

The victory scored in the case of the Bradford 12 has not deterred the British State from seeking to criminalise all opposition to its rule. The case now looms of five Welsh patriots who are to be charged with offences under the Explosive Substances Act. Their defence must be the cause of all democratic people in Britain. The article that follows is mainly taken from material supplied by the Welsh Political Prisoners Defence Committee.

During the past two years 13 bombs have been planted at political targets in England and Wales. Most of the bombs were defused, no-one has been injured, and there has been minimal damage to property. Until April this year no-one has been charged with any offences relating to these bombs.

A previously unheard-of group called the Workers' Army of the Welsh Republic has claimed responsibility for the last six bombs. Two of these were fire bombs found at two South Wales targets during the visit of Prince Charles and his wife last October: at the army recruiting centre at Pontypridd and at the Wales HQ of the British Steel Corporation in Cardiff. At the beginning of January 1982 explosive devices damaged windows at the Severn-Trent Water Authority offices in Birmingham, and at the National Coal Board pensions and investment fund offices off Fleet Street in London. During that weekend another explosive device was defused at the Stratford-on-Avon offices of property group International Designers and Constructors, of which Denis Thatcher is a well-known consultant and lobbyist for second home schemes in Wales. The most recent fire bomb exploded at Welsh Office Agricultural Department offices in Cardiff during the first

# Welsh Nationalists under attack

weekend of March.

In a letter to the South Wales Echo (27.10.81) the Workers' Army say that they will "attack all aspects of English cultural, economic and political rule including the recruitment of unemployed Welsh youth to carry out English repression in Northern Ireland and elsewhere."

Early in January police officers from Scotland Yard, City of London, West Midlands, Warwickshire and South Wales forces met in Birmingham to co-ordinate their efforts to uncover WAWR. Towards the end of April and throughout May they questioned and released at least 13 people, and charged a further five with offences under the Explosive Substances Act, 1883. All those questioned and/or charged deny involvement in the bombing campaign but admit to membership of Plaid Cymru Youth Movement and/or the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement, which are legitimate political organisations.

WPPDC

The Welsh Political Prisoners' Defence Committee was established on May 13th 1982 to co-ordinate defence strategy during the 6-12 month period up to the trial, publicise the circumstances of the police investigations, and liaise between prisoners, lawyers, parents, supporters and the political groups and parties involved. WPPDC members include prisoners'

parents and relatives, various civil liberties and political organisations, including Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement, around which police questioning centred.

Those charged under the Explosive Substances Act 1883 are:

DAVID BURNS, a 23 year old computer programmer, under section 3 (for the bomb at Pontypridd army recruiting office on October 24th, 1981).

NICHOLAS HODGES, a 22 year old clerk, under section 3 (for the bomb at the BSC Welsh HQ in Cardiff on October 26-29th 1981, and the bomb at the Welsh Office agricultural department offices in Cardiff on 7th March 1982).

JENNY SMITH, a 28 year old student, under section 4 (for possession of explosive substances - see Police Evidence below).

ADRIAN STONE, a 22 year old unemployed man, under section 4 (for possession of explosive substances - see below) and under section 3 (for the bomb at the Welsh Office agricultural department offices in Cardiff on March 7th).

GARETH WESTACOTT, a 27 year old attendant at St Fagan's Museum, under section 3 (for the Pontypridd army recruiting office bomb on 24th October 1981).

These are serious charges which require the Attorney-

General's permission to proceed (the Attorney-General's office is likely to take a month or more to consider the papers). Maximum sentences on conviction are 14 years for possession of explosives and 20 years for causing explosions.

At present 4 of the 5 are held in custody. Jenny Smith is on bail, but she has to report to the police every day and is followed by Special Branch.

## POLICE EVIDENCE

The police do not have to outline the prosecution evidence until committal proceedings in the magistrates' court in 2-3 months' time. The Crown Court trial is likely to be held in 6-12 months' time. The police have obtained signed statements from two of the five prisoners. Because we don't want to prejudice the defence case when it comes to court, we cannot discuss the content of these statements, nor the police methods used to obtain them or the pressure applied in attempts to gain other statements of confession or incrimination. In general, we can state that the Judges' Rules on criminal procedure provide such limited protection and can be so broadly interpreted by the police that the Rules did not hamper the police investigations.

Other evidence listed by the police includes a soldering iron, pliers, wire, a circuit board (a free gift from an electronics magazine), batteries, a circuit tester, pestle and mortar, a pencil torch minus bulb, a torch bulb, cotton wool, a reel of black insulation tape, and small lengths of blue, brown and black insulation tape. These are all household items which can be found in various combinations in many homes, as can sodium chlorate (more commonly known as non-flammable weed-

killer) and hexamine (fire-lighters) ... the mysterious chemical names sound much more dramatic!

It is quite likely that the Director of Public Prosecutions will initiate proceedings for conspiracy charges against the prisoners in addition to the current serious charges.

## CAMPAIGN

WPPDC is committed to a campaign:

- for the charges to be dropped
- to publicise police methods of investigation
- to co-ordinate a strong legal defence
- to support the prisoners and their families by providing for their welfare in and out of jail
- to keep the trial in Wales
- to oppose jury vetting

The defence of the five comrades is a very important question for all those concerned with national self-determination, the struggle of the working class and democratic rights. As with the struggle of the Irish people and the national minorities, the British State aims to criminalise the oppressed who fight back. They aim to smash the growing Welsh Republican Movement: to present it as a criminal conspiracy. They seek to intimidate the Welsh working class, prevent the revival of its revolutionary traditions in a period of deep crisis, and crush its spirit of freedom.

The Revolutionary Communist League is committed to supporting the fightback being organised by the Welsh Political Prisoners' Defence Committee who can be contacted at: The Secretary, WPPDC, 175 Mackintosh Place, Roath, Cardiff.