

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

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Anti-imperialist bulletin of the Revolutionary Communist Group

Editorial

British imperialism is moving into a deeper and deeper crisis. This finds its most striking expression in 1) the war in Ireland 2) the imperialists' attempts to defeat the liberation movement in Zimbabwe and to prop up the racist regime in South Africa 3) the racist offensive against black people in this country 4) the attacks on working class living standards, in particular the offensive against the public sector.

What distinguishes all these features of crisis is that they are all direct attacks on the oppressed. British imperialism is fighting for its survival. In Ireland the British state has waged a long and bloody war against the republican population and the Provisional Republican movement. It has failed to defeat that movement or to suppress the nationalist population. In Zimbabwe and South Africa British imperialism is fighting desperately to maintain its power over these nations by support for the white racist regimes and their puppets in power. The liberation movements in these countries are fighting a war against British imperialism and its allies, and they are winning.

In the heartland of British imperialism the state has launched a massive offensive against black people. The British state requires immigration laws, Sus laws, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and all other means of violence and terror it can lay its hands on, to harass and intimidate the black and Irish population in Britain. It requires this savage offensive of necessity for its own continued existence. The assaults on the public sector, in particular on health and education are yet another feature of this savagery. Again it is black, Irish and women workers who are a large proportion of those fighting to keep their jobs, and it is black,

Irish and women workers who are swelling the ranks of the unemployed. It is the poorest and most oppressed sections of the working class who will suffer from barbaric health care facilities, poor education and reduced Social Security benefits whilst the British state labels them as scroungers. *But* black and Irish people, the oppressed in Britain, have made it clear that they are not going to sit back whilst the state carries out its vicious attack. They are going to fight alongside the liberation movements in the oppressed nations in order to defeat the British imperialist state.

The imperialist offensive and the resulting resistance of the oppressed make it clearer by the day that there are only two sides in this struggle. To side completely and unequivocally with oppressed *or* take the side of the imperialist butchers and their allies. There is no longer a fence to sit on.

In the face of this the labour movement has failed to come to the aid of the oppressed. The last Labour Government continuously attacked the oppressed in Ireland, South Africa and Britain. The trade union leadership openly collaborates with British imperialism. It is clear that a movement is needed in Britain which can win the working class to the side of the oppressed. It is equally clear that the British petit bourgeois left is major obstacle to the building of such an anti-imperialist movement.

Which side for the British petit bourgeois left?

The response of the petit bourgeois left to movements fighting imperialism and the British state is a ceaseless attack on all liberation movements which have taken up arms to defend themselves. We can examine their record.

Ireland

To the heroic struggle waged by the Republican Movement the British petit bourgeois left has presented a common front of abuse and hostility.

The Socialist Workers Party says

'There are two organisations of Provisionals—the leaders full of their own bullshit and political gamesmanship, cut off from reality, never grasping the real initiative, their forms of organisation (road blocks, searches, military offensives) a carbon copy of the methods of the British state...'

(*Socialist Worker* 23 June 1979)

The Communist Party, commenting on the execution of Mountbatten and 18 British soldiers said

'The horrible tragedy of the Provisional IRA campaign is that yesterday's killings will do nothing to help the work of those seeking to end repressive legislation and the violence that it creates.'

(*Morning Star* 28 August 1979)

Scared witless by the victories of the oppressed, the CP wishes that British rule could be more democratic.

The International Marxist Group says

'The only quarrel we would have with the IRA is that force is not just a matter of guns—there is also the force that arises out of the mass mobilisations of the population on the streets. It is the latter type of force that will be finally decisive in the North of Ireland.'

(*Socialist Challenge* 11 October 1979)

The IMG, which can scarcely mobilise its own membership for a demonstration against British rule in Ireland, has the temerity to criticise a movement which has fought for a decade against British imp-

erialism with the complete support of large sections of the nationalist population.

South Africa and Zimbabwe

The same disgusting attitude is displayed in the petit bourgeois left's treatment of the liberation movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The SWP says

'The struggle for national liberation in South Africa requires *critical examination* and indeed we would argue, the rejection of the ideology which has given rise to that struggle—African nationalism.'

and

'the leadership of the national liberation movements including the ANC have typically been petit bourgeois both in social position and in ideology.'
(*Southern Africa after Soweto* p195,210)

The IMG says

'The ANC has long been dominated by the South African Communist Party—one of the most pro-Moscow CPs. The SACP leadership of the ANC has advocated a blind reliance on a strategy of guerilla warfare as the answer to all political problems of the South African revolution. This meant the ANC's energies being concentrated on military preparations at the expense of developing a strategy of mass action against the regime.'

(*Socialist Challenge* 4 January 1979)

And the IMG on Zimbabwe

'The liberation movement is almost exclusively based on the peasantry and the rural landless rather than the million-strong urban working class. Its petty bourgeois leadership thus tends to reflect the demands of the emerging black middle class for property ownership and the employment opportunities denied to them by white supremacy—implying simply an end to this rule'

(*Socialist Challenge* 28 June 1979)

These organisations, themselves composed of serried ranks of teachers, social workers, students etc, dare to say this to movements which have the support of millions of the most oppressed, most poverty stricken people in the world. Let us not forget that thousands of these freedom fighters are dying in the fight against British imperialism whilst the British petit bourgeois left writes its pages of criticism.

The anti-racist struggle

On 24 September 1978 the ANL refused to 'divert' its anti-fascist carnival to defend Brick Lane from attack by the National Front and the police.

The SWP said

'The result (of diverting the carnival to Brick Lane. *Ed*) would have been 1) the disintegration of the ANL 2) The realisation that even such a movement on

the empty streets of the City of London facing 8,000 police might not have broken through and beaten the Nazi marchers.'

(*Socialist Worker* 30 September 1978)

The IMG said

'Already some of the spokespersons of the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee have called for a state ban on the NF march. This goes hand in hand with a call to divert the whole carnival—a gigantic substitution for the fact that the Asian community in the East End itself, despite the progress that has been made, is *not yet committed to defending itself* with the support of anti-racists and the labour movement at large.'

(*Socialist Challenge* leaflet 'Unity for Mass Action only way to Build Self Defence'. *Our emphasis*)

What a slander! April 23 in Southall showed that black people are ready to defend themselves from attack. And when they did—what did the petit bourgeois left say?

Southall

The IMG

'But the impatience of the young lions is overwhelming. They attack a bus and clashes with the police follow. Walls are knocked down and bricks are used as missiles. It is a big mistake born of anger and frustration and as the day evolves everyone will realise this is so.'

(*Socialist Challenge* 26 April 1979)

And the CP

'Of course racism will never be defeated by throwing stones at policemen. Squalid little street fights with the police are no answer to the problem.'

(*Morning Star* 24 April 1979)

This is the record of the British petit bourgeois left. When the Republican Movement and the Irish people take up arms to defend themselves from British terror the left points its little finger of criticism. They try to create a split between the republican population and its organised movement—a split which even the British bourgeoisie has recently admitted does not exist. In Zimbabwe and South Africa the thousands of freedom fighters and their leaders are labelled as petit bourgeois because they have been forced to take up arms to defend themselves. On 24 September 1978 when the NF and the police attacked Brick Lane, the petit bourgeois left was more anxious to snuggle up to the pro-imperialist Labour Party than to support in practice the defence of the Asian community. At Southall when the blacks used bricks and stones to defend themselves against the onslaught of the police they were chastised by the left for 'squalid street fighting'.

The British petit bourgeois left has consistently taken the side of imperialism by

criticising those who take up arms in their struggle—those who meet the ruthless violence of imperialism with self defence. Why does it do this? Why has it chosen the side of the bourgeoisie?

Imperialism and the Labour Aristocracy

Imperialism is at the root of racism in the world today. It divides the world into oppressed and oppressor nations. In the last ten years, because of the crisis it faces at home, British imperialism has strengthened its stranglehold on oppressed nations. Exploitation and brutality have increased in order to maintain and expand the super-profits which Britain reaps from this oppression. Throughout the post war boom, founded on the defeats of the working class, the British imperialist state has plundered the oppressed nations and enforced poverty and starvation on the oppressed masses. At home the state has ensured that the most oppressed sections of the working class, including the immigrant labour from oppressed nations, are kept at the minimum level necessary for existence.

The post war boom was nurtured on this pillage. From this has grown—*on the one hand* a privileged layer in the working class—the labour aristocracy—which benefits from the super exploitation of the oppressed; which now dominates the British labour movement and ties it to imperialism. This stratum expresses itself politically in the Labour Party and the trade union leadership. And *on the other hand* the liberation movements of the oppressed, who by their heroic struggles are forming the vanguard of the struggle for socialism.

The British petit bourgeois left is drawn from the relatively privileged layers—the new petit bourgeoisie—created during the post war boom on the backs of the oppressed. They have benefitted from the relative 'democracy' and peace in Britain of the post war boom which was paid for by brutality in the oppressed nations. Their privileges depend on the maintenance of the British imperialist state. This layer is against violence which challenges imperialism and also what it regards as the excesses of imperialism which 'unnecessarily' provoke the violence of the oppressed.

