We are not impressed by Eagleburger's documents. They are meaningless. The FMLN has on numerous occasions demonstrated its internationalism and fully deserves all the support it receives—military, economic and political—from any revolutionary and progressive forces be they Soviet, Cuban or otherwise.

Eddie Abrahams



Women fighters from the Guerilla Army of the Poor

Honduras

US imperialism is now grooming the Honduran armed forces as a counter-revolutionary agent to smash the Central American revolution. It is dressing the military regime with the tattiest of democratic clothing to avert imperialist 'liberal' opposition to its chosen role for the Honduran regime.

In July 1980 there was a rigged election—the banned Communist and Socialist parties were unable to participate. A literacy and land reform programme has failed; some of its officials are on trial for corruption. Power remains with a reactionary and corrupt army involved in the £700m a year drug trade. The 'liberal' Guardian's reporter in a recent article may have been duped into believing in the 'Honduran military's willingness to acknowledge the needs

of democracy', but not the Honduran left. They, as well as the Honduran CP are boycotting this year's Presidential elections and preparing the armed struggle.

Meanwhile, the US Government strengthens the Honduran military. Last year it received \$3.53m of military aid. It has the strongest air force in Central America reinforced recently by 10 more helicopters. Teams of US advisors are training the army in counter-revolutionary warfare, senior members of the security forces organise unofficial fascist death squads, whilst 7,000 ex-Somoza National Guards are harboured and organised ready for combat.

Results of this counter-revolutionary preparation are already in evidence. The Honduran air force is bombing and strafing El Salvador's border areas controlled by the FMLN, 500 ex-Somoza mercenaries are fighting against the FMLN in El Salvador and Honduran troops guarding the border turn back refugees to certain death. Last year 600 refugees turned back were massacred by the El Salvador army.

Guatemala

Guatemala, like El Salvador is a Central American nation of 42,000 sq. miles with a population of 7 million. It too is the scene for mass anti-imperialist war against the US Government and its lackeys.

Since the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution in 1979, the military regime headed by General Garcia, has escalated repression against the mass movement to unprecedented levels. Over 4000 workers, peasants, students and teachers were murdered in 1980 by the army and fascist death squads. In June 1980 all 27 Executive members of the National Confederation of Workers were kidnapped and have not been seen since. In November 1980, Felipe Alvarez, one of the few Indian mayors (Indians are 60% of the population) was kidnapped and has not been seen since. By June 1980 an average of 20 workers, peasants and democrats were being killed every day.

This intensified war against the Guatemalan masses, financed by US imperialism, has a purpose; to smash the revolutionary armed organisations of the people and prevent the further spread of revolt in Central America. But despite murderous repression, the revolutionary resistance grows daily. It is a resistance fuelled by conditions of utter destitution which imperialism has imposed on the Guatemalan people. The overwhelming majority of the people are peasants, yet 2% of the people own 70% of the land—all the fertile coastal plains cultivating export crops. The mass of the peasantry is forced into subsistence farming in the rocky 'high plains'. 87% of bank credit goes to the big capitalists producing export crops, whilst only 3% to peasants producing food. Peasants encouraged to cultivate northern jungle areas are now being expelled as imperialism discovers rich mineral deposits and conditions for cultivating luxury spices. Unemployment is 45%; 81% of all children suffer malnutrition; the mortality rate is 7.9% (in Britain it is 1.4%) and adult illiteracy is 53%.

It is only on the basis of this poverty and destitution that imperialism can operate profitably. And it is against the upholders of this ruthless oppression and exploitation—imperialism and its puppets—that mass organisations are waging armed revolutionary war. On the political front workers and peasants are organised through the CNUS—National Committee for Trade Union Unity and CUC—Committee of Peasant Unity. These mass organisations are linked with armed organisations of the people—the EGP (Guerilla Army of the Poor), the FAR (Rebel Armed Forces), and ORPA (Revolutionary Organisation of the People in Arms). In December 1980, these organisations and the PGT (Guatemalan Labour Party) announced that they will form a unified military command in preparation for a final offensive against the regime. They aim to establish a revolutionary people's government, free the masses from imperialism and set about building socialism. Hundreds of daring and successful military operations and the tremendous loyalty they command proves that these organisations are the revolutionary vanguard of the Guatemalan anti-imperialist struggle.

NEW CROSS MASSACRE: POLICE, PRESS AND PARLIAMENT COVER UP

On 18 January 1981 a fire *deliberately started* at a birthday party at 439 New Cross Road, South London, resulted in the cold blooded murder of 13 black children. Mrs Amza Ruddock, who held the birthday party for her 16 year old daughter, Yvonne, lost two children – Yvonne and Paul.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! extends its deepest sympathy and solidarity to the relatives and friends of the dead and injured. Those who died are Lillian Henry (16) Lloyd Hall (20) Patricia Johnstone (15) Jerry Francis (16) Steve Collins (17) Andrew Gooding (14) Humphrey Brown (18) Peter Campbell (18) Patrick Cummings (16) Owen Thompson (16) Glen Powell (16) Yvonne Ruddock (16) and Paul Ruddock (22). 29 other children were injured, some very severely.

There is a long history of racist and fascist attacks on black people in South London. Within one mile radius of 439 New Cross Road, 4 places have been burned down in the last few years, and shortly before the massacre black people's cars in the area were burnt out by racists. Black people are therefore rightly convinced that the New Cross Massacre was another such murderous and deadly attack. Obscene letters have been received by relatives of the dead and injured gloating over the attack and stating that this is the first of many. One of the letters, received by Mrs Haynes, mother of one of the injured stated 'What a great day it was last Sunday when I heard about the fire and all those niggers going up in flames...' The response of the black community to the massacre has therefore been a massive anger, shown by meetings of up to 1000 people.

After one meeting at the Moonshot club in Deptford of 1000 people, youth demonstrating in the road outside 439 New Cross Road caused the police to divert the traffic for one and a half hours. Large and angry meetings have been held not only in London but up and down the country in support of the Black People's Day of Action called on 2 March by the New Cross Massacre Action Committee. This activity culminated in the 15,000 strong demonstration on 2 March which showed the militancy, anger and determination of black people. To date £10,000 has been raised for the New Cross Fire Fund, coming mostly from working class black men, women and children and including £82 from Wormwood Scrubs C Wing. Black people's response to the racist murders has been anger and the need to organise. But what has been the response of the police, the press and parliament?

Police and press collude in cover-up

The police and press have colluded in every way to twist and distort the facts of the massacre. The police maintain against all odds that there is 'no evidence' that this was yet another racist attack. Police 'theories' about the fire have been widely publicised by the press. This publicity has included distortions and outright lies. Police have suggested that there was trouble at the party and that the fire was caused by gatecrashers in revenge for not being allowed in. On the contrary Mrs Ruddock has stated that on 3 occasions gatecrashers were turned away peacefully and that there was no trouble. Other theories advanced by the police are that the fire was caused by cannabis smokers or by the presence of large quantities of alcohol on the premises. Both these 'theories' have been dismissed outright by Mrs Ruddock.

The evidence of Carl Wright, a youth who attended the party has been twisted by the police and press for their own ends – that is to 'prove' that the fire was not started by racists. Carl, who left the party at 5.45am was walking towards New Cross station when he turned round to see if his brother was following. At that moment he saw a man making a throwing action and simultaneously he heard the sound of



439 New Cross Road (after the murders)

breaking glass at 439 New Cross Road. This person then got into a white Austin Princess car and drove off. By the time Carl had run back to the house the entire ground level was ablaze. Carl told the police that he could not see whether the person was a black or white man. And yet it was reported in the press that a black man had been seen driving away from the fire! The police are doing everything in their power to rule out what should be the main line of enquiry – that of a racist attack. On 25 February they detained several black youths for 'questioning' in an attempt to sow confusion prior to the Day of Action. This attempt was actively collaborated in by the *Daily Mail*. On

25 February a story written by Peter Burden, Chief Crime Correspondent of the *Daily Mail* appeared under the headlines: 'Killer Blaze Charge Soon'. The report stated that black youths were being questioned and held with a view to charging them with the murders. Radio and TV stations picked up the story and used it. Yet there was not one grain of truth in it. Scotland Yard said that the story was completely untrue. Yet no doubt they, in cahoots with the *Daily Mail*, planted the story. Once again we see British journalists actively assist the British state. A number of journalists got their come-uppance at the 2 March Day of Action – when they were given a taste of rough justice. It was nothing more than they deserved.

The reason for the cover up is easy to guess. The police are terrified that black people will take matters into their own hands and the authorities will tell any lie under the sun to prevent that.

Parliament and MPs silent

The police and press are not the only ones engaged in the cover up. Despite the fact that the New Cross Massacre is the worst atrocity suffered by black people in this country, yet it took the Day of Action to force MPs to raise it in Parliament. Local Labour MP John Silkin, whose Labour party office is but a few doors away from the scene of the fire, has said not one word in the House of Commons, and, up to 3 weeks after the massacre, had not sent any message to the relatives. As an angry black woman stated at a press conference – if the fire had taken place in a dog's home and killed 12 dogs, there would have been more response. While there had been no mention of New Cross in parliament William Whitelaw made a big point of announcing a special committee of enquiry into racist attacks on black people, only 2 weeks after the massacre. And yet who is to give evidence to this committee? The racist British police!

HOLLOWAY FIGHTBACK SCHOOL LETTER

Police repression in Holloway has continued without mercy since the arrests of 20 local youths at the end of December. At the time a Hornsey Road police thug said, 'We want the blacks off the streets for Christmas'.

Not content with harassment of black people on the streets and in their homes, at the courts and in the prisons, the police have now carried their attacks into the schools. Readers can see from the letter printed on this page what happened on Monday 16 February at a North London school. The youth arrested were actually grabbed and beaten up in the school building itself.

The letter which FRFI is pleased to publish was given to our supporters, who have been working regularly in the area, by youths from the school. We are impressed by the solidarity and determination of these youth to organise against police tyranny. They do not see why such actions should be carried out and kept secret from parents and the community as a whole. The school authorities know, the teachers know, so let the world know what can happen to black and working class youths in a London school. That is the message from 150 pupils.

Other fightbacks are taking place too. Many schools in North London have taken the news of the South London massacre of 13 black youths to their friends and families. Collections

have been made and sent to the New Cross Massacre Action Committee. Many school children supported the Black People's Day of Action, travelling miles across London to show their solidarity and determination not to let the British state and its friends, the racists get away with murder.

Many people know that the attack on black parties at New Cross and Birmingham are by no means rare. At New Cross the racists reaped a bitter harvest. In Birmingham the black community won a battle against the police. In Holloway a Valentine's Day party held for school-children was attacked by racists in a typically cowardly way. A group of young people were attacked and racially insulted on leaving the party. They scattered and when they regrouped with larger forces were met by an even bigger gang armed with knives and broom handles. The racists told those at the party that they would be 'picked off one by one'. The boot, however, seems to be on the other foot. It appears that two of the racists are now in hospital with broken legs, nose and jaw between them. The fightback is getting organised.

Ruling class encourages racists and fascists

Far from exposing racists and fascists, the ruling class covers up for them, finding them a useful unofficial auxiliary to the major racist institutions of the British state – the police, the courts, the prisons. The ruling class is well aware that murders and atrocities have been carried out against black people for years and are increasing. British Movement members recently found guilty of possessing whole arsenals of weapons have been given sentences of only a few years, while black youth picked up on SUS are given long sentences for nothing, just on the word of a policeman. Jill Knight MP has recently been coming out with racist abuse about West Indian parties, attacking them as a source of nuisance and demanding that they be controlled. This provocation came after harassment carried out by police against black youth holding a party in Ladywood Birmingham to raise funds for recreational facilities denied to them by the Labour council. Jill Knight's racist and provocative abuse was followed by an NF march in Birmingham against West Indian parties. Shortly after that, the New Cross Massacre took place. In this way, the ruling class paved the way for the racist attack which killed 13 black children.

While the racist police and the British imperialist state carry out attacks against black people, they attempt to cover up those who carried out the New Cross Massacre. They must be stopped.

What you can do

Money is urgently needed. FRFI has raised £175 for the New Cross Fire Fund. **Rush donations to New Cross Fire Fund Bank Account No 91340565 Barclays Bank 5A Marylebone High Street London W1**

Send messages of sympathy and solidarity to: **New Cross Massacre Action Committee c/o 74 Shakespeare Road London SE24**

Raise a motion in your trade union branch condemning the massacre and send money to the fund **END POLICE COVER UP OF RACIST MURDERS**

Olivia Adamson
South London FRFI

Do you know what goes on at Archway. Do you know what the Holloway police do to black school kids of Islington? We the undersigned will tell you.

On Monday 16 February 1981 one more incident of racist police harassment took place, only this one was clearly a planned attack. Over 30 so called guardians of law and order, namely racist police thugs, invaded Archway school, 8 cars, 3 vans including a dog van and two helicopters were used.

They came in the playground and immediately started harassing and trying to arrest one youth, other youths who saw this went to find out what was going on. One schoolkid was arrested and beaten up along with his friend while teachers looked on and did nothing. They were both held in Holloway Police Station and beaten up again, both were released without charge. This is the sort of attack that we suffer day in and day out. We the undersigned are not prepared to put up with it any longer, we will not be harassed by the police.

We resist all attacks from the NF or their brothers in blue the Holloway police. We the undersigned demand that this letter be printed. The people of Islington should be told the truth.

signed by 150 young people

KATE TRUSCOTT (JFL)



BLACK WORKERS ON THE MARCH

On the Black Peoples Day of Action, Central London witnessed a clear display of the hatred and anger felt by black working class people for the 'National Front in police uniform', the racist organisations and the imperialist institutions they defend. It was the most significant sign of the revolutionary militancy of the black working class for many years. Black people showed once again that they would not be the victims of racism, but the revolutionary fighters against their racist oppressors.

Organised by the New Cross Massacre Action Committee the march was a militant response to the lies and distortions of the press, the inactivity of the police, the total indifference of Parliament and local Labour MP, John Silkin, to the massacre of 13 black children by fascist murderers.

15,000 people joined the march and their placards and slogans made their feelings clear: New Cross Massacre Cover Up; Forward to Freedom, Babylon will fall; No stopping us now we are on the move; No Rights, No Obligations.

At the March a declaration was made. Called the New Cross Declaration it said:

'The New Cross Black People's Day of Action is another stage in the response of the black people, of our allies in the country to this savagery and this barbarism.

We warn the country and the world there will be no social peace while blacks are attacked, killed, injured and maimed with impunity on the streets or in our homes.'

The marchers, from all over the country and including a contingent of FRFI supporters, marched from New Cross through central London to Hyde Park, resisting police attempts to halt the march.

Although a route over Blackfriars Bridge and into the City had been agreed with the police, suddenly at Blackfriars Bridge the marchers confronted two lines of police with riot shields. The police had decided to try to keep the angry march of black people out of the City and Fleet Street. The youth would have none of this and fought to get through the police lines. They broke through and triumphantly surged over Blackfriars Bridge. The police were forced to retreat and regroup.

Along the way symbols of wealth, a bank and a jeweller's shop, fell victim to a hail of bricks and stones: journalists who quite rightly are seen as siding with the racist British state got rough justice; a black policeman was told in no uncertain terms that he was a traitor and would pay for it; when a youth was arrested the march came to an immediate halt shouting 'Let him go!' which the police were forced to do as the marchers refused to move without their captured comrade. When two white children of about 9 years old ran to join the march the police shouted at them asking what the hell they were doing. Black youths immediately went and stood protectively between the police and the children.

Later on, near Oxford Street the police again threw a cordon across a side street. Mounted police, in an act of provocation rode through the march blocking off streets. One policeman who tried to kick a marcher got what he deserved as he and the rest of the cordon met with a barrage of bricks, stones, litter bins and umbrellas. The police then charged down the street on horseback scattering people in their path.

