

restricted circular

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



occasional internal bulletin

Revolutionary Communist League of Britain



INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

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This is an occasional internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, national liberation struggles and the analysis of, and developments within organisations of resistance.

There may be unacknowledged disagreements with positions expressed, and these articles should not be regarded as representing official R.C.L. positions.

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that the company belonged to hospital secretary Mr Hans Prinsloo. Like many other white civil servants who carried out racist policies, this cosy family unit has aligned itself with the new administration and its friends. The only people who were being recommended for promotion were members of NEHAWU, the sweet-heart union of the new administrator. Members of other health associations such as SANA, HOSPERCA and SAHPSWU were being by-passed. SAHPSWU took action to curb racism, favouritism and exploitation by picketing the hospital and barring the white administrators. Treatment of patients has not been disrupted. According to SAHPSWU national organiser Cde Silas Baloyi the workers are holding out for a minimum living wage of R1 500.00 a month, which the Union is campaigning for throughout the civil service.

AZAPO RESCUES BLACK SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

36 Black head teachers from Diepkloof in SOWETO, and from other parts of the PWV were "expelled" from their posts last month by members of COSAS and SADTU who want to control the employment of teachers in Black schools and force Black teachers into SADTU, which is opposed to democracy and whose members do very little teaching.

The claim was that 10 of the principals had taken a photo-copier and two cyclostyling machines which had been donated to the Do it with Diepkloof Project, and that they should leave their posts. The other 26 refused to continue in their posts until their colleagues were re-instated. Members of AZAPO's national organising department, Monwabisi Duna, National Organiser Strike Thokoane and his deputy Fundile Mafongosi met with members of the Principals' Forum operating in the PWV and helped to call a meeting in which AZAPO, South African national Workers Union, NACTU and other community organisations took part on October 20. The meeting found that the claim about missing office machines had no truth. COSAS and SADTU have been saying that the Principal's Forum should be disbanded because in their view it was not based in the community. This is a stupid argument because the Forum is a professional association. Not every member of the community is a principal. The meeting helped the principals to get back to their jobs on Tuesday 25 October. Similar bullying of Black head teachers had taken place in Senaoane in 1992 and last year. The people in government whose party is aligned to COSAS and SADTU are silent about this bullying yet they talk about political freedom of choice and association.

PLEASE MAKE MANY COPIES AND GIVE TO FRIENDS, WORK COLLEAGUES, NEIGHBOURS AND RELATIVES.

LETSETSE THE FLEA



Monthly news, comment and mobilisation pamphlet of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO).

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AZAPO CONGRESS ELECTS COMRADE MANGENA PRESIDENT

The twelfth Congress of AZAPO, which was combined with the merger Congress between AZAPO and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania : BCM(A) was held at Crown Mines, Johannesburg, from 7 - 9 October. The BCM(A) underground and in exile from its founding in April 1980, to the installation of the coalition government now running the country. The fourth and final Congress of the BCM(A) took a resolution to disband the organisation and to merge with AZAPO on the evening of Friday, 7 October 1994.

AZAPO's Congress heard reports from commissions on several issues including gender, labour, the future direction of the Organisation, proposed amendments to the Organisation's constitution and local government. The bulk of the commission reports were not fully discussed, and were deferred to a future gathering of the Organisation. Congress decided that AZAPO would not take part in the 1995 local government elections since the authority of such councils would be limited by the authority of provincial ministers for local government. In a place like the Western Cape for example, the local governments would have to keep within what the racist premier Hernus Kriel and his colleagues would want to happen. Congress also condemned the harassment of AZAPO members by police in the Port Elizabeth area and in Natal.

The Central Committee elected by Congress is made up of five members from the previous AZAPO Central Committee, five members of the former BCM(A) Central Committee, and three long serving AZAPO stalwarts who have not served in the national leadership before, although in-coming Vice President (Transvaal) Mrs

Joyce Kalaote was elected to lead AZAPO's women's forum in November 1993. Former BCM(A) Chairman, Comrade Mosibudi Mangena was elected President of AZAPO and thus remains Commander-in-Chief of the Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA), with Comrade Pandelani Nefolovhodwe continuing as Deputy president. The rest of the team are Comrades Jairus Mpotseng Kgokong (Secretary General), Don Nkadimeng (Deputy Secretary General) Strike Thokoane (National Organiser), Fundile Mafongosi (Deputy National Organiser) Godfrey Afrika (Treasurer General), Vuyisa Qunta (Publicity & Information Secretary), Nkutsoeu Motsau (Political Commissar), Mzukisi Madlavu (Deputy POLITICAL Commissar), Mrs Joyce Kalaote (Vice President : Transvaal), Patrick Mkhize (Vice President : Natal), Danile Landingwe (Vice President : Cape). The delegation from the Orange Free State requested the post-ponement of the nomination of a candidate to represent the Province on the Central Committee, and Congress agreed that a candidate be co-opted later. The first meeting of the new Central Committee decided that since most of the business of Congress was not completed, a delegates Congress would be held on December 17 in the Orange Free State to consider the amendments to the Constitution and other commission reports. The reports, the draft amendments and resolutions have been printed by the Head Office of AZAPO and sent to all regions. All delegates will be expected to attend Congress with mandates on all the documents so that business can run quickly and smoothly. the

WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS REALLY GETTING OUT OF HAND

The Constitution agreed on at Kempton Park put into office a government which is tied to keeping whites as top dogs in occupied Azania. As a result, Black people can not be blamed for expecting white South Africans to be grateful that they got off so lightly after all the things they have done to us. Some say they expected whites to at least learn to be humble. When we look at what white South Africans are continuing to do, we might start at the top, with those who know they are the real owners of the country, at least for now.