Their privileged status leads them to believe that imperialism need not be violent, that a Bill of Rights can settle the Irish war, that the British state can act in a democratic fashion for the benefit of all classes by disbanding the SPG, by introducing non-racist immigration controls. They are frightened of the revolutionary violence of the oppressed because it challenges imperialism which is the basis of their secure and privileged existence.

The privileged position of this layer and their desperation to preserve this position, explains the alliance they seek with the

labour aristocracy and liberal sections of the bourgeoisie. These petit bourgeois left groups whilst attacking the liberation movements for not being 'socialist' enough in their fight against imperialism, called for support for the Labour Party in the General Election—a party which has consistently and viciously attacked the oppressed at home and abroad. They have one standard for the oppressed and another for themselves and their imperialist allies. They are highly critical of the revolutionary violence and socialism of the oppressed and on the other hand they make an alliance with racist sections of the bourgeoisie.

The anti-imperialist vanguard

Unlike the petit bourgeois left the oppressed, black and Irish, have no illusions in the neutrality of the British state. They know that it cannot and will not act in their interests. They have learnt through the experience of their daily lives, at Southall, at Grunwicks, on Bloody Sunday, during 10 years of war in Ireland, that the British state will respond to their peaceful demonstrations for democracy with unfettered violence. They have learnt that their only defence is to fight back, for unlike the petit bourgeois left they have nothing to lose. Black people do not see the war being waged in Ireland as a struggle for peace and democracy by the British army against a handful of psychopathic terrorists. They recognise the British state as an imperialist state which serves up only imperialist justice against the oppressed. They have the evidence, Southall, deportations of so-called illegal immigrants, police brutality against black people.

Because of this experience black and Irish people are the key to the development of an anti-imperialist movement and the revolutionary vanguard in Britain. By their agitation and resistance they will draw other sections of the working class to the anti-imperialist struggle. Only their struggle can begin to unify the working class against imperialism and against the pro-imperialist anti-working class sections of the British labour movement.

The British imperialist state fears the success of the liberation movements in oppressed nations. In Ireland, Zimbabwe and South Africa these heroic struggles undermine British imperialism, and the British state recognises the threat which these movements pose: that its position and credibility in the world is weakened if it cannot maintain its power over these nations.

How terrified, therefore must they be of the prospect of an anti-imperialist movement in this country, which will not only offer the movements in the oppressed nations complete and unceasing support, but also threaten imperialism at home. The movements in the oppressed nations are weakening imperialism, the movement in this country in unity with these struggles will deal the

death blow to the monster.

Now we can see the real role of the British petit bourgeois left. They too fear the development of such a movement which will deny them their privileged existence and will expose their alliance with imperialism. They seek therefore to weaken and isolate the vanguard by maintaining the divisions in the working class, by denying the experience of the oppressed, by maintaining that imperialism can be pacified. They seek to prevent the vanguard from drawing the whole working class to the anti-imperialist movement.

The RCG is committed to complete, unconditional support of the oppressed and the vanguard and we support their right to defend themselves by any means they choose. We place ourselves alongside the oppressed in their struggles whatever the consequences for us from the British imperialist state. We know that this state will try everything in its power to prevent the anti-imperialist movement from developing. *Hands Off Ireland!* (bulletin of the

RCG) has consistently defended the Republican movement and the Irish people in their struggle for self-determination. In that struggle *Hands Off Ireland!* supporters have been arrested, our meetings attacked and banned, and our sellers harassed on the streets. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* will consistently take the side of black people and all liberation movements of the oppressed in their struggles. We recognise the dangers which the opportunists in the labour movement and the petit bourgeois left present to the vanguard. In order to protect their own interests they will try to isolate the vanguard of black and Irish people from the working class as a whole. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* will expose the opportunists and prevent them from sabotaging the building of a revolutionary anti-imperialist movement in this country.

Carol Brown
October 1979

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

wants your active support

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! is committed to supporting the anti-imperialist struggle and to building and strengthening the movement against British imperialism and racism in this country.

5000 copies of this first issue have been produced. We intend to bring **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** out monthly from February 1980. And we want to rapidly increase the number we print so that **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** can take its anti-imperialist message to new areas and more people.

To do these things we want your participation and support. **Don't just read Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! Support it! Use it!**

Sell Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!—order 10 or 20 copies (or more) and then them to your friends and workmates.

Write to Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!—and tell us about local struggles, we will publicise and support local campaigns and struggles.

Become a Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism subscriber—for £1 you will get 5 issues post free.

Become a Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism supporter—By sending £2 you will get a year subscription to *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* and details of our activities in your area and nationally together with copies of our leaflets.

Support Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!—send us donations. We need money to assist us with our work, with our publications and activities. Help that work to succeed by committing a regular donation to us.

Contact us at RCG Publications Ltd, 49 Railton Road London SE24 OLN

DEFEND SOUTHALL!

It is now five months since the British state used its police force for a brutal and murderous assault against the black and Asian people of Southall. Accustomed by years of practice, the British state has since taken all measures necessary to cover up what happened on that day. Blessed with the most servile labour movement leadership and the most cringing media, British imperialism has now moved smoothly on to the stage which normally follows its bloodiest deeds—the prosecution and persecution of the victims of its assault.

The British state has quite consciously decided to hammer those who were arrested at Southall. The cases of those charged are being heard at Barnet Magistrates Court, 20 miles from Southall, thus making mobilisation in defence of those accused as difficult as possible. The conviction rate is 87% clearly showing the state's intention to use the trials as a further weapon against the black people of Southall. And not content with all this the Court is now using a Magistrates Act of 1361 to bind over those who have gone to court simply as *witnesses* for the defence. On September 26 the magistrate said to Mr Rampal, a defence witness:

'You were also a member of that hostile crowd and have come here to excuse your friend.'

He then bound over the *witness* to keep the peace for 12 months on a surety of £100. Clearly the fact that in so many of the cases defence witnesses prove the police case to be a pack of lies has become an embarrassment. The result is this latest tactic of binding over witnesses in an effort to intimidate them.

The number arrested—800—and the number of those going through the courts—342—shows how enormous was the assault launched on April 23 in Southall. Its scale and ferocity make it the worst single attack against black people in Britain.

A huge police operation beginning early on April 23 virtually sealed off Southall. Using 5000 police, including the notorious SPG, the British state was determined to force the black people of Southall to submit to the humiliation and insult of a meeting being held in Southall by the racist thugs of the NF. More than that, the British state was determined to show by its actions that it would not tolerate organised resis-

tance to *any* aspect of the racial oppression which black people suffer; that it would smash that resistance. To do this the British state used methods which have become familiar to the Irish people over the past ten years—brutality, assault and murder. When the oppressed dare to rebel the thin veneer of British 'democracy' is pushed aside to reveal the British imperialist monster athirst for the blood of its victims. The savagery of this carefully planned attack left one man, Blair Peach, dead and 1000 others injured, many severely. One victim of the police described what happened to him:

'First a mounted police horse kicked me and then I was grasped by the hungry wolves and kicked right in the guts... The police picked me up and threw me over a five feet wall... On the other side of the wall more British police pounced on me like vultures and then there was no end to it, they were kicking me and hitting me with their fists and then I passed out.'

This man suffered damage to his kidney, a fractured pelvis and multiple internal bruising. Another young man was so severely beaten that both his testicles have since had to be surgically removed. Multiply the injuries hundreds of times and a true picture of the savagery emerges. A local community group's premises were raided. The police ripped the building apart and those who had sought shelter and medical aid there were repeatedly beaten as they were forced to run the gauntlet through lines of truncheon swinging policemen.

This brutal attack was no freak or isolated incident. It must be seen as the most serious single assault in a *continuous campaign* against black people by the forces of the British state. Day in and day out the immigration laws, the police and the courts are used to harass and persecute black people. In that deadly campaign black families are split up, black people are beaten on the streets and in police stations and black people rot in prison framed by the police and courts. The result of such oppression has been growing resistance. Black people are in the forefront of opposition to the British imperialist state. The state's attack at Southall had a clear purpose—to try to destroy the revolutionary challenge to its power which is

developing amongst black people in Britain.

The British state has written many bloody pages in the history of oppression. It has been responsible for countless massacres and atrocities throughout the world. And after each particularly bloody deed there have always been those who have leapt forward to say that this or that massacre was not the responsibility of British imperialism but of individual soldiers or policemen rioting or showing excessive zeal in their butchery. When the British state murdered 14 civilians in Ireland on Bloody Sunday 1972 it did so as part of its strategy to terrorise the risen nationalist people into submission. Yet the blame was laid with individual soldiers supposedly panicking. The purpose of this argument is a simple one—to cover up for British imperialism, to hide the fact that it can *only* rule by terror. It proves this daily in Ireland. Equally, since British imperialism is blatantly incapable of providing equality and justice to black people in Britain then it must use force to keep them where it wants them—at the bottom. And it must then use more force to smash the resistance which this oppression inevitably produces.