As the march moved on to Hyde Park, traffic in Oxford Street and Regent Street was brought

to a standstill and city gents covered in their offices terrified at the sight of the oppressed demanding justice.

The March was a fine example to the working class. It put to shame the so-called revolutionaries of the petit-bourgeois left who allow the police to play havoc with their demonstrations, arrest and beat people willy nilly and do nothing about it. This demonstration showed that the vanguard forces of the British revolution are the black youth who will fearlessly take on and do battle with the forces of the state. In doing so they are showing the rest of the working class the *only* way forward in the struggle against oppression.

No doubt the spineless cowards of the petit bourgeois left will recoil at such a thought arguing that it isn't the proper way to fight racism. Already the CP has said that

'No one is going to excuse the outbreaks of violence which undoubtedly took place'.

How wrong the CP is. All true revolutionaries and communists will see the resistance of the youth as a splendid example of revolutionary working class means of fighting oppression. Far from needing to 'excuse' it we rejoice that one section of the working class is on the road to revolution.

Oldham - 'Minister of Deportations'

Timothy Raison, Secretary of State for Home Affairs, was met by a hundred-strong picket when he visited Oldham. Oldham's black community turned up in force chanting 'Death to Racism! Fight All Racist Attacks! Self-Defence the Only Way!' and 'Immigration Controls Out!'

Black people in Oldham live under a regime of police/racist terror. The mosque windows in Oldham are regularly broken and racist slogans painted up in the area, black people are beaten up by gangs of white youths. There have been numerous deportations.

Most immigrant workers work in the textile mills in Oldham. One shift worker is forced to mind six or seven machines and he is paid £47 per week. In Chadderton Mill which is on a 2-3 day week, workers (approximately 99% black) are not allowed to have shop stewards, they are forced to work overtime at no notice and are paid the ordinary rate. If they demand their rights they are told the mill can't afford it and would close. Anyone who challenges management is sacked, the union does nothing to protect workers. But the fightback is beginning. A Defence Committee has been set up. The black community has no trust in the police and courts. They will defend themselves! It is no coincidence that since the Defence Committee was set up there have been no more racist attacks!

Liz Sullivan

THE PROSTITUTE PRESS

The ruling class press owned by millionaires and staffed by highly paid prostitute journalists showed their obscene racism in their reporting on the Black People's Day of Action.

Their headlines screamed:

The Day the Blacks Ran Riot in London

Rampage of a Mob

When the Black Tide met the thin blue line.

The Sun hysterically raved:

'For seven hours a frenzied mob took part in an orgy of looting and destruction in the West End.'

And the *Mirror*:

'The young thugs attacked anything and anyone that tried to get in their way.'

A *Daily Mirror* photographer who was busily snapping the attack on a jeweller's shop was beaten up. No doubt his photos would have been used to finger black people and so his camera was smashed. He bleated

'In all my 21 years on the *Mirror* I have never been in the City without finding the police when I needed them. I was looking for police protection but no police were around.'

No wonder these ruling class servants need police protection. Their reporting of the New Cross Massacre, their blatant lies and their subsequent sensationalist reporting of the Day of Action will make them need it increasingly as the struggle intensifies.

Accuracy was the least concern of the press. *The Mail* (once again by their Peter Burden who spread the lie that black people were about to be charged with the murders) said that the New Cross Massacre Action Committee was made up of

'Black Pride groups, Women's Lib groups and Left wing organisations of which the most prominent is the Revolutionary Communist Tendency'.

He can only have made up this fairy story since the committee is for black organisations only, a fact which no doubt our racist Mr Burden finds hard to take.

The Express said that the March was organised by the 'Campaign against Racism in the Media', a body totally separate from the Committee.

The fact that 15,000 black people were on the streets expressing their justified and righteous anger at the racist murder of 13 children - that fact featured not at all. The fact that they met police obstruction during the demonstration just as they meet police obstruction and attack every day - that fact figured not at all.

It is also a fact that most journalists write their reports in the nearest bar, using police statements. They are overpaid, decadent and cynical - as those who have sold their minds to the ruling class are bound to be. No wonder they react like wounded dogs when they see the oppressed march for truth and justice. It spells the end for them as well as for their masters.

Maxine Williams

FREE THE ST PAULS 9

Three of the St Pauls 12 have been acquitted. In these three cases even the frame-up tactics of the British police and courts could not be made to stick. In the case of one of the acquitted defendants, the Judge was forced to admit that his name had not even been mentioned in the course of police 'evidence'.

The remaining nine face the serious charge of 'joining in common cause to riot' which carries a heavy prison sentence. Of all the hundreds who rose up against police harassment, the state has chosen these nine to act as an example to all those who dare to rebel.

The trial has been marked by contradictory police evidence. As police witnesses stumble over their carefully rehearsed lines, even the jury cannot help joining in the contemptuous laughter that breaks out. The composition of the jury - eight whites and four blacks - took 39 defence challenges to arrive at, and it remains to be seen how they will respond to this obvious frame-up.

The police case is that they were conducting a routine drugs raid within the context of excellent relations between the police and the community, when for no apparent reason a riot broke out. They are claiming that some of the defendants were central to 'instigating' this.

The defence, strongly led by Rudy Narayan, has shown that the police did all in their power to provoke the people of St Pauls to retaliate. That after years of racist police harassment, discrimination in jobs and housing, the final provocation on 2 April was the last straw. The people rose up to defend themselves. Rudy Narayan drew a clear picture of the police marching up Grosvenor Road in military form-

ation. He pointed out that when police dogs are turned on a crowd (as they were on 2 April) it is to inspire terror. 'Have you heard of Adolf Hitler?' he asked Superintendent Arkell. 'Have you heard of his attitude to minority groups?'. 'Yes', said the local bobby.

Cross-examining Superintendent Arkell, Narayan reminded him that the police described the raid on the Black and White Cafe as a 'light-hearted raid'. He pointed out that police had ripped cigarettes from between the lips of black people in the cafe. 'Are you saying that these men then smiled?' Even Arkell didn't seem to see the joke anymore.

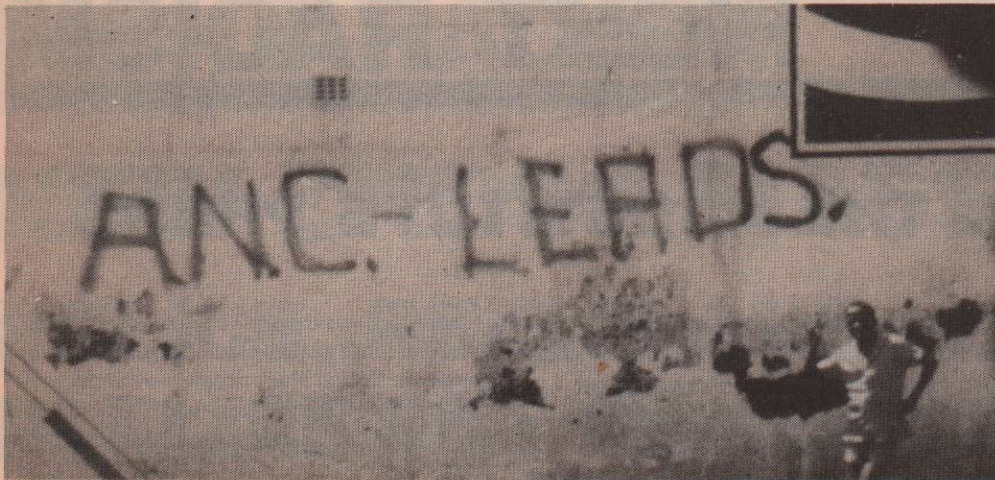
Later on a police dog-handler was cross-examined. Fourteen years in the force, he was so 'stupid' that he wrote 5 April on his two statements although he claimed he had written them on 3 and 6 April. Narayan drew out the fact that his second statement added some damning evidence against defendant Frank Rapier - a man who was known to be an 'articulate critic of the police'. Narayan showed that the so-called mistake over dates was in fact another example of the police framing-up one of the defendants.

The police have admitted that the day after the uprising they were called to watch film of the events and identify people in it. The state's revenge for the defeat it suffered on 2 April has been well planned and orchestrated.

The political nature of the trial was shown when a statement from defendant Clinton Brown was read to the court. He blamed police harassment for the uprising and said:

'This is only a taste of what you have got to come. You are always picking on us. We will fight back.'

No case to answer! Free the St Pauls 9



INTERNATIONALISM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

On 30 January 1981, a commando group of the South African Defence Force (SADF), armed with helicopters, rockets, mortars and automatic weapons invaded Mozambique. Their target was two African National Congress (SA) homes in Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique. When the commando group left, 11 ANC members lay dead and those captured were taken to South Africa to face torture, interrogation and eventual death. Immediately after this murderous attack, General Viljoen Chief of the South African Defence Forces stated:

'It is indeed the task of the South African Defence Force to destroy the enemy wherever he might be found before the people of South Africa [ie the white people - ed] suffer. This we will do fearlessly.'

A day later, the South African Prime Minister stated that unless the frontline states of Mozambique and Angola withdrew all support and facilities from the ANC, they would be attacked by the SADF. The frontline states are being threatened: either support imperialism in its war against the ANC or become victims of South African military might.

This is imperialism shorn of its hypocritical dressing of democratic phrases. This is reaction and counter-revolution. Imperialism will use any means to suppress the uprising of the oppressed, to destroy democracy and crush the organisations of the democratic and revolutionary movement. No morality, no law, no international law or conception of national and territorial sovereignty will stand in the way of imperialism trying to defeat the democratic and revolutionary forces of the ANC.

Communists and revolutionaries denounce this act of imperialist banditry and declare their full solidarity with the ANC and the oppressed masses of Southern Africa. In Britain, there was no immediate condemnation of the SADF raid from the Tory government, the Labour Opposition or Liberal Party. There was no tabling of Parliamentary motions to break all links with the South African regime, no resolutions supporting the imposition of sanctions by the United Nations. This much was to be expected from British imperialism and its lackeys; they are at one with apartheid in opposing democracy and freedom for the black masses in South Africa. The disgraceful fact was the response of the British petit bourgeois socialists. The IMG and SWP were conspicuous by their absence at the ANC picket of South Africa House on 9 February, protesting against the raid, whereas Ernie Roberts, a Labour MP, did feel concerned enough to attend! Their newspapers did not carry statements of outrage and condemnation. They did not, in the name of communist internationalism, express full solidarity with the ANC. They remained indifferent or silent.

This response by the British petit bourgeois socialists contrasted sharply with that of the Government of Mozambique, itself subjected to numerous attacks by the IMG and SWP. The Mozambiquan Government's response was an object lesson in true internationalism, alien to petit bourgeois socialism, but applauded by FRFI and all communists in Britain. On 15 February, at a mass rally of 50,000 people in Maputo, and with Oliver Tambo, ANC President on the platform, Samora Machel leader of the Mozambiquan Government said:

'We remain solidly with the ANC, the legitimate representatives of the South African people.

... South Africa is now in direct confrontation with us. It wants to launch war. We are ready for war. We do not fear war because our liberty, independence and socialism are the products of war.'

The Mozambiquan Government is refusing to bow to apartheid threats and refuses to withdraw support from the ANC. This stand was

Starvation in South Africa

It is a fundamental proposition of Marxism that the privileged condition of the labour aristocracy and petit bourgeoisie is based on British imperialism's ruthless and savage exploitation of oppressed peoples. In South Africa, British imperialism has billions of pounds of investments, each year robbing the enormous amount of wealth produced by black labour. Part of this wealth goes in bribes to the British labour aristocracy and petit bourgeoisie in order to bind them more closely to imperialism, in order that they act as ruling class agents within the British working class movement. Meanwhile in South Africa, the black masses continue to suffer appalling poverty and starvation. This

taken in the full knowledge that Viljoen's and Botha's threats are no idle statements.

The South African regime, with full backing from British imperialism, has been waging a devastating war against the progressive regimes of Mozambique and Angola ever since they won their independence from Portuguese imperialism in 1975. Imperialism knows that these countries and their support for the ANC pose a threat not only to the apartheid regime but to the continued existence of imperialism itself. It has therefore waged vicious war against the Angolan and Mozambiquan people and continues to do so. Angola has suffered most. Since 1977 the SADF has carried out over 400 major air and ground attacks against Angola. Over 2000 civilians have been murdered and £3.5b worth of damage has been done to the Angolan economy as a result of these raids. In June 1980, under the name of Operation Smokeshell, gangs of mercenary commandos entered the Angolan province of Kunene massacring 378 men, women and children. These methods of pure terror and economic war are the content of Viljoen's and Botha's threats.

During the war for Zimbabwean independence, Mozambique bore the brunt of the Smith regime's military attacks against the frontline states supporting the forces of the Patriotic Front. Now, itself subject to constant military raids by South Africa, wracked by economic crisis, poverty and underdevelopment imposed by imperialism, Mozambique is threatened with meeting the same devastation as Angola. Samora Machel and the Mozambiquan Government are surely preparing to accept the sacrifices that their stand in support of the ANC will entail. But the South African

REVOLUTIONARY JOURNALISM BANNED

In the last issue of FRFI we reported the ending of the black journalists' strike organised and led by the Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa). Mwasa, a revolutionary union, won the right to organise not only journalists but all black media workers. But the racist regime took immediate steps to smash Mwasa—it banned a number of its officials including Mwasa's President Zwelakhe Sisulu. The regime, in an effort to extinguish any spark of democracy in newspapers read by black people took steps to close *The Post* and *Sunday Post*. These papers, closed during the strike, were legally required to re-register before resuming publication. The owners, the so called 'liberal' Argus Newspapers were informed that if they applied for re-registration, the papers would be banned.

Based on the complete suppression of democracy for black people, the imperialist, racist South African state cannot permit any free expression of democratic and revolutionary views amongst black people. Justice (sic) Minister Coetsee, when issuing his banning threat stated that *The Post* and *Sunday Post* were trying to create a 'climate of revolution' and had published, in full, the ANC's Freedom Charter! The Freedom Charter is the democratic and revolutionary programme of the black liberation movement in South Africa. Faced with the powerful upsurge of the revolutionary movement it is no surprise that the reactionary regime deeply fears the discussion and study of this programme amongst the black masses. The response of so called 'liberals' and 'reformists' to this further tightening of black oppression

was a display of liberal complicity with apartheid. Argus Newspapers did not even try to fight the ban on *The Post* and *Sunday Post*. They replaced these with *The Sowetan* but not before purging militant Mwasa members from its staff and appointing an editor who disagreed with Mwasa's revolutionary standpoint.

Mwasa has rejected the reactionary and petit-bourgeois prejudice of 'objective journalism'. In the words of Zwelakhe Sisulu, in South Africa there can only be two kinds of journalism: 'establishment or revolutionary' and the role of black journalists is:

'irrevocably part of the struggle against white oppression'

It is because of this stand, that 5 more Mwasa journalists have been banned. Included amongst these is Phil Mtimkulu who took over the presidency of Mwasa following the banning of Sisulu. But the black journalists have not been cowed. In a statement issued by Mwasa they declared the bannings to be:

'... a declaration of war against black aspirations. [The bannings] were not isolated incidents... they have been accepted as the ultimate price [we] have to pay in [our] fight for a just and non-racial society.'

The revolutionary stand adopted by Mwasa is a lesson for Communists in Britain. Under imperialism journalism is either 'establishment or revolutionary'. It reflects either the forces of reaction or those of revolution and in doing so it reflects the reality of imperialism and the anti-imperialist struggle. There is no middle road, the choice is either 'establishment or revolutionary', siding with the revolution whatever the sacrifices demanded or siding with imperialism against the oppressed.

year alone 50,000 black children will die of starvation in the rural areas of South Africa. Another 100,000 will suffer irreparable damage to their health. In Maritzburg 40 children die every month of Kwashiorkor. In the Tongaat area in Natal, 60% of Indian children are undernourished. The Medical School of the University of Natal produced statistics covering the period 1964-1980. These show that 45% of the children admitted to King Edward Hospital in Durban suffered severe malnutrition and 24% of these children died.