The chief negotiator of the Anglo-American Corporation on labour matters Bobby Godsell has been going around trying to ridicule those in the government who appeal to big business to assist with the community welfare and infrastructure programme, including the State President. Mr Godsell is quoted by the business section of the Cape Town newspaper largely owned by his company, The Argus of October 22, as saying big business will not be "Father Christmas" to the programme. Earlier the same upstart had amused his white fellow tycoons by saying big business was not going to be "the Salvation army of the RDP". Two issues ago, in the August **LETSETSE** pointed out that the lower ranks of privileged white society keep telling their Black colleagues at work when they quarrel, and Black job-seekers to go and get jobs from Mr Mandela. The clearest cases of total disrespect for Black people in general, and especially for those in the powerless government have been arrests and

beatings of two cabinet ministers by white traffic officers, for parking offences. In a government led by AZAPO, with Comrade Mosibudi as President, a white traffic officer, or any white for that matter WILL NOT assault a Black minister over a parking offence and get away with it.

The real elite of white society such as Mr Godsell know that the Kempton Park talks and the present constitution have made sure that they remain the small tin gods of our country for now. Black people must learn from the behaviour of such people, that people like Mr Godsell, and their poorer kith and kin will not respect us unless we really struggle hard and take control of our land and its wealth. When any of us talk politely and appeal to them, for anything, they will continue to treat us like beggars and making a laughing stock of us.

HARASSMENT AND DEATH THREATS AGAINST COMRADE ZODWA JOHNSON

Harassment, raids and arrests of AZAPO comrades by the South African Police in Port Elizabeth is continuing and escalating. Delegates who represented the region at the AZAPO Congress in Crown Mines were stopped and body searched at road blocks as they were returning from the Congress. The white police operating the road blocks said they were looking for a certain car. Only they know how a car can be found through body-searching AZAPO delegates.

During the same week, four armed white men and a non-white lackey raided the home of Comrade Zodwa Johnson in Thonjeni Street, Zwide in an unmarked navy blue kombi with tinted windows. The unit, claiming to be from the police and led by Hendrik Erasmus, from the old Special Branch, took Comrade Zodwa and her three week old baby away at gun-point. Before the group left with their captive, Erasmus told the family that the return of Comrade Zodwa depended on whether she would co-operate. Earlier, the same fat lout had demanded from the family, that they should take Comrade Zodwa to the police or she would be shot on sight. Three days after her detention, police officials in Port Elizabeth told reporters from the SABC that they knew nothing about the arrest. Erasmus later brought Comrade Johnson back and said they would leave her at her home and visit her many times so that people would think she was an informer. U-Erasmus i-AZAPO imjongile.

NEW PUBLIC SERVICE UNION CHALLENGES CORRUPTION AND POOR PAY

Members of the South African Health and Public Service Workers Union (SAHPSWU) have taken action against the white administration at Ga-Rankuwa Hospital. The white administration which was made up of Mr and Mrs Cronje, the stores supervisor and hospital administrator man and wife team, tried to replace the hospital's security guards with guards from a private company. The staff discovered

representatives have been quick to see that whites have retained effective control of the things which matter in our country, especially money and all the other fruits of the conquest of our land by whites and of our labour power.

Former member of a liberal University of Cape Town SRC, Raymond Ackerman of Pick 'n Pay, is one of the culprits who still pay wages determined on a racist basis. He and many others are telling Black workers clearly that they, the white owners of our country's wealth are more secure in power as ever.

Many critics said AZAPO and the BCM were being difficult when we opposed the Kempton Park Constitution last year, and up to the April 1994 elections. Some of the people who promoted the Kempton Park agreement are now saying that there is nothing they can do because of that Constitution. Anyone who did not see that from the beginning, does not deserve to be in public office. It is important for AZAPO members to organise themselves into units and branches. Black people in large numbers are now saying the things we said when we refused to join the April elections and to be part of the neo-colonial government. We will be able to draw in the disgruntled workers, the landless peasants, the restless youth and other sections of the Black community if we are better organised. The time now is not for us to complain about what other parties are not doing, nor about what other members of our organisations are failing to do. These of us who want the advancement of Black people must take steps on our own to link up with others in our areas and build up AZAPO, AZAYO, Imbeleko and all our other formations.

WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS MORE INSOLENT THAN EVER

Since the coming in of the new government Black people have been able to see that nothing big is going to change for them. The promise signed to at Kempton Park to keep whites in control of kind and money in Azania are being taken very seriously by the government. The promises given to Black people at election rallies about jobs and houses cannot be kept. Because whites can see that they are now secure, many of them are now showing Black people that white is baas. Black people in many private company jobs are being retrenched and replaced by whites. When white managers disagree with Black executives, they ask the Blacks why they don't go and work for the government. When there was a white government whites still occupied most senior positions in the business world. Now it is as if since a few Blacks are in the government jobs, Black people have no right to be successful in business.