After April 23, just as after Bloody Sunday, the usual chorus started up, this time stating that it was the result of the SPG rioting out of control. The British left led the chorus. The SWP went so far to back up this view that it printed two articles by Paul Foot the purpose of which was to contrast the 'out of control' SPG with the (presumably under control) 'decent minded' ordinary policemen. Black people will be surprised to learn that:

'Decent minded policemen, and there are lots of them, are often shocked at the bullying and racialism which is permitted and even encouraged in street patrols.'
(*Socialist Worker* 26.5.79)

And that:

'Police often do help people.'
(*ibid*)

How conveniently the SWP forgets the fact that there were 5000 police at Southall of whom 200 were SPG; that Swarm Singh Grewal died in a Southall police station full of lots of 'ordinary policemen'; that such 'ordinary policemen' make black peoples' lives a misery. But above all how carefully

SOUTHALL IS INNOCENT!

DROP ALL CHARGES!

Throughout this country the Black community has been subjected to horrific and violent racist attacks and provocation. The death of one Brother Gurdip Chagger in June 1976 in Southall was one of such countless incidents.

The death of Gurdip Chagger sparked off a new leaf in our struggles for equality and justice. The youth of Southall demonstrated that they had had enough, leading to the formation of the Southall Youth Movement and similar groups in other parts of the country.

The events in Southall on 23 April 1979 are much more sinister and have grave repercussions for our community in this country. The decision by the Tory Council to allow the racist National Front permission to hold a meeting and spread their filth in the heart of the coloured community was part of a deliberate strategy of provocation. The

police accompanied by their notorious SPG deliberately came into Southall to smash the community—old and young, men women and children.

A police state was in operation in Southall. Over 800 people were arrested and 342 of our brothers and sisters charged for daring to defend our community against racist provocation. Many were seriously injured—Blair Peach was killed.

The purpose of the manoeuvre to move all the Southall defendants' cases to Barnet Magistrate Court, some 20 miles away, is to demoralise the community and smash any resistance. Heavy sentences and fines are being imposed on our brothers and sisters appearing at Barnet, where the contradictory police evidence has become its hallmark.

We are all on trial at Barnet. Defeat for Southall is a defeat for us all.

APPEAL

Southall Defence Fund Appeal

The Southall Youth Movement has made the ultimate sacrifice of all in the defence of Southall and our right to exist. More than half of all arrested on 23 April were our members. Two of our members, Birk and Rai, have already been sent to prison. The severity of the imposed sentences is such that it is estimated some 70-80 more defendants will be sentenced to imprisonment.

What took place in Southall does not just affect Southall, it affects the whole of the Asian Community in this country.

We need your help to save our brothers and sisters who have made the sacrifices.

We hope that you will express your solidarity by donating generously to the Southall Youth Movement Southall Defence Fund.

All donations for the Southall Defence Fund to be sent to:

SYM 12 Featherstone Rd Southall, Middlesex.

All cheques payable to SYM or Southall Defence Fund.

and conveniently the SWP twists reality until the brutal deeds of the British imperialist state are the result not of its very nature but instead, of its 'out of control' servants.

The same trick has been performed by the IMG. Tariq Ali, in an article in the *Guardian* (24.9.79) showing how the frame-up of the Southall defendants is being conducted by the courts ends by complaining that the British judicial system is:

'... less accountable and less democratic than the judiciary in virtually every other bourgeois democratic state.'

His solution is to bring the judiciary under control by having them elected. Perhaps it has escaped his notice that in the USA the fact that judges are elected has made no difference to the fact that US prisons are crammed full of black victims of frame ups. Elected or appointed, the judiciary is there to serve the interests of imperialism and those interests demand injustice, racism and brutality.

But the British left was not content with thus covering up for British imperialism. It went one stage further—to condemn the black and Asian people of Southall for fighting back against the British state. The CP said:

'Of course racism will never be defeated

by throwing stones at policemen. Squalid little street fights with the police on the part of tiny groups are no answer to the problem.'

(*Morning Star* Editorial 24.4.79)

And the *Socialist Challenge* eye-witness account of April 23:

'Tariq Ali stresses the same message (ie 'no provocations') but the impatience of the 'young lions' is overwhelming. They attack a bus and clashes with the police follow. Walls are knocked down so that bricks can be used as missiles. It is a big mistake born of anger and frustration and as the day evolves everyone will realise this is so.'

(*Socialist Challenge* 26.4.79)

Such an attitude to resistance by black people should come as no surprise. The British left has consistently condemned the Provisional IRA, a movement which has heroically and effectively fought British imperialism to a standstill in Ireland. The British left is quick with its sympathy for victims but as soon as victims become fighters then the tears rapidly dry and the abuse starts. It starts with terms like 'mistaken', 'squalid', 'unwise' and ends up, as it has done in the case of the British left's attitude to the Provisional IRA, with streams of vitriolic abuse.

As the war in Ireland has progressed, as the Provisional IRA has proved to be a skilful and effective national liberation army so it has become obvious that two sides exist in that war and that British socialists have to choose their side. The RCG unreservedly supports those fighting British imperialism in Ireland. But the major part of the British left, finding the middle ground no longer exists, have come down on the side of British imperialism and against the Irish people. And with its response to Southall the British left has given another warning that when black people fight back, and as that fightback grows, then once again the British left will side with British imperialism.

Bloody Sunday in Ireland and the associated war of terror by British imperialism in Ireland led inevitably to greater resistance by the nationalist population; led inexorably to Bloody Monday when that figurehead of imperialism, Mountbatten, along with 18 British soldiers were executed by the Provisional IRA. Imperialism cannot break the resistance of the oppressed. Repression will call forth resistance. April 23 in Southall has stoked the fires that one day will destroy the British imperialist monster.

Maxine Williams

IMMIGRATION CONTROLS

THE BRITISH RACIST STATE

'British officials in Bangladesh are telling women and children who want to settle in Britain that they must first have X-ray examinations to prove their identity... One such case involved a pregnant woman whose skull was X-rayed, despite the fact that Department of Health regulations would prevent such a test on pregnant British women except in cases of absolute medical necessity, because of the danger of an X-ray damaging the unborn baby.'

(*Guardian* 8 February 1979)

Such brutal racist practices, X-rays, virginity tests, the splitting up of families and detention of immigrants, are daily events in the British state's drive to exclude and persecute immigrant workers. The racism of Britain's immigration controls is rooted in the nature of the British state. It is because the British state is an imperialist oppressor state that its immigration controls are necessarily racist.

Imperialism has divided the world into oppressed and oppressor nations. To maintain the highest profits the British capitalist class, with the aid of its state has systematically brutalised, exploited and impoverished the oppressed nations. To safeguard imperialist super-profits the British state sustains and aids viciously repressive regimes throughout Asia, Latin America and is a mainstay of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. Britain is still today one of the strongest imperialist powers. Throughout the world its bloody tentacles retain a stranglehold on the masses in the oppressed nations. It condemns the masses in the oppressed nations to poverty, unemployment and starvation. This year in South Africa, black workers on strike were offered their jobs back if they accepted wages of 15p per hour. In India 40% of all children die before they are five years old; 200 million people live on less than 10 pence per day. In Kenya the *average* annual income is £84. In Pakistan it is £57. In Bangladesh it is £30. Unemployment in Jamaica is 25%.

Imperialism has robbed the oppressed nations of their raw materials, it has destroyed local manufacture and it has sucked out surplus value by super-exploiting their peoples. The systematic

underdevelopment of the oppressed nations by imperialism has created a vast international pool of unemployed labour. Tens of millions of people in the oppressed nations have this choice: migrate in search of work or stay to slowly starve.

British imperialism drew on this international reserve of labour to feed the post war boom of capitalism in Britain. Immigrant labour from Asia, Africa and the West Indies was brought to Britain to do the worst jobs, the heavy manual labour in bad conditions, the jobs involving shift work, the lowest paid jobs particularly in the state sector. Racism serves British capitalism by keeping black and immigrant workers as an oppressed layer within the working class.

During the 1950s the British state actively encouraged immigration from the oppressed nations to meet the needs of expanding British capitalism. It had no need of formal immigration controls for Commonwealth citizens, it could rely on the very mechanisms of imperialism to drive these workers from their homes and families to occupy menial jobs in the heartland of racist British imperialism.

From the early 1960s onwards, however, British imperialism no longer needed to call on this international reserve to the same extent. On the contrary, faced with a crisis of profitability and growing internal unemployment, British imperialist interests demanded a speedy move to the contract labour system. It is this contract labour system which is in operation today. Immigrant labour is brought in for specific jobs and then expelled after use. The 1971 Immigration Act requires that non-patrial immigrants (all aliens and most non-white Commonwealth citizens) entering Britain have a work permit. The Department of Employment issues permits for a maximum of one year to the employer who has to show that he has been unable to fill the vacancy from the domestic labour force. If immigrant workers engage in trade union activity they can lose their work permit, they can change jobs only with the approval of the Home Office, and they can be deported without any appeal to the courts. This system reduces immigrant labour to labour without rights, including the right of

residence.

The benefits to imperialism of this system are obvious. The British capitalist class is provided with a section of workers who are entirely at their mercy. The resulting wages and conditions of many of these workers are appalling. If the workers fight back, or when they are no longer required, then they can be deported. The further advantage for British imperialism is that the state bears no cost for maintaining these workers should they be made unemployed. Nor does the British state have to provide health, education or other services to these workers' families, since their dependents are largely excluded from the country.