This is the reality of imperialist oppression. This is the reality upon which 'British democracy' is built. Those in the British labour movement—the Labour Party, the TUC, the Benns, and Heffers—who defend this 'democracy' are Judases, bought and bribed by imperialism. They are the enemies of the oppressed masses and enemies of the working class in Britain.

regime may have to eat its words given the USSR's stand of solidarity with the people of Mozambique. The Soviet Union has already sent two warships to Mozambique and its ambassador has declared that

'If anyone attacks us or our friends we will give a suitable response.'

The peoples of Southern Africa know that imperialism is the enemy of all the oppressed. They know that the fate and fortunes of the people of South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe are dependent on the successes of the united anti-imperialist struggle. They know that a victory for the ANC in South Africa will mean not only freedom for the black people of South Africa, but also an end to the war the South African racist regime is waging against all the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa. A defeat for the ANC, they know will be a defeat for all the peoples of Southern Africa. The Mozambiquan Government's stand risks sacrificing much, but is an internationalist stand for which all the sacrifices made will be handsomely recompensed by the crushing of the apartheid regime in a united anti-imperialist struggle.

Such is the true internationalism echoed in the words of an ANC representative: the South African attack on Maputo

'...is a continuation of premeditated aggression against the frontline states, especially Mozambique and Angola, because of the stand they have taken from the very beginning against the apartheid regime and in support of liberation movements especially the ANC.'

Last week's attack... must not be separated from the aggression against the people of Angola and Namibia...

British communists see very clearly that these attacks against the peoples of Southern Africa are also not to be separated from imperialism's attack on oppressed people in Ireland, and on black and Irish people in Britain. The struggle against imperialism is an international struggle. British Communists stand fully with the ANC and the peoples of Southern Africa.

Eddie Abrahams

Not Cricket

Robin Jackman, England Test cricketer, has been thrown out of Guyana because of his regular visits to coach the South African racists. Readers of FRFI will not despair, they will loudly applaud the actions of the Guyanan government and all those who follow suit. The liberation movement in South Africa calls for disinvestment: political economic and cultural isolation of the apartheid regime.

The British bourgeois press however is angry. It is not angry that the apartheid regime still exists, that South Africa is waging a vicious war in Angola, Namibia and Mozambique against the liberation fighters. It is not angry that its own state, the British state, is the worst racist, imperialist state in the world and that it backs the South African regime. No, it is angry that a small oppressed black nation dares to criticise the British. The British imperialist state has its most trusted agents in hack journalists and racist British press.

GLASGOW 2 solicitor general lies

FROM HANSARD

Terrorism

40. **Mr. Ron Brown** asked the Solicitor-General for Scotland how many of those people charged with an offence under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1976 in Scotland during 1980 were subsequently convicted of an offence under a different Act.

The Solicitor-General for Scotland: No one was so charged on indictment or complaint and convicted of a different offence.

Mr. Brown: Is not it the case that the "Glasgow Two", namely, Michael Duffield and Kirsteen Crosbie, were charged under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act and were later convicted under a different Act? Is that a sign that the Government intend to harass people on the Left such as those who sell newspapers at football grounds? That is patently obvious to me. The Solicitor-General must explain why this case came about in the first place.

The Solicitor-General for Scotland: I mean no discourtesy to the hon. Gentleman but I am afraid that I did not hear the end of his question. I welcome the fact that he is here today to listen to the answer to the question he tabled for our last Question Time, when he was present, but did not care to ask it.

The two persons in question were not charged under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1976. They were arrested under that Act. The purpose of their activities was to obtain publicity, which the hon. Gentleman is giving them. They were members of the revolutionary Communist group sympathetic to the aims of the IRA, just as the hon. Member is sympathetic to a revolutionary Communist group elsewhere which is sympathetic to the attitude of the Russians. The hon. Member should have better judgement than to suggest in these circumstances that there is prejudice on the part of the prosecuting authorities in Scotland against anyone of any political party.

SUPPORTER GROUPS

If you support the work which FRFI is doing, why not become an active supporter? Join an FRFI Supporter Group.

Liverpool

Every fortnight on Friday at Stanley House, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool 8, at 7.30pm. Next meeting 27 March

Manchester

Every fortnight on Thursday at Slade Lane Community Centre, Stockport Road, at 8pm. Next meeting 26 March

Leeds

Every fortnight on Monday at Leeds Trades Hall, Saville Mount, Leeds 7 at 7.30pm. Next meeting 16 March

Birmingham

Every fortnight on Sunday at Mount Pleasant Centre, Balsall Heath Rd (bus 8, 48, 50), at 8.00pm. Next meeting 15 March

Glasgow

Every fortnight on Sunday at Trade Union Centre, Carlton Place, at 7.30pm. Next meeting 15 March

Edinburgh

Every fortnight on Thursday at 1st of May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row at 7.30pm. Next meeting 19 March

North London

Every fortnight on a Tuesday at Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19 (nearest tube Archway) at 7.30pm. Next meeting 24 March

South London

Every fortnight on Tuesday at Buckmaster House, Stockwell Park Estate, Off Brixton Road, at 8pm. Next meeting 17 March.

UNTO THE HONOURABLE THE SHERIFF OF GLASGOW AND STRATHKELVIN AT
GLASGOW

August

1980

THE PETITION OF THE

PROCURATOR FISCAL of Court of GLASGOW AND STRATHKELVIN for the Public Interest:

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That from information received by the Petitioner, it appears, and he accordingly charges, that MICHAEL SNOWDON DUFFIELD (born 21.12.54) and KIRSTIN CROSBIE (born 29.9.55, both now in custody did on 9 August 1980 in Janefield Street, Glasgow near Holywell Street, solicit and invite financial and other support for a proscribed organisation namely the Irish Republican Army; Contrary to the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1976, Section 1(1)(b)

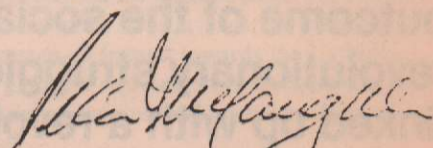
As everyone knows, if a member of Parliament accuses another of lying, this is regarded as an outrage and the accuser is thrown out of the House. A den of liars necessarily must have some such rule.

The case of the Glasgow 2, the two FRFI supporters arrested and charged under the PTA in Glasgow and subsequently charged and convicted of breach of the peace was recently raised by Ron Brown MP in the House of Commons. As readers will see from the copy of Hansard printed here, the Solicitor General for Scotland evaded the question by lying. For it was simply a lie when Fairbairn stated that the Glasgow 2 were not charged under the PTA. Next to the copy of Hansard we reproduce the Glasgow 2's charge sheet which shows that they were indeed charged under Section 1 (1) (b) of the PTA. What is more they were held in prison for a week on this charge.

No doubt Fairbairn was anxious to cover up the fact that simply for selling Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! outside Glasgow Celtic football ground the two were arrested, charged and imprisoned under the PTA. Such realities do not fit in with the hypocritical cant about human rights and democracy we hear so much of from the British ruling class.

The Solicitor General not only lied but he went on to attack Ron Brown both for raising the case of the Glasgow 2 and for his stand against imperialist lies and propaganda about Afghanistan.

We have no hesitation in calling Fairbairn, a LIAR and a reactionary enemy of all those fighting for democracy and socialism. FRFI! intends to take this matter further. We extend our thanks to Ron Brown for taking a stand for the democratic rights of socialist newspaper sellers.



Procurator Fiscal

TIGHT LIPPED

In answering Parliamentary questions from MPs concerned about the harassment and arrest of socialist newspaper sellers, an alternative to lying is, of course saying nothing. This much is proved by the experience of Alf Dubs MP.

Monday 26 January 1981
Written No.75
(21.1.81)

Mr Alfred Dubs (Wandsworth, Battersea South): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will seek to amend the law relating to obstruction, so as to clarify the position of sellers of newspapers.

Mr Patrick Mayhew
No.

Monday 26 January 1981
Written No.74
(21.1.81)

Mr Alfred Dubs (Wandsworth, Battersea South): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many prosecutions for obstruction involving newspaper sellers there have been so far this year compared with last year.

Mr Patrick Mayhew
Information collected centrally on offences of obstructions under the Highways Act 1959 does not show separately offences involving newspaper sellers.

Monday 26 January 1981
Written No.76

Mr Alfred Dubs: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will seek to amend the law relating to obstruction so as to clarify the position of sellers of newspapers.

Mr Malcolm Rifkind:
No. I am not aware of any need for such amendment.

Monday 26 January 1981
Written No.73

Mr Alfred Dubs: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many prosecutions for obstruction involving newspaper sellers there have been so far this year compared with last year.

The Solicitor General for Scotland:
I have been asked to reply. There are no records of any such prosecutions this year or last year.

POSTCARD FROM AUSTRALIA

13.2.81

A Cara,
Sheriff Bell should be hung, drawn and quartered.
Good on you Mike Duffield and Kirstin Crosbie.
Keep up the good work.

U.T.P.

EDINBURGH ARRESTS

On 22 February, two FRFI supporters returning home after a door to door sale in Edinburgh's Bingham estate, were stopped by plain clothes policemen. Using the Criminal Justice Act (Scotland) the police insisted that the sellers go to the police station for questioning.

No charge was pressed, but the Act was cited as the basis for demanding personal details - under threat of long detention. Subsequently we discovered that the section of the Criminal Justice Act used *has yet to become law*. This section enables the police to detain a 'suspect' without charge for up to six hours, and becomes law in the summer. This incident throws a new light on the Lord Advocate's recent pledge that Scottish police 'will not abuse the new powers'. Perhaps he should instruct Edinburgh police to refrain from 'abusing' their new powers, at least until they have them!

The attitude of British socialists to the Irish liberation struggle over the years until the Partition of Ireland confirmed the strength of opportunism in the British labour movement. Time and time again, so-called socialists betrayed the revolutionary wing of the national movement in Ireland and in so doing undermined the struggle for socialism not only in Britain but also in Ireland. For this reason it is vital that communists draw the lessons of these years in order to fight for a revolutionary programme on the national question today. To do this, we first need to understand why the attitude of socialists to the national question is such a decisive factor in determining the outcome of the socialist revolution. And why the revolutionary struggle for socialism has to be linked up with a revolutionary programme on the national question.

Socialists and the right of nations to self-determination

Many socialists argue against all nationalism on the grounds that they are 'internationalists'. But this is to turn internationalism into a lifeless and reactionary abstraction. This avoids confronting the reality of imperialism: the fact that the world has been divided into oppressor and oppressed nations and that national oppression has been extended and intensified. It also ignores the split in the working class movement. One section, the labour aristocracy, has been corrupted by the 'crumbs that fall from the table' of the imperialist bourgeoisie, obtained from the super-exploitation and brutal oppression of the people from oppressed nations. The other, the mass of the working class, cannot liberate itself without uniting with the movement of oppressed peoples against imperialist domination. The main consideration for the socialist revolution today is a united fight against the imperialist powers, the imperialist bourgeoisie, and their bought-off agents in the working class movement. This means the working class fighting in alliance with national liberation movements to destroy imperialism for the purpose of the socialist revolution.

The unity of all forces against imperialism can only be achieved on the basis of the internationalist principle 'No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations'. This is expressed through the demand of the right of nations to self-determination. Far from being counterposed to the socialist revolution, it is precisely to promote it that communists are so insistent on this demand. This demand recognises that class solidarity of workers is strengthened by the substitution of voluntary ties between nations for compulsory, militaristic ones. The demand for complete equality between nations, by removing distrust between the workers of the oppressor and oppressed nations, lays the foundation for a united international struggle for the socialist revolution. That is, for the only regime under which complete national equality can be achieved.

'To insist upon, to advocate, and to recognise this right (of self-determination) is to insist on the equality of nations, to refuse to recognise compulsory ties, to oppose all state privileges for any nation whatsoever, and to cultivate a spirit of complete class solidarity in the workers of different nations.' (Lenin)

Our 'internationalists', when confronted with these arguments, are forced to adopt yet another line of approach. Of course, they say, we support the right of nations to self-determination, but as 'socialists' we are opposed to bourgeois and/or petit bourgeois nationalism. Once again, they avoid the reality of national oppression. They ignore the fact that, as Lenin pointed out, the actual conditions of the workers in the oppressed and in the oppressor nations are not the same from the standpoint of national oppression. The strug-

gle of the working class against national oppression has a twofold character.

'(a) First, it is the "action" of the nationally oppressed proletariat and peasantry jointly with the nationally oppressed bourgeoisie against the oppressor nation; (b) second, it is the "action" of the proletariat, or its class conscious section, in the oppressor nation against the bourgeoisie of that nation and all the elements that follow it.'

Let us examine these two points in turn.

In general, all national movements are an alliance of different class forces which unite together for the purpose of achieving national freedom. The bourgeoisie in the oppressed nation supports the struggle for national freedom only in so far as it promotes its own class interests. For this class, national freedom means the freedom to exploit its own working class, to accumulate wealth for itself, to establish itself as a national capitalist class. If, at any point, the struggle for national freedom threatens the conditions of capitalist exploitation itself, the bourgeoisie will abandon the national struggle for an alliance with imperialism.



V.I. Lenin

The working class supports the struggle for national freedom as part of its struggle to abolish all privilege, all oppression and all exploitation — this being the precondition of its own emancipation. The working class policy in the national movement is to support the bourgeoisie only in a certain direction, but it never coincides with the bourgeoisie's policy. For this reason, the working class only gives the bourgeoisie conditional support. Insofar as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation fights the oppressor, the working class strongly supports its struggle. As Lenin so clearly argued in 1914:-

'The bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support.'

Insofar as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for its own bourgeois nationalism, for privileges for itself, the working class opposes it.

The important thing for the working class is to

THE COMMUNIST TRADITION ON IRELAND

PART THREE

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

ensure the development of its class. The bourgeoisie is concerned to hamper this development by pushing forward its own class interests at the expense of the working class. The outcome of this clash of interests in the national struggle cannot be determined in advance. It depends on the concrete context in which the struggle for national freedom takes place.

The guiding light for the working-class movement is clear. The working class rejects all privileges for its 'own' national bourgeoisie, and its 'own' nation. It is opposed to compulsory ties between nations standing firmly for the equality of nations. In the oppressor nation, the working class can only express this position by insisting on the right of nations to self-determination. And it does this in the interest of international working class solidarity. A refusal to support the right of nations to self-determination must mean in practice support for the privileges of its own ruling class and its bought-off agents in the working class movement. Therefore, support for the right of nations to self-determination is the only basis for a united struggle against national oppression and imperialism, and for the socialist revolution. Whether the exercise of this right takes the form of complete separation or not hinges on the conduct of the working class and the socialist movement in the oppressor nation. The history of the Irish struggle for self-determination underlines this.

Marx and Engels had at first expected that the English working class, having overthrown capitalism in England, would then go on to free Ireland. After 1848, however, the English proletariat lost its revolutionary drive and fell under the influence of the Liberals while the national liberation movement in Ireland developed and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx and Engels, therefore, called upon the English working class 'to make common cause with the Irish' and support the dissolution of the forced Union of Ireland and England in the interest of their own emancipation. As Marx wrote in January 1870:

'The transformation of the present forced Union (that is to say, the slavery of Ireland) into an equal and free confederation, if possible, or into complete separation, if necessary, is a preliminary condition of the emancipation of the English working class.'

Whether the dissolution of the forced Union would take the form of complete separation or a free federal relationship would depend on the manner in which it was carried out. A 'free confederation' was a possibility if the emancipation of Ireland was achieved in a revolutionary manner and was fully supported by the English working class. Such a solution to the historical problem of Ireland, as Lenin pointed out, would have been in the best interest of the working class and 'most conducive to rapid social progress'. Such close links between the proletariat in Ireland and England would have played a decisive role in a united international struggle for the socialist revolution in Europe.