LETSETSE

THE FLEA



Monthly news, comment and mobilisation pamphlet of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania: BCM(A)

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WHO WAS STEVE BIKO ?

Steven Bantu Biko is the Activist who is most talked about and most admired by Black people in the struggle in Azania. He was one of the young men and women who saw that the struggle was almost dead in Azania after the white colonial regime had murdered hundreds of Black people, imprisoned thousands and closed down the older political groups in the 1960's.

Born in King William's Town, Comrade Steve grew to oppose the oppression and exploitation of Black people by the settler-colonialists and worked to change the acceptance of these chains. This is how he became one of the people who brought out the style of thinking and struggle called, Black Consciousness, which urged people to look at their lives and to work to end their oppression with their own efforts. This style of work did not create self-important snobs or saviours of the people. Steve Biko became the first Resident of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) when it was launched in July 1969. Later, as Publicity Secretary of the organisation, he produced the SASO Newsletter in which his well known articles were published under the column, I Write What I like, under the pen name, Frank Talk. Comrade Biko gave up his medical Studies in 1972 and was later part of the founding of many other formations of the BCM including the Black People's Convention (BPC), Zimele Trust Fund and Black Community Programme (BCP). After he had been placed by the oppressor's regime in March 1973, together with others such as Randwezi Nengwekhulu, the late Jerry Modisane, and Strini Moodley, Comrade Biko was made Honorary President of the BPC, a position he held until he was murdered in detention in September 1977. Because he was the first overall leader of any political movement to be killed directly by the enemy while he held office. Steve Biko's name became known in every corner of the world. Many organisations which Steve Biko never belonged to took advantage of his fame outside the country by claiming that he was part of their organisations. The BCM did

not have an organised structure in exile at the time, thus the same people who had criticised Comrade Biko and the BCM claiming they were racist, were able to ride on his name while making sure that BCM activists would not be allowed to speak for themselves and would not get any of the help meant for victims of the South African settler-colonial regime.

Steve Biko was detained at a police road block, with fellow BCM activist, Peter Jones of Somerset West, as the two were driving back from a secret visit to Cape Town in August 1977. The trip was part of an effort by Comrade Biko, Hlaku Rachidi, Jones and others in the Movement to build unity and co-operation between the BCM and all other forces of liberation. Treacherous behaviour by leaders of the intellectualist organisation they had gone to meet in Cape Town caused the BCM delegation to leave a day earlier than they planned, and to pass through Port Elizabeth on August 18, the day of which Black people in that city commemorated the start of the 1976 students' uprising in their city. It is thought that the road block that they ran into was part of the steps taken by the regime to control Black people on that day. Peter Jones recalls horrific details of torture that he went through after they had been separated. Comrade Biko was beaten and battered to death by the white security officers and his murder was condoned by the racist courts in what was supposed to be an inquest into his death. All this was behaviour Black people were used to and expected from our racist oppressors and exploiters. What will always be a shock is the attempt in a recent book by a person who treated Comrade Biko most shabbily in Cape Town to still be the final expert on what will make the BCM and Steve Biko's legacy acceptable and other attempts by turn-coats who left the BCM for richer organisations to dance on his grave and to try and claim his name for their new chosen organisations.

In the middle of growing mistrust for saviours who rush to reward themselves and to cover themselves in luxury, Black people remember Comrade Steve as an activist who stayed in a humble house in Ginsberg township, King William's Town, and who sacrificed a chance to move from being the son of a humble widow to become a doctor. This is the spirit of sacrifice comrades in the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and all our formations must awaken in order to revive the struggle of Black people for real power and upliftment. Lastly, Biko is remembered for giving up everything including his life. His widow, Comrade Nontsikelelo is admired for having brought up and educated their two sons with little help from those who claim to support the struggle, and for refusing to be bought by those who wished to use the name of this martyr for their own glory.

AZAPO COUNCIL CALLS 12th CONGRESS

The 4th National Council of the 11th Congress of AZAPO was held on Saturday and Sunday, July 30 and 31 at the Laudium Hotel in Pretoria. The Council was the last before the 12th Congress which will take place in Johannesburg.

The Council in Pretoria was the first to be openly attended by members and leaders of the BCM (A) which had been operating in exile and underground and was jointly chaired by the AZAPO President, Cde Itumeleng Mosala and BCM(A) Chairman, Cde Mosibudi Mangena. Council adopted financial reports and established a commission to look at issues of local government and whether AZAPO would serve Black people better by participating in election for local authorities in 1995.

Council endorsed the decision of the two Central Committees of AZAPO and the BCM(A) to arrange for the return of exiles and for the merger of AZAPO and the BCM(A) with the movement operating under the name of AZAPO. Another commission was set up to review constitutional proposals which would give the leadership of the regions and such formations as AZAPO and the women's wing, direct representation on a much expanded Central Committee.

The BCM(A) will hold its 4th and final Congress from September 9 at which the structure will be dissolved and all its assets handed over to the AZAPO Congress. Members of the BCM(A) will become members of AZAPO. At the AZAPO Congress, elections will be held for a Central Committee which should include activists from both structures. On Friday, September 9, AZAPO will hold a reception for the returning exiles to which the Black Community is invited.