Since British imperialist interests demand the use of the contract labour system, from the early 60s both Labour and Tory governments alike have taken the necessary steps to bring this about, culminating with the 1971 Act. But British imperialism, facing a deep crisis, requires far more than that. It demands that all black and immigrant workers in Britain be forced to *accept* the racial oppression they suffer. So immigration controls are used by the British state as one of its weapons against *all* black people. The result is that increased racist brutality is required to implement the stricter immigration controls and to harass the black population. The British state uses immigration controls as an excuse for arbitrary arrests, mass passport raids and round-ups of so-called illegal immigrants in order to intimidate all black people.

The number of 'illegal' immigrants detained under the 1971 Act has increased yearly. In 1974 there were 811 cases, in 1978 there were 1,305 people held. The Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit was set up in 1972. The unit is explicitly intended to gather information on people with no criminal record—to seek out *suspected* illegal immigrants. In practice the police assume that all black people are illegal immigrants unless there is proof to the contrary. The Unit and local police forces have carried out mass raids and passport checks. In December 1977 the police in Newcastle raided homes and restaurants in the black and Bangladeshi community. 70 people were arrested, all but three were eventually released. There were no charges

but several people were gaoled for weeks while they proved their legality.

Over 300 immigrants are held in detention at any one time. Periods of detention (without charge, trial conviction or sentence) have been anything up to 12 months. The detainees are kept in abominable conditions. Last summer in Armley Gaol, 23 Asians awaiting deportation were kept six to a cell for 23 hours a day and they suffered constant racial abuse from the warders. Mr Kahn, a Pakistani community leader, described Harmondsworth Detention Centre at Heathrow Airport as 'horrible' with a 'crowded, prison-like atmosphere'. There is no access to rooms between 9 am and 9 pm. There are two living rooms for seventy people and the bedrooms are shared by up to six people. The reason that the British state holds its 'illegal' immigrants in such conditions for long periods is to deter and punish them. Mr Kahn said,

'I met people who had been there for a month and they are in a state of agony — they would rather be sent back than spend another night in this prison camp.'

Britain's immigration controls tear families apart. Theoretically individuals settled in the UK have the right to bring their wives or husbands, children and distressed relatives to the country provided they can support them. A deliberately long-winded procedure means a waiting list to gain entry clearance of up to four years. The refusal rate for clearance is high — in Dacca for example it is 35%.

The interrogation of relatives trying to enter Britain epitomises the racist brutality of the British state. On January 24th 1979 at Heathrow Airport a 35 year old Indian woman schoolteacher was subject to a disgusting and humiliating internal medical examination. She was seeking admission as the fiancée of a Southall man. Under duress she agreed to be examined by a woman doctor. A male doctor made her undress and carried out the examination to test her virginity. The Home Office subsequently confirmed that this was normal procedure. In fact British High Commissions in India and Pakistan have been employing virginity tests at least since 1968.

The Home Office also directs immigration officials in the widespread use of X-ray examinations. In one case a 17 year old and a 13 year old applied to join their father. According to the doctor carrying out the X-ray tests the boys were 15 and 11 years old. The discrepancies were cited to refuse the boys' entry.

In June 1979, three Pakistani children (ages 6, 5 and 21 months) were held at Harmondsworth for at least four days. Police had taken them from their uncle who had adopted them in Pakistan after their mother's death and their father's disappearance. A 10 year old Pakistani girl was detained at Harmondsworth for a

week, after arriving for a three month holiday with relatives. She was eventually granted temporary release, but entry has still been technically refused.

These examples of British imperialist 'humanity' can be compared to the case of Mrs Shirley Webb, a British mother of four, deserted by her husband in South Africa. After a personal appeal to Mrs Thatcher she was allowed to enter Britain. Mrs Webb is white.

Families already settled in Britain are being broken up through deportations. Mrs Kusah from Sierra Leone came to Britain to live in 1955. In February 1979 she faced enforced deportation because she had re-entered Britain on the wrong visa. 72 year old Mr Jaswant Singh lived in Birmingham with his son since 1967. He went to India for a holiday in November 1976. He returned in April 1977 but was sent back because the immigration officer believed his passport had been 'tampered with'. Akram Dogar is 8 years old and lives in Oxford with his uncle who adopted him when he was only 2 weeks old. Akram entered Britain nearly two years ago, but the family has been told that because he has not been legally adopted in Britain Akram must return to Pakistan.

The British state does not openly admit it, but it is carrying out *enforced repatriations* of immigrants. To split up families the Home Office officials are bringing into question the paternity of children. Gias Uddin is not his father's son *according to the Home Office*. Afzal Mohammed is not his son's father and should be deported *according to the Home Office*. Afzal is being forced to prove that he is the biological father of his children by undergoing blood and tissue tests. A fiancée is not a fiancée unless she is a virgin and proved to be so. No intimidation is too refined, no humiliation is too great for black people at the hands of Britain's immigration controls. *This is the immigration control that is required by British imperialism.*

The laws and institutions of the British state are being reshaped to deal with immigrants as contract labourers with no political or civil rights. The terms of the 1971 Immigration Act allows for immigrants to apply for settlement after four years of work permits. The government intends removing this right. Immigrants will never be allowed to settle. The qualifying period for the Employment Protection Act has been extended to 52 weeks, thereby effectively removing work permit holders from its limited cover. The Government plans to prevent foreign husbands of British wives from living in Britain. This proposal is primarily aimed at keeping out fiancées from the Indian sub-continent.

The Labour Government's proposals on citizenship are being put to Parliament by the Conservative Government in a new Nationality Act. Labour's Green Paper

proposed two categories. The first category proposed is British Citizenship which would include patrial UK citizens. This category would be largely white. The second category proposed is British Overseas Citizenship, including non-patrials without right of entry. This category would be overwhelmingly black. The Green Paper proposed removing civil rights for British Overseas Citizens. As the Brixton Black Women's Group explain:

'It is obvious that the Green Paper is meant to do two things. First encourage 'voluntary repatriation' by forcing any Black person who wants full citizenship rights to leave Britain and become a citizen of another country. And second, if we stay here, to weaken our fight against racism by making it difficult to organise in the way which we do at present.'
(*Speak Out* No2)

To match these changes the British state's structures of immigration control are being centralised. In its state, British imperialism, is constructing a well-oiled machine for the oppression of black people. The Home Office recommends an expansion of the activities of the Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit. It recommends the addition of a code digit to National Insurance numbers to help track down 'illegal' immigrants. The passports of immigrants are already marked by officials to convey information on visa status. The Home Office plans an extension of this system of close surveillance and control through the use of computer technology. It plans to install a mini-computer in Harmondsworth to hold information on 'illegal' immigrants. It plans to provide immigration officials at points of arrival with access to a central computer in Croyden. They plan to connect these two systems by the end of 1980. It plans to introduce a third stage in 1982 when a new type of passport will be introduced. Passports will be machine readable cards; details will be kept stored in the computer rather than stamped on the card.

The last Labour Government drew up plans for a detention centre at Heathrow with three times the capacity of the existing buildings for holding detainees. The new centre is due for completion in 1983. The conditions planned for inside the centre will be of the standard immigrants can expect from the British state. The Home Office plans that the accommodation will be 'essentially for a third world population'. The centre will include a 'Moslem ladies room' and 'Asian toilets'. Nine security staff will guard the detainees and a ten foot high fence, topped with alarms, will surround the site.

These plans are not the policy of a particular government: Labour and Tory will implement them alike. They are a necessity for the maintenance of the British imperialist state. They mean greater and more

brutal repression. The future under the rule of British imperialism means more suffering, more divided families and more detention, more police raids, round ups, more terror and intimidation. It is not a future which black people are prepared to tolerate.

Andrew Goddard

STATE ATTACKS ON BLACK PEOPLE

Sarah Kusah

Mrs Sarah Kusah came to Britain from Sierra Leone in 1955. She married and her two children were born in this country. After marital difficulties the two children went back to Sierra Leone in 1964. The children returned to Britain in 1973, and Mrs Kusah followed them in 1974. She was told by a Home Office representative in Sierra Leone that she could return quicker if she came as a visitor and changed her status on arrival. On arrival the Home Office refused to change her status, and then ordered her deportation.

In February 1979 Labour Minister Brynmor John said that he was not prepared to defer execution of the deportation order even though the case was being considered by the European Court of Human Rights. The police were sent in.

'A Scotland Yard spokesman said last night that police had gone to Mrs Kusah's home at 6.30am yesterday to enforce the deportation order. The children had been taken to the police station... Damage to the property would be repaired.' (*Guardian* 14.2.79).