Irish Citizen Army parading outside Liberty Hall

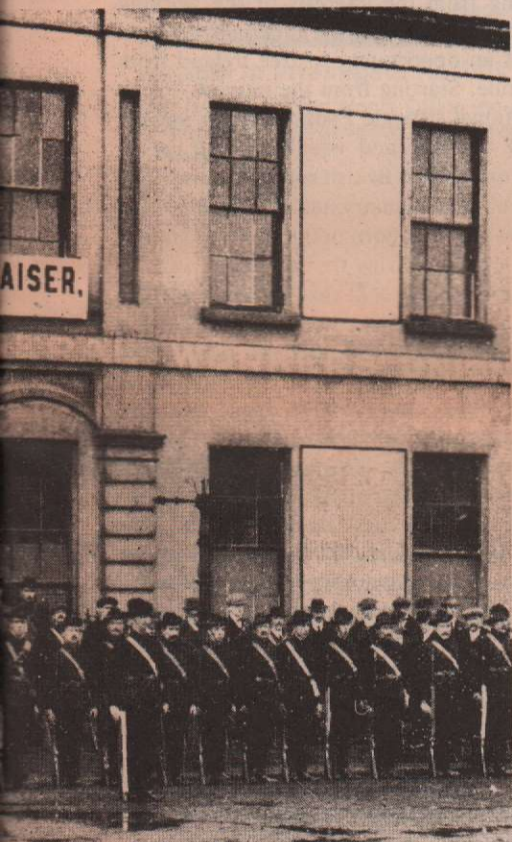
However, this was not to be. The failure of the British working class movement to support the Dublin workers in 1913 made it clear that the interests of the Irish working class could only be advanced through Ireland's complete separation from Britain. The long held view of that great revolutionary socialist, James Connolly, had now finally been confirmed. As he argued in 1916 a few weeks before the Easter Rising:

'...Is it not well and fitting that we of the working class should fight for the freedom of the nation from foreign rule, as the first requisite for the free development of the national powers needed for our class? It is so fitting.'

Socialists in Britain would soon be put to the test. The right of the Irish people to self-determination could only mean for socialists complete separation and, as Lenin argued, socialists could not, without ceasing to be socialists, reject such a struggle in whatever form, right down to an uprising or war. The years to the Partition of Ireland were to show how the working-class movement in Britain failed to support the national struggle in Ireland. Imperialism and war not only split the working-class movement but also divided the national movement in Ireland into a revolutionary and a reactionary wing. The British working class movement did not support the revolutionary wing of the national movement in Ireland and in failing to do so betrayed both its own interests and those of the

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Irish working class. It was only a very tiny group of revolutionary socialists who consistently stood for the communist position on the right of the Irish people to self-determination.

Home Rule and the Exclusion of Ulster

The General Election of December 1910 created a parliament in which 84 Irish (Home-Rule) Party members held the balance of power between the Liberal/Labour majority and the Conservative opposition. In August 1911 an act was passed limiting the veto of the House of Lords so removing one major obstacle to the passage of a Home-Rule Bill. The Liberal government was forced, through pressure from the Irish Party, to introduce a Bill in April 1912 to give a very limited measure of Home Rule to Ireland. In this Bill, the British Parliament retained the sole right to make laws connected with foreign relations, defence and external trade. It retained full control over taxation. It held the power to alter or repeal any Act of the proposed Irish Parliament. While Redmond's Irish Party enthusiastically supported the Bill, many sections of the national movement denounced it.

The Ulster Unionists began a militant campaign against the Bill. They made it clear that they would ignore the British Parliament and would take over the Province of Ulster instantly Home Rule came into force. The leadership of this rebellion fell to

Sir Edward Carson. Preparations for armed resistance to the British Parliament began. Following the precedent of 1886, Ulster Unionist thugs demonstrated against Home Rule by attacks upon Catholics. On 12 July 1912 two thousand Catholic workmen were driven out of the Belfast shipyards.

Under Carson's leadership, Unionist paramilitary forces, the Ulster Volunteers, began training openly in the use of arms. Carson repeatedly said that he didn't 'care two pence whether it was treason or not'. He knew he could get away with it. After all, Bonar Law, leader of the Conservative Party, in July 1912 in a speech at Blenheim in England in the presence of Carson had said

'There are things stronger than parliamentary majorities. I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster will go, in which I shall not be ready to support them...'

Although Asquith, leader of the Liberal Party, described this as a 'declaration of war against Constitutional Government', he took no action against those involved. On 28 September, Carson's infamous Covenant was drawn up which said that if Home Rule was 'forced upon us we further solemnly and mutually pledge ourselves to refuse to recognise its authority'. It was signed by nearly half a million Ulster men and women. In December 1912 all those men who had signed it were asked to enrol for either political or military service against Home Rule. The aim was to get an armed force of some 100,000 men. The Liberal government took no action against Carson.

All through 1913 arms were imported into Ulster for use by Carson's volunteers. Ex-officers and reserve officers of the British Army offered their services to train the volunteers. During March, orders were sent by the Government to the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in Ireland, General Gough, to move troops from the Curragh camp in the South to Ulster to protect arms depots which it thought were to be raided by the Ulster Volunteers. General Gough and other officers from the British Army said they would resign their commissions rather than serve against Ulster Unionists. The officer class of the army had mutinied. The Liberals refused to take action against them. The army officers had, after all, close links with the English landed aristocracy as well as the leaders of the Conservative Party, that is, they were linked to a significant section of the British ruling class. The Liberals, knowing where their real class interests lay, gave assurances that the armed forces would not be used to crush opposition to the Home Rule Bill. The following month, under Carson's orders, 35,000 rifles and 2,500,000 rounds of ammunition were openly landed on the Ulster coast. Parliament and the law had been overruled by the officer class of the British Army.

The lessons from this episode are important. The Liberals had no qualms in sending Tom Mann and others to prison in 1912 when they called upon soldiers not to shoot striking workers. The Liberals had, in fact, used armed soldiers against striking workers at Tonypandy in 1910 and Llanely and Liverpool in 1911. But they refused to confront Carson, Bonar Law and the army officers who mutinied at Curragh. Why did the Liberals allow the aristocratic officers at the head of the British Army to tear the British law to shreds and give British workers, in Lenin's words, 'an excellent lesson of the class struggle'? Essentially, because even this mild Irish Home Rule Bill challenged the interests of a significant section of the British ruling class, and threatened to begin the process of undermining British imperialism's rule in Ireland. And, as Lenin argued

'These aristocrats behaved like revolutionaries of the right and thereby shattered all conventions, tore aside the veil that prevented people from seeing the unpleasant but undoubtedly real class struggle...'

Real class rule lay and still lies outside Parliament... And Britain's petty-bourgeois Liberals, with their speeches about reforms and the might of Parliament designed to lull the workers, proved in fact to be straw men, dummies, put up to bamboozle the people. They were quickly 'shut up' by the aristocracy, the men in power.'

The Liberals, concerned to maintain British imperialist rule, had no choice. In a period of the growing polarisation of class rule, they could not appeal to the only force capable of putting down the rebellion - the working class - they had, after all, been using the army to put down strikes. They

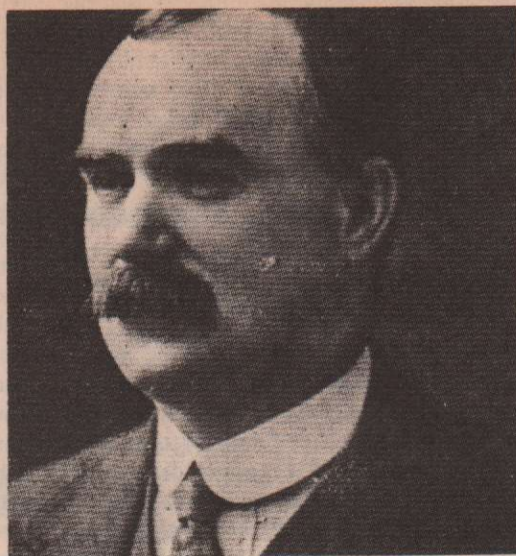
simply gave way to the demands of those who held real power. And real power was outside Parliament.

The Home Rule Bill had been put forward to contain the growing opposition to British rule in Ireland. It was an attempt to use the moderate bourgeois Irish Party as the vehicle for preserving British rule in Ireland in a more acceptable and less naked form. The Ulster Unionists backed by a powerful section of the British ruling class protested. Even at this time to speak of Ulster as though it was overwhelmingly Loyalist was simply nonsense and everyone knew that. After a by-election in early 1913, Ulster's elected representatives in the House of Commons consisted of 17 Home Rulers and 16 Unionists. Anyway, the issue for the British ruling class was not democracy - then or today. The issue was to preserve British imperialist rule in Ireland and democratic rights would be brushed aside when that was threatened. Lloyd George demonstrated this when, in May 1916, he gave Carson a written pledge that 'Ulster does not, whether she wills it or not, merge in the rest of Ireland'. Thirty years later this position was repeated by the post-war Labour Government which said:

'So far as can be foreseen, it will never be to Great Britain's advantage that Northern Ireland should become part of a territory outside Her Majesty's jurisdiction. Indeed, it seems unlikely that Great Britain would ever be able to agree to this even if the people of Northern Ireland desired it.'

The Labour Party, faithful as ever to Great Britain, that is, British imperialist rule, gives the game away. Democracy - well, that is for those prepared to be fooled. That is why British rule in the North of Ireland today is defended on the basis of 'democracy', that the people in the Six Counties want to preserve the Union with Britain.

In May 1914, the Liberals announced an amendment to their Home Rule Bill which excluded part of Ireland from the operation of Home Rule. Ireland was to be partitioned in order to preserve British rule. The Irish national movement was immediately split. Griffith's Sinn Fein, the revolutionary Republicans and Irish Labour were totally opposed to the Partition of Ireland. The Irish Party accepted it. The Irish bourgeoisie, represented by the Irish Party, knew that it could only oppose Partition by mobilising the revolutionary forces of the Irish people. Having experienced the revolutionary determination of the Irish working class during the Dublin lock-out, it knew



James Connolly

that mobilising such forces would threaten its very existence as a class. Forced to choose between the struggle for national freedom and its own class interests, the Irish bourgeoisie abandoned that struggle and formed a corrupt alliance with British imperialism.

The revolutionary socialist James Connolly completely understood the real meaning of Partition for the Irish working class:

'Such a scheme as that agreed to by Redmond and Devlin, the betrayal of national democracy of Industrial Ulster would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured.'

All hopes of uniting workers irrespective of religion and sectarian divisions would be shattered if a part of Ulster were to be separated from the rest of Ireland. Connolly understood all too well how

British imperialism had perpetuated divisions in the Irish working class through the union with Britain. He knew why the Protestant working class invariably sided with British imperialism against the national aspirations of the Irish people. He was able to explain why the Protestant working class supported Orange ideology, which was not only hostile to nationalism but also opposed to the interests of the working class. Connolly recognised the basis of these facts in the different social economic and political positions occupied by Protestant and Catholic workers. And it was British imperialist domination of Ireland that was the root cause of these divisions in the working class:

'... the Orange working class are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude were more slavish than their own. In Catholic Ireland the working class are rebels in spirit and democratic in feeling because for hundreds of years they have found no class as lowly paid or as hardly treated as themselves.'

'At one time in the industrial world of Great Britain and Ireland the skilled labourer looked down with contempt upon the unskilled and bitterly resented his attempt to get his children taught any of the skilled trades; the feeling of the Orangemen of Ireland towards the Catholics is but a glorified representation on a big stage of the same passions inspired by the same unworthy motives.'

The Protestant working class, just like the skilled workers in Britain possessed certain privileges (better wages, better conditions, greater job security, political rights) denied the rest of the working class. The Protestant workers, therefore, feared and opposed the Irish workers' fight for equality because they thought this would undermine their own position. They likewise accepted Orange ideology and sided with British imperialism because of their privileged position in relation to the Catholic worker. That is why Connolly could argue

'The doctrine that because the workers of Belfast live under the same industrial conditions as do those of Great Britain, they are subject to the same passions and to be influenced by the same methods of propaganda, is a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity.'

What prevented basic class interest uniting Catholic and Protestant workers was precisely the Union with Britain. While suppressing the democratic rights of the Irish people as a whole, British imperialism guaranteed certain rights and privileges to the Protestant minority in Ireland. By bolstering the Northern industrial capitalists in Ireland, it guaranteed a relatively privileged position for Protestant workers. The Protestant workers saw their privileged position as a consequence of British rule and that is why they supported that rule.

Connolly understood that independence for Ireland would result in equal rights for Catholic and Protestant workers. And only the loss of its privileged position would allow the 'possibility of an immense spiritual uplifting of the Protestant working class'. Only in such circumstances would the Protestant working class be able to recognise its real class interests with 'its brothers and sisters of different creeds'. While British imperialism remained in Ireland such developments were not possible. Partition would block any hopes for the unity of the Irish working class. The Irish capitalists in the South and Orange capitalists in the North therefore had a common interest in supporting Partition.

Such was Connolly's hostility to Partition that he argued that it should be fought with armed resistance if necessary. He reminded the workers of Belfast how during the Belfast Dock Strike (1907) no officer class resigned when told to shoot down workers and shed blood in Ulster. No Cabinet members apologised to the relatives of the workers they had murdered. British imperialism had an interest in supporting Carson and the Loyalists in order to maintain British domination of Ireland. Without British backing, the Unionists could easily be dealt with. For

'... were the forces of the Crown withdrawn entirely, the Unionists could or would put no force into the field that the Home Rulers of all sections combined could not protect themselves against with a moderate amount of ease.'

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THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF- DETERMINATION

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It was not for nothing that the British ruling class had turned a blind eye to the arming and drilling of the Loyalists. Indeed, it was only on 4 December 1913, nine days after the inauguration of the Irish Volunteers, an armed force of the Irish Nationalists, that the British Government issued a proclamation prohibiting the importation of military arms and ammunition into Ireland. The Ulster Unionists were reputed to have already between 50,000-80,000 rifles at this time. Then, as today, behind the Protestant armed gangs and thugs were the British imperialist forces. The Liberal Government and Ulster capitalists had a common interest in the exclusion of Ulster, as the best available way to prevent the 'new unionism' and the rapidly developing Irish labour and socialist movement from uniting the Catholic and Protestant working class. A divided working class, whilst aiding the Ulster capitalists, also perpetuated British imperialist rule and seriously undermined the possibility of a united socialist movement in Ireland.

The internationalism of the British labour movement was now to be tested. Partition not only threatened to undermine the struggle of the Irish working class, but was also a direct denial of the right of the Irish people to self-determination. The working class in Britain had an internationalist duty to uphold this right and oppose Partition. This was the only possible basis for unity of the Irish and British working class and for a united struggle against their common enemy, British imperialism.

Instead of following the lead of the revolutionary Irish working class, the British labour movement followed the Irish bourgeoisie. It followed Redmond rather than Larkin and Connolly. The British Labour Party ignored resolutions from the Irish Trade Union Congress preferring to adopt the recommendations of the Irish Party. The British Labour Party acted like its British imperialist masters towards the Irish TUC when Irish representatives proposed to establish a separate and independent party. The Irish members requested that political contributions of Irish members of amalgamated unions (British based) be turned over to the Irish Congress to aid the formation of an Irish Labour Party. The British Party refused because, according to Arthur Henderson, the constitution of the Irish Labour Party, unlike the British, did not allow affiliation of socialist and co-operative bodies: the differences made the objectives of the two parties different. The Irish explanation that their different circumstances demanded this, did not move these Labour Party leaders like Henderson so infected with that British imperialist mentality which had such deep roots in the British labour movement. Henderson wanted the Irish Labour Party to be the tail of the British Labour Party.