Council had set Congress for the weekend leading up to September 12, Steve Biko Day. When the Central Committees of AZAPO and the BCM (A) met on August 20 and 21, they agreed to postpone Congress to October 7 to 10, so that all branches and regions get a chance to update their fees. The Theme for the Congress will be Amandla inkululeko umhlaba.

BLACK WORKERS LOOKING FOR IMPROVED WORK CONDITIONS AND LIVES

Almost every Black trade unions which waged struggle during the days of white settler rule in Azania has come out in a strike for better wages and working conditions in the last two months. Black workers and their

Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe remains a name deserving of respect. This African revolutionary was so feared by the old apartheid regime of South Africa that it brought in a new law - quickly known as "The Sobukwe Clause" - to keep him in jail after his original sentence had ended in 1963. He was kept in isolation on the notorious Robben Island until banished to "internal exile" at Kimberly in 1969. There he remain in ill-health that proved to be terminal. Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe died of cancer in February 1978.

A talented linguist, Sobukwe, affectionately known as "the Prof", had turn down well-paid academic status to remain at the cutting edge of the anti-apartheid struggle. He practiced what he preached without regard to personnel cost.

When Sobukwe led the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in launching its historic campaign against the Pass Laws in March 1960, it was in defiance of the racist rule that he presented himself for arrest. At Sharpeville, the police opened fire on the PAC-inspired peaceful demonstrators killing 69, most of them shot in the back. The PAC and ANC were proscribed amidst the regime's clamp down of the resistance sparked off by the PAC's defiance. Robert Sobukwe, one amongst thousands arrested, was to remain a prisoner of apartheid for the rest of his life, an undaunted example of incorruptable resistance. In Sobukwe's words which initiated the Sharpeville protest:

"This is not a game. The white rulers are going to be extremely ruthless. But we must meet their hysterical brutality with calm, iron determination. We are fighting for the noblest cause on earth, the liberation of mankind. They are fighting to retrench an outworn, anachronistic, vile system of oppression. WE represent progress. They represent decadence. We represent the fresh fragrance of flowers in bloom; they represent the rancid smell of decaying vegetation. We have the whole continent on our side. We have history on our side. WE WILL WIN !"

At the time of his arrest Robert Sobukwe was the Founding President of a young organisation that had come into being in 1958 but had deeper ideological roots in its Africanist politics. Sobukwe had been politically active in the ANC's Congress Youth League (CYL) when a student at Fort Hare College in 1948. In the CYL, along with Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, Sobukwe was critical of the ANC leadership for its mild opposition to apartheid. They promoted a radical Programme of Action that was eventually adopted at the 1949 Bloemfontein Congress.

The Programme of Action, based on Africanist principles of self-determination, was abandoned at the June 1955 Congress of the People which saw the emergence of the South African Communist Party (SACP) inspired 'Freedom Charter'. After a polemical period, Sobukwe led the Africanist opposition within the ANC out of the organisation. This saw the birth of the main ideological division within the broad liberation movement that still dominates today : the Charterists and Africanist strategy. The newly born PAC began building and Sobukwe "found it was not the Africanist point of view he had to sell, but rather the wisdom of leaving the ANC".

The PAC breakaway began as a Trasvaal event, and Benjamin Pogrund, a journalist observing these events, provides an informative account of the tensions and arguments of the period. He refutes the persistent slander against the PAC that describes its progressive African nationalism as a form of "mirror racism". This slander has been repeated by forces on the political Left as well as by defenders of apartheid attempting to discredit the liberation movement.

The early PAC was wary of white communist influence but the revisionist SACP deserved such suspicion. Others saw hope in a Black anti-communist force, and the PAC initially received the backing of the US Information Service. Such hopes were misplaced: Sobukwe and the PAC had a leading part in the anti-apartheid resistance, not least in the armed struggle of Poqo, and the leftward evolution of the organization occurred in the heat of the struggle. The Pan Africanist theme has remained consistent from the day Sobukwe staked out the PAC's political objective: *" the government of the Africans, by the Africans, for the Africans, with everybody who owes his only loyalty to Africa and who is prepared to accept democratic rule of an African majority ... We guarantee no minority rights because we think in terms of individuals not groups. "*

It is Robert Sobukwe rather than the organisation he founded that is the focus for Benjamin Pogrund's book "How Can Man Die Better". The former deputy editor of the defunct 'Rand Daily Mail', has written a passionate liberal view of his friend but it is a deeply disappointing account. There is no doubting his admiration for Sobukwe's personal integrity. But for someone who inspired so many well beyond the confines of PAC membership, whose power, influence and intellect was recognized by friend and foe, it is less Sobukwe's ideas and aspirations but Pogrund's own ideological and theoretical concerns that come to dominate the narrative.

Pogrund's is a partial account: as a white observer of a fundamentally black experience, as a Jewish humanist befriending an African revolutionary. A biography that does justice to the rich contribution of Sobukwe's political life remains to be written. Pogrund's book is the only easily available account, thankfully within its limits it has shown a glimpse of a dedicated commitment to the African struggle for liberation. Amongst the speeches of Sobukwe that Pogrund quotes from is an early expression of the goal still to be achieved:

" Let me plead with you, lover of Africa, to carry with you into the world the vision of a new Africa, an Africa reborn, an Africa rejuvenated, an Africa recreated, young AFRICA. "

i A frika (O Africa!) Izwe Leth (Our Country)

Benjamin Pogrund. *How Can Man Die Better - Sobukwe and Apartheid*
Peter Halban 1990 £14.95

"WAS IT WORTH 25 YEARS?" SOME ASK. BUT THE STRUGGLE IS NOT OVER.