The Patel Family

Mrs Manju Patel is a railway worker in Kent. She brought her three sons, Sanjesh (16 years old), Jayesh (13) and Diptesh (10) to Britain in March 1979. Since 1975 Mrs Patel had been supporting her children, who stayed with their grandparents in India. But the grandparents grew too old to look after the boys and Diptesh was seriously ill. Mrs Patel brought her children to Britain without the official entry certificates. According to immigration rules the proper certificates must be obtained by application to the British High Commission in the country of origin. The boys were due to be deported on

August 7. The deportation was delayed, and delayed again for a few days. An Asian women's group raised funds to allow Mrs Patel to accompany her children. Mrs Patel was only persuaded to return to India after the Home Office led her to understand that re-entry procedures would be speeded up for her children. The normal waiting period in Bombay is 8 months or more. The Patel family is now in Bombay, where immigration officials are deliberating over the case. They have sent a letter to the grandparents asking them to come to Bombay for an interview. Mrs Patel says:

'The parents of my ex-husband are very old. My father-in-law doesn't have very good health, and it is very far for them to come here. The village is about 500 miles away. They have very little money—enough for just eating, and very simple eating only.' (*Guardian* 7.9.79)

Mrs Patel is paying £6 a night to lodge her family and her money is running out. Having lured Mrs Patel out of the country with promises of a rapid return with her sons, the Home Office is now stating that Mrs Patel's divorce is a 'divorce of convenience' in order to gain illegal entrance for the Patel children. They are using this as the excuse to keep the family out of Britain. Once again the British state is trying to brand immigrants as cheats and liars with its accusations of false fiancées, false sons, false fathers, marriages of convenience, and now divorces of convenience. The only falseness and the only convenience is in the British imperialist state's excuses for its racist behaviour.

Abdul Azad

Abdul Azad was 12 when his mother and father brought him to England. He lived with them in Oldham. When he left school he got a job as a textile worker. In October 1978 the police came to the factory where he worked and told him that his mother had been found dead. Although it was obvious that Abdul was innocent of murder the police kept him imprisoned for ten days until they had made him sign a statement that he was an illegal immigrant. Only then did they let him meet his father and see a solicitor. Abdul was held for 12½ weeks in Risley Remand Centre. A strong defence campaign has forced the state to back down and withdraw the immediate threat of deportation for Abdul. The state used the case to widen its attack. The Abdul Azad Defence Committee states:

'During the course of the investigation, the police have demanded to see the passports of hundreds of Bengalis and many Bengalis have complained of harassment, intimidation and police violence. The police have also hunted through official employment records only taking out those relating to Bengalis.'

The Mohammed Family

Afzal and Shemin Mohammed and their two young children are British citizens. They were married in Pakistan in 1971 and again in Leeds in 1975. Shemin has lived in the UK for 8 years, Afzal for 5 years. Shemin is again pregnant. Yet the Home Office claims that their marriage is not a real marriage and that Afzal should be deported. Last year Whitby magistrates acquitted Afzal of being an illegal immigrant. Despite this he has been required to report to the police *daily* for the last 10 months. He has been imprisoned, and for a time had to report to the police *twice daily*.

The latest Home Office claim is that Afzal is not the true father of at least one of his children. Shemin and Afzal have had to undergo blood and tissue tests to prove their family relationship. Three times they have travelled from Whitby to London to picket the Home Office. Support has been organised by AWAZ. 5,000 Whitby residents have signed a petition calling on the Home Office not to deport Afzal. The stress of the fight to keep the family together has made Shemin ill. She says that if Afzal is deported she will be forced to have an abortion as she will be unable to cope with another child on her own.

Gias Uddin

Gias Uddin is an 18 year old from Liverpool who is imprisoned in Harmondsworth Detention Centre, threatened with deportation. Together with his mother, sister and four brothers Gias was accepted for entry in December 1975. They joined Gias's father Mr Badshah Miah who has been legally resident since 1963. Last year immigration officials raided the restaurant where Gias was working. In another search, this time of his home, immigration officials found a letter bearing the name Salik Miah. Salik Miah is the name that Gias is known by in his village in Bangladesh. The Home Office claim that the letter casts doubt on Gias's identity, and that this is grounds for deportation.

Gias spent 4 weeks in Risley Remand Centre before being released 'pending further investigations'. In July he was detained again and arrangements made for his deportation. The Gias Uddin Action Committee states:

'At the moment Gias is being held in Harmondsworth while the Home Secretary reconsiders his case. So far Gias has spent almost 12 weeks in detention—8 of them in Risley. NO EVIDENCE HAS BEEN LAID BEFORE A COURT OF LAW, HE HAS NOT BEEN CHARGED WITH ANY CRIMINAL OFFENCE, HE HAS NO RIGHT OF APPEAL BEFORE HE IS RETURNED TO BANGLADESH.'

Detention in Harmondsworth

Mr Choudhary, a revenue officer from Pakistan, was recently held for ten days in Harmondsworth Detention Centre at Heathrow. His 'crime'? Coming to Britain for a holiday to visit his relatives in Nottingham and Oldham. After his release he agreed to be interviewed by 'Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!' The following account is based on that interview, recorded on 6 September 1979.

'Outside the British Embassy in Pakistan there is a big sign saying "NO VISAS REQUIRED FOR TOURISTS TO BRITAIN"'. When I came to the airport I was kept hanging on all day and they kept putting silly questions to me all the time. They kept asking me whether I was married and these kinds of question... After many hours they said "OK, we refuse you entry".'

That was on 4 August. Mr Choudhary was then transferred to Harmondsworth without being allowed to contact either his relatives or a solicitor.

Once inside, he was subjected to racist abuse along with the other detainees — half of whom were Asian. Although it was the religious time of Ramadan, no facilities were provided for prayer or fasting. In fact detainees are denied all privacy during the day. They are kicked out of their bedroom-cells at 9 am. The cells are then locked until 9 pm. There is nothing to do in those twelve hours except sit on a chair in the main area and wait. And the regulations are imposed with the severity and inhumanity to be expected of British imperialism:-

'I saw a man, a very old man, over sixty years old. He was very sick on the plane. He spent 12 hours in the plane and 12 hours sitting in a chair at Immigration. He came down four hours earlier than opening time, at 5 o'clock. He told how long he had been travelling and that he was sick, and requested to be allowed to go on to bed. Please, would they open the door. They said no.'

After three days Mr Choudhary was told he would be put on a plane back to Pakistan. However, thanks to the ceaseless efforts of his relatives this was prevented, and he was eventually released on 13 August. After the 'welcome' accorded him by British imperialism, its immigration officers and security guards, Mr Choudhary said:

'When I was in Pakistan I thought that there were a few people, a few racists in this country. But when I arrived at the airport I felt that the Government itself was involved in racism.'

FIGHT RACISM! DEFEND SOUTHALL PUBLIC MEETINGS

As part of its campaign to build political, practical and financial support for the victims of the British state's racist attack on Southall, the RCG is holding the following meetings:

BRISTOL Thursday 1 November
7.30pm Baptist Mills Community
Centre, Horley Road, Bristol

LONDON Wednesday 7 November
7.30pm St Matthews Meeting
Place, Brixton.

MANCHESTER Thursday 8
November 7.30 Birley High School
Chichester Rd, Moss Side,
Manchester.

LEEDS Wednesday 14 November
7.30pm Leeds Trades Club, Saville
Mount, Chapeltown Leeds

SHEFFIELD Wednesday 7
November 7.30pm Brungreave
Vestry Hall, Brungreave Rd,
Sheffield 3

All tickets 20p. On door — 30p

ANTI-NAZI LEAGUE BEATS COWARDLY RETREAT

The announcement of a joint Provisional Sinn Fein/Bristol RCG meeting on 16 October to mobilise support for Sinn Fein's 20 October demonstration was greeted by a hysterical outburst in the local press, aimed to whip up the right wing. 'Storm erupts in city over IRA show' screamed a headline in *The Bristol Journal* of 12 October.

What has been the role of those staunch 'anti-fascists', the Anti-Nazi League? Having previously agreed to send stewards to the meeting, the ANL reversed its decision *on the day of the meeting itself*. And why? According to the ANL member who informed us of the decision by phone, they had heard from a reliable source that a gang of thugs from the Army—the Gloucester regiment—were planning to attack the meeting. *The ANL were not, as a result, sending anybody to the meeting*, as they were not prepared to be beaten up by the army. The RCG, it was pointed out, should expect this sort of thing if we hold such meetings.

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RACIST ATTACKS

Introduction

Every day, in every town, the British state pursues its campaign of harassment against black people. As the following three cases show, no black person is safe — the old, the sick, the young — all are victims of this campaign. We are publishing the following reports of police harassment not because they represent something exceptional but precisely because they are normal and typical examples of what black people are suffering. What the police did at Southall on April 23rd they did on one day in one concerted attack. What they have done to the X family, whose case is reported below, they have done over a period of years. The results for the X family are as shattering as those suffered by the victims of April 23rd in Southall. The X family now has one son in prison, one son facing charges and one son who is threatened with spending the rest of his life in a mental institution.

These attacks cannot be explained by the racism of individual policemen. No doubt the police are racist bullies. Only people of a brutish nature could be attracted to work in the police force. But that is not the main point. The fact is that such attacks are being carried out *systematically*. They form part of the British state's campaign against black people. British imperialism, having forced black people to be the victims of a racist society must then use its state, its police and courts to contain and control all threats of resistance and rebellion. It must use every weapon in its extensive armoury to attempt to crush resistance and grind black people down. The weapons, as well as immigration laws, Sus laws, frame ups, beatings by police, also include unofficial encouragement to the gangs of white racists who have been responsible for numerous murderous attacks against black people.

The view of the British state was made clear by Metropolitan Police Commissioner McNee when he said:

'If you keep off the streets and behave yourselves you won't have the SPG to worry about.'

