

# BRADFORD 12

## VICTORY SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE



Defendants after the verdict.

July 1982

"Class Struggle"  
Correspondent

12 young Asians in the dock at Leeds Crown Court won a major political victory on Wednesday 16 June when the state failed in its attempt to gaoil them. They had been charged with "Making explosives with intent to endanger life and property" and "Conspiracy to cause explosions with intent to endanger life and property."

have been systematically attacked by racist thugs. The police have just let this go on: they're claiming not to know of any racist attacks - as they did during the trial of the Bradford 12, after the murder of a black taxi driver in Bradford and a number of other, obviously racist attacks. They've ignored reports from black people about such attacks, and have not made any effort to catch the thugs who carry them out.

A succession of defence wit-



If found 'guilty' they could have been sent down for life. Instead, they were acquitted on all the charges.

The Police had claimed that the defendants had made petrol bombs and planned to use them in a 'riot'. They claimed that the 12 had intended to launch an assault on Bradford City Centre with the intention of burning down big stores and attacking the police.

### PIG IGNORANCE

The defence was clear. National minority communities

nesses, including the President of Southall IWA, the editor of the "Daily Jang" and a councillor from Luton who is a member of a Community Defence Committee, built up a picture of racist violence across Britain and police passivity in the face of black calls to put a stop to it. But the other side of the picture was the growing unity of the black national minorities in the face of such attacks, and this too was shown in the courtroom.

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The trial turned into a trial of the racist state and presented a forceful political statement of the right of black people to organise and fight in their own defence.

The claims of the police, their prosecutor and the judge that this was not a political trial was belied by the open, forthright and vigorous political defence put forward by the Bradford 12.

## THE CAMPAIGN

The legal defence in the courtroom had solid support in the campaign waged outside court by the Bradford 12 Defence Campaign.

Campaigning groups were established in many towns and their activities brought widespread publicity to the case. The campaign organised support in the public gallery of the courtroom every day and regular pickets and demonstrations.

One defendant was released on the Judge's direction at the end of the prosecution.

When the jury rejected, by 11 votes to 1, the entire police story and their claims that the trial was not political, the courtroom erupted into unprecedented scenes as the defendants, lawyers and observers cheered and applauded the Jury.

The Jury clearly accepted the defendants' argument that they acted in self-defence and that was no offence.

The National minority communities have declared their unity and their intention to defend themselves. They have now won a major battle to es-

tablish that right in the face of vicious opposition from the state.

The Revolutionary Communist League consistently supported the Campaign to free the 12. We join with all others who took part in the work in applauding this victory, a victory not just for the 12 brothers but also for the democratic rights of all national minority and working people.

## SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE!

### INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

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*In our last two issues, we have reported on the international solidarity activities with the Bradford 12.*

*Subsequent to those reports, "Concret", the newspaper of the Party of Labour of Belgium, again gave coverage to the trial. A Tamil language daily paper in Sri Lanka reported on the solidarity work of the Sri Lanka Communist Party (Left). "Unity", newspaper of the United States League of Revolutionary Struggle (Marxist-Leninist) extended support, as did the Working People's Alliance of Guyana, Workers' Party of Jamaica, All-India Co-ordinating Committee of Working Women, Indian People's Association of North America, Democrazia Proletaria of Italy and progressive organisations in France. In Ireland, both Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Socialist Party gave their support. Na Fianna Eireann, the youth wing of the Republican movement, organised a petition, in support of the 12, and calling for the charges to be dropped.*