The Irish Congress executive in 1914 urged the British Labour Party to oppose Partition and, if necessary, to vote against the entire Home Rule Bill in order to prevent it. But the British Labour Party knew better, it followed the lead of the Irish Party—the party of Irish capitalists—in supporting Partition. George Barnes, Labour MP, justified this treachery on the grounds that 'the Nationalists of Ireland have sent men to Parliament and the Labour men have not'. Connolly's reply to this will suffice: 'The love embraces which take place between the Parliamentary Labour Party and our deadliest enemies—the Home Rule Party—will not help on a better understanding between the militant proletariat of the two islands'. Once again, the corrupt and privileged leadership of the British Labour movement joined with British imperialism and the Irish bourgeoisie against the Irish working class. Having betrayed the revolutionary trade-

unionism of Larkin and Connolly during the Dublin lock-out, it now betrayed the revolutionary nationalism of the Irish masses. It was now clear that no section of the Irish people, apart from the Irish bourgeoisie, could place any trust in the official Labour movement in Britain. Once again, Connolly's stand was confirmed; the only way to defend the interests of the Irish working class was complete separation from Britain.

At this point, the first imperialist war broke out. The Home Rule Bill was passed, but was suspended until after the end of the war.

Imperialist War

On the declaration of war the European Socialist movement disintegrated, as socialist parties sided with their own imperialist bourgeoisie. The major exceptions were the Russian and Irish labour movements. Lenin and Connolly were among those very few who stood by the resolution on war passed at the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International (1907). This argued that it was the duty of socialists, should war break out, to use the economic and political crisis 'to rouse the people and thereby hasten the abolition of capitalist rule'. As Connolly said:-

'Should the working class in Europe, rather than slaughter each other for the benefit of kings and financiers, proceed tomorrow to erect barricades all over Europe, to break up bridges and destroy the transport service that war might be abolished, we should be perfectly justified in following such a glorious example and contributing our aid to the final dethronement of the vulture classes that rule and rob the world.'

And if this did not occur then it was 'our duty to take all possible action to save the poor from the horrors this war has in store'.

Connolly was among those in Ireland who saw the war as an opportunity to end British rule. 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity.' Connolly, and then Lenin after him, both following in the tradition of Marx and Engels, saw a national revolution in Ireland as a blow delivered against the English imperialist bourgeoisie, which would sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe. Connolly proposed as an immediate step that the labour movement should prevent the food that ought to feed the people of Ireland from being exported in ever greater quantities so 'that the British army and navy and jingoes may be fed'. To prevent the working class in Ireland from starving, it may mean more than transport strikes, if necessary it could mean 'armed battling in the streets to keep in this country the food of our people'. He continued:-

'Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war-lord'.

James Larkin, leader of the Irish Transport Union, before he left for America on 24 October 1914 to collect funds for the Union vigorously denounced the war and any Irish participation in it. 'Stop at home. Arm for Ireland. Fight for Ireland and no other land.' By the end of August 1914 he, like Connolly, saw that Ireland had now the 'finest chance she had for centuries' to free herself from British rule. Addressing 7,000 people in O'Connell Street, he told them that the Transport Union was prepared to do all it could to facilitate the landing of rifles in Ireland. He appealed for recruits to the Irish Citizen Army.

In Ireland, the majority of labour and socialist organisations opposed the war. No representative labour body officially supported the British war effort, and the leading figures of the labour movement were strongly opposed to it. The Dublin Trades Council declared against Irish involvement in the war in September 1914. In Belfast, the anti-war feeling was at its weakest. Whole sections of the Protestant working class were 'loyal' to Britain. Nevertheless, Connolly and his supporters fought to win the Belfast workers to an anti-war position, often in a very hostile environment. In this development already can be seen the consequences of the forthcoming Partition of Ireland. For with Partition, the Protestant

workers of Belfast would be completely cut off from the anti-imperialist forces of the Irish working class.

On 10 August 1914, the Irish TUC Executive issued a proclamation, 'Why should Ireland starve?', and it declared that 'a war for the aggrandisement of the capitalist class has been declared' and urged all workers 'to aid us in this struggle to save Ireland from the horrors of famine' by means of control of foodstuffs and the prevention of profiteering etc... In September 1914, the ITUC executive passed a resolution, sponsored by Larkin, condemning economic conscription. The resolution condemned 'the insidious and cowardly action of the employers in dismissing men from their employment with a view to compelling such dismissed men, by a process of starvation, to enlist volunteers'.

While the Irish working class had revolutionary leaders like Larkin and Connolly there would be no Irish labour movement support for Britain's imperialist war. In fact, the Irish labour movement, after Connolly's murder by the British, and Larkin's absence in America, continued to prevent conscription of any kind until the end of the war. On 23 April 1917, with the exception of the Belfast area, there took place the first general strike in the European labour movement against the more vigorous prosecution of the war through conscription in Ireland.

This stand of Irish labour was in sharp contrast to the totally pro-imperialist response in Britain. The British TUC and Labour Party enthusiastically supported the war. On 24 August 1914, they declared that there should be an Industrial Truce for the duration of the war; and on 29 August, the Labour Party agreed to an Electoral Truce and placed the party organisation at the disposal of the recruiting campaign. In May 1915, the Labour MP Arthur Henderson, having already sided with the Irish bourgeoisie against the Irish working class, now joined a War Coalition Cabinet with the most reactionary forces in Ireland, including no less than 8 Ulster Unionists. The Loyalist thug and reactionary, Sir Edward Carson, was made Attorney-General and Bonar Law, Secretary of State for the Colonies. A more calculated insult to the Irish people could not have been conceived. A more destructive blow to any hope of united struggle between the Irish and British workers against imperialism could not have been conceived. Two other Labour MPs, William Brace, of the Miners, and G H Roberts, of the Printers joined in this filthy act of betrayal by taking junior offices.

The small socialist movement in Britain was not able to make any effective stand against the war. The largest organisation, the British Socialist Party, under Hyndman's control, wholeheartedly supported an allied victory in the war. It later split and after the Hyndmanites left in 1916, the new leadership, while disowning a chauvinist line on the war, did not elaborate any clear alternative. Leading Labour movement figures such as Keir Hardie, George Lansbury MP (editor of the *Daily Herald*), Ramsay MacDonald supported the war, once war broke out. Only the tiny Socialist Labour Party and the Women's Suffrage Federation (later Workers Socialist Federation) developed a revolutionary opposition to the war. There were also small numbers in the ILP who opposed it on pacifist grounds. John Maclean in Glasgow and Sylvia Pankhurst in London were the revolutionary leaders in Britain who maintained the most consistent opposition to the war. It is no surprise that they also gave unwavering support to the Irish struggle for self-determination.

To return to Ireland: the anti-war forces of the Labour movement were soon joined by the revolutionary wing of the national movement. Redmond's Irish Party necessarily supported the war in alliance with British imperialism. Redmond and his supporters organised recruiting meetings up and down the country in defence of Britain and the Empire. His efforts were supported by the Irish employers, who sacked workers in their thousands in order to force them, by starvation and poverty, to 'volunteer' to join the British army. Once again, the Irish bourgeoisie betrayed the national struggle to protect its own class interests. The Irish Party was as 'loyal' to Britain as the Ulster Unionists.

The revolutionary wing of the Irish Volunteers led by, among others, Padraic Pearse, opposed any support for British imperialism. On the contrary, they saw the war as an opportunity to strike a blow for Irish national freedom. 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity.' Redmond's support for the war led to a split in the Irish Volunteers. A National Convention on 25 October, 1914 saw a section of the Irish Volunteers, 12,000 out of 200,000, affirm their determination to maintain a defence force in Ireland, resist conscription and defend the unity of the nation and its right to self-government. Those who remained with Redmond became known as the National Volunteers. Most of the National Volunteers joined the British army.

From the outbreak of war, the Irish Citizen Army co-operated fully with the Volunteers. When Connolly made contact with the Irish Republican Brotherhood, forerunner of the IRA, secretly organised within the Irish Volunteers, the first steps towards the Easter Rising were made. The IRB had also decided on the outbreak of war that an uprising must be organised. They had, in fact, sounded out other nationalist groupings for their views. It is of note that Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein opposed a rising and broke with the IRB and the Volunteers. Padraic Pearse was made director of the IRB in December 1914. The alliance of revolutionary nationalism and Irish Labour had now been forged. Under the leadership of Pearse and Connolly it carried out the Easter Rising.

Starting from the interests of the working class, Connolly opposed the imperialist war and saw it as an opportunity to free Ireland from British rule. Starting from the interests of the Irish national struggle Padraic Pearse equally opposed the war and equally saw it as an opportunity to end British rule in Ireland. The alliance of revolutionary nationalism and Irish Labour which was born in the Dublin lock-out came to fruition during the imperialist war.

We have already said that the main consideration for the socialist revolution today is a united fight against the imperialist powers, the imperialist bourgeoisie, and their bought-off agents in the working class movement. And that this requires the working class to fight in alliance with national liberation movements to destroy imperialism. In the struggle for Irish self-determination the significance of this position is clearly seen. On the one side we see the forces of revolutionary nationalism in alliance with the class-conscious workers in Ireland. On the other the forces of reaction: the Irish bourgeoisie, the British imperialist bourgeoisie, and its agents in the British working class. The defeat of the Irish struggle for national freedom and the working class struggle for socialism in both Ireland and Britain, was decisively influenced by the failure of the British working class movement to unite with the Irish national liberation movement against British imperialism.

To be continued

David Reed
March 1981

Books on Ireland

Ireland upon the Dissecting Table
by James Connolly 60p + 15p p&p
Labour in Irish History
by James Connolly 30p + 15p p&p
Marx and Engels on Ireland
£3.00 + 60p p&p

Available from RCG Publications Ltd
49 Railton Road, London SE24 0LN

Correction

Communist Tradition on Ireland Part 2
A line was inadvertently missed out from the top of page 10 in the last issue of FRFI (8), first column, first line. It should have read:
they happened to be. Murphy called a meeting of the Dublin Employers Federation and on 3 (then as before)

POLICE FILE

K Division – Ham Actors

K Division, Merseyside, have been at it again. Not satisfied with 3 previous mentions in this column they persist in getting themselves caught. Three K Division PCs have been sent for trial following a police raid on a Liverpool Hotel. PC Scarisbrick is charged with falsely claiming he was hit and attempting to pervert the course of justice, and he and two other PCs are charged with perjury. We suggest that Merseyside Chief Constable immediately sends all K Division officers on a crash course at the Police School of Acting if this appalling standard of lying is to be improved upon.

PC Grunts Like a Pig

Poor old PC White of Glasgow police was convinced that everyone was against him because he was a policeman (we've no idea why). At a party his 'emotions boiled over' and he began grunting like a pig and saying 'police are pigs'. He kicked his hostess in the face and punched a colleague who was sent to arrest him. Not content with this, PC White punched the inspector who drove him home after being charged. Clearly White had now gone out of line. Not so. To preserve the 'integrity and reputation of the force' White was found not guilty of hitting his hostess and ticked off with a £35 fine for taking a swipe at his colleagues.

Racists to Investigate Racists

The much heralded Home Office inquiry into racist attacks is to be based solely on evidence provided by Chief Constables. As the vast majority of racist attacks in this country are carried out by, or with the assistance of the racist British police force we need not expect a great deal from this inquiry.

Police Porn

The Home Secretary has been asked to intervene in the row over the showing of hard-core porn films by the A1 police patrol, as reported in FRFI 8. Presumably Whitelaw has to consider whether or not this will affect their driving, or is it that such activity will undermine the role of the vice squad? Meanwhile in Southall, officers have confiscated 3 porn films. One year ago these very same films were hired out to Southall police station, to be shown to police on reserve duty at the funeral of Blair Peach.

Dopes Grow Dope

Perjury, Porn, Assault, and now drugs. Two inch Cannabis plants, confiscated in a police drugs raid, were cultivated to a height of ten feet at the police laboratories in Lambeth 'in case they were needed as exhibits'....

Legalised Murder

Police who shot and killed Gail Kinchin and her unborn baby, held hostage in a Birmingham siege last June, are not to be prosecuted. Instead the man they hoped to kill, David Pagett, is to be charged with this same murder. He did not pull the trigger or aim the gun, but there is no judge who will put such a problem in the way of conviction.

Manchester Police Terror

On 18 January, Manchester police wearing flak jackets, riot helmets, and armed with shot guns burst into the home of Peter Lowry, and held him and his Irish wife, her sister Anne and her boyfriend, at gunpoint while they searched the house for – Gerry Tuite. Not only this, but Mr Lowry's 8 year-old daughter was dragged sobbing from her bed by these gun-wielding cowards. The raid followed an 'anonymous tip-off'. It was a further attempt by the British state to terrorise the Irish Community into submission and like all such attempts will not succeed.

Thin Blue Line

'We are that thin' Manchester Chief Constable James Anderton told the *Guardian*, 'if people chose to ignore the police they could immobilise them overnight'.

Despite the guns and the terror tactics, this statement is probably quite true. The British state does exist as much by bluff as by force. It is held up only by the myriad of opportunists and misleaders who deny its brutality and peddle the myth of its invincibility. One day this myth will be broken, and the racist police will not only be ignored but punished for their crimes against the oppressed and working class of this country.

IRISH HISTORY - NEW LIES FOR OLD



Censorship of reporting on Ireland is no secret. Between 1970 and 1978 at least ten TV programmes were banned. Another ten were delayed and cut. All programmes on Ireland are vetted by the BBC and IBA. Yet both channels have now shown major series on Ireland – The Troubles (Thames) and Ireland: A Television History (BBC). Why?

Today it is clear to all that the Republican struggle cannot be defeated militarily. The British ruling class knows that mass support for the Republican struggle has never been stronger. The response to the last hunger strike confirmed this. The ruling class also knows, as St Pauls and New Cross demonstrate, that at any time black working class resistance to racist oppression may break out in Britain. They know that in areas like South Wales workers are losing jobs, wages, everything as the crisis bites. As the crisis grows worse rebellion and resistance will develop in Britain itself. The prospect of facing serious battles in Britain at the same time as fighting the war in Ireland terrifies the ruling class. As does the fear of growing unity between these struggles. The ruling class is driven to find a new 'solution' to the Irish problem: one which middle class reformist elements within the Nationalist community can use to isolate and destroy revolutionary Republicanism in Ireland. The attempt to do this by terror alone has failed.

This fear lies behind the Thatcher/Haughey talks. The British ruling class, in alliance with the Irish bourgeoisie, is attempting to devise a 'political' settlement which will allow it to split the opposition to British rule. The precise form of this settlement does not matter as long as it achieves the object of defeating the Republican movement and maintaining British imperialist control in Ireland.

The theme of the Thatcher/Haughey talks is

the need to break away from the 'old prejudices': Republicanism and Loyalism. Common citizenship, mutual trust, new political institutions etc can satisfy the aspirations of all 'parties': the 'Catholic Nationalist' community of the North, the 'Protestant Loyalist' community of the North, the 'people' of the South and the 'people' of the United Kingdom. The requirement of bourgeois propaganda now is to show that the Irish question today can only be solved by breaking with the past, putting aside 'mistakes' made on all sides. This means that liberal media criticism of Government policy and of Loyalism which was banned yesterday, can today suit the propaganda needs of the ruling class. The old crude pro-Loyalist anti-Irish drivel will no longer suffice.

The Robert Kee version of Irish history shown on BBC failed precisely because it was too much the old crude lies and not enough the new liberal line of criticism. According to Kee Ireland was never a nation. Every rising from 1798 to 1916 was a myth. Every Loyalist pogrom was caused by insecurity. Even the Sinn Fein landslide victory in the 1918 General Election was the result of vote-rigging! Kee's arrogance, racism and lying rendered Ireland: A Television History a failure, although he was given every assistance. The Twenty-Six Counties ban on interviews with 'terrorists' was lifted for a fortnight to allow Kee to be shown on RTE!