When black people organise to fight racism the British state is threatened and therefore unleashes the frenzied assault that we saw at Southall on April 23rd. But even when

black people are simply going about their daily business they are regarded as a threat and a menace. Like warders fearing rebellion by the prisoners in some foul gaol, the British police interpret every action by black people, walking on the streets, looking in a shop window, as threatening. The use of Sus laws against black youths shows that for the British state every black person is suspicious. The result, as the following cases show, is that black people on the street and in their homes are subjected to a harrowing process of harassment and intimidation.

TOUSSAINT CASE

A recent case shows that for the British police, the encouragement of the activities of racist 'irregulars', as in the case of the Virk brothers, is not enough. On June 2 this year, Lindi Toussaint was repairing his car outside his home in East London when he was approached by two policemen. They demanded evidence of ownership of the car which he gave to them, upon which one of the policemen called Lindi a 'clever nigger'. Lindi objected to this racist abuse, at which point the police officers proceeded to search his car. Finding a piece of rag and a funnel, they accused him of syphoning petrol from other vehicles. When Lindi refused to accompany them to the police station on the basis of this trumped-up charge, the police attempted to force him to their car. Lindi's younger brother, Kennis (16), on hearing the noise, rushed out of the house and was coshed over the head by one of the policemen, causing a severe head wound. Within minutes the street was full of police. The two brothers, one of them by now badly injured, ran indoors and were pursued by the police who battered down the door, severely frightening the Toussaint's sister who is handicapped. The brothers were then arrested.

Later, Mr Toussaint, on learning all this, went to the police station and was himself threatened with arrest for demanding to know the grounds of his sons' arrests. Kennis Toussaint was left without medical attention to his head wound for 24 hours.

The Toussaint brothers are now charged with Actual Bodily Harm and theft of a

police truncheon. This incident is not a rare or extreme occurrence. It is a fact of life in Britain today that black youth, going about their everyday business, become *in the eyes* of the police potential criminals. Their everyday possessions become, at the whim of the police, the tools of potential crime. The Newham Defence Committee are taking up the Toussaint case and are asking for support

POLICE HARASSMENT IN MANCHESTER

The following report details police harassment and racist attacks on one black family in Manchester. These attacks are only a small part of what the family has suffered at the hands of the police in the last few months. They show the day to day reality of state racism for black people in Britain today.

In July the police gained access to the family's home by pretending a piece of card was a warrant. They then deliberately smashed in the front door, broke windows and smashed open the bedroom door. R describes what happened then:

'I was asleep under the sheets, they pulled the sheets off me, dragged me out of bed, and said, "Get out of bed you black bastard." I said, "There's no need for that, why didn't you just tell me to get out of bed?" He was going on giving cheek and my mam was going mad there, so he pushed her. I told him to leave her alone. He said, "What are you going to do about it?" I said, "I can't do anything at the moment, but one day..." They dragged me down the stairs and when they got me outside, one of the coppers was choking me. The other copper said, "Hey, you're choking him." He said, "Never mind." And carried on. He punched me in the eye seven or eight times, then they threw me in the Black Maria. They pulled my mam in and tried to arrest her.

We got down to the station, got out of the

Black Maria and they had my arms twisted behind my back. There was one of them in front of me and as I was walking in he was back-heeling me in the shins. They got me in the cell and they started asking me about so-and-so, and I don't even know these people. Then this copper starts hitting me in the same eye, then he said, "I'm sorry, I'll hit you in the other eye instead!" I couldn't do nothing about it. After that we got charged (for stealing forty cigarettes). We came out and all four police were standing there laughing, "I wonder how he got that eye?" My eye was blood-shot for a week and I couldn't do nothing about it.

Mrs X, R's mother, who is white, was subjected to racist abuse by the police who called her a 'nigger lover' and told her 'You'll do well if the NF gets in, you and your niggers.' She also suffered severe bruising to the foot because of a beating with a police truncheon.

Mr X, R's father told what happened when he sent a younger son S, to the shops recently.

'I sent him one afternoon, the mother was at work, to the shops to get a tin of stewing steak and some potatoes. He was looking in the window to see what the prices were and the police saw him and picked him up. They picked him up just for looking in the shop window and I had sent him for some groceries.'

This son was held overnight and charged, the police claiming that he was about to break into the shop. The police regularly harass this young man, picking him up, holding him for a few hours then releasing him with no charges. Because of such harassment it has become impossible for young men like S and R to walk the streets. In the shopping centre black youths are constantly moved on by the police.

R says, 'You can't do nothing there, they shift you on sight. That's why I stopped going there. Now it's getting the same in the town.'

Mr X sums it up: 'When the black lads decide to go to the disco, you'll find they go around and knock on doors, calling for their mates. They don't dare go out on their own anymore at night. If it's not the white lads it's the coppers. Somewhere along the line they get hounded.'

Manchester correspondent

NAZIR AHMED

Only occasionally a major police assault on black people, such as at Southall, is reported in the press. Yet every day the police force shows itself to be racist from top to bottom. As a major agency of the British imperialist, racist state, the police force continually abuses, terrorises and assaults black people, then drags them

before the courts for imprisonment on trumped-up charges.

The following account is an example of police racism and the methods they employ to try and convict the victims of such attacks. Just after midnight on 3 July last year, six men and a woman burst into the home of Mr Nazir Ahmed above his shop in Manchester. Two doors were smashed down, five children sleeping in the house were terrified, and, as Nazir tried to ring the Police for help, the phone was ripped off the wall. Rightly thinking themselves to be under racist attack, Nazir and his son Munir tried to defend themselves and their family. Their mistake was in thinking their attackers to be National Front, they were in fact plain-clothes police. Nazir was dragged downstairs by the police, he was beaten up and his face was ground into a metal grating. As a result he suffered cuts and bruises to the face and a cut forehead requiring eight stitches. Still believing a National Front attack to be in progress, Munir tried to defend his father. In the course of the attack not only was Nazir injured, but the children were terrified, doors broken down and the phone and furniture vandalised. Nazir and Munir were arrested, taken to Levenshulme Police station where Nazir was charged with assault on a constable and wounding with intent and Munir with carrying an offensive weapon and two counts of assault on a constable. The police then set about fabricating evidence to convict their victims on these charges, claiming that the Ahmeds knew the men were police from the outset.

There are usually only two ways that black people facing such trumped-up charges are acquitted in a British court. One is, as in the case of George Lindo, that the police concerned are caught framing some one in another case; the other is what happened in this case—that the police evidence is so ridiculous and so contradictory, that the trial is stopped to protect the 'reputation' of the police.

The case came to court in July this year, and it soon became obvious that the police evidence was a pack of lies. The first contradiction in their evidence arose after Sgt Barlow claimed that Nazir had come down to the shop in answer to his knock, switched on the light, and seeing the search warrant, ran back upstairs to the flat. PC Thompson, a later police witness could not remember the light going on, and Sgt Barlow himself made no mention of the light in his written statement. The confusion arose because the incident never occurred, the police did not knock, they broke the door down without warning. After forcing the door to the flat the police were attacked by Nazir with a bottle and shovel, said Sgt Barlow. He was contradicted by PC Thompson who named (and described) the attacker as Munir: this is rather odd as Nazir is at least twenty years older than Munir, is several stones heavier,

and has a full beard while Munir is clean shaven. Sgt Barlow next asked the court to believe that the response of the police to this vicious attack was to produce their identification and say, 'We are Police Officers, we have a warrant to search your premises'! Sgt Barlow who said that Nazir was led quietly down the stairs was contradicted by PC Thompson for the third time when Thompson said Nazir was dragged down the stairs. Fourthly Sgt Barlow denied that Nazir was shouting 'Help, National Front!' while PC Thompson admitted that he was. The police claimed that Munir was arrested as soon as he came out of the shop to try and free his father, but a neighbour gave evidence that Munir had aroused him by knocking on his door at the time when he was allegedly under arrest six doors and a side street away. The sixth contradiction in the prosecution case concerned the phone; the police denied even seeing a phone, but a neighbour who entered the flat immediately after the Police left gave evidence that the phone lead had been torn out.

Finally Thompson claimed he charged Nazir at about 4 am before going off duty at 5 am, but the charge sheet (witnessed by Sgt Barry Shaw — since sacked for various irregularities) maintained he was charged at 6.10 am. Every one agreed that Nazir had been interviewed by CID man Lowmass at 5.30am. If Thompson was right, ie if Nazir was charged at 4 am, Lowmass had interviewed Nazir after he had been charged with the offense—a breach of Judge's Rules, and Sgt Shaw had falsified the charge sheet to cover this up. At this point the Judge had two options, he could proceed with the trial, in which case one or more of the police would be shown to have falsified documents, or he could stop the trial and so cover up for the police. He chose the latter and instructed the jury to find the Ahmeds not guilty.

So this case ended in a victory, but how many hundreds of black people are in prison at the moment through the connivance of the police and the courts? The Ahmeds were spared prison only because of the contradictions in the mountain of lies, distortions, perjury and corruption that the police presented as evidence. The Ahmeds suffered physical injury, distress, anxiety, and damage to their property while their racist attackers—the police—went free. This, along with imprisonment, is what 'British Justice' means for black people in this country.

Manchester correspondent



VICTORY AT LEEDS SCHOOL

A particularly blatant example of the use of suspension as a method of racist harassment of black school children has recently occurred in Leeds. We report this not only because it highlights the racism of the British educational and judicial system but also because it shows the effectiveness of resistance to the attempts of the state to deprive black children of their education and to split black families.