Those who ask, "Was it worth 25 years?" assume the struggle is over. It's far from over. The force of revolutionary nationalism has still to play its hand; the Six counties remain, as does the aspiration and struggle to reunify Ireland. Without the armed resistance the British state would not be edging forwards to the inevitable negotiations. Republican sacrifice has underlined that there can be no internal settlement, no return to Stormont and all that it represented.

Since the 1988 discussion document "A Scenario for Peace", the architect of the peace process has been the Republican movement. The British government has embarked upon a process which they will be unable to control. The ceasefire represents the beginning of another phase of struggle, and not the end of "The Troubles". It is clear that the impetus for peace will not stumble because of Republican action. The responsibility to fail to grasp the opportunity created by the republican movement will lay squarely with either Dublin or London. Dublin's role may be undermined by the fragility of its own ruling coalition. London can reject the process and retreat to the failed practices of the past that could not extinguish the most sustained insurgency in the industrialised world.

Today's republicans have endured because of the support of the nationalist people - 'ordinary people acting under extraordinary circumstances'. 1969 began with demands for decent housing, an end to rigged voting and denial of catholic civil rights - the reaction of the sectarian Stormont was the B Specials and mobs on the street. today no settlement would involve the return to unionist domination, misrule or abuse of democratic rights. Twenty-five years of resistance has ensured there can be no 'internal' settlement. The status quo is not an option.

Major and Mayhew have constantly repeated that Britain had no 'selfish, strategic or economic interest' in the Six Counties, identifying London as the honest broker. The Republican movement correctly identifies the British state's involvement as the principal obstacle to Irish unity. Indeed, the insistence that the will of the North of Ireland majority would be decisive in the future (rather than the will of all the people of Ireland, or even the will of the British people) remains the substantive rock upon which the Republican peace initiative could break. On this Republicans are clear: *the fundamental question of reconciling the two competing claims of sovereignty was impossible* (Gerry Adams, The Guardian, Sept. 10, 1994). However, the loyalists can only be resolved by persuasion. What must be removed is the Westminster guarantee.

The ceasefire declaration has been accompanied by the explanations of the need to 'demilitarise' the political situation, to use mass political struggle - not simply representative politicking - to continue the struggle towards a united Ireland. The Republican movement has a strong social base and international opinion on its side. Sinn Fein should be supported in its call for the British government to support the peace process. We should continue to campaign for the end to British involvement in Irish affairs.

It is Time For Peace! Time for Britain to go!

Issued by the Revolutionary Community League
Boxholder P.O. Box 2665 London N4 3NZ

THE CASE OF PATRICK McLAUGHLIN

In 1985 Patrick McLaughlin, like so many young, unemployed men from Derry, went to England to find work so he could support his wife and four children.

Instead of finding a job, Patrick is today serving a life sentence for an offence he did not commit. He was convicted of "conspiring to cause an explosion" following the discovery of an alleged bomb outside the Chelsea Army Barracks in London in November 1985. The package, which contained the components of a bomb but which forensic evidence was able to show had not been primed, had been claimed by the INLA.

Inside the bag that contained the explosive materials was found some personal documents of a person who lived at a flat in the Harlesden district of London.

The police raided this flat and arrested five people who were afterwards released without charge.

Unfortunately for Patrick McLaughlin he had been at a party in the flat the night before the explosives were discovered. He was arrested some weeks later back in Derry and taken to England for questioning.

He was subsequently charged with conspiracy to cause explosions along with another man. This other man was also from Derry but was living in London at the time. He had met Patrick by chance in a launderette and had invited him to the party in Harlesden.

At Patrick McLaughlin's trial, the prosecution admitted immediately that their case was thin. Prosecution counsel said, "We have no hard evidence to convict this man, but we do have circumstantial evidence and I think when you hear it you will smell a trout". The case against the other man was thrown out for lack of evidence at the start of court proceedings.

The case against Patrick rested on three points:

- 1) It was claimed by the police that Patrick's fingerprint was on a bin-liner discovered surrounding the bomb;
 - 2) A magazine with his name written on it was discovered in a van which the police believed had been used to transport the bomb;
 - 3) He was alleged to have had an incriminating conversation with a police officer, during which he said that he had been aware of the bomb being made at the flat during the party.
- In court, the defence was able to raise serious doubts against all of this alleged evidence.

1) The prosecution was unable to identify where on the black bin-liner Patrick's fingerprint had been found. They said that the identification sticker had been "lost". Only the police therefore can claim to have seen this fingerprint. The prosecution then reluctantly admitted that other fingerprints were on the bag. The defence argued that these prints were those of people who lived in the flat and that the bin-liner was one of a number of innocent items from the Harlesden flat pushed into the bag containing the explosive components.

2) Patrick claimed the magazine had been planted in the van by the police. He insisted he had left it and another magazine at the Harlesden flat. It is unlikely that a member of INLA would leave a magazine bearing his name and address in the back of a van used to transport a bomb. As it happens a key witness who had seen three men working at the van on several occasions was able to positively state in court that Patrick McLaughlin was not one of the three men.