The Troubles, by contrast, was so successful

that the petit bourgeois socialists heaped praise on it. The Troubles, it seemed, 'admitted' everything: Ireland was invaded and colonised by the British; settlers were planted to defend British rule; every Republican rising was met with savage repression; the Treaty did establish an undemocratic and sectarian statelet; the Civil Rights movement was beaten off the streets by the RUC thugs; the armed struggle was a response to injustice and oppression. The Troubles criticised Loyalism in a way which has not been seen since the days of the Civil Rights movement. All this led up to the big lie: a united Ireland cannot be achieved and the solution to the Irish question can be found without destroying British imperialism.

The vicious attacks on the Civil Rights movement by Loyalist forces was exposed. British 'mistakes' – such as the Falls Road curfew of 1970 and internment – were exposed. So-called Republican 'atrocities' were also 'exposed'. All these were shown to be the results of outdated aims: Stormont rule (Loyalists), military victory (British) and a united Ireland (Republicanism). Precisely the ideological basis of the Thatcher/Haughey talks: break with the past, both Loyalist and Republican.

Thus the final programme: Deadlock. Loyalists will not accept Republicanism. Republicans will not accept Loyalism. The army cannot be withdrawn. Therefore a new solution avoiding the two extremes of Republicanism and Loyalism is required. The book *The Troubles* – based on the series – concludes:

'If the political parameters defy solution, the only approach is to begin to change, in the context of a society that has agreed to disagree, those parameters themselves. Politics in Northern Ireland is not about solutions, but about how to change the situation sufficiently to make talk of solutions realistic.'

It reads like a Northern Ireland Office press statement explaining the Thatcher/Haughey talks!

Yesterdays needs were served by banning programmes and covering up for every barbaric act of Loyalism and British imperialism. Today's needs are served by allowing, indeed promoting, liberal programmes 'criticising' Loyalist, British and Republican 'prejudices' and pleading for a 'change of parameters'. But the purpose remains the same: to provide the necessary conditions for the continuation of British imperialist rule in Ireland.

Terry Marlowe

NEAVE PLOT:

Benn turns other cheek

The *New Statesman* recently revealed that shortly before his death, Airey Neave was plotting to set up a Secret Service team to prevent a Left Labour Government coming to power, and in particular to 'make sure Benn was stopped'. Neave had no qualms about using violence to ensure this.

This revelation does not surprise us. We know that the ruthless British ruling class will unleash terror in Britain, as they have in Ireland, when it proves necessary.

Potential victim, Mr Benn, finds it all 'unbelievable' and strongly objected to the *New Statesman* publishing it because it would 'distress' Neave's family and friends.

Naive Benn, like all social democrats, like Allende before him, does not want to face the reality of imperialism. Unlike INLA whose experience of imperialist oppression led them to execute Neave.

We wonder how Mr Benn feels to have been 'saved' by the very forces he labels 'terrorist'.

DIPLOCKED

Lord Diplock is at it again. His last notable action was to recommend the setting-up of the notorious Diplock Courts in 1972. These are the juryless courts through which are processed countless prisoners in the Six Counties. Now the venerable Lord has produced an official Report on phone-tapping.

After a nine month long enquiry, Diplock has produced a 6 page report (two thirds of a page per month – perhaps the Government will next appoint Diplock to conduct an enquiry into 'low productivity in British industry'). His report concludes that phone-tapping procedures are working satisfactorily with minimum interference for individual privacy and in the public interest.

Diplock's other conclusion is that phone-tapping is 'an essential weapon in the fight against crime'. As no doubt are juryless courts!

FRFI has conducted its own undercover investigations into Diplock's 'enquiry'. We can exclusively reveal that for the first six months of the enquiry, a team of civil servants was employed full-time to convince 74 year old Lord Diplock that the telephone had been invented.

'Damn handy little gadget', was his response when finally convinced. 'We can listen to the devils plotting to get rid of us. If only we'd had it in 1917 we wouldn't have had all that trouble in Russia, eh?'

Murder not to be investigated

In the last issue of FRFI we reported that Melvin Jackson a senior prison warden, at Winson Green prison in Birmingham, charged with the murder of Barry Prosser had been given bail.

Subsequently, during the committal proceedings David Rushton, a pathologist stated that Prosser had been killed by a vicious blow which had ruptured his stomach. The prosecution case indicated that Melvin Jackson was at the time in charge of the hospital wing of the prison, that he was the only person who could have assaulted the prisoner, and that after the assault he tried to cover his tracks by calling the prison doctor and suggesting that Prosser had gone mad and lost control of himself.

The QC for the defence denied that anything said by the prosecution constituted evidence that Jackson had struck the blow that killed Prosser. This satisfied the Birmingham Stipendiary magistrate. He refused to let the case go for trial. And now Jackson, charged with murder is scott free on the grounds of insufficient evidence.

Who killed Prosser, will the criminal be brought to justice? Obviously the Stipendiary magistrate is not bothered about such details. He didn't even care to have the case tried.



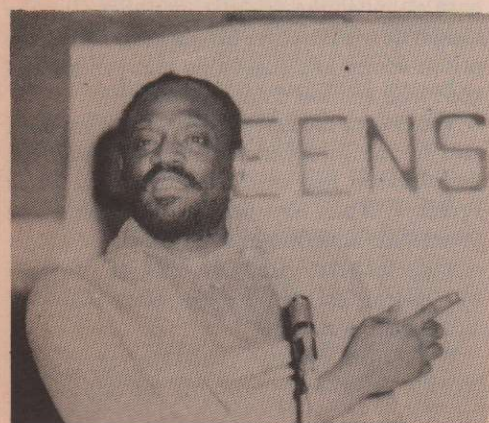
RALLY AGAINST IMPERIALISM

The revolutionary fightback against racism and imperialism is growing – this was the message of the highly successful 'Greensboro Massacre Rally' organised by Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! An audience of 180, overwhelmingly working class people, including a large number of black youth and also revolutionaries from Iran loudly applauded this message. Their enthusiasm was shown by the fact that the collection raised a magnificent £230.

FRFI organised the rally as an act of international solidarity with the CWP, who had five of their members murdered by FBI/KKK collaboration in Greensboro. Those fighting around the Greensboro outrage were anxious that the case should be publicised in Britain and FRFI had no hesitation in undertaking this task. Not so the petit bourgeois socialists. Approached by FRFI for their cooperation in building the rally the SWP, IMG, ANL refused. The IMG stated that they wouldn't support the rally because the RCG 'attacks the Fourth International'. So much for internationalism. Indeed the rally was boycotted by the petit bourgeois socialists. It was their loss. Their absence was not mourned by a rally which represented the real revolutionary forces of the future.

The Rally heard a series of important speeches from Dale Sampson, widow of murdered CWP member Bill Sampson; Darcus Howe, Editor of Race Today speaking for the New Cross Massacre Action Committee; Alastair Logan, a lawyer who represents almost all of the Irish Republican prisoners in England; and Eddie Abrahams of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! This platform provided a unique opportunity to draw out the lessons of the anti-racist struggle and to link together the anti-racist, anti-imperialist fightback in the US, in Britain and in Ireland. It was the internationalism of the rally that was most striking with constant reference to El Salvador, Ireland, Iran, as well as the fight against racism. Messages of solidarity from The Peoples Mojahedin Organisation of Iran, and Iranian Students for the Freedom of the Working Class reinforced this spirit of internationalism.

First to speak was Darcus Howe who recounted the monstrous police and press cover up of the New Cross massacre. He showed how both the Tory Government and the previous Labour one had created the conditions in which such an event could take place. He said that Britain has descended into barbarism and that it was the task of the working class to drag society out of this barbarism. The black working class, as its responses to New Cross had shown, was already beginning to do so.



Darcus Howe



Alastair Logan

'I believe that with the black working class there is a possibility of this country being taken by the scruff of its neck and dragged back into humanity.'

At the end of the rally a special collection was taken for the New Cross Massacre fund.

Dale Sampson showed that the Greensboro murders and subsequent acquittal of the KKK/FBI assassins had given the green light to the most racist and reactionary forces in the US. She showed that the US state itself was behind the murders and the subsequent cover up. But, she emphasised that people were fighting back, they were not standing by while the hearts of black men were cut out in Buffalo or while 19 black children are kidnapped and murdered in Atlanta, and they had not stood by when five communists were murdered in Greensboro.

'Repression has been stepped up but resistance is growing.'

Alastair Logan gripped the audience with a speech which exposed the barbarous treatment of Irish prisoners. Citing the case of Steve Nordonne who after his arrest was viciously beaten, he showed what a sham the subsequent so-called police inquiry and European Human Rights Commission response into his treatment had been. The British Government could get away with open lies and would go as far as was necessary to protect their system. He told of the vicious regime facing especially black and Irish prisoners in British gaols. He cited the case of a prisoner who had suffered ingrowing toenails and who as a result of medical neglect had lost one leg and was due to have the other amputated a week later because of gangrene. He called for the greatest solidarity for the Irish prisoners especially given the imminent hunger strike in Long Kesh.

'The Irish prisoner is a fighter for freedom, fighting against British imperialism, and he will endure what it takes to endure.'

Finally Eddie Abrahams for FRFI spoke of the developing revolutionary movement in Britain which rejects constitutionalism, rejects polite parleying with the state and rejects the reactionary Labour Party. A movement whose potential was shown in St Pauls. Black people were

RACIST FRENCH CP DEGRADES COMMUNISM

- The mayor of Saint-Denis refuses a petition from immigrant workers and tells them 'Why don't you go back to your own country.' The immigrants are violently removed from the town hall: one ends up in hospital!
- In Nanterre the deputy mayor tries to limit the number of black workers moving in because, he says, they have a different lifestyle!
- In Montigny the mayor calls a picket outside a Moroccan family's flat chanting 'Don't let the poison spread!'. Later the mother has an epileptic fit, while the daughter is physically attacked.
- In Rennes the local council refuses permission to build a Moslem Centre!
- In Aulnay-sous-Bois, in Ivry-sur-Seine (and the list goes on) mayors refuse to admit any more immigrants.

Who are these mayors and local councillors? Have the fascists come to power? No. These eminent men are all members of the French Communist Party, elected by the working class on a so-called Communist platform. For many years the French CP has put the interest of French imperialism above all else. It has called for 'Buying French!' It has tried to boycott foreign imports. It has upheld the French flag against attempts at revolt and liberation in the colonies. For years it has demanded an end to immigration. But it still claimed to stand against racism.

Now the French CP is openly racist. It attacks blacks and immigrant workers verbally and physically. It demands that police and immigration officials be more strict. It demands more police to protect white French workers from immigrants. And it hounds a Moroccan family in a crude attempt to win the racist and law-and-order vote.

The CP hit the headlines at Christmas by bulldozing an immigrants' hostel, in Vitry, sealing doors and windows and cutting off gas, electricity and water. What was the immigrants' crime? They had come from Mali and been placed in a hostel. From there they were moved to Vitry. Nobody asked their opinion. The Communist mayor of Vitry had claimed his area was becoming a ghetto. He said the hostel was unfit for habitation. Rather than join in solidarity with the immigrant workers to fight for a decent hostel, the Communist mayor and councillors treat them as the enemy. Unconcerned by the plight of these 400 homeless men, they tried to whip up racist anger among the local population.

Such 'Communists' are a cancer in the working class movement. Their 'Communist' label only breeds confusion. How many immigrant families now see 'Communists' as the worst racists?

The French 'Communist' Party has nothing to do with Communism! Other forces uphold and fight for the true Communist tradition,

showing the way to the rest of the working class now confronting massive unemployment and wage cuts. That way lies in total opposition to the British state and a complete rejection of the corrupt, rotten tradition of the Labour Party, tied as it is to imperialism. Communists stand with the emerging revolutionary movement for in it lies the seeds of destruction of British imperialism, its exploitation of workers, oppression of nations, and its racism.

When FRFI asked Dale Sampson for her comment on the rally, which she had come so many thousands of miles to speak at, she said:

'I would like to thank FRFI for their act of international solidarity in promoting the fight against fascism. Two things were most significant about the rally. First the connections made between the Irish struggle, the struggle against racism in Britain and the struggle in the US. Second, about the composition of the audience, which here or in the US would have been significant with the number of black people, particularly youth, as well as the numbers of white people. The fact that there was nobody from the left there was appalling!'

Maxine Williams

uniting the struggle of the working class with the struggle of the oppressed against racism and imperialism. So for example the Parti Communiste Internationale in Ivry, up the road from Vitry, put out a leaflet condemning the Communist Party's racist campaign:

'French comrades. In our factories, our offices, our schools, would we accept the expulsion of a comrade because of the colour of his skin? No. So let us refuse to accept it in our towns... FRENCH WORKERS AND IMMIGRANT WORKERS, SAME CLASS SAME RIGHTS! DOWN WITH RACISM AND CHAUVINISM, REAL POISONS ONLY SERVING THE EXPLOITERS!'

But is the CP the only racist party in France? To hear the Socialist Party and the French 'Thatcherites' talk, you would think so. A sickening flood of bourgeois hypocrisy has filled radio, TV and newspapers for months. Forgotten are the 100,000 immigrant workers thrown out of France in the last five years with general approval from politicians and Trade Union leaders. Forgotten is the series of laws passed with unanimous approval from all Parliamentary parties (including the Socialist Party) to end immigration and to deport and 'repatriate' immigrant workers. The bourgeoisie is delighted to be able to attack 'Communism'.

As for the petit bourgeois socialists, they are playing the same pathetic role as in Britain. The Anti-Nazi League put the Labour Party forward as a real ally for black people, and pushed under the carpet the whole history of its racist attacks on black people in Britain. The racism of this party was veiled over by the SWP and IMG, major forces in the ANL who called upon workers to vote Labour in the last election. So, in France, the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (IMG co-thinkers and members of the 4th International) offers the French working class the perspective of unity between the Communist and Socialist Parties as a means of fighting racism! Meanwhile Lutte Ouvriere (with fraternal links with the SWP), just two days before the Vitry attack, declared at its Congress that with regard to racism 'What the PCF denounces is true and well founded' and 'the local councils have shown no sign of victimising the immigrants.' These organisations put unity with the racist parties first. They dare not side fully with the oppressed, and so they betray them.

The French CP, though more blatantly racist than the British CP, has much in common with it. Here in Britain the CP calls for the 'democratisation' of the police force. The CP also refuses to oppose all immigration controls. When black people rose up against the police in St Paul's the CP described the uprising as 'primitive'. The French CP has only taken to its practical conclusion the common theoretical standpoint of both parties.

The CP in France and Britain have nothing whatsoever to do with real communism. The true tradition of communism has always been to side with the oppressed against racism and imperialism. There can be no 'ifs' and 'buts' about that. Anyone who calls himself a communist but refuses to fight racism and imperialism has simply stolen the name.

Sheila Marston.

FRENCH CP: MORE RACIST THUGGERY

The French 'Communist' Party took its rightwing populism a step further last month when it organised a demonstration outside a Moroccan family's flat. Claiming to be a determined drive against drugs, the demonstration was a vicious example of racist harassment. How did it come about?

The 'Communist' mayor of Montigny-les-Cormeilles, a working class suburb of Paris, decided to launch a 'law and order' campaign to win the white petit bourgeois vote. What better issues to choose than immigration and drugs? To set the scene he held a press conference and called on everyone to report to him any drug offence they came across.

Meanwhile he had his first 'case' already lined up. A Young 'Communist' member had persuaded an illiterate Algerian mother to sign a letter accusing a Moroccan neighbour's son of selling marijuana to her son. The police had been informed but were not pressing charges with such meagre evidence.

The first the local community knew of it was when a leaflet was pushed through every door by the Young 'Communists' denouncing the Moroccan family as dope-peddlers and giving their full name. The leaflet called for a rally 'to drive drugs out of Montigny' on 7 February, to take place under the very windows of the family's flat.