On February 26, a fifteen year old black youth was suspended from a school in Leeds for refusing to cut his dreadlocks and thereby break the discipline of his Rastafarian religion. Despite the fact that white youths at the same school were allowed to wear their hair longer than his, the school insisted on suspending the black youth. They thus ensured that he missed five months of his education. The headmaster of the school revealed the colonial mentality which permeates the British state when he suggested that the black youth wear a turban. The headmaster rejected the black youth's suggestion that he wear a hat to school.

In July the Leeds Education Authority, by then responsible for preventing his attendance at school for five months, took their racist harassment one stage further and summarised his mother to court for failing, they said, to ensure his attendance at school. Despite overwhelming evidence in his favour, proving that it was the education authorities which were preventing his attendance at school, the court ruled that if he missed one more week of school he

would immediately be taken into care. The magistrate said:

'If you don't cut your hair you will go straight into care. It is as simple as that.'

This racist alliance between the British education system and the courts resulted in a very real threat that this black youth would be removed from his family and friends and taken into 'care' by the same local authority which had victimised him. By these means the British state would lock up a black youth for three years using the absurd and trivial excuse that his hair is too long.

Had the case been left there, no doubt the Leeds Education authority would have achieved its racist aim. But it was not left there. A local defence committee, the Chapeltown Rasta Defence Committee, was set up to fight the case. This committee achieved considerable local publicity for the case, collected over 1000 signatures for a protest petition including over 100 signatures collected at the Notting Hill Carnival. As well as mobilising support in Leeds the case attracted national support and signatures were collected in Bristol, London, Manchester and Scotland. On the first day of the school year, September 4, a picket of the school was called by the Defence Committee. About 30 people attended. As well as local support from the black community in Leeds the picket was attended by a contingent from Bradford Asian Youth Movement and also from Manchester Revolutionary Communist

Group. The picketers' message was made clear by their placards: 'Hair length is not the issue. Racism is', 'Stop the Racist Suspensions', 'British Education is Racist'. While the picket continued, attracting much support from school children going into the school, a meeting was held with the Headmaster. After five months of refusing to change his decision to suspend the youth, his resolve crumbled in the face of resistance. Victory was achieved and he agreed to allow the youth back into school providing he wore a hat (which he had all along offered to do but which previously the Headmaster had refused to accept.)

No doubt the school and the Local Education Authorities were concerned not only about the protests aroused by this one case but also that such protests would throw the spotlight on the whole question of the use of suspension as a weapon against black youth in Britain. For the case in Leeds is not an isolated incident. The latest example to come to light concerns a Sikh girl who has been refused admission to school in Birmingham for wearing a turban as her religion decrees. Throughout the country black children are the victims of an education system which suspends them on the most trivial grounds, which randomly labels them educationally sub-normal and which robs them of even the paltry and inadequate education which is available to the working class.

Leeds correspondent

RACISM IN EDUCATION SUSPENSIONS

The case of the young Rastafarian in Leeds is but one example of the vicious intolerance of the teaching profession and its desperate need to keep control and discipline over the pupils.

In June 1979 there was a public meeting instigated by the United Black Women's Action Group to tackle the immediate problems affecting black children in Haringey schools. Within the last year, and within the London Education Authority alone, black parents have met in Camden, Hackney and Brixton to organise their protests against the treatment their children are receiving from the schools. At a recent meeting of the Islington Committee for Community Relations a speaker from the Caribbean Teachers' Association described school common-rooms as 'citadels of prejudice' and urged action on racism in schools.

For the first time an organised and determined section of the working class is demanding justice and accountability from the teaching profession. For the first time pupils, victims of a second-rate education system, are insisting that their needs be met and their demands heard by teachers. It is from within the black community (and its supporters) that this independent and class-conscious move is being made. It is in response to this independence that the institutional forms of punishment, expulsion, the ESN school, Special Units for

Disruptive Pupils and especially informal Suspension are being brought to bear.

In the case of black and working class children, Suspension is being used more and more as a convenient method of getting rid of unwanted pupils, of harassing them and threatening them. There have been numerous cases within the last ten years of black children being suspended for an indefinite length of time, for Afro-hair style (Haringey 1975) for wearing a 'Free Angela Davis' badge (South London 1971) for wearing a woolly hat or Tam (Islington 1976). In the well-documented case of Ladbroke School in West London a black girl was threatened with Suspension for plaiting her hair because it was thought to be a sign of rebellion. The following day all the girls, black and white turned up with their hair in plaits to demonstrate their solidarity. In Haringey in 1979 a newly-appointed Head suspended around 20 youths at one go, all of them black. Only 5 of these pupils were suspended officially and even the Governors of the school were not informed about the incident.

The most recent forms that discipline of 'recalcitrant' pupils has taken within the schools are Suspensions and reference to Special Units for Disruptive pupils. These are the preferred punishments at this time.

The use of expulsion as a method of ridding the schools of difficult and unwanted pupils has been found unsatisfactory by the

Authorities. Under the 1944 Education Act all children must be provided with educational facilities for at least four hours a day. The expulsion of pupils merely pushes children into other schools, shifting the 'problem' about and resulting in bargaining and deals between Head teachers. The pupils still have to be catered for within the school system.

Another institutional method that has been developed to control and punish pupils has been the setting-up of Special Units for Disruptive pupils. These are usually attached to a Comprehensive School and they have been created with a lot of talk about catering for difficult and anti-school children. It was the same language of 'concern' that surrounded the development of the ESN (Educationally Sub-Normal) schools over ten years ago when Caribbean pupils in particular were forced into an inferior status by anti-working class and racist methods. The ESN schools that remain still have a high percentage of black children, often as much as 75%. They are, however, being phased out, largely as a result of a massive onslaught by the black community. Where they still exist they are being transformed into schools for difficult and disruptive children.

The present situation is one of severe cut-backs in educational expenditure introduced by the Conservative Government in 1973 with a £182m cut, speeded up under



Labour in 1976 with a £1030m cut and continued again under the present government with a planned £115m cut. The Authorities have had to slow down the introduction of the Special Units as a result of this loss of finance. Since these 'sin-bins', as they are commonly called, have a low teacher/pupil ratio, schools are now finding difficulty in placing unwanted pupils.

Expulsion has been found to have only a limited effect in removing pressure from the schools since the LEA must find an alternative place for the child—ESN schools are being phased out because their racist basis has made them unacceptable to the black community—there are only sufficient places for the present 4000 pupils in the Special Units. This leaves one useful method of repression against pupils not wanted in the schools—Suspension.

While DES (Department of Education and Science) regulations say nothing definite about the length of Suspensions, no child should be out of school for more than a few days without provision being made for his or her education. In September 1978 an 11 year old black child was suspended from a Haringey school and despite the efforts of his mother, over 6 months later no alternative provision had been made for his education. The ploy of leaving his name on the register while not allowing him to attend school was a clear abuse of the intended use of Suspension as a short-term measure to arrange alternative teaching. In yet other cases, Suspension is used to banish pupils from the school premises for shorter periods ranging from one to three weeks, but repeatedly. In one Islington school at least 3 black pupils have been suspended for intervals which have added up to the loss of approximately two term's work out of the nine terms of the first three years of Secondary School.

We can see why Suspension is such a convenient tool for the discipline of pupils. It is easy to do in a situation where the Head is accountable only to the same Governing body that appointed him. It is overwhelmingly supported by teachers who see control as a matter of punishment. It is cheap. Finally, it is difficult to fight in that fellow pupils often do not know for some time that a pupil has been removed from the school.

In looking at this pattern of institutional violence directed at young people at school, the question we must ask is why are black children at the forefront of oppression by teachers?

Since its beginnings, the secretive middle-class education sector has covered-up for the second-rate education service the state provides for the working class. The anger aroused within the black community has changed all that. They want to know about the school system and what it is doing to their children. Teachers cannot tolerate much criticism of their authority but at the

same time black pupils and their parents will not tolerate their second-rate treatment within the schools. They fight back.

The price that black school children are paying for their struggle against a repressive education system is a heavy one. The Authorities have deliberately and cynically ignored the rights of pupils of access to education. In their anxiety to defend and cover up for the system, the provision of appeal, notification, consultation with parents have all been swept aside. In the need to bludgeon all opposition, Suspension is being used for the racist oppression of school children. Nonetheless, there are and have been substantial victories in the struggle. The Leeds case is one example. It shows how Suspension can be fought against by a consistent campaign. Black parents and their children will defend their right to a decent education. They are in the

vanguard of the struggle against the capitalist education system and in supporting this struggle we support the demand for a proper education system for the working class as a whole.

Sue Davidson

HANDS OFF ZIMBABWE! VICTORY TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT!

DEMONSTRATION Sunday 11 November

ASSEMBLE 1.30PM SPEAKERS CORNER MARCH TO RALLY IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE

Demonstration called by ZECC

PUBLIC MEETINGS

To build support for the demonstration called by the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee for November 11th, the RCG has called the following public meetings:

GLASGOW: Tuesday 30 October. 7.30pm. City Hall, Candleriggs, Glasgow.