3) Patrick McLaughlin denied the incriminating conversation with the police. Incredibly, the police officer concerned, admitted he had not asked Patrick for the names of the people he allegedly had seen making the bomb. Significantly, the other police officer present at the interview stated in court that he had never heard Patrick say anything about a bomb being made.

4) Witnesses who could have given evidence in support of Patrick's innocence did not appear in court. The police claimed they had traced two people who were at the party to Ireland (a third had left for the USA), but that they were unwilling to give evidence because of alleged threats. Others have suggested that their failure to give evidence was due to a fear of arrest and themselves being implicated. Yet for Patrick their evidence would have demonstrated clearly his innocence. Unfortunately for the defence, these witnesses could not be subpoenaed as they were outside UK jurisdiction.

5) Other key witnesses showed that Patrick was an unlikely INLA member. Father Ryan, who runs a hostel for Irish people in London, was called as a Crown witness. He was expected to identify Patrick as one of two men who had used a false name and address when they had stayed at the hostel. In fact Fr Ryan was able to testify that Patrick had signed in his own name and had stayed in the hostel with his wife who had come to take him home to Derry when his money ran out.

6) The judge at the trial has been severely criticised by both defence lawyers and Patrick's family. His conduct of the trial was by common agreement appalling. In simple matters of

uncontested fact he managed to get it wrong. He said that Patrick was from Belfast. He said that the alleged bomb was planted by the IRA (it had been planted by the INLA). He also conceded to the Crown's wish to introduce evidence unrelated to the case but likely to have a detrimental effect on the jury. For example that Patrick had the letters IRA crudely tattooed on his arm as "proof" that he was an IRA supporter! The judge also introduced other irrelevant but prejudicial matters such as the horrific effects of the Harrods bombing in which six people were killed and dozens injured. Throughout Patrick's testimony he constantly interrupted him in a hostile manner and when it came to his summing up he spent approximately ten hours emphasising the prosecution case against two hours dealing with defence evidence.

After twelve hours of deliberation by the jury, during which they came back to the court four times for further guidance, Patrick McLaughlin was convicted on a majority verdict of ten to two and then only after the judge had used the now discredited "Waldheim" direction to the jury, that is an urgent exhortation to them to bring in a verdict on the grounds that a re-trial would "be a terrible waste of tax-payers' money". As the verdict was announced two of the jury openly wept.

Since his trial Patrick McLaughlin has consistently maintained his innocence as has the rest of his family. The INLA has repeatedly denied that Patrick was one of their members or that he was involved in any way in making or planting a bomb. Indeed, at no stage while he was in London did Patrick act like a member of INLA or as a terrorist. He lived openly, always used his own name, was eventually broke and had to be bailed out by his wife who came to London for a week and then returned to Derry, where he continued to live openly. At no stage did he go on the run.

If Patrick McLaughlin were tried today, he would almost certainly be acquitted. After the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and Judith Ward acquittals, English juries have become more reluctant to convict Irish defendants unless the evidence is overwhelming and compelling. They are right to do so. In 1986 juries assumed that the police had got the right people and willing to convict even in cases where there was little or no evidence. In the cases of the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, Judith Ward, Danny McNamee - and in the case of Patrick McLaughlin - they were wrong.

No political cause can justify sending an innocent man to prison for life, nor can peace in Ireland be achieved by scapegoating Irish people who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Patrick McLaughlin should be freed immediately.

If you wish to know more about
the campaign to free Patrick, contact
THE FRIENDS OF PATRICK McLAUGHLIN,
1 West End Park, Derry BT48 9JF, Ireland.
Telephone (0504) 268846. Fax (0504) 266453



To Public and Press

Free Kani Yilmaz

Mr Kani Yilmaz, PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) European Representative, was arrested and detained on 26 October 1994 while on his way to address a parliamentary meeting at the invitation of John Austin Walker MP.

He has since been detained at a succession of prisons, Paddington Green Police Station, Rochester Prison, Belmarsh Prison and presently Brixton Prison. There have been no charges placed against him. Neither has he been provided with any legal safeguards since the terms of the draconian National Security Provision of the 1971 Immigration Act override all principles of natural justice.

Mr Howard, Home Secretary, in a letter to Mr Jack Straw, Shadow Home Secretary admitted that "Mr Dunlayici [Kani Yilmaz] was **erroneously** given leave to enter the UK although I had **earlier directed** that he should be excluded from the country for reasons of national security, namely his **involvement in terrorist activity.**" (our emphasis).

This leaves a lot to be explained because Mr Yilmaz was ushered through immigration and check-out with full VIP honours by state officers. How come Mr Howard's "direction" was flouted(?), overruled(?) or simply overlooked(?) when the object of the operation was a possible terrorist? Was it a lapse of security or something else?

On 11 November this procedure was suspended and he is being held pending extradition to Germany and/or Turkey. We consider this to be an unlawful action and a political scandal of major proportions in what now appears to be only one of several such actions by the government.

It now appears that it is the German state that wants Mr Yilmaz as a suspected leader of a so-called terrorist organisation (The PKK?). But they are not ready yet. They are still engaged in framing their charges and "evidence".