The day before, a Communist councillor visited the mother and told her what was in store. He advised her to explain her side of it to the crowd, and then to leave the area. The father was absent working shifts at the time.



The CP's racist onslaught did not get the support they had hoped for. Only about 80 people attended, mainly Party members from other areas. 'Don't let the poison spread' said the placards. The 14,000 inhabitants of Montigny stayed at home.

Following this scandalous harassment a daughter was physically attacked and called a 'pusher'. Most of the other children have been sent to stay elsewhere to avoid discrimination at school and in the street. The mother had a severe epileptic attack. All the Communist mayor could say was that further revelations would be made about the family!

The French CP has joined the ranks of the enemies of immigrant families, already attacked on all sides by the state, the bourgeois parties and rightwing fascist groups. The Montigny incident is by no means an isolated one. Two weeks later Marchais, leader of the CP, made a public statement attacking the Place d'Italie area of Paris as a 'Hongkong-on-Seine'. The CP is modelling its tactics on the prewar populist movement, which whipped up violent support for reactionary causes. It will not mind losing black workers' support: many of them have no vote, and that is all that counts for the CP.

Sheila Marston

FIGHT IMPERIALISM

What is a Mojahed

The following are extracts from an article printed in the magazine Mojahed, May 1980.

What is a 'Mojahed'? What is his or her message, and what is his or her pain? What point of view lies at the heart of fifteen years bloody struggle? What is it that so preoccupies a Mojahed that he does not permit himself a moment of peace? What is his feeling about the events occurring around him?

From the creation of the skies and the earth to the everyday reality of social change and development, the work of overthrowing tyrants and heeding the cries of the oppressed and the calloused hands of the worker and the peasant, the tears that well in the eyes of the mother of a martyr or a tortured prisoner, and the wrath that gleams forth as iron will - these are the preoccupations of a Mojahed.

How does a People's Mojahed assess the phenomenon of wretched huts in the same society with luxurious dream palaces, the exorbitant price of basic commodities necessary for the sustaining of life, along with the unemployment of workers, and in a social scene with fancy federal budgets?

What is the ideal society of a People's Mojahed? And what methods must he utilise to reach his goal?

When we present the standpoints of the PMOI, we attempt to shed light on the



PMOI Mass rally in Iran

ideological view which underlines them, as well, by seeking to communicate the intrinsic philosophical content which informs these viewpoints with a true realism, which to us is the Towhidi (Divinely integrated) approach. On the social plane, we are committed to promoting the ideals of the classless Towhidi society, which enjoys complete equity, ensured by an uncompromising anti-exploitation stance and the vigorous defence of the most deprived strata and classes - the workers and the peasants.

In terms of education and political analysis at this stage of our society's kinesis, we have taken an anti-imperialist, anti-reaction and anti-dictatorial stance, consistent with the principle of maintaining unity of all revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces, whereby we, furthermore, condemn any action which might create divisiveness (in the revolutionary front) on the part of any individual, or group.

The Mojahed believes that the obliteration of exploitation in every form around the world can only be achieved through the total destruction of imperialism, the primary obstacle in the path of the evolution of humanity. The Mojahed also holds the conviction that the anti-imperialist struggles of the peoples of the world are the force to realise this sacred objective through the cementing of close revolutionary relations.

IRAN

The People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran

Below we publish an article submitted to us by the Moslem Students Society - UK (Sympathisers of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI) and excerpts from an article in Mojahed No5, the English language journal of the PMOI.

We are opening the pages of FRFI to the PMOI in line with our frequently stated policy of allowing revolutionary anti-imperialist organisations to express their unedited views to the British working class movement. We do so as a gesture of international solidarity and in the cause of the united anti-imperialist struggle.

The PMOI is a revolutionary anti-imperialist organisation with mass support in Iran. During the Shah's regime it played a prominent role in the struggle against imperialist tyranny and is today a major revolutionary force defending the Iranian revolution against attempts at imperialist counter-revolution.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supports the PMOI's efforts to gain justice for M R Saadati and has sent telegrams of protest to the Public Prosecutor in Tehran.

SAADATI - PRISONER OF TWO REGIMES

Seyyed Mohammad Reza Saadati, a member of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran, once a political prisoner of the Shah's brutal regime, who suffered seven years of imprisonment including years of solitary confinement and severe torture, was released by the people's uprising in February 1979. But after a short period of freedom he was again arrested and imprisoned in April 1979.

This time he is a political prisoner of a government whose present status is the result of sacrifices of the heroic people of Iran and other revolutionaries. From the start, his arrest was in fact clearly unlawful. The way things turned out afterwards and the treatment he has been receiving since his imprisonment including brutal beating up and torture leave a great deal to be explained. He has been in solitary

create a guilty image of Saadati in public minds, hence imposing this allegation and its consequences upon the court.

- 4 No attention was paid to his hunger strike which was in protest against the violation of his basic rights. His hunger strike lasted two months.
- 5 A Kangaroo Court was formed while the file was as yet incomplete. This court was adjourned with the excuse of Saadati's non-attendance in the court while in fact due to hunger strike he had become bedridden.
- 6 He has been unlawfully imprisoned for nearly two years. The formation of courts were successively announced and consecutively denounced and adjourned to unspecified dates.

Eventually, on the eve of the American elections and during negotiations for the release of the American spies it was announced that Saadati was going to be tried on the following day. Even his lawyer was not present during the trial and the charges against him were as follows:-

- Carrying illegal weapons!
- Wearing a glass which could see 100 yards behind him!
- Spying for the Soviet Union!

confinement from the beginning of his unlawful imprisonment.

The following are some important facts with respect to this anti-Mojahed conspiracy:-

- 1 He was arrested by unauthorised persons who not only had no responsibility in this connection but were themselves American agents and there are many documents to prove this. These armed men were members of an illegal committee positioned in the American embassy. After the occupation of the American embassy and even before that, many documents were found to prove that these men were acting as agents for US imperialism. The leader of these men 'Mashallah Kashani' was arrested on charges of spying but due to his influence within the Public Prosecutor's Office he was released shortly after and was given an official responsibility. Recently he has been arrested again because of numerous complaints and heavy public pressure. Although the Prosecutor's Office has still not clearly specified on what charges, the people are now well aware of his many criminal and treacherous activities.
- 2 Saadati was tortured in a secure house by a specialist interrogator who was trained by Savak and American CIA.
- 3 Torture and threat were used together with acquired documents to form a file by the same unauthorised persons. This file was published on a nationwide scale in order to

He was tried in a secret court and on humiliating charges. Even the Prosecutor and the Judge (who is a well-known anti-Mojahed) were aware of the falsehood of these charges. In fact, they did not sentence Saadati on those charges but they sentenced him for being a Mojahed. The anti-Mojahed attitude of the court was shown right from the beginning. They were trying to prosecute the Mojahedin Organisation and not Saadati personally. They wanted to give much heavier sentences but since they did not have any document to prove their false claims and due to national and international support for Saadati and the PMOI, he was given 10 years of imprisonment.

While they were trying Saadati the Public Prosecutor's Office had already banned all the publications of the PMOI and later, at the end of the trial, the Prosecutor ordered the arrest of two leading cadres of the PMOI. These events are nothing but a green light for US imperialism. Negotiations for the release of US spies continued until they were released after shameful and ridiculous compromises with the US imperialism. Compromises which undermine the anti-imperialist line of Iranian masses for which they now have to pay a heavy price.

After the release of the American spies the Iranian authorities diverted the people's attention from the hostages' issue and in order to exert another blow to the PMOI have decided to try Saadati again. This trial is to cover for all reactionary compromises made over the hostages' issue.

REPORTS FROM IRELAND



Mrs Sands, Bobby's mother

BELFAST MARCH

The first day of the new hunger strike was marked by a mass march in Belfast. Despite atrocious weather conditions, thousands of people turned out to demonstrate their total support for Bobby Sands and his comrades. The marchers themselves were solidly Republican and solidly working class, with contingents from Provisional Sinn Fein, ex-prisoners, and local H-Block/Armagh Action Groups from all parts of Ireland. The march made its way up the Falls Road to Andersonstown, where a rally was held.

The first speaker, Jim Gibney (National H-Block/Armagh committee), began by saying that one message needed to be spelled out to the British government time after time — we don't want you in our country. In support of this message, he said, the prisoners in the H-Blocks were prepared to lay down their lives. The hunger strike, he emphasised, was not for material comforts but for political status. The prison struggle was part of the struggle for political independence, he continued, and it was that principle and that conviction that had seen the prisoners through their protest until now, and would see them through to final victory. Bobby Sands, he said, did not have a death wish, but like the rest of his generation he was faced with a challenge from the British government. The British government had thrown down the gauntlet and the prisoners knew that if that gauntlet was not taken up the British government would screw them into the ground. He concluded by saying that we should not be taken in by Thatcher's claim that she would not do a U-turn on the question of political status. The miners, he pointed out, had not only made her turn but had made her do somersaults in her economic policy, and, he emphasised, she could be made to turn again.

Next, Rosaleen Sands, the mother of Bobby Sands, came forward on the platform to thank the crowd for turning out in such numbers in support of her son and his comrades. She sharply criticised John Cousins of the Alliance Party who had claimed that Bobby Sands had

been forced into starting the hunger strike. Her son, she emphasised, had voluntarily gone on hunger strike and she pledged her family's full support for him in his action.

Paddy Logue (Trade Union H-Block/Armagh Sub-Committee) criticised Paddy Devlin, who had claimed that the H-Blocks issue was divisive and weakened the working class in relation to low pay and bad working conditions. He said that the fact was that workers in the North of Ireland were divided through discrimination and there were bad conditions and unemployment. This, he emphasised, was caused by the British government through partition, and so long as the British stayed here the working class would never be united. It was vitally important, he said, to get this message through in the trade unions. He pointed out that Bobby Sands himself was a member of the ITGWU, and he concluded by calling on all workers to come out on the planned Day of Action in mid-April and to stay out until the H-Blocks issue had been resolved.

The final speaker, Fergus O'Hare (National H-Block/Armagh Committee), summed up the situation by saying that Bobby Sands had drawn a line and people now had to decide which side of the line they were on — the side of Irish freedom or the side of those who opposed Irish freedom.

Irish Correspondent

IRA MILITARY CAMPAIGN

After the unofficial ceasefire during the period of the first hunger strike the IRA showed in the first two months of 1981 that its ability to strike at military and commercial targets remains as effective as ever. Eight members of the occupation forces were killed in this period (including one killed by the INLA) and several others were seriously injured. In addition, the RUC barracks at Clogher in Co Tyrone was devastated by a bomb attack on 25 February. There were also numerous bomb attacks on commercial targets, the single most spectacular attack, of course, being the sinking of a British ship in Lough Foyle. On two occasions there were simultaneous co-ordinated bomb attacks on commercial targets in different towns. On 26 January bombs exploded in towns throughout the occupied six counties, targets being hit in Belfast, Derry, Portadown, Newry, Omagh and Lisnaskea. Nearly 100 commercial premises were either destroyed or damaged by these attacks, and at the same time a bomb attack also closed the railway line between Belfast and Dublin.

In all these attacks warnings were given to avoid civilian casualties. Less than a month later, on 21 February, a co-ordinated series of firebomb attacks destroyed or damaged fifteen commercial targets in the three cities of Belfast, Derry and Armagh. The scale, precision and efficiency of these attacks, of course, is in direct contradiction to the claims of the British government that IRA volunteers are simply 'criminals': it is obvious that such operations could only be carried out by a highly trained and disciplined guerrilla army.

The most significant military operation carried out by the IRA so far this year, however, was undoubtedly the execution of Sir Norman Stronge and his son and the destruction of their mansion at Tynan in Co Armagh. In explaining the reasons for this attack the IRA said:

'This deliberate attack on the symbols of hated unionism was a direct reprisal for a whole series of loyalist assassinations and murder attacks on nationalist people and nationalist activists which has gone on far too long. For us the decision to take such reprisals represents a real departure, no matter

DUBLIN H-BLOCK CONFERENCE

A special conference of H-Block/Armagh activists was held in Dublin on 25 January to discuss ways of re-mobilising the campaign in support of the prisoners. The urgency of the situation was underlined by messages from the prisoners which were read out to the conference. The message from the protesting Republican prisoners in Long Kesh drew attention to the refusal of the British government to honour its agreement to allow the prisoners to wear their own clothes and concluded, 'We wish to state publicly that we have made genuine attempts to resolve the prison protest but we have been exasperated and frustrated by the British administration. We have endured 4½ years of the blanket protest and were forced to escalate when all else failed. We will not crawl now.'

The message from the INLA and IRSP prisoners was the same: 'Our position remains that we will not be criminalised and when the protest needs escalating we are prepared to escalate it'. A message from the prisoners in Armagh likewise emphasised that they would not hesitate to go on hunger strike again if necessary.

The large number of people attending the conference (about 500) from all parts of Ireland clearly indicated the readiness of activists to resume the campaign in support of the prisoners. It became clear in the course of the conference, however, that opinions differed as to how the new campaign should be conducted. Speakers from the National H-Block/Armagh Committee argued that the campaign should again be conducted on a 'broad front' basis, with more pressure being put on the SDLP and Fianna Fail to support the five basic demands of the prisoners, but this view did not by any means receive universal support at the conference. Members of H-Block/Armagh Action Groups in Derry and Belfast in particular called for a much more militant campaign to be launched this time.

The Chairperson of the Derry H-Block/Armagh Action Group was the first to express dissatisfaction with the views of the National Committee. He pointed out that in Derry during the hunger strike there had been a very militant campaign which had disrupted the city, but there had been little to show for it when the hunger strike ended. He emphasised that those who took part in the campaign in Derry did so not on a 'humanitarian' basis but because they were Republicans, and he concluded by saying that this time the issue must be clearly defined — political status and Brits Out. This speech received great applause and the views expressed in it were endorsed by a number of other speakers from Belfast and Dublin.

how sections of the media and politicians have hitherto attempted to misconstrue with a sectarian label IRA attacks on RUC and UDR men. Our operations against these targets have been based on their involvement in the crown forces, but our decision to take reprisals for the activities of loyalist paramilitaries is being taken on a political basis and the responsibility for reprisals rests full square on their shoulders'.

In a further statement the IRA added:

'Let this be understood. The loyalist ruling class have never needed a republican excuse to attack the nationalist cause or the nationalist people. They needed only the support of the British and their motivation is the defence of the loyalist state and the privileges which have flowed from it. Our action last Wednesday night, we repeat, represents a real departure. The stupid working class loyalists with guns who shoot nationalists are only cannon fodder. So if those in the category and class to which the Stronges belonged want to be taken out of the firing line then let them be seen to use their considerable political influence to put an end to the sectarian activities of the loyalist monsters which they have created and which they have the power to stop.'

Two issues attracted particular attention at the conference — the attitude to be adopted towards the SDLP and Fianna Fail, and the question of industrial action. The call by the National Committee for greater pressure to be put on the SDLP and Fianna Fail to support the demands of the prisoners was strongly challenged by a number of speakers who pointed out that such a tactic only serves to foster illusions about these parties, both of them in fact being completely on the side of British imperialism. The strength of this argument was underlined by the reports given by several speakers about the intense harassment of H-Block/Armagh activists by the Free State police, and indeed it was later discovered that people leaving the conference itself were being stopped and questioned by the Special Branch.

On the question of industrial action, a number of speakers strongly argued that a much more systematic and determined attempt should be made to mobilise the working class in support of the prisoners, with a general strike as the ultimate goal, rather than merely organising token days of action as in the previous campaign. Speakers from the National Committee, however, described this view as 'unrealistic', and in the event the National Committee resolution (which simply called in general terms for workers 'when necessary to show their solidarity with the prisoners through industrial action') was passed without any amendment.

While the conference in general formally approved the resolutions put forward by the National Committee on how the new campaign should be conducted, therefore, the discussion at the conference made it very clear that many activists in the local H-Block/Armagh Groups will approach the campaign in support of the new hunger strike in the firm conviction that only a strong and militant campaign that is solidly based on the working class will ensure that this time the prisoners secure a clear and unequivocal victory. This attitude of the grass roots activists towards the new campaign was expressed not only at the conference but also in the days leading up to the hunger strike itself. It was perhaps best summed up in a letter from the Markets/Ormeau H-Block/Armagh Action Group in Belfast to the *Irish News* which was published on 26 February. This letter pointed out that it was now clear that the British government never had any intention of honouring its agreement with the prisoners, and it concluded: 'While many groups are calling on the British to "honour their word" we in the Markets/Ormeau area believe this is to a degree naive. We see this coming hunger strike as the most crucial development and believe that it is only through our strong, unified, militant agitation that the British will concede. We must accept the limitations of calling on establishment, political and Church leaders to call on the British to implement the five demands. Instead we should ensure that we are on the streets in force and determined to employ any methods necessary to end the British policy of criminalisation in Ireland and to win the five just demands for the men and women in the H-Blocks/Armagh'.

Irish correspondent.

LETTERS

FRFI welcomes your letters.

They should be sent to the Editor, 49 Railton Road London SE24 0LN. We may, on occasions, cut letters for reasons of space.

Canadian anti-Imperialists

Dear Comrades,
Many thanks for your letter and the back issues of *Hands Off Ireland!* which I requested, and for the bonus material too.

I would like to comment that it certainly takes courage to publish an interview with the IRA in the heart of British imperialism – we salute you for it.

For our part, the committee is relatively new having been put together since last summer only. We have been very fortunate, however, in having the work galvanised and consolidated by two major developments in recent months: first, a speaking tour by Raymond Crane, who was released from the Kesh last summer and was here for the first weeks of the hunger strike, and then a visit by Ruari O Bradaigh, here for talks and a speech at our rally in commemoration of Bloody Sunday.

The prospects here look very good, especially since Toronto has two things going for it: its an immigrant city, with a goodly share of political exiles and refugees from fascist dictatorships throughout the Yankee empire. At the Bloody Sunday event, for instance, one of the highlights was an intervention from the floor by the leader of the Grenadan revolutionary popular forces in Canada. And the other thing is the ruling class in Ontario, concentrated in Toronto, a pro-British, Orange, Anglo-Zionist clique, whose first reflex in every instance is racism – against blacks, Asians, franco-ontarians, Quebecois, Palestinians, Latins.

Police brutality against the minority communities (who would, if truly united, actually amount to a majority at this point) is an everyday event. Ruari was particularly pleased to meet several of the outstanding leaders of the anti-racist struggle (Sikh, black Canadian and Iranian among others).

In short, the outlook, at least in the sense of a material basis, for a broad-based internationalist anti-imperialist movement here is good, especially as events continue to heat up in the empire – eg all the Latin Americans are beginning to coalesce around defence of the popular revolutionary forces in El Salvador.

Yours fraternally,
For the victory of the Irish revolution and death to imperialism.
M Quigley
Secretary, Irish POW Committee

Sham socialists

Dear Editor
The incident that I describe below shows that any attempt to move trade unions to an anti-imperialist stance against British rule in Ireland is inevitably met with sectarian obstructions by the two main brands of petit bourgeois socialism – that of the SWP and that of the CPGB. The CPGB try to stop any debate on the issue, while the SWP try to ensure that they control the terms of the debate if a discussion is unavoidable.

When I recently proposed support for the Glasgow 2 Campaign to the 70 strong EC of my NALGO branch, CP member Archie Fairley spoke against, saying that while he was a believer in 'politics in the trade union movement' this motion was the kind that 'brought

politics into disrepute'! The (numerous) SWP members present said nothing in support of the motion. Though they and *Socialist Challenge* supporters were vociferous and eager to back Tory trade unionists who moved support for 'the Polish workers in their struggle' (against communism they all hoped).

This scabbing on the fight against state repression in Ireland and Britain has been carried through to Edinburgh Trades Council. There a CP/SWP majority on the EC conspired to censor all further information and action on the Glasgow 2 Campaign from reaching the floor of the Council. This despite the overwhelming support the Council gave to the two in August when supporters of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* successfully insisted on an emergency debate. The EC has so far managed to prevent any official announcement of the 'guilty' verdict and any appeal for further support from being heard.

This is incident number one. Then before putting a motion for Political Status to Lothian NALGO's AGM, *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* supporters had abortive discussion with the SWP members on a common motion. The SWP insisted that any motion had to a) call for support for the 'five demands' and not for Political Status; b) call for support for 'humanitarian' reasons and c) back the Charter 80 campaign, which by the time the motion was heard had proved in practice to be useless. Our motion, backed by other socialists in the branch, called for support for the prisoners as political prisoners in the context of the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland. The only possible way to significantly move opinion in the

trade union and labour movement.

At the meeting, it became transparently obvious that the SWP's insistence on the superiority of their motion had nothing to do with concern for the prisoners' lives, let alone their magnificent political struggle. Their two speakers shambled on to the floor, hands in pockets, and spoke for about two minutes each. Neither had taken the trouble to prepare anything and their speeches were sloppy routinism at its height. Maureen Watson, an SWP Central Committee member informed the meeting that Pauline McLaughlin was still in prison near death – this two months after her release at the end of the Hungerstrike!

This branch, having listened to and debated the SWP motion, then carried a right wing motion to move next business which, of course, excluded the FRFI motion from the agenda. The SWP would say the right wing were to blame for this, and that this right wing was the obstacle to socialism in the trade unions. However their own lack of principle and sectarianism was the real stumbling block in this affair. Despite Charter 80 being a dead duck by then they refused to withdraw their pathetic motion. In opposing the struggle for Political Status they were at one with the right wing in depriving those who are behind the prisoners and the Irish liberation struggle of an opportunity to voice their opinions.
Fraternally
MM (NALGO member)
Scotland

The racist French CP

Dear Editor,
The last issue of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* condemned the French Communist Party for its recent racist actions. Ruling class papers have also carried stories about the racism of the French CP – but use it to try and discredit Communism. Real Communism, however, is bitterly opposed to racism and has always fought it, inside as well as outside the communist movement.

In June 1922, the communists of Sidi-bel-Abbes in Algeria wrote to the Secretary of the French Communist Party, attacking the Communist International's call for colonial revolt:

'... there are oppressed peoples who are, as of now, ready for sovereignty and others which are not... If Egyptian sovereignty is necessary, a sovereignty of cannibals is undesirable... the "revolt of the Algerian Muslim masses"... would at the present time... before any victorious revolution in the mother country, be a dangerous folly... you will certainly, in the case of a premature Arab sovereignty, have to liberate communist slaves from the yoke of Muslim feudalism.'

This vile and disgusting racist tirade by a section of the French CP was condemned and rejected at the 4th Congress of the Communist International. Safarov, of the Russian Communist Party, said

'The flag of communism is used to hide chauvinist ideas foreign and hostile to proletarian internationalism... they are not comrades but petty bourgeois' The attack on the French CP was carried further in 1924 at

the 5th Congress of the Communist International. Manuilsky, speaking for the Russian CP demanded to know if 'these possibly excellent Frenchmen, but extremely bad communists, have been excluded from the party'? The French party, he charged, had failed to produce any proof that it called for liberation of the colonies from imperialism.

'During the Lyon Congress the Comintern addressed an appeal to the French workers and the colonial peoples. The editors of the central organ of the party, Humanite, in publishing the appeal deliberately cut out from the text the words 'to the colonial peoples'. Is it possible for a Party having an attitude like this to carry on propaganda among the 'natives'?'

In the French general election, which had seven representatives for the colonies, why had the party put forward only Frenchmen?

The British Party came in for even greater reproach for its passivity on the colonial question. Quoting Marx on Ireland, Manuilsky asked,

'Do our British comrades think that the revolutionary process begins with the British proletariat liberating itself, and then in the capacity of a Messiah, carrying deliverance to the colonial peoples? We do not think so.'

The Comintern had seen no document where the British party demanded separation for the colonies from the British empire, or Ireland's independence.

Ho Chi Minh, who was later to found the Vietnamese Communist Party in 1930 and to lead his people in their victorious national liberation struggle against French, Japanese, British and American imperialism, supported the criticisms of the French CP. What the Communist parties of Britain, Holland, Belgium and other imperialist countries had done was almost worthless:

'As for me, I was born in a French colony, and am a member of the French Communist Party and I am very sorry to say that our Communist Party has done hardly anything for the colonies.'

All those, who to-day try to use the anti-communists of the French 'Communist' Party, to discredit Communism should know that true communists have always opposed racism and never withheld support from oppressed peoples struggles against racism and imperialism.
Stephen Palmer
London

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HANDS OFF IRELAND!



Section of Glasgow march

Press statement from Glasgow H-Block/Armagh Action Committee

The committee has decided to issue this statement in order to answer press comment on last Saturday's march and to counter the anti-democratic proposals which have been mooted by the press and various public figures. The Glasgow H-Block/Armagh Action Committee has no regrets about Saturday's march but it is disturbed at the distortions and lies which have taken place since Saturday. We wish to make the following points:

1. The marchers on Saturday did *not* clash with counter-demonstrators. Only two marchers were arrested and this gives the lie to claims of 'clashes' and violence from both sides. It is clear that violence came from the loyalist opposers of the march whose behaviour, being in the public eye, had to be dealt with by the police. Those loyalist supporters who were arrested on Saturday were inflamed and duped by their leaders into cannon fodder.
2. Saturday's march was political – it called for political status for Irish prisoners of war. Counter-demonstrations were whipped up by leading religious bigots such as Glass and the leaders of the Orange Lodge who promised 'blood on the streets' and violence. The point is that the demonstration was political and the opposition was bigoted and anti-democratic. We would draw attention to the placards of the counter-demonstrators they read: 'No Irish in Britain', 'No Popes, No Provos', 'No Communists' and 'We will defend Christ'. Therefore the counter-demonstrators were the ones who introduced religion and sectarianism onto the streets of Glasgow on Saturday February 14th. This point cannot be further underlined except by drawing attention to Paisley's completely bigoted reference to the march leading to the spread of 'Romanism'.
3. We must point out that every month in the west of Scotland there are Orange and Loyalist parades. These are regular celebrations of sectarianism and bigotry yet when political demonstrations march for clear purposes we are greeted with a chorus of 'ban them' and 'refuse them lets'.
4. Therefore we intended to campaign to ensure that the right to hold marches and to protest government policies is defended. We consider that the present discussions about selective bans can only further boost the widespread attack on democratic rights. In this context, the Glasgow District Councils talk of not allowing halls to be used as rallying points after marches is a serious and reactionary move – the next step would be to deny the use of

parks, open spaces, streets and so on. And where would next Saturday's Labour Party march then be? We intend to lobby MPs, councillors and civil liberties bodies regarding this and demand that they make statements condemning moves to restrict the right to march and protest.

5. Finally on the above points we would repeat that last Saturday's march was another successful step towards a mass campaign in Britain which will force the British government to grant political status to the men and women in the H-Blocks and Armagh.
6. On the question of our future plans; once again we would draw attention to the fact that we intend to hold another Glasgow march. This will be during the Hungerstrike which begins on March 1st. We have *not* finalised a date for this and reports of a march on March 7th were based on an obviously hoax call.

THIS MONTH'S AWARD



This month the award indisputably belongs to the SWP for their refusal to support the working class youth who, under the aegis of the Glasgow H-Block/Armagh Action Committee, marched in support of Irish political prisoners on 14 February

This is scabbing at its worst. We recommend, in the interests of honesty and truth, that the SWP change its masthead on *Socialist Worker* from 'Neither Washington nor Moscow but International Socialism' to

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW BUT GREAT BRITAIN

GLASGOW WORKERS MARCH FOR IRISH FREEDOM

Support for a victory for the political prisoners in H-Block and Armagh continues to grow in Scotland. On Saturday 14 February over 1500 marched two miles into Glasgow for a rally in the city centre. The turn-out for the demonstration was larger than the previous march in support of the Hunger Strikers on 20 December and is even more significant because of the campaign mounted to prevent it. The last march into the city centre took place 10 years ago and ended with the demonstrators being severely assaulted by loyalists. Confident of their ability to stage a repeat performance, local loyalists bayed for blood in the days leading up to the march. The press took up the witch hunt and called for a ban. Local councillors tried to deny the organisers – the Glasgow H-Block/Armagh Action Committee – the use of a hall for the rally.

None of this prevented the march from taking place. With banners and tri-colours flying, two republican flute bands in full tune and hundreds of Glasgow workers, the march militantly demonstrated the mass support which is growing for the demands of the Action Committee. Led by banners proclaiming *Victory to the H-Block Men! Victory to the Armagh Women! Political Status Now!* the marchers fended off loyalist attacks and reached the city centre for the rally.

Going into the rally jubilant marchers sang 'say hello to the Provos' and the atmosphere in the hall was one of complete solidarity with the Irish liberation struggle. Messages of solidarity were read out from the Democratic Iranian Students Society (Glasgow) and the Turkish Solidarity Campaign. At the end of the rally the hall stood still for the 'Soldier's Song'. Representatives from each of the organisations supporting the Action Committee and the march spoke: Sinn Fein, the Revolutionary Communist Group, Scottish Republicans, TOM and IMG. The RCG speaker roundly condemned the refusal of the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party to support the march. When he said that these people had no right to call themselves socialists the hall erupted in applause.

The Glasgow H-Block/Armagh Action Committee has consistently and openly campaigned for a victory for the Irish political prisoners and political status. RCG members and supporters of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! were instrumental in forming the Action Committee, have fought for its revolutionary position and defended it in the face of attempts, during the last Hunger Strike, from the SWP and the IMG to water down the Committee's militancy.

The steadfast and revolutionary work resulted in the gains on Saturday 14 February. Support for the march was *not* solicited from vicars, Labour MPs and university lecturers – the shopping list of the petit bourgeois left who have no confidence in the working class – instead the Action Committee went direct to the working class of Glasgow with its clear revolutionary position, and they responded. Those who didn't respond to this call to support the Irish liberation struggle were chiefly the CPGB who refused to support the march and the SWP who not only refused their support but *actively* spread lies and distortions.

Leading members of the SWP claimed the march was (a) off (b) organised by RCG and Sinn Fein without the support of the other members on the Action Committee (c) organised by Sinn Fein only with other political organisations and banners not wanted or (d) 'ill-timed'. On numerous occasions those working flat out for the march were confronted with this disgusting behaviour and there should now be no doubt, as the applause at the rally proved, that the SWP have no claim to socialist credentials at all. The SWP found themselves



on the same reactionary side as the Orangemen, the Press, the police and Tory councillors in declaring their opposition to a march in support of Irish self-determination. Members of the SWP who want to work in support of the political prisoners should not stand for this. They must leave their degenerating anti-Irish organisation.

Following the march the press called for bans and went out of its way to depict the demonstration as a 'clash'. In fact only three marchers were arrested and the other hundred plus were loyalists who turned out with bottles, stones, smoke bombs and union jacks. None other than Paisley arrived to bail his supporters out of jail, he left bewailing the growth of IRA support in the West of Glasgow.

The Glasgow Action Committee will be continuing its campaigning and there will be another demonstration in March or April. The significance of this local demonstration need hardly be stressed; compared to *national* marches supposedly fully supported by the British left, the Glasgow march was made up of working class people and openly called for a victory for the Irish people and for political status.

FLUTE BAND STATEMENT

In a deliberate attempt to prevent our band and supporters from attending the demonstration, Glasgow police sprang a trap. They directed our coach into the midst of Loyalist counter-demonstrators who attacked the coach. The police then promptly arrest all 57 of us, including four ten-year-old boys, photographed us and charged us all with breach of the peace. We were detained long enough to ensure we did not attend the demonstration.

Billy Reid Republican Flute Band