STIRLING: Wednesday 31 October. 7pm. Stirling University. Speakers from the Patriotic Front and RCG.

EDINBURGH: Thursday 1 November. 7.30pm. Edinburgh and District Trades Council, Picardy Place, Edinburgh. Speakers from the Patriotic Front and RCG.

DUNDEE: Friday 2 November. 7.30pm. Park Place Primary School, Dundee. Speakers from the Patriotic Front and RCG.

HANDS OFF ZIMBABWE!

“David Owen in drag” was how one Rhodesian newspaper described Margaret Thatcher after her apparently surprising change of position at the Lusaka conference in early August. In April the Tory election manifesto had promised to gain international recognition for a Muzorewa type regime, and the Conservative delegation which reported on the elections in May argued that sanctions should be lifted. The Tory government was forced to come to the conference table in September because of the decisive successes of the Patriotic Front, and because they thought this might be the only way to salvage something from Rhodesia.

The struggle in Zimbabwe is now at a decisive stage and offers the anti-imperialist forces an opportunity which will not recur for many years. The armed forces of the Patriotic Front have driven the Rhodesian army and British imperialism into a corner. For many years they have fought heroically against a vicious and racist regime. British imperialism is failing to meet its NATO commitment, unable to defeat the national liberation movement of the Irish people, and it cannot at the moment conveniently send a military force of any consequence to Zimbabwe. It can only hope to buy time by attempting to split the Patriotic Front or to coerce the Front Line states into withdrawing their support for the liberation movement. The British ruling class is aware of the gigantic issues at stake. A victory for the Zimbabwean people would mean an enormous threat to the beleaguered apartheid regime of South Africa, and a smashing blow to the arrogant confidence of the British ruling class. Such a victory would be a victory for the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world of even greater importance than the defeat of American imperialism in Vietnam.

The key factor in the present situation is that the Patriotic Front forces are winning the war against the white racist regime, and are thus well on the way to such a historic victory. They control 4/5 of the area of Zimbabwe and 1/5 of the population lives in the liberated zone. In their raids on Salisbury and Bulawayo earlier this year, they showed their ability to strike right at the heart of the racist regime. Lieutenant-General Peter Walls, the chief commander of the Rhodesian armed forces, has publicly admitted that there is no possibility of his army winning the war, and that the response

to 1.5 million leaflets dropped in the liberated zone offering amnesty to ‘guerillas’ who surrendered was a ‘mere trickle’ (in fact it was about 100, compared to an estimated total of 15,000 freedom fighters). As a last measure of desperation, the call up now extends to all white men up to 60 years old. Even this is ineffective, given that so many white Rhodesians are voting with their feet, so that an increasingly large proportion of the Rhodesian army consists of foreign mercenaries — ZAPU estimates put this as high as 43%.

It is only the success of the Patriotic Front forces which has forced British imperialism and Smith to the conference tables, and made them apply the thin and patchy cosmetic of the Muzorewa regime. The 1976 Geneva conferences, the 77-78 Anglo-American plan, championed by David Owen with the full support of the Labour Party, and now the Muzorewa constitution, all foundered on the rock of the armed resistance of the Zimbabwean people.

Faced with this reality, Thatcher adopted a different line at Lusaka, agreeing to the talks which began in September. This was not because of a change of heart by the Tories. It was not because they recognised that elections held without a registered list of voters, with thousands of Patriotic Front supporters detained and the Patriotic Front itself detained, with large numbers of voters brought under armed guard to the polls, could hardly be regarded as democratic; but because they realised that in the present situation, the David-Owen-Labour Party approach is the best tactic for imperialism. That is, to play on the divisions between the Front Line states, in particular Zambia and Tanzania, and by political, economic and military blackmail to sow discord between them and the military forces of the Patriotic Front.

‘Constitutional’ conferences may come and go, but the brutal repression of the Zimbabwean people continues in all its barbaric ferocity. Just one week after the installation of Muzorewa and his fellow puppets, the Rhodesian Air Forces attacked Patriotic Front bases in Mozambique, only the first of several ‘hot pursuit’ raids into the territory of the Front Line states. Whole populations are moved at will by the ‘security’ forces. As a result, in 1977, during the very period of the Labour Party’s ‘democratic initiative’, 600,000 Zimbabwean peasants were living in ‘protected villages’ — in fact these are con-

centration camps in all but name, surrounded by barbed wire, subject to the daily harassment, torture and rape by ‘auxiliary’ forces. One in twelve of the entire black population lives in these camps — the equivalent total for Britain would be about 5 million people: the proportion is far higher than that of the European population imprisoned in Hitler’s concentration camps. In the refugee camps in Mozambique and Zambia, 200,000 people fleeing from the Rhodesian armies cling precariously to bare existence, just surviving from day to day with the ever present threat of murderous raids by the Rhodesian army. There are as many black refugees in the camps as there are whites in Zimbabwe as a whole.

In this situation, the key questions are not so much the constitutional niceties, or the details of electoral procedure, *but*: who will rule Zimbabwe in the interim period up to the next elections? Whose armed forces will have effective control? Anti-imperialists in Britain must resolutely oppose any suggestion that British troops could be sent into Zimbabwe to play a ‘peace-keeping role’ during any forthcoming elections — even if initially it is proposed that they will only be playing an equal or even a subordinate role to the forces of the Patriotic Front. For where would these troops be drawn from? From Northern Ireland — where they were sent ten years ago under the pretext of ‘keeping the peace’? For the last ten years of British imperialism’s rule, the Unionist statelet has been maintained by the open slaughter of Irish nationalists, by the undercover murders of unarmed Irish working class men and women, by the torture centres at Castlereagh and the prisons of Long Kesh and Armagh. Are the vicious butchers of the Irish people to be transformed over night into messengers of peace, into guardians of a truly democratic constitution — one which would sweep away minority racist rule for ever? We must oppose all British plans for Zimbabwe — constitutional or military. Recognising that victory for the Patriotic Front is a victory for the British working class and a blow against the racism of the British state, we must give complete support to the Patriotic Front. This is what the Zimbabwean people have every right to demand of British anti-imperialists!

Patrick Newman

RCG ACTIVITIES

Street meetings and sales

RCG members and supporters hold regular Saturday street meetings and street sales of anti-racist and anti-imperialist literature in **Bristol Cardiff Edinburgh Glasgow Leeds London** (Brixton and Kilburn) **Sheffield** and **Manchester** (Moss Side and Hulme). At the street meetings our placards display the slogans *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! End All Immigration Controls! Smash the Sus Laws! Oppose Police Brutality!* Our speakers publicise the struggles of black people, the intensifying attacks on blacks—particularly at the hands of the British state and its police force—and the victories of liberation struggles in Southern Africa and Ireland. We are extending our street meetings to other areas. If you would like to join us at these meetings, or help support any of our activities, then please contact us at the editorial address.

The RCG has also been active in supporting campaigns against racist harassment and deportations in local areas:

Manchester and the North

Manchester RCG and supporters in Leeds supported the campaign of the *Chapeltown Rasta Defence Committee* in Leeds which fought for a Rasta to be allowed back into school after he had been suspended and threatened with being taken into care because he refused to cut his hair. A picket on the school, organised by the Defence Committee, following a systematic campaign attracted local support and was also attended by Bradford Asian Youth Movement and the RCG. Victory was achieved when the Rasta was allowed back into school. The details of this case are printed in this bulletin.

On 31 August RCG members and supporters were among the 60-70 people who supported a picket of Liverpool Immigration Office called by the *Gias Uddin Defence Committee*, in protest against his being held in Harmondsworth Detention Centre as an 'illegal immigrant'. His deportation has been temporarily postponed, but a continued campaign will be needed to ensure his release and to remove the threat of deportation.

Bristol and South Wales

Recent police charges made in Cardiff against a member of Provisional Sinn Fein and two Hands Off Ireland! speakers on 15 September on the grounds that they were distributing literature of an abusive or insulting nature, was followed a week later by a large and successful rally in protest at the charges. It was listened to by nearly 300 people, including a large number of black people from the local area.

Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee

Regular street sales, street meetings and public meetings are held in these areas. Edinburgh RCG are holding a public meeting on 1 November to mobilise support for the November 11 Zimbabwe demonstration. Meetings on the same subject will be held in Glasgow on 30 October, Dundee on 2 November and Stirling on 31 October to build support for the demonstration. At the Edinburgh, Stirling and Dundee meetings there will be a speaker from the Patriotic Front. Members and supporters of the RCG are actively engaged in the fight against racism and the anti-imperialist struggle in these areas.

London

London RCG members and supporters attended a series of 3 pickets of the Home Office called by AWAZ, in an attempt to stop the brutal deportation of Afzal Mohammed. The Home Office claim that his marriage to his wife, Shemin, is not legal and that he is not the father of his children. The pickets were supported by representatives of many Asian organisations. The outcome of the case is still uncertain as the Home Office is still trying every racist tactic to split up yet another black family. (See report in this bulletin)

On 6 October a picket called by the *Black Prisoners Welfare Scheme* on Pentonville Prison was supported by RCG members, in protest against the detention under immigration laws of Brother Mohammed Seisay. Brother Seisay will be under threat of death if he is deported to Sierra Leone. (BPWS can be contacted at c/o 61 Golborne Road, London W10)

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

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