And now we have it from Turkish media that the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mumtaz Soysal, has demanded the extradition of Mr Yilmaz to Turkey. Turkey has one of the worse records of human rights violations in the world and its admission to the EU has been held up on account of this.

Over the last 22 days, since the arrest of Mr Yilmaz it has become clearer what all the "errors" and confusion are all about: at best, a prolonged legal wrangle preventing Mr Yilmaz from representing his people; at worst, a return to the Turkish state executioners. The plot thickens.

Two million Kurds have been driven out of their homes and 1,700 villages reduced to ashes as the Turkish state wages a war of genocidal proportions against the Kurds living within its borders. Mr Yilmaz represents an organisation which represents the greater part of this nation. Therefore an action against Mr Yilmaz is considered to be an action against the Kurdish nation.

When the present borders in the Middle East were drawn in the 1920s, Britain played a major role in the denial and suppression of the Kurdish people's right to self-determination. The present actions of the British government in relation to Mr Yilmaz further compounds this crime and thereby gives public expression to its policy of criminalising the Kurdish community in this country.

Mr Yilmaz has committed no offence against Britain and we therefore demand that he be immediately and unconditionally released from prison to go the country of his choice.

ERNK
16/11/94

29 October 1994

PKK European Representative Kani Yilmaz:

"...an attempt to defeat the democratic process"

Kani Yilmaz, who is being held in Rochester Prison, made the following statement to Kurdish daily Özgür Ülke.

"I was invited to Britain by John Austin-Walker MP to meet various MPs and officials and to address a parliamentary meeting in Westminster to discuss the prospect of peace and a political solution to the ongoing war in NW Kurdistan. There were no problems on my entry into the UK on 23 October 1994. The immigration officers were aware who I was and the purpose of my visit.

Over the past two years I have traveled extensively to almost every country in Western Europe and on my two previous visits to the UK had not encountered any problems that could justify my suddenly being designated a threat to British national security.

Allegations that I am a terrorist are of course baseless and absolutely unacceptable. I protest against them. I note that no detail has been given of the nature of the threat I am supposed to pose. An official letter written to me from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, now lodged with my solicitor, serves to confirm my legal status. My activities on behalf of my organisation Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) are entirely legal.

I think that the reason I have been subjected to this treatment is due to the intervention of the Turkish authorities. This is an absolutely unacceptable situation. I gather that the Turkish ambassador in London had contacted the authorities and demanded that action should be taken against me. I see what has happened as an attempt to defeat the democratic process and the purposes of dialogue.

The British government is also denying my right to challenge the details of the case against me and preventing the public becoming informed. There are obviously reasons for this. Everything in Turkey is being privatised and being put up for sale. The British authorities may have acted as it did to get its share in the privatisation through some private agreement. This is the first idea that occurred to me.

We have no problems with Britain. On the contrary, we desire friendship and consider Britain a country which can play a significant role in the resolution of the Kurdish question. Therefore we expect Britain to act accordingly. This is all I can say at the moment.

I wish to continue the meetings that I began. Meanwhile I am still being unjustly held pending deportation. If I am to leave Britain, I wish to do so with dignity, to the country of my choice.

The Kurdish people are showing the necessary sensitivity, responding in an appropriate way and will continue to do so. I will also continue my stand. They have no right to try to label me as a "terrorist". I must state that we can not tolerate this approach to the liberation struggle in our country. I stress that friendly relations with Turkey imply approval of the Turkish state massacres of our people and I demand that the order issued against me is immediately withdrawn.

While so many people are being slaughtered and so many villages and forests burnt down in Kurdistan the silence of the international community and the action against me by those who remain silent in face of the cruelty of the Turkish state is an expression of their lack of conscience on the Kurdish question. This action by the British government does not intimidate us.

I demand that this decision is revoked and that the mistake is rectified. I call on international organisations and Kurdish people to respond in an appropriate way to ensure this problem is resolved as soon as possible in a peaceful and proper way."

LEGAL BRIEFING

RE: KANI YILMAZ

On 26th October 1994, Kani Yilmaz was arrested with a view to deportation on National Security grounds. The legal position altered fundamentally on 10th November when he was arrested following an extradition request by the German government. The German Authorities have sought extradition for offences connected with Mr Yilmaz's membership of PKK and related activities.

Mr Yilmaz first appeared before Bow Street Magistrates' Court following his arrest where he was remanded in custody until 17th November. On 17th November a request was made by the prosecution for an adjournment of the proceedings to 28th November, 18 days after his arrest, to enable the prosecution to obtain from the German government the necessary "requisition". This is normal legal procedure in extradition cases. Once the requisition has been received, the prosecution have to obtain authority to proceed from the Secretary of State. Thereafter, a full hearing is fixed in the Magistrates' Court.

At the full hearing, the prosecution does not need to prove that there is a case to answer in respect of the charges on which Germany seeks extradition.

The defences available to Mr Yilmaz in fighting the application for extradition are contained in the 1989 Extradition-Act. He would have to show either that:-

- a) The requisition for his surrender has in fact been made with a view to try to punish him on account of his race, religion, nationality or political opinions; or
- b) That he might, if surrendered, be prejudiced at his trial

or punished, detained or restricted in his personal liberty by reason of his race, religion, nationality or political opinions.

Evidence in support of these two contentions will have to be produced at the hearing.

It is understood that a request for extradition has also been made by Turkey though the position on this is unclear at the present moment

(YILMAS.LEGAL)
18.11.94

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

PALESTINE : FREEDOM STILL DISTANT

In the spotlight of international media coverage, Israeli bulldozers stopped tearing up the land on a hill adjacent to the ancient Palestinian village of *Al Khadr* at the beginning of January. But the villagers' victory was hollow, writes *David Evans*, the bulldozers were moved to another hill closer to the settlement of Efrat, where they started to rip up another part of Khadr's land.

At the present time, there are protests every week in different areas of the West Bank against settlement construction. The fact that this is continuing highlights the critical faults in the agreement signed by Israel and the PLO in September 1993. Widely hailed at the time as a major step towards peace, it was seen as an agreement which reflected a "pragmatic" approach by both parties: they had signed accords in which the simpler issues were addressed, and agreed to put off consideration of the more difficult questions of refugees, settlements, borders and Jerusalem until a later stage of "final status" negotiations.

The picture now looks very different. Many of the warnings of the Oslo Accords' critics have been confirmed. Israel has pulled its troops out of the densely populated areas of the Gaza Strip, where its soldiers were being steadily demoralised by Palestinian resistance. It has secured a peace treaty with Jordan: the PLO was unhappy about this, but did not have a leg to stand on as it had already made its own unilateral agreement with the Zionist state. The Israeli government is now trying to define the shape of the "final status" agreement which it will seek to force upon the PLO by taking measures to pre-empt negotiation.

Those which are at present at the forefront of Palestinian concerns focus on the settlement issue. The Rabin government is seeking to consolidate key blocs of Israeli settlements by seizing more land, giving the go-ahead to fresh housing construction, and building roads to link the settlements to Israel which will by-pass Palestinian towns and villages. To these ends, it has seized 40,000 acres of land in the West Bank since September 1993. The priority has gone to securing Israel's grip on East Jerusalem, which Palestinians want to be the capital of an independent Palestinian state. The Labour government has, in the recent past, approved the construction of homes for another 30,000 Jews around East Jerusalem -- Housing policy really does operate this way in Israel: housing is earmarked for specific national groups, not simply put up and made available to all comers.

Meanwhile, at the UN, Israel is lobbying Western governments to get the organisation to drop resolutions re-affirming Palestinian rights and criticising Israel. It would particularly like to end the annual re-affirmation of the principles set out in Resolution 194, which declared that the Palestinians turned into refugees in 1948 must be enabled to return home or receive compensation. Supported by the USA, it has declared that it will not consider this resolution in negotiations on the refugee issue, which directly affects three out of every five Palestinian - those who were expelled from their lands in 1948 and their descendents.

Things look very grim for the Palestinians in the near future. The PLO leaders around Yasser Arafat are in the position of having to try to exercise control over their own people's resistance to continuing Israeli occupation, but in so doing, they weaken further the pressure on Israel to clear out of the lands it occupied in 1967 completely. If in deference to Palestinian feelings, they do not clamp down severely, then the Israeli opposition parties and elements in the government then say that Israel should not withdraw from any more land because the PLO cannot be trusted to keep its word. It is a wretched position to be in, and largely of Yasser Arafat's own making.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that Palestinian criticism of the accords and their selective implementation has become louder. All Palestinians want to avoid conflicts which might escalate into a civil war and opposition within the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been forced to establish some form of *modus vivendi* with the Palestinian National Authority whose very legitimacy many people challenge.

Attempts to establish an effective united front of opponents of the Oslo accords have failed. The Islamists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and the secular leftists of the PFLP and DFLP tried to construct a ten party alliance, but could not fix a coherent set of aims and organisational structure. They were unable to put forward a coherent collective alternative nor have they offered long term proposals for carrying forward the Palestinian people's struggle. It hardly needs pointing out that simply reiterating opposition to the PLO-Israel deal does not offer the necessary alternatives: indeed, that can be an excuse for doing nothing positive.

A common programme could have been so general as to be useless or a compromise of some factions' basic principles: risking it losing credibility with its own supporters. If the PFLP and DFLP had declared their acceptance of Islamist principles in order to please Hamas, Islamists would not have believed them, and most of their committed supporters would have felt betrayed.

In addition, the front could not have embraced the substantial number of Fatah supporters who are dissatisfied with the accords, the Palestine People's Party (which backed the Oslo agreement critically, but opposed subsequent agreements), the "Third Force" headed by prominent figures such as Abdel Shafi or the large number of Palestinians not affiliated with any organisation who feel unhappy with the agreement. This amounts to a body of dissident opinion probably encompassing a larger section of the Palestinian people than all the factions of the abortive ten party alliance.

Resistance does continue, however, both violent and non-violent. While many see the Oslo Accords and the Palestinian National Authority which came out of them as realities which they have to deal with, they are more and more critical of them, and are pushing for full Israeli withdrawal and the freedom to exercise their national rights - including the right of the exiles to return - irrespective of the bartering going on between Israel and the empty-handed Palestinian negotiators appointed by Arafat.

For analysis and news on the Palestinian struggle, an annual subscription to PALESTINE SOLIDARITY is £ 3 from PSC, Box BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX.