

THE WOMEN'S UNION OF BRITAIN

**DOCUMENTS OF  
THE FOUNDING  
CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
WOMEN'S UNION  
OF BRITAIN  
- March 6, 1982 -**

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Price 40p

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# Photographs from the Founding Conference of Women's Union of Britain



A Representative of the Preparatory Committee reads the Founding Statement to the Conference.



A delegate making one of the many contributions to the Conference.



The red banner of the Women's Union of Britain is raised to mark the historic event of the formation of the organisation.



The Representative of the Women's Front Denmark is applauded by the Conference.



Voting on the Draft Constitution.



Representative of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) addresses the Conference.

## Founding Statement of the Women's Union of Britain Unanimously Adopted at the Founding Conference

Today, delegates from all over the country have gathered together to form the Women's Union of Britain. This is an historic occasion for the women workers and the broad masses of women of Britain. This is because for years women have been demanding and striving to build their own genuine fighting organisation, an organisation which upholds and carries forward their best traditions, an organisation which stands for the uncompromising defence of the rights of women and for the genuine and complete emancipation of women. Such an organisation is being founded here today with the formation of the Women's Union of Britain.

The work for the founding of the Women's Union began just over a year ago with the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for a Revolutionary Women's Union in Britain in March 1981. Since the founding of the Preparatory Committee important preparations have been organised for the realisation of this historic event today. These preparations have included the production of the regular organ of the Preparatory Committee, "Voice of Women", which has been sold in many cities and gained definite support; the building of local committees of the Preparatory Committee, which have begun active work for the organising of women on a revolutionary basis; the organising of discussion meetings in a number of areas to discuss the tasks facing the women's movement; the holding of the National Delegate Conference on December 5, 1981, which consolidated the organised support around the Preparatory Committee, and clarified a number of important questions facing the women's movement, and which took the historic decision to found the national women's organisation and which elected the enlarged

Preparatory Committee to realise this decision.

The Preparatory Committee considers that the time is now ripe to form the Women's Union of Britain. On the one hand the objective situation in the country demands the formation of such an organisation, as manifested by the increasing attacks which are being launched against the rights of women, as manifested by the demands of women for the realisation of their aspiration for genuine emancipation. On the other hand, very clear lines of demarcation have been drawn in the women's movement, and the Preparatory Committee, through the work it has organised over the past year, has created very definite conditions and a very definite basis for the founding of the Women's Union. The Preparatory Committee congratulates all the women who have come forward to make very definite contributions to bring about this important event and hails the fighting women of Britain, who have never slackened their struggle for the defence of their rights and for their genuine emancipation.

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## Section A

### **The Serious Situation Confronting Women Workers and the Broad Masses of Women**

#### **THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

Women are half the population of Britain, they are a militant, determined and fighting section of the people; they are a major part of the productive forces of society; they are the mothers of the future generation of workers and people. Women seek and demand a better life, a life without imperialism, war, exploitation and oppression, a life where women are respected, have an equal place alongside men, a life where the rights of women, as with the rights of all workers and working people, are fully respected in words and deeds.

This sentiment and aspiration of women is manifested in the heroic struggles waged by women in Britain and throughout the world; in the manner in which women have stood in the front ranks of the people fighting for their rights against the common enemies, and for democracy, progress and freedom; in the manner in which women have stood in the front ranks in the development of all the aspects of society.

Through these struggles of the women and through the development of society, women have made certain advances in the struggle for their rights. In Britain, for example, women have won definite gains over the conditions of the past; women increasingly participate in the economic, political and social life of the country; women have forced governments to recognise, even if only in words, the necessity of women's equality with men; women have gained certain advances in relation to certain social rights and so on and so forth. But despite the many years of glorious struggle waged by women, despite the advances which have been gained, despite the endless "promises" by different governments of the day, despite all these things, two things remain vividly clear. Firstly, that women have not gained their emancipation, and secondly, that the attacks on women, far from decreasing, are daily escalating.

The situation facing women in modern capitalist society in

Britain is that they remain very much, doubly exploited, robbed and oppressed – suffering further robbery, exploitation and oppression as a result of their being women, over and above that which they suffer as workers, as part of the labouring masses. Women still suffer every kind of abuse, indignity, discrimination, subjugation, humiliation, debasement, exploitation and attack. The situation facing women is that these attacks, abuses and discrimination are all increasing, that alongside all workers and oppressed people, the women and their children and families face the most serious of situations with the further impoverishment and the growing dangers of fascism and war.

The situation facing women in Britain is becoming steadily worse, with many of the gains of the past, won in the course of the struggles against the exploiters, increasingly being lost.

### ATTACKS ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

On the economic front a most serious situation faces the women, as with the entire working class and people. They are a target of attack on all fronts. Economically women are doubly exploited and oppressed, – exploited and oppressed as wage slaves and as women. Women workers are found in the worst jobs with the worst conditions; they are discriminated against on all fronts, unequal in all aspects of work, pay, conditions and rights, as seen in the different rates of pay between men and women workers, as seen in the lack of opportunities for women, as seen in the massive unemployment amongst women workers, and so on.

Women are a source of cheap labour for the bourgeoisie, a means to maximise its profits, and it is this which forms the basis for the economic exploitation of the women.

There are many examples.

Women make up 42% of the total workforce but the majority work in those sectors of the economy characterised by very low rates of pay and the worst, most exploitative conditions. For example, 54% of all women manual workers are employed in catering, cleaning, hairdressing and other personal services, 18% in light assembly, packaging and inspection work. Women predominate in those jobs which are categorised as "women's work" but in all of which low pay and bad conditions prevail. A recent Report of the Low Pay Unit revealed that certain

industries which are characterised by very low rates of pay were also those industries which were the biggest employers of women workers – such as for example textiles, clothing and footwear, and food and drink manufacture. The fact that women workers predominate in those industries shows that they are a source of cheap labour for the bourgeoisie. The amount of profit which the rich make out of low pay to women and the discrimination against them, whereby they are restricted to certain sectors of industry, is phenomenal. It is calculated that 11,000 firms who employ an estimated 2 million women workers at low rates of pay gain an extra £22 million in profits in this way.

Women workers have always been paid less than men, and the discrimination against women on this front again ensures maximum profits for the bourgeoisie. In 1981 the average wage for women was still only 72% of men's and, whereas 76% of men earned £100 or more a week, only 30% of women earned this. Last year the average basic wage was £153.10 for male non-manual workers as compared to £93.60 for women; for women in manual jobs the average was £64.80 as compared to £93.60 for male manual workers. In 1978 the low pay commission investigated how many women workers were receiving rates of pay below the official poverty line (which was £60 per week). What they found was that 66.6% of skilled and 48% of unskilled women workers, earned below £60, whereas the corresponding figures for men were 9.6% and 6.6%. (It is also to be noted that all these figures are based on government statistics, which always inflate the "average" wage of workers, because for example, the average is taken from all wages including those of top management, etc.)

Britain has the highest percentage of part-time workers of any country in Western Europe, and the vast majority of these are women workers. Whilst this is justified as being "in the interests" of the women workers, conveniently "fitting in with their responsibilities to the family" and "hours which children come and go to school" and so forth, in fact the basis of it is that women part-time workers are massively discriminated against on the front of pay. There are over 4 million part-time women workers in Britain and their pay is 55% of the full-time pay. Not only this, but they are also discriminated against on the front of rights – their rights at work, job protection, benefits and

pensions, etc.

Similarly there are at present over 2 million women who work at home, often working up to 60 hours a week and earning as little as 50-75 pence an hour. Many women are employed as shopworkers, working long hours, at low rates of pay and suffering many indignities and abuses in terms of their status and rights. According to one survey, in April 1979, only 15% of home workers earned as much as £1 an hour (which is what the lowest 10% of the female workforce earns). As the crisis deepens and employers step up their exploitation of all the workers more and more employers are shifting work which used to be done in the factories to home workers and much more work is now being done in women's homes. Home workers are amongst the most exploited of women workers; many of them are national minority women. The profits made from articles made by home workers is enormous. The employers have no overheads – lighting, heating, electricity, etc.; the laws on health and safety which are supposed to operate in workplaces partially cover home workers but are not implemented; home workers are isolated from other workers, often themselves having to pay their employers for the hire of machinery to do their work.

Young girls face a serious situation. One-in-three are without any means of employment and face the prospect of a life on the dole. Others who have jobs, are super-exploited in the factories and work-places of the rich, their youth being the pretext for paying them such low rates of pay.

In order to maintain their profits, the capitalist concerns have, as the crisis deepens, been greatly reducing their workforces, throwing workers out onto the streets in many cases closing down whole factories, in order to cut costs, produce goods more cheaply and increase their competitiveness with other capitalist firms. The massive unemployment which is created as a result affects all the workers. Women in particular – who were brought into the workforce at such a large rate during and after the first and second world wars – are in the present crisis being thrown out of work at a rapid rate. Between 1971 and 1980, unemployment amongst women rose by 414%, compared to an increase of 84% for men. Women are especially hard hit at times of crisis and with unemployment at its highest since the 30s, it is estimated that at least a million women are without

work; one in three young women has no job and the unemployment amongst women is used as a lever against the jobs, wages, working conditions of the other workers.

Whilst the most serious problems face the unemployed workers, the pressure, insecurity and competition created by the existence of so many unemployed is used by the capitalists to force worse conditions and wages upon workers who still have a job. As with all workers there are many examples, in industries, schools, hospitals, where the capitalists are throwing women out of work and then forcing the remaining women to work twice as hard and cover the work of those who have been thrown out. Thus in the factories and the workplaces the rate of work is being constantly increased. For example, in a recent struggle of women cleaners in Scotland, the employers tried to sack a number of them and then force those women remaining to sign a new contract, involving a cut in wages, an increase in the work which they had to do and reduction in the time they had to do it in. The women were threatened that if they didn't "agree" to the new contract, new rates of pay and increase in their workloads, they too would be thrown out of their jobs and more women would be easily available from the "dole" queue. This example is typical of the attacks which are taking place throughout the country.

Similarly, by increasing the competition for jobs the bourgeoisie hopes to lower the wages of the women still further. Many women report that, when they have applied for jobs, not only are there, in some cases, hundreds of applicants, but also that the standard rate of pay which existed formerly, no longer applies; instead they are asked by the employers how much they would be "prepared to accept", the inference being that the women who ask for the "least" are those who will be employed. Thus, as with all the workers, the capitalists are trying to drive down the already low rates of pay of the women workers still further. Similarly it is a fact that many women workers are being thrown out of their jobs only to find themselves replaced by youth on government employment schemes. These youth are themselves being paid the lowest of wages, while the firms are being paid to employ them.

## THE BURDEN OF THE CAPITALIST CRISIS IS BEING FOISTED ONTO THE BACKS OF THE WORKING CLASS AND THE WOMEN, ON ALL FRONTS

Ever increasing cuts in social and welfare services are taking place, causing disastrous consequences for the workers and their families and the women as well. Hospitals are being closed; the health care and health provisions are being cut back; housing programmes have been greatly reduced and in many cases stopped altogether; nurseries and schools are being closed. This is creating a serious situation for the women and their families, a situation of worsening living conditions, increasing homelessness, the deterioration of the health of women and their families (aggravated by the increased pressure and stepped-up exploitation at work), less and less health care provisions for the women and children, and a lowering of the standards of those provisions which exist, and a drop in the level of education, facilities and care for children. For example, children and adults are dying of diseases and illnesses where the cure exists and is well known to medical science, but where the provisions for treatment have been wiped out by the cuts. Thus doctors report that they are forced into a position where children are condemned to die because of "lack of money".

Recently there was the case of a cancer treatment research unit which had painstakingly gathered facts on the causes of childhood leukaemia since the fifties. It was the only research of the kind to be carried out in this country or elsewhere and it was close to the achievement of important results and conclusions. Despite all this, it reported that, unless funding from charity (not from the government which had just cut its grant) was found, the research unit would have to close. A hospital in Leeds, recently reported that children who were desperately in need of operations could not be operated on because of the lack of nurses and the inability to provide post-operative intensive care. It is well known that children and adults who suffer from kidney disease are dying because there is not enough money available for kidney transplants or kidney machines for dialysis. Many other examples exist where it is clear that the health of the women and children and of the people as a whole is suffering greatly, resulting in unnecessary deaths in many cases, because of

the cuts in health care. Britain has one of the worst records in infant mortality in Europe because of the serious lack of provisions for the care of pregnant women; women in Britain receive the lowest maternity benefits in Europe, and so on.

Similarly in education the cuts result in the closure of schools and nurseries. The demand for nursery facilities is overwhelming. A survey of working mothers in 1979 revealed that four out of five wanted to go out to work and, with the crisis increasing, large numbers of women not only want to work but must work if their families are not to go further into poverty; in many cases now the woman is the sole earner in the family. Nursery provisions have never been adequate, but with the crisis they have been further reduced and, in many cases, wiped out altogether. Thus, for example, the number of children attending nurseries full-time fell in the two years up to 1977 from 20% to 11% in England, from 28% to 20% in Wales, and from 8% to 6% in Scotland. Since this, provisions have been cut back still further, and state-run nursery provisions are almost non-existent for the majority of women.

As well as depriving children of a necessary educational and social facility, the cuts in nursery provisions are having the effect of forcing women back into the confinement of and isolation of the home, preventing them from going out to work, and increasing the hardship of working-class families. Correspondingly, the propaganda of the government, capitalist press, etc., is justifying these attacks on women – the denial of their right to a livelihood, their right to good educational facilities for their children and their right to nursery provisions – by saying that the "true place for women is in fact in the home", and that it is "the responsibility of the individual woman" to look after her children and not the responsibility of the state to provide such services. This propaganda is designed to force women to accept all this, to withdraw to the confines and isolation of the home and give up fighting for their rights. Such propaganda is of course never directed at the rich, who leave their children in the care of "nannies" and at nursery schools, boarding schools, preparatory schools, etc., where excellent conditions and facilities exist.

The cuts in health, education and so on are being made by the government under the fraud that the "country" cannot afford such provisions any more, that in the conditions of the crisis the

workers must reduce their expectations of a "good life" for themselves and their families, that the women cannot expect to "receive" such things as nurseries for their children, educational material, good health care, etc.; that now is the time for everyone to "tighten their belts". But whilst the cuts are being made in all these areas which primarily affect the lives and well-being of the workers, the working-class women and their families, rapidly increasing amounts are being paid out to the big banks, to the financiers, to the rich, in the form of government debt repayments, preparations for war, the strengthening of the army and the police force, in handouts to the big monopolies, and so on.

The fact is that the women (as with the rest of the working class) are being subject to increasing attacks as the crisis deepens. This is seen in particular in unemployment, in the low wages paid to women, in the worsening working conditions, in the lack of provisions for health care and education, and in the worsening general living conditions of working-class families. These attacks are being carried out to further increase the exploitation of the women and the workers as a whole, bringing increasing impoverishment and worsening living conditions for the women and their families at the same time as profits for the capitalist increase.

#### **THE INCREASING POLITICAL ATTACKS BEING MADE ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

Combined with these attacks on the economic front and combined with the economic exploitation and oppression of the women, are the attacks and discrimination against them socially, culturally and politically. Even on the bourgeoisie's own terms women have been discriminated against politically, as illustrated by the fact that there have never been more than 27 women MPs in the Houses of Parliament.

In all manner of ways, women's political and legal rights are limited and violated over and above the restriction of the rights to which all the working and oppressed people are subject. The past few years have seen great efforts by the capitalists to further restrict the rights and freedoms of the workers and people and of the women. These measures are aimed at enforcing the attacks against the people, and limiting and weakening their

struggles and their ability to defend their rights and interests. The recently passed Employment Act, which attacks the rights of the workers to strike and take action in defence of their interests, also includes an additional attack on the rights of women workers. In particular the Employment Act restricts the right of women to return to work after having a child and makes it easier for the employer, to employ someone else in their place; it also makes it more difficult for women to get paid during the time when they are pregnant and need additional medical care.

Similarly many other rights of women are under attack. Unemployed women with young families who are looking for work are being threatened that if they cannot produce evidence that they have childcare facilities already arranged then they are "not available for work" and cannot claim unemployment benefit. Women who claim social security are similarly subjected to all manner of degrading questions and abuse under the government's so-called "campaign to stop fraud". Women who claim benefit under the social security system are subjected to intensive questioning about their personal lives; state spies are frequently set on them; their neighbours are interrogated and they are openly threatened with prosecution. Many of the women harassed in this way are mothers of single-parent families – unmarried, divorced or separated from their husbands. These harassments, carried out under the pretext "of making fathers bear the responsibility for maintaining their children" are aimed by the state at avoiding having to pay anything towards the upkeep of the women and their children. This is part of the increasing attacks on all unemployed workers and people.

Also at this time the state is increasing its repressive powers. Increased powers are being given to the police and the courts. An increasing number of laws are being passed further restricting the rights of the people. There is an increasing trend towards fascism in society. Thus, for example, increasing numbers of women are being sent to jail, and the conditions to which they are subjected, and the abuses which they suffer inside the prisons, are worsening. In 1979 for example of the 1,706 women who were imprisoned, over one-third of them were for non-payment of fines and over a third for theft (mainly shoplifting). More women who were "first-time" offenders were sent to jail even though they had families or were pregnant. Inside the

prisons the women face all kinds of abuses and humiliations at the hands of the prison authorities. Furthermore, to stop the women fighting against the attacks, the authorities threaten them that if they do not "behave" they will be denied visits from their children, or that the children will be taken into care and they will never get them back again. Also the authorities use pacifying drugs widely and threaten prisoners that if they do not take them they will lose still more of their rights.

As well as the increasing attacks of the state, its institutions, the increasing repressive laws and measures, the violence the state carries out against the women, the activities of the fascist movement and organisations are also increasing. Racist murders and attacks on national minority women and their children, as well as on national minority workers in general, are increasing. The most barbarous crimes are being carried out, such as the recent murder of a mother and her three children when a racist gang firebombed their house in East London.

Under the racist laws and the recently passed British Nationality Act, national minority people are faced with the attacks of the racist British state. Women and children are deported, children are separated from their mothers and families are divided; national minority women have been subjected to racist "virginity" tests by immigration officials; "blood tests" have been carried out allegedly to establish that children "really are" the children of their parents, and so on. All kinds of racist abuses, harassment and attacks are being carried out by the British state. National minority women and the national minority community are the target of these attacks. A most serious situation faces national minority women, who, as part of the working class, are triply exploited and oppressed; they are exploited as wage slaves, as national minorities and as women.

With the increasing development of fascism and the degeneration of capitalist society, with the deepening of the capitalist crisis, the number of violent crimes against women is on the increase, and recent figures show that 25% of all reported crimes of violence are against women. These crimes are reported daily in the press and on television in such a way as to further promote such violence against women. The propaganda for these crimes, far from doing anything to prevent them, glorifies the violence against women and incites further attacks against them. At the

same time, the press, TV and film propaganda which the bourgeoisie produces (a highly profitable industry for them), depicts women as sexual objects, portraying all manner of abuses and perversions against them, thus creating the climate and conditions for the escalation of such attacks against women.

The rich and their state make the violence against women the pretext to give the most reactionary calls for more repression of the people, including repression of the women who make any attempt to oppose the violence carried out against them. For example, in recent demonstrations against the attacks, plain-clothes police and the Special Patrol Group were used to attack the demonstrators and a number of women were arrested.

The violence against women is also used by the rich to create a climate of fear and insecurity amongst the women. It is put forward that, as the streets are so unsafe, "the safest place for women to be is in the home". This aims to reduce the women to passivity and prevent them from struggling for their rights. The bourgeoisie also uses the increasing violence against women in its attempts to mobilise a section of them onto the side of the bourgeoisie, to encourage them to join the army and the police (the repressive machinery of the state which carries out violence against the working class and people).

Politically women are educated and brought up to believe that "politics is a man's business", that women are "inferior" and do not have the same capabilities as men, and every kind of backward, reactionary view of women is propagated. These reactionary ideas and views on women are carried throughout the capitalist society, embodied in all its institutions and continuously propagated through its media. And thus, the bourgeoisie tries to force both women and the working class as a whole, both men and women, to accept the bourgeoisie's reactionary concepts that women are "inferior", the "weaker sex", and so on. The bourgeoisie has elevated into a theory the most unscientific views on women, for example, that it can be "proved" that women are "inferior" to men; and, through such ideologues as Freud and Jung and their successors, the bourgeoisie has sought to convince women that they are "inadequate", "inferior", unable to fulfil more than a domestic role in society, etc., all in order to keep women exploited and oppressed, to stop them taking up the struggle in defence of their

rights and for genuine emancipation, in a vain attempt to write off half of mankind.

From these few examples it is vividly clear that women have not won their emancipation, that they remain doubly oppressed and exploited, they continue to suffer every kind of abuse, indignity and attack.

### **THE CLASS BASIS OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION**

What then, is the basis, the cause of this oppression, these abuses and indignities against women? It is the class nature of the economic and political system. It lies in the fact that the economic and political power is in the hands of a handful of exploiters. It lies in the very nature of the system of exploitation of man by man.

Through the scientific study of the development of society, Marx and Engels showed that the "bondage of women is connected with the appearance of private property". Before the emergence of private property, women were equal alongside men, they suffered no oppression from men or society at large. It was the emergence of private property which led to the overthrow of mother right in the family, which led to the defeat of the female sex, the degrading and enslavement of women – their position in society being reduced to that of a mere instrument for producing children. Since that time – through slave society, through feudal society, and through capitalist society – women have continuously suffered the most barbarous exploitation and oppression, suffered double exploitation and oppression. Under the capitalist system of today, at the heart of which is private property and the exploitation of man by man, the robbery, exploitation and oppression have weighed heavily on all the people, but they have weighed most acutely on women. It is the capitalist system which gives rise to crime, corruption, degradation and violence against all the working and oppressed people and in particular to crime, corruption, degradation and violence against women. This profoundly anti-woman character of the capitalist system, its state, its institutions and politicians, etc., was clearly demonstrated recently when a judge declared that a woman who had been savagely assaulted was herself "guilty of contributory neglect". By inventing this category, unheard of even in bourgeois law, the judge brought out precisely

the deep-rooted, anti-woman nature and stance of the capitalist order.

Today, this class basis of women's oppression is most vividly apparent: the double exploitation and oppression of women is a cornerstone of the capitalist system. To give just three examples of this: firstly, women are a source of cheap labour for the exploiters, as illustrated in the previous section; secondly, the double exploitation and oppression of women is used as a lever to force worse conditions, impoverishment and denial of rights upon all sections of the people (a recent example of this was provided when the government used the occasion of the savage assaults on women to call for "stronger sentencing", not just for crimes against women, but in general, in other words, as a call for increased repression of the people); thirdly, the double exploitation and oppression of women is used as a means to try to create divisions amongst the people, to harm their unity and to try to set the people at loggerheads with one another – in this case on the basis of "men versus women" – in order to prevent them from strengthening their unity in the struggle against the common enemies.

It is very clear that the double exploitation and oppression of women can only be eliminated, the genuine emancipation of women can only be realised, through the entire working people gaining their emancipation, through the system of exploitation of man by man being ended once and for all. This has been vividly demonstrated in the Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin, and it is vividly demonstrated in Socialist Albania today, where the exploitation of man by man and all exploiting classes have been eliminated, and where there is no oppression of the Albanian women, where they have gained their emancipation and all the conditions have been created for their complete and total emancipation.

### **THE PRESENT SITUATION IN BRITISH CAPITALIST SOCIETY**

The situation facing women today cannot be viewed other than in the context of the present situation in British capitalist society. This situation is characterised by the deepening and broadening of the all-sided crisis. In Britain, this crisis, which is manifested in the economic, political, financial, ideological, moral and other spheres, is extremely acute, extremely grave.

The great proportions of the economic crisis, for example, are seen in the inflation and sky-rocketing prices, in the constant increases in unemployment, the uncompetitiveness of British industry, the overproduction crisis, the falling rate of production, as well as the energy crisis and other such phenomena.

This crisis is not caused by the working people of Britain nor of any other country. The crisis is caused by the capitalist system, by the inherent contradictions of this system, which are corroding it from within, by the operation of the laws of motion of this system, which are based upon the securing of maximum capitalist profits for the exploiters.

None of the parties of the exploiters has any solutions to this crisis. They are themselves having a serious crisis within their own ranks as a result of their inability to find any such solutions. The present Thatcher government came to power, for example, with a so-called "radical" "solution" to the crisis. Yet, within a short period of time, its "radical" "solutions" have been shown for what they are, frauds, "solutions" which do not work, but which in fact, serve only to intensify the crisis.

The only "solution" and path which all of the parties of the exploiters have adopted is to foist the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class and people. It is the workers and working people who are being forced to pay for the crisis, which is not, and never was, of their making. It is the workers and working people who are being forced to accept lower standards of living, lower wages, unemployment, cuts in social and welfare services, in order to maintain, and create the conditions for increasing in the future, the superprofits of the big monopolies and multinationals, the banks, finance houses, etc. – in short, the big bourgeoisie. It is clear that the call of the Government, press and employers for all to "pull their weight" and "make sacrifices" is a smokescreen. It is a smokescreen to hide the actual policies of the employers and their government, a policy which is to do everything in their power to make the people pay for the crisis. The facts speak for themselves: **WHILST THE RICH GET RICHER, THE POOR, THE WORKING PEOPLE, ARE GETTING POORER.**

Another aspect of the present situation in British society is that, combined with these economic attacks, the past few years have seen the great efforts by the capitalists and their state –

parliament, the government, courts, army, civil service, police, etc. – to further attack and restrict the rights and freedoms of the people. The political trend in society is away from democracy and towards fascism, and this trend is being further pursued and is a deliberate policy of the state and its governments – as has been in evidence with the latest Employment Act, with the measures being taken to beef up the police force, etc. – a deliberate policy aimed at preventing the broad masses of people rising up in struggle, preventing them from resisting and fighting the attacks being made against their livelihoods, living standards and rights. A component part of this policy of the ruling class is the incitement and promotion of the Hitlerite nazi movement and gangs, the further development of racism and chauvinism as preferred policy.

A further aspect of this crisis is the spiritual, cultural and moral crisis, the further growth in decadence, pornography, (a highly profitable business for sections of the exploiters), the further growth in crime, corruption, violence and degradation against all the working people.

A final aspect of this crisis is the increasing and most serious danger of war – which will be dealt with in the next section.

It is in this context, of the present situation in Britain, that the "women's question" must be viewed. On the one hand, women workers and the broad masses of women, being part of the working class and people, are suffering acutely from the shifting of the crisis onto the backs of the working people, are confronted with all of the dangers arising from the increasing restriction of the rights of the people, the further development of racism, the dangers of war and the Hitlerite activities of the nazi gangs; they are suffering all of the consequences of the spiritual, moral and cultural crisis and decadence in society. On the other hand, because of the position of women in society, because of the double exploitation and oppression which they are subjected to, these increased economic, political, social and cultural attacks on the people are manifested more acutely, more barbarically, more severely, against women. Whether on the front of the wage reductions, and the effects of price rises, whether on the front of the restrictions of democratic rights and savage assaults and violence being launched against the people, whether on the cultural and spiritual front and the increasing decadence and

decay being manifested in society, it can be seen clearly that women are subjected to this offensive with especially great severity. Thus, the particular oppression which women suffer – the discrimination, the abuses, humiliations, the attacks and degradations – all of these are on the increase.

### THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The struggles of the women in Britain and the situation facing women must also be viewed in the context of the present international situation.

This international situation is fraught with serious danger for the world's people. The international situation is extremely turbulent and the dangers of war, fascism and reaction are very grave indeed.

It is imperialism, headed by the two superpowers, which has been and still is the source of all aggressions and predatory wars, the source of all the disasters and suffering faced by the people; the people have paid and still are paying the price of its insatiable drive for maximum profits, markets and exploitation. The two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union – constitute the most dangerous enemies of the world's people. The aggressive and murderous activities of the United States in El Salvador and of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan are a vivid testimony to the barbaric, aggressive and enslaving nature of both of these superpowers.

The rivalry between these two superpowers, and the sharpening of the contradictions between them, constitute the main danger of present-day international conflicts and the growing danger of war. The dangers of such a war are daily growing as these two superpowers, together with their respective allies and military blocs, are arming to the teeth, increasing their contention and squabbles over areas of control in the world and making a new world war a real and serious threat to the lives and freedoms of the people of all countries.

The British government is very much part of these war-mongering activities, as seen by its huge military budget – second only to the United States in terms of the percentage of the Gross Domestic Product being spent on war preparations – and by the obscene way which this government backs the

aggressive global policies of the United States.

Throughout the world all of the imperialist and social-imperialist countries are continuing and increasing their aggressive and plundering policies against the peoples of the oppressed nations. This is no less in evidence with the British ruling class, which very much pursues this policy, as concretely seen with its savage armed occupation of the north of Ireland and its murderous repression there. (As well as its colonial war of aggression in the Malvinas).

Furthermore, the dangers of fascism are very much in evidence throughout the world. Military, reactionary and fascist regimes, backed by the imperialist and social imperialist powers, are being installed in many countries – such as in Turkey and El Salvador. Repression and the fascisation of the state are very much on the increase in all of the capitalist and revisionist countries.

At the same time as these dangers to the world's people are increasing, so too are the struggles of the workers and oppressed people for their rights and for their national and social emancipation. In El Salvador, for example, the people are waging a heroic struggle against the fascist dictatorship and US domination; in Afghanistan the people are waging mighty struggles against the Soviet aggressors. In the Middle East the heroic Palestinian people are continuing to wage struggle for their national rights and the return of their homelands against the barbarous genocidal aggression by Israeli Zionists. The people of Europe are intensifying their struggles against exploitation, the increasing repression and the dangers of war. The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America are fighting imperialism and for the liberation of the peoples and nations.

In Albania, the only socialist country in the world, the people have gained real freedom and emancipation; the system of exploitation of man by man has been eliminated and genuine socialism is being built.

It is in this context, of the increasing threats to the lives and freedoms of the world's people caused by imperialism, social imperialism and reaction, and the growing, broadening and deepening of the struggles of the people, that the struggles of women and the situation facing women in Britain must be viewed. The dangers of war and reaction, the dangers and

suffering caused by imperialism are a very grave threat to the rights, freedom and liberties of women and their families. At the same time the struggles of the women of Britain are very much part of the heroic struggles being waged by the women of all countries for their rights and for their emancipation: they are very much part of the struggles of the workers and oppressed people of the world against the common enemies and for national and social emancipation.

**NONE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE EXPLOITERS  
HAS ANY SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS,  
TO THIS SITUATION, FACING WOMEN**

Finally, in relation to these most serious problems, this most serious situation which faces women, it has been the experience of women that these attacks on their rights, the serious threats to their freedom, are not just a matter of the policies of the "Tories", of the Thatcher government. Undoubtedly, the Thatcher government, like all Conservative governments in Britain, has shown itself to be the most hated, callous and vicious enemy of the people and of women. But the experience of women, as of all other sections of the people, has been that they cannot expect any fundamentally different policies from the "Labour" Party or any other party of the exploiters. Whichever party happens to be in government, whilst there may well be some slight differences in some aspects of their policies, they are all policies of the exploiters. Whichever party is in government, wealth and power remains in the hands of the exploiters; the economic, political and spiritual enslavement of the people continues; the abuses and attacks, the double exploitation and oppression of women continues.

And the conclusion from this fact? It is that the women, as with all other sections of the people, cannot have any faith or trust in, and will not find any solutions to the problems which confront them, in any of these parties of the capitalists. It is that the destiny and future of the women, the defence and advance of their rights and interests, rests in their own hands, rests in their own struggles, as those of the working class and other sections of the people. It is that the struggles of the women must be directed against the capitalist system and against the class of exploiters.

## Section B

### **The Struggles of Women and the Two Lines in the Women's Movement**

#### **THE INTENSIFYING CLASS STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD**

The women workers and the broad masses of women have never accepted the attacks on their rights, the degradation and abuses launched against them, nor the exploitation and oppression which has been levelled against the entire people. Time and time again hundreds and thousands of women have risen up in powerful struggles for their rights, for the rights of all the people and for their emancipation. In the ranks of the women there have been numerous examples of women emerging as militant, determined leaders of the people and their struggles, standing in the front ranks of the revolutionary, patriotic and democratic movements of the people.

Internationally, the role women played in the Paris Commune, in the Socialist Revolution in the Soviet Union, in the anti-fascist war, in the national liberation war in Albania, in the revolutionary movement in India; the role that women are playing today in the heroic struggle of the people of El Salvador and Afghanistan, in the struggle of the Irish people for reunification and independence of their country, the large numbers of the heroines who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, democracy and socialism – these and many other examples reflect the true revolutionary and fighting character, aspirations and sentiments of women.

In Britain too, this fighting character of women has been seen time and time again. It was seen in the powerful struggle waged by women towards the end of the last century against capitalist exploitation – such as the matchgirls' strike; the militant and determined struggles waged by women at the beginning of this century for votes; the role women played in the anti-fascist struggle in the 1930s and the large numbers who volunteered to go to Spain to serve with the International Brigades against

Franco fascism. It is seen in the great contributions which women have made to the development of the political movement of the working class and people – such as the work of Eleanor Marx in the struggle to build a genuine Marxist party of the working class in Britain.

This historic and heroic role played by women in the struggle for their rights and for the rights and freedom of all the working people has been very much in evidence in recent times – as manifested by the powerful strike struggles waged by women workers, such as at "Lee Jeans" and Plesseys in Scotland and many others, and by the large number of women who have heroically participated in the anti-fascist and anti-racist struggle and in the struggle against police and state repression and harassment, in the anti-war movement, and in the struggle to rebuild the party of the proletariat. It has been very much in evidence in the increased participation of women in many other political and economic struggles of the workers and oppressed people, their increasing political activity, the rise and development of the women's movement over the past decade – to name just a few examples.

These heroic and glorious struggles which have been waged historically by the women in Britain and internationally, plus the manner in which large numbers of women have come forward to take up active leadership of the struggles of the people, concretely show the great force which women constitute when they are organised, when they are in motion and in action against their enemies, when they wage their struggle in unity with all the oppressed sections of the people. They show the great possibilities which exist for women to defend their rights, win genuine emancipation and make a very important contribution to the emancipation of the entire working class and people. These struggles also show that women have only advanced their cause and the cause of the people, have only defended their interests and rights, through the most acute and determined struggles against their enemies, the exploiters and their representatives. As with any section of the people, nothing has ever been handed to women on a silver platter; they have only gained advances in their cause through struggle, through relying on their own strength and the strength of all the oppressed people, through keeping the initiative in their own hands and waging an

uncompromising struggle for their rights and for their emancipation.

### **THE TACTICS USED BY THE EXPLOITERS AND THEIR STATE TO TRY TO SUPPRESS THE STRUGGLE OF THE WOMEN**

Today, as throughout their history, the exploiters, their parliament, state institutions politicians and press, are vehemently opposing the struggles of the women and have been doing their utmost to try to suppress and divert them.

Two basic tactics used by them for this purpose are: firstly, direct suppression and attack and secondly, deception.

#### **i) Direct suppression and opposition to the struggle of women.**

Events in recent times have seen the extent to which the exploiters and their representatives organise to oppose the struggles of the women directly. Some examples of this are as follows:-

a. There is the open suppression of the struggles of the women by the forces of the state, as seen in recent strike struggles of women, the harassment, arrests and beatings and imprisonment which increasing numbers of women are suffering as a result of their participation in the anti-fascist, anti-racist and other struggles of the people.

b. The worst kind of reactionary, anti-women propaganda is being given to oppose the struggles of the women and their participation in political activity. This has been evident in various speeches by Margaret Thatcher, for example, to the effect that women have nothing to fight for, that they have gained all their rights. Propaganda is constantly carried in the press and by various representatives of the rich that "women's place is in the home", that their participation in economic, political and social life is taking women away from where they "should be" – looking after their home and families. There is promotion of the worst kind of reactionary, decadent and degenerate values as to what a so-called "liberated" women allegedly is, what women workers and the broad masses of women should aspire to. More and more speeches are being made by various politicians to the effect that the struggle of women is leading to "discrimination" against men and that

something should be done to stop women from pursuing their interests.

c. There is the mobilisation of outright reactionary forces to oppose and attack the struggles of women – such as the nazi gangs, who have launched many vicious attacks against women, especially against national minority women, but also against all sections of women; also there is the instigating and promotion of such reactionary organisations as SPUC which openly oppose the just demands and struggles of women on the most reactionary and anti-woman basis.

d. Very open and direct attempts are made to prevent women from organising in the factories – with open threats of large-scale sackings, etc; blatant attempts are made to prevent women from actively participating in political activity – on the most reactionary grounds – such as the "inferiority" of women, the "job" being "better left to men", etc., etc.

e. The press and other means are used to promote and incite the most savage assaults against women and a very definite attempt is made to use these assaults to intimidate women, create an atmosphere of fear amongst them and try to prevent them from fully participating in political and social life.

ii) The tactics of deception. Combined with these, and many other examples of the open opposition and attack against the struggles of women, the exploiters and their representatives also use the tactic or method of deception. Some examples of this are as follows:-

a. Such is the degree of consciousness and the level of struggles amongst the women, that successive governments in Britain, as well as in many of the capitalist countries, have in words "recognised" the rights of women, have passed laws "guaranteeing" women's equality. These laws, such as the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Opportunities Act, are a fraud. Their main purpose is to cover up the actual widespread discrimination, abuses and attacks which, in practice, exist throughout, and are a cornerstone of, the capitalist society. They try to dampen down and liquidate the struggles of the women and, in fact, to increase the attacks being launched against women. This is vividly clear in the above legislation.

In February 1976, the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Dis-

crimination Act were passed by a Labour government. These laws, which were supposed to "protect" and establish "equal rights" for women, were passed because the consciousness and opposition of the women and all sections of the people against the inequality and discrimination in pay was rising, as were the struggles which the women were waging. The aim of these laws was to channel the opposition of the women in the various strike struggles for equal pay and rights into faith that the system and its laws would bring about equality, so that there was no need to fight.

In the first six months of their existence, however, over 60% of the cases brought under the Equal Pay Act were withdrawn and, of those going through the tribunals, 72% were lost. In 1979, of the 263 cases heard, only 5% were upheld, over one quarter were dismissed and over half withdrawn. On its fifth anniversary this year, the Equal Opportunities Commission was forced to admit that, despite the changes in legislation brought about by these two Acts, the situation of the women and the discrimination against them had got worse and that it was "pessimistic" for the future. It also warned the government that if something was not done then women would lose faith in the Commission, lose faith in the laws and take to other means to resolve the question of their rights and the discrimination against them.

b. Women are encouraged to rely on the parliament and parliamentary democracy to make reforms and pass laws which allegedly defend their rights and bring about their "emancipation". The above example of the Sex Discrimination Act is a clear example of the fraudulence of this propaganda, a very deliberate attempt to channel the women's movement and the women's struggle into blind alleys, into channels which in no way defend the rights of women or bring about their emancipation.

c. The theory is promoted that the women should turn to and rely on the "Labour" Party and the trade unions to "fight" for their rights and emancipation. This is a further fraud to divert the women's movement into channels solving none of the fundamental problems with which they are confronted. The concrete practice of the "Labour" Party (which has been in government for 19 years since the Second World War alone), and

the concrete practice of the trade unions, show these organisations to be defenders of the capitalist order, to be labour lieutenants of capital, against the interests of the broad masses of the people and against the interests and cause of the women workers and broad masses of women.

Both these tactics – repression and deception – are used and promoted by the exploiters and their representatives, their press and politicians; they exist side-by-side. At a given time one tactic may be highlighted more than the other, but all in order to create maximum confusion amongst the women, to disarm the women on all fronts and, above all, to ensure that the subjugation of and the increasing attacks on women are maintained.

### THE TWO LINES IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Over the past decade or so, large numbers of women have come forward to participate in and become active in the women's movement. The consciousness, scope and size of the movement are all greatly increasing. But, within the women's movement two very clear lines have emerged: one which harms the struggles of women in defence of their rights and for their emancipation and serves only the exploiters and their representatives in their attacks against the women and people; the other which represents the true and genuine aspirations and sentiments of women and which serves to advance their struggles in defence of their rights and for their genuine emancipation.

The essence of the negative – in fact, bourgeois – trend which exists in the women's movement is to divert the women away from the revolutionary struggle which must be waged, in unity with the working class and other sections of the people, for their genuine emancipation and to divert women away from relying on their own strength, their own fighting spirit and organisation and waging a determined struggle, together with their allies – the broad masses of working people – against their real enemies, the exploiters and their representatives, in defence of their rights. Some examples of this policy, promoted by the revisionists, opportunists and bourgeois feminists, are as follows:-

Firstly, there is the promotion and the giving of credence to the entire position of the exploiters that the women should rely

on reformism, should rely on parliament and other state institutions, the "Labour" Party and trade unions, etc., in their struggles. The struggles of the women are reduced to making the laws better and making them work; to getting more women into the "Labour" Party, parliament and the trade unions; to calling upon the state institutions to strengthen their laws of repression in order supposedly to defend women against savage attacks, and so on and so forth. This policy is aimed at trying to create every kind of illusion amongst the women that these institutions of the exploiters both have the will and the ability to defend the rights of women and bring about their emancipation; it serves to hide the class basis of women's oppression and divert the struggle into channels where the leadership of the women's movement is placed in the hands of the representatives of the very forces which are at the basis of the oppression of women – the exploiters and their system of exploitation of man by man.

Secondly, there is the promotion of the completely erroneous concept that the cause of women's oppression, and the main target at which the struggles of women should be aimed, is not the capitalists and their system but "men".

This feminist policy seizes on the chauvinist ideas which sometimes exist, inflates them to the principal issue, hides the actual basis, cause and real promoters of these ideas and diverts the struggles of the women away from their real enemies into a struggle against their co-fighters and their allies, away from the exploiters and their representatives, into a struggle against a section of the working class and oppressed masses. At the same time the feminist policy adheres to the other side of the same coin of chauvinism, the ideas of submissiveness and subservience cultivated amongst women, holding that the problem amongst women is their "low level of political awareness" and limiting the perspectives of the women in their struggle to "consciousness raising" and bemoaning the lot of women in their "struggle against men". In doing so, this policy not only seriously damages the struggles of the women for their rights and emancipation and diverts it into a path which has no future in realising these demands of women, but it also greatly assists the enemies of the people in their schemes to try to create divisions amongst the people, to set the workers and people at loggerheads with one another and prevent them from strengthening their unity in the

common struggle for the rights and cause of all the people.

Two very concrete examples of this are provided by the demands raised by the feminists and opportunists for "fighting sexism" in the trade unions and for the adoption of a policy of "positive discrimination" in favour of women. Through both of these demands the main direction and thrust in which the struggle of women is taken is diversionary, divisive and against "men". Take the question of "fighting sexism" in the trade unions. It is true that the trade union chieftains are chauvinist, promote chauvinist values and ideas against women; it is true that the trade unions do not defend the rights of women or fight for their emancipation. But this is only a manifestation of the entire policy which is adopted and promoted by the trade union chieftains and their apparatuses – a bourgeois policy, a policy of class compromise, an anti-worker, anti-people, capitalist policy. And the consequence is that on all questions the ideology and practices of the bourgeoisie are adopted by these big-wigs – whether in attacking the working class, youth, women or national minorities. It is against this entire policy of class compromise which the women must fight, alongside the men, within the capitalist trade unions.

In relation to "positive discrimination", amongst other things, there are three issues to raise; firstly, it is an illusion which is being floated amongst women that the present system is capable not only of ending the double exploitation and oppression of women but in fact, of positively "discriminating" in favour of women; secondly, it serves to further create and incite divisions amongst the people, divisions amongst men and women on the basis of such "positive discrimination"; thirdly, it creates an entire diversion within the women's movement concerning the target against which the struggle of women should and must be aimed.

It is true, for example, that there should be "positive discrimination" – but the overriding question is against whom? Should there be such "positive discrimination" against men, or should there be such "positive discrimination" against the capitalists, the denial of the rights of the capitalists, the expropriation of their wealth and power, the elimination of their system of exploitation of man by man. Such "positive discrimination" is an extremely just and necessary policy to ensure

the emancipation of women and of all the oppressed sections of the people. But this is not what the feminist policy has in mind and its "positive discrimination" is aimed at men and not the real and fundamental enemies of women.

Thirdly, there is the creation of every kind of "theoretical" justification – theories which have no scientific basis or thought in them – to hide the class basis of women's oppression and promote all kinds of confusion and erroneous ideas amongst women. On this front there are, for example, the vain attempts to "discredit" the scientific and correct analysis of Frederick Engels concerning the "Family, State and Private Property", the promotion of the completely erroneous concept that the family and patriarchal society is the basis of women's oppression and even of the capitalist society, that it is allegedly the family against which the struggles of the women must first and foremost be directed.

Fourthly, there is the reduction of the "women question" and "women's issues" to the narrowest sense, in a manner which tries to blind women to the most acute dangers which are affecting and threatening their rights, such as the dangers of war and fascism. Upon this basis an attempt is made to oppose "the bringing of politics into the women's movement". In reality behind this deception, a very definite political line and solution are being promoted, namely, bourgeois politics and the attempt to tie the women's movement to the leadership and ideology of the bourgeoisie.

Fifthly, there is the promotion of the same propaganda as that issued by the open enemies of women, according to which women are "inferior politically", do not understand political questions, are incapable of taking up revolutionary positions and seeing the class basis of their oppression and the direction in which their struggles must be aimed. Upon the basis of this most spurious reasoning, the facts are deliberately hidden from women, to try to keep them in ignorance concerning the nature of the capitalist system and the exploitation and oppression of women, whilst promoting, behind this fraud, all the diversionary, divisive and erroneous concepts – that "men are the problem" facing women, that women should reduce their political activity to "consciousness-raising" about their "womanhood", etc. – thereby trying to prevent women from taking up active struggle in defence of their

rights and for their genuine emancipation.

Sixthly, there is the promotion and imposition on the women's movement of the most erroneous concepts as to what a liberated woman is, as to what the "women's issues" are. This tends to undermine the seriousness and credibility of the extremely important struggle of the women; it tends to alienate large sections of women themselves – especially women workers – from the women's movement; it tends to cause divisions amongst the women – as occurs on the question of abortion – and it gives weight to the attempts by the exploiters and their representatives to try to belittle and trivialise the women's movement and to harm the necessary active support for the struggle of women by the working class and broad masses of people.

These, and many other examples of the feminist policy, of the policies promoted by the revisionists and opportunists, concretely illustrate how these seriously damage the women's movement and the struggles of women, sap the energies of women and divert these energies into blind alleys, so as to ensure that the women's movement does not actually become a real fighting force in defence of the rights of women and all sections of the people and for the genuine emancipation of women.

In order to further advance the women's movement on correct lines, on a correct basis, in order to ensure that the women's movement is built as a real fighting force for the defence of the rights of women, for their emancipation, and aimed at the real enemies of women – the capitalists and their representatives – it is essential that these erroneous reformist, feminist and opportunist policies, these policies which do such great harm to the struggles of women, are clearly exposed for what they are. It is essential that the clear line of demarcation which has been drawn in the women's movement is made even clearer, in order that the conditions be created for the women workers and broad masses of women to build their unity, to advance their struggles on the correct basis, on a basis which will actually serve to advance their cause and the cause of the entire working class and people.

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## Section C

### **The Programme of Action and Tasks of WUB**

There is an urgent necessity for the establishment and building of a women's organisation which unites and organises women genuinely to fight in defence of their rights and for their genuine emancipation. Such an organisation is being founded here today with the formation of the Women's Union of Britain. Without organisation the people have nothing and this is no less the case in the struggles of women.

Throughout the country, both the attacks against women and the struggles of women are increasing. Increasing numbers of women are coming forward to take up active struggle; the exposure of the fraud of the "Sex Discrimination Act" and other such measures is daily increasing; so too are the worst aspects of the feminist policies and the policies of the opportunists.

Under these conditions it is a vital question to begin the work to organise, give revolutionary perspectives, direction and leadership to these escalating struggles of women, to ensure that they can steer clear of the obstacles put in their path by the exploiters and their representatives, and lead to the real and complete emancipation of women.

The Women's Union of Britain has great responsibilities and great tasks confronting it, but its policy is just and correct, and accords with the genuine aspirations and sentiments of women. The question of building such an organisation amongst the women workers and broad masses of women is today being taken up for solution.

#### **THE CHARACTER OF THE ORGANISATION**

The Women's Union of Britain is the organisation for the women workers and broad masses of women. It is open to all working and oppressed women, whatever their political, religious or other belief, as long as they support its programme, as long as they agree with the absolute necessity of uniting to defend the rights of women and of organising for the realisation of the

demand of women to bring about their genuine emancipation.

Whilst the Women's Union of Britain is open to all sections of women workers and broad masses of women, it is women workers who are at the centre of its work, for it is the working class, the women workers, who are the most steadfast, determined and resolute fighters for the cause of all the oppressed women. It is amongst the women workers where the Women's Union of Britain concentrates its activity on mobilising and organising – whilst never neglecting or underestimating the very important question of mobilising and organising all other sections of the broad masses of women. At the same time, the Women's Union of Britain has no agreement with the line which is promoted according to which "all women are together". It makes a clear-cut analysis that, as with the rest of society, the women are divided between classes, that on the one side stand the women workers and the broad masses of women, whilst on the other side stand the women representatives of the capitalists. There is no unity between these two sections of women.

The Women's Union of Britain is a revolutionary organisation: it has set itself revolutionary perspectives to organise women to bring about their complete emancipation. At the same time, the Women's Union of Britain is a mass organisation of women: it is open to all sections of oppressed women, however active they wish to be, who wish to make some contribution to the advancement of the cause of women.

### **PROGRAMME OF WOMEN'S UNION OF BRITAIN**

The basic programme of the W.U.B. around which it organises and mobilises women is as follows:

1. TO FIGHT IN DEFENCE OF THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND OTHER RIGHTS OF WOMEN; TO FIGHT ALL THE DISCRIMINATION, ABUSES, ATTACKS AND DEGRADATION AGAINST WOMEN.

The rights of women are sacred and must be defended. The increasing attacks on the rights of women must be confronted by the solid, organised and united force of the women workers and the broad masses of women. It is the task of the W.U.B. and its members to educate, mobilise and lead mass struggles of the

women in defence of their rights. Its task is to develop this struggle by relying solely on the forces of the women, by relying on the women's own initiative and organisation and opposing all attempts to take the initiative out of the hands of the women. It is the task of the W.U.B. to direct these struggles of women against their real enemies, the class of exploiters and their representatives and state institutions. It is its task to develop this struggle by building various forms of organisation which unite the women against the exploiters and in defence of their rights, to develop this struggle on the basis that it can and must go beyond the limits set by the exploiters and cannot concede to these limits or give up the rights of women as the rich demand. To develop this struggle on the basis that it can and must develop all forms of struggle to ensure that the rights of women are defended and enforced.

2. ORGANISING TO REALISE THE AIM OF BRINGING ABOUT THE GENUINE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.

The W.U.B. considers that to fight for the interests and cause of women is not just a struggle over the day-to-day problems and attacks which confront women. It is, and must be, a struggle which is, at the same time, directed towards the realisation of the fundamental aim of women – to bring about their genuine and lasting emancipation.

To realise this fundamental aim, the W.U.B. upholds that the emancipation of women is conditional upon the emancipation of the entire working class, that it is the ending of the system of exploitation of man by man through the revolutionary transformation of society led by the working class which is the only way that the emancipation of women can be realised.

As a very important part of its programme, the W.U.B. will educate, mobilise and organise women to take up this programme, to organise women for the realisation of their genuine emancipation, and for women to make their contribution to the emancipation of the entire working class and broad masses of people from the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

3. TO FIGHT FOR THE UNITY OF WOMEN, FOR THE UNITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AND FOR THE UNITY OF ALL THE OPPRESSED SECTIONS OF THE PEOPLE.

The principle of the W.U.B. is that the unity of the people is a sacred and fundamental question. It upholds the principles AN

INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL and ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL, and works wholeheartedly to build and strengthen the unity between men and women and between all the working and oppressed people in the course of the common struggle against the common enemies. UNITY IN ACTION is the slogan of the W.U.B. And, as an important part of building and strengthening this unity amongst women and the people, the W.U.B. will oppose every attempt, from wherever it comes, to disrupt this unity and solidarity of the women, between men and women and between the people; they have all the same interests, the same struggle against exploitation and oppression and this unity must be strengthened in order to ensure the advancement of the cause of the women and all sections of the people.

#### 4. TO FIGHT IN DEFENCE OF THE RIGHTS OF THE ENTIRE PEOPLE.

The W.U.B. considers that the struggle of women is not some narrow struggle, it is part and parcel of the struggle of all the people, and the W.U.B. takes up the task of organising women in the context of this struggle. The W.U.B. considers that the working class will never realise its own emancipation unless it takes up the question of the emancipation of women, and it also considers that the women will never bring about their own emancipation without making their cause one with the working class, without unifying their energies with the energies of the working class and oppressed people.

In the light of this fundamental principle, the W.U.B. will educate, mobilise and organise women to take an active part in the struggle, to make their fullest contribution to the struggle of the entire people for the defence of their democratic rights, in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression and for the end of the system of exploitation of man by man.

#### 5. TO FIGHT IMPERIALISM, SOCIAL IMPERIALISM, THE TWO SUPERPOWERS AND ALL REACTION

The W.U.B. considers that the working and oppressed women of Britain have important international tasks and duties; they cannot wage their struggle in Britain without taking a firm, determined stand against the two superpowers and all forms of imperialism – which is at the basis of all the misery and suffering the world's people are subjected to.

In particular, the W.U.B. considers that the struggle in

defence of the rights of the women in Britain will be an absolute fraud if the women are not organised to fight imperialism, to fight the increasing and grave dangers of war and to fight the imperialist, aggressive and subjugationist policies of all the imperialist powers, including those of the British ruling class.

#### 6. FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND UNITY WITH THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD AND WITH THE WORKING AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS AND FOR NATIONAL AND SOCIAL EMANCIPATION.

W.U.B. considers that the struggle of women in Britain is part and parcel of the struggle of women and the working people throughout the world; the women of Britain must wage their struggle in defence of their rights and for their emancipation in the context of the same struggle being waged by the people in all countries.

The W.U.B., therefore, considers it its duty to educate, mobilise and organise women to fully support the struggle of women of other countries fighting against imperialism and reaction and for their rights and emancipation; to fully support the struggles of all oppressed people fighting for their national and social emancipation; to support the one country where the women and working class and people have achieved their emancipation – Socialist Albania; and to develop and strengthen links and relations with all genuinely revolutionary, democratic, fighting organisations of women in all countries. And furthermore, in this respect, the W.U.B. will oppose all attempts by the exploiters and their representatives in Britain to promote and try to gain support of the women for their own imperialist and chauvinist policies.

#### FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT INTO A REAL FIGHTING FORCE IN DEFENCE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FOR GENUINE EMANCIPATION

The W.U.B. will place the centre of activity at the base, on the organising of women workers and broad masses of women in the struggle in defence of their rights and for their genuine emancipation.

The W.U.B. will at all times fight for demands and reforms which serve to advance the short- and long-term cause and interests of women, always having the perspective of

coordinating and directing these struggles to realise the fundamental goal of bringing about the complete emancipation of women. In particular:-

1) W.U.B. will fight in defence of the living standards of the women, against the attempts to force the women and all other sections of the people to pay for the crisis of capitalism; to uphold that it is not the women or any other section of the working people who should pay for the crisis. Its fighting programme is MAKE THE RICH PAY FOR THE CRISIS. In this respect, the W.U.B. will oppose all discrimination against women, all the economic attacks and will fight for the demand of EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

2) W.U.B. will fight against all the abuses, attacks, humiliations, degradations directed against women; it will fight for the demand that THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN ARE SACRED AND MUST BE DEFENDED TO THE END.

3) W.U.B. will fight in defence of the democratic rights of the people, against every attempt to restrict political activity and democratic freedoms and liberties of the people, against the revival of Hitlerism, against racism and for genuine democracy and freedom. The W.U.B. will fight for the demand NO TO RACISM, NO TO FASCISM; NAZIS HAVE NO RIGHT TO ORGANISE; FOR DEMOCRACY FREEDOM AND PROGRESS. And in its work the W.U.B. will support the work of the National Organising Committee of People's Democratic Front.

4) WUB will fight against the increasing dangers of war and the war preparations frantically being carried out by the governments in Washington, Moscow, London and by all other war-mongering powers. The WUB will fight for the demands: NO TO THE WAR PREPARATIONS; BRITAIN GET OUT OF NATO; US BASES AND TROOPS OUT OF BRITAIN; BRITISH AGGRESSOR TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND AND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES.

5) W.U.B. will fight against the imperialist policies of all reactionary powers. The W.U.B. will fight for the demands NO TO IMPERIALISM; FOR THE FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE OPPRESSED NATIONS AND PEOPLES.

6) W.U.B. will fight against capitalist exploitation and all the class compromise policies - including the chauvinism against women - being pursued in the trade unions by the trade union

chieftains. The W.U.B. will fight for the demand UNITY OF THE WORKERS AGAINST THE EXPLOITERS, AGAINST CLASS COMPROMISE AND AGAINST THE TREACHEROUS TRADE UNION CHIEFTAINS and in fighting for this programme will support the work of the Trade Union Revolutionary Opposition.

These are some of the concrete demands, slogans and programmes which the W.U.B. will take up for solution in the course of its work to realise its programme.

\* \* \* \* \*

Women delegates, this conference calls upon all women workers and the broad masses of women to join the WUB and to take up the urgent and most important task of building the WUB and extending its influence and organised support amongst increasing sections of the women.

We are just beginning, but our cause is just, it reflects the real aspirations and sentiments of the broad masses of women, and through the development of the work of the W.U.B. the mighty energies of the women will be released to enable them to meet the attacks of their enemies and win decisive victories in their struggles.

Let us go from this Conference and take up the task of building W.U.B. and organising women in Britain to DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND BRING ABOUT THEIR GENUINE EMANCIPATION.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Programme of Action Unanimously Adopted at the Conference

The Women's Union of Britain is the organisation of the working and oppressed women of Britain; it is the organisation which unites and organises women in the struggle in defence of their rights and for their genuine emancipation.

The Programme of Action of the Women's Union of Britain is:

1. to oppose and fight all forms of discrimination; to oppose and fight the double exploitation and oppression of women; to oppose all abuses and indignities against women; to defend the economic, political and social rights of women;
2. to organise and fight for the complete and genuine emancipation of women, the condition of which is the emancipation of the entire working class from capitalist exploitation and oppression;
3. to fight for the unity of working and oppressed women, unity between men and women workers and oppressed people, unity of all the working and oppressed people;
4. to defend the democratic rights and freedoms of all workers and people of Britain and to oppose and fight the dangers of racism, fascism and war;
5. to oppose and fight against imperialism and social imperialism, and their aggressive, imperialist policies against the oppressed peoples and nations; to oppose and fight the two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union – and all reactionary attacks being levelled against the world's people, including the dangers of fascism and war;
6. to support and unite with women all over the world fighting for their rights and genuine emancipation; to support and unite with workers and oppressed people of all countries fighting for their rights, freedoms and liberties and for national liberation and socialism.

## Draft Constitution Unanimously Adopted at the Conference

### NAME:

The name of the organisation shall be the "Women's Union of Britain", hereafter referred to as WUB in this Constitution.

### AIMS OF THE WUB:

The basic aim of the WUB is to unite and organise women in the struggle in defence of their rights and for their genuine and complete emancipation.

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE WUB:

1. Any woman, regardless of political, religious or other beliefs, may join the WUB if she agrees with the Programme of Action and Constitution of WUB and pays regular dues.
2. Application for membership of the WUB is made through the local branch of the WUB. The application for membership is confirmed by a full meeting of the local branch.
3. All members of the WUB should defend and strive to implement the programme and constitution of the WUB.
4. Organisations can apply to the General Council to affiliate to the WUB and become Affiliated Organisations. Affiliated organisations will fully participate in the life of the WUB and should call on their own members to become individual members of the WUB. An affiliated organisation, whilst it will have no specific voting rights as an organisation, will have a consultative vote at every level of the WUB.
5. Any member of the WUB who consistently acts against the Programme and Constitution of the WUB can be expelled by the full meeting of the local branch, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the General Council. The expelled member may appeal to the General Council against such a decision, but until the appeal is heard she will remain suspended from membership of the organisation.
6. The General Council has final and overall say concerning all questions of membership in the WUB.

### **MEMBERSHIP DUES:**

1. All members will pay the annual dues of £1.00
2. Affiliated organisations will be asked to pay £2.00 every year.
3. For unemployed or retired women, or any other women in financial hardship, dues may, upon the decision of the General Council, be reduced.
4. The General Council is responsible for the allocation of the central finances of the WUB, which are used only for the programme and campaigns of the WUB.

### **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE WUB:**

The basic principle of the organisational structure of the WUB is central planning, leadership and organisation, with the fullest democracy in the organisation, all officials and bodies being accountable to and subject to recall by the membership.

#### National Conference of the WUB

1. The National Conference is the highest body of the WUB.
2. The National Conference must be called at least every two years and is called by the General Council, which presents the agenda in writing to the membership at least two months before the date of the National Conference. If at least half of the members request it, the General Council must call the National Conference within three months of the request.
3. The delegates to the National Conference are elected by the local branches of the WUB, the procedure for such elections being determined by the General Council.
4. Resolutions to the National Conference must be received by the General Council at least two weeks before the opening of the National Conference. In case of emergency, motions can be put forward by the National Conference itself.
5. The National Conference of the WUB can make decisions if at least half of the delegates are present. The National Conference makes its decisions by a simple majority.
6. The National Conference shall:
  - i) discuss and sum up the work of the WUB over the preceding period and approve the report presented by the General Council;
  - ii) decide the tasks for the next period;
  - iii) elect the General Council;
  - iv) make any changes in the Programme of Action and Constitution of the WUB;

#### General Council of the WUB

The General Council is elected by the National Conference, between the National Conferences it is the highest body of and leads the WUB and it is accountable to the National Conference.

2. The General Council will:
  - i) meet at least once every six months;
  - ii) elect the Executive Committee, including the National Secretary;
  - iii) assist in the establishment and directing of new local branches and the organising of national campaigns, issuing of statements, etc.;
  - iv) organise the publication of the paper of the WUB, "The Voice of Women";
  - v) contact, work with and assist individual women and organisations not organised in the WUB on the basis of unity in action to defend the rights of women and to fight for their genuine emancipation.

#### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will be:

- i) elected by the General Council every two years;
- ii) responsible for the day-to-day running of the WUB;
- iii) accountable to the General Council;
- iv) the authorised spokesman of the WUB.

#### Local Branches

1. The local branches of the WUB are the basis and foundation of the WUB.
2. Local branches can be established only under the direction of the General Council; they can be established when three or more members of the WUB are active in a local area, factory, community or town.
3. A full meeting of all members of the local branch shall be held at least once every two months and shall be responsible for implementing the policies and Programme of Action of the WUB in the factory, community, locality or town.
4. The full meeting of the local branch shall elect a committee and secretary to run the day-to-day affairs of the local branch.

#### Regional Committees

1. If three or more local branches of the WUB exist in a region, then, under the direction of the General Council, a Regional Committee of the WUB can be established.

2. The Regional Committee is established through the elections by the local branches, the procedure for such elections being determined by the General Council.

3. The Regional Committee shall be responsible for leading and coordinating the work of the WUB in a specific region.

#### CONSTITUTION:

1. This Constitution is to serve as the Constitution of the WUB until the time of the next National Conference.

2. The WUB can be dissolved only with the consent of nine-tenths of its members, who must vote at a meeting duly summoned for the purpose.

3. Amendments to the Constitution can only be made by a majority decision taken at National Conference.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Summary of Resolutions Unanimously Adopted at the Conference

1) Resolution thanking the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) for the initiative it took and the support and concrete assistance it has given towards establishing the Women's Union of Britain.

2) Resolution in firm support of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania – the only socialist country in the world, where the emancipation of the women and the working class and people under the leadership of the Party of Labour of Albania is a living reality – and sending warmest greetings to the Women's Union of Albania and the Albanian women.

3) Resolution thanking the representatives of the Women's Front (Denmark) and the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) for their participation in the Founding Conference and thanking the Women's Union of Albania, the Democratic Women's Union of Canada and the Communist Ghadar Party of India for their messages and greetings.

4) Resolution sending greetings to all democratic, progressive, revolutionary women's organisations who are fighting for the rights and genuine liberation of women.

5) Resolution hailing International Working Women's Day and calling upon the General Council of WUB to organise various activities for the rights of women and for genuine emancipation next International Working Women's Day, March 8, 1983.

6) Resolution calling upon the General Council to further develop "Voice of Women", the paper of the Women's Union of Britain.

7) Resolution calling upon the General Council to publish the documents of the Founding Conference of WUB.

8) Resolution calling upon the General Council to organise various activities to advance the work of the WUB, including the participation of women in the Anti-fascist, Anti-imperialist Camp

in 1983, to establish centres, where the conditions exist, and to work with the other genuine fighting organisations of the people.

9) Resolution to oppose capitalist exploitation and the double oppression and exploitation of women workers at the place of work and in other areas, to fight in the trade unions against the policy of class compromise and to support the work of TURO.

10) Resolution to work closely with and support the work of People's Democratic Front.

11) Resolution to support and work for the success of the 2nd International Sports and Cultural Festival to be held in August 1982 in Britain.

12) Resolution supporting all women workers at present on strike, in particular the women workers at Plessey's in Scotland.

13) Resolution denouncing the preparations for war of the US and Soviet Union and other warmongering powers, including Britain, and pledging to mobilise the women to vigorously oppose the war preparations of the rich and demand that BRITAIN GET OUT OF NATO!

14) Resolution denouncing the violent crimes carried out against women and pledging that WUB will step up its work to eliminate the basis of these – the capitalist system.

15) Resolution denouncing the development of the nazi movement and the racist and fascist murders and attacks against women, children and the people, and upholding the principles that NAZIS HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK OR ORGANISE! and SELF DEFENCE IS THE ONLY WAY!

16) Resolution denouncing the British government for its crimes against the Irish people, for its illegal occupation of the north of Ireland and demanding that BRITISH IMPERIALISM GET OUT OF IRELAND!

17) Resolution in support of the principle that women demand a better life, a life without imperialism, war, exploitation and oppression, a life where women have respect and an equal place alongside men, a life where the rights of women and the rights of all workers and working people are fully respected in words and deeds, pledging WUB to organise women to fight for the realisation of this principle.

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## Messages of Greetings Received by the Conference

### Women's Union of Albania

To the Founding Conference of the Women's Union of Britain.

Dear Comrades,

On the occasion of the foundation of the Women's Union of Britain, on behalf of the General Council of the Women's Union of Albania and of the women of Socialist Albania we convey to you, members of the founding conference of the Women's Union of Britain, and through you to all the progressive and revolutionary women of Britain, our most ardent greetings of militant solidarity and wish full success to the proceedings of your conference.

The work so far of the Preparatory Committee for a Revolutionary Women's Union of Britain, the programme of the Conference of December 5, 1981, as well as the programme of the Founding Conference, show that the struggle for the emancipation of women is being ever more considered as part and parcel of the struggle of the proletariat and other working masses against oppression and exploitation.

The foundation of your organisation, the Women's Union of Britain, will be an important event for all the progressive, democratic and revolutionary masses of women to be engaged hand in hand with the working class as an organised force, in concrete actions for revendications and in the struggle for their genuine liberation and emancipation, for equality and democratic rights.

The women of Albania, liberated from any yoke of oppression and exploitation, who march on the road of complete emancipation in their socialist country, educated by the Party of Labour of Albania, headed by Comrade Enver Hoxha, with the feelings of proletarian internationalism, hail from their hearts the foundation of the Women's Union of Britain. They wish ever greater successes with your work among the masses of women

and express their conviction for the strengthening of friendship and solidarity between our two organisations and among the progressive women of Britain and the women of Albania.

For the General Council  
of the Women's Union of Albania,  
President, Vito Kapo

## Democratic Women's Union of Canada

Dear Comrades,

On this historic occasion of the founding of the Women's Union of Britain and of International Women's Day, the Democratic Women's Union of Canada, on behalf of all Canadian revolutionary and democratic women, sends militant greetings to you and, through you militant greetings to all revolutionary and democratic women in Britain.

The British women have a long and militant tradition of fighting for genuine democracy and social progress and of taking their place in the front ranks of the struggle against capitalist oppression and slavery, and in particular in the struggle against exploitation and oppression of women and children. The fact that women in Britain occupy leading positions in all the revolutionary and democratic organisations, whether this be in the workers' movement, in the democratic organisations or in RCPB(ML), shows the determination of the women of Britain to win liberation through the struggle for their rights and the rights of all the exploited and oppressed.

We hail the formation of the WUB, through which the women of Britain will organise to defend their rights in unity with all other revolutionary and democratic forces. And we stand as one with you in our common struggle for emancipation and for a happy and secure future for our children through the emancipation of the entire working class, and in the struggle against imperialism, racism, fascism and war.

Long live the unity of our two countries in the struggle against the common enemy!

Hail the founding of the Women's Union of Britain!

The National Council  
of the Democratic Women's Union of Canada.

## Women's Front of Denmark

Dear Comrades,

The Women's Front of Denmark sends its greetings to the conference held by the Preparatory Committee for a revolutionary Union of Women in Britain.

We are convinced that this conference will be an important event in the struggle of the British women. You have put forward the necessary tasks to found and build a mass organisation of women under the leadership of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) in order to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the women in the course of the struggle of the working class and people and to organise the women to fight for their rights, emancipation and socialism.

A fierce struggle and dedicated work among the working class women and among the masses of women in order to develop the revolutionary force of the women and to make the women take up their right position in the class struggle are of great importance in the situation today, in the situation where the capitalist and revisionist society is in a rapidly increasing economic, political and ideological crisis, which it is unable to escape, where the working class and the people have taken up the question of revolution for solution and where world imperialism, with the two superpowers US imperialism and Soviet imperialism, at the head, are increasing their aggression against the people and are threatening to throw the world into the flames of a new Imperialist world war.

In order to keep the working class and masses of women away from the road of revolution and socialism, imperialism has steadily increased its political and ideological aggression and promotes all kinds of reformism, revisionism and feminism. But they cannot and will not succeed, no matter what means they may use, in holding back the great force of the revolutionary and progressive people, who in increasing numbers have joined the only way forward, the way of struggle and solidarity. Throughout the world this happens and throughout the world the masses of women join the class struggle.

In Socialist Albania we clearly see the deep truth of how the question of the full emancipation of the women is closely linked with the emancipation of the whole working class through the

transformation of society from capitalism to socialism, and that the emancipation unites the great forces of women to the further strengthening of socialism. In Socialist Albania the women have stepped out in all fields of society, with their heads high, as a new socialist, fighting and educated women armed with Marxism-Leninism and the line of the Party of Labour of Albania.

In the spirit of international solidarity we wish you all further success in your work and militant struggle against the heavy exploitation and oppression of capitalism and the rich, against the increasing racist and fascist violence and against all imperialism. It is our wish that the solidarity among the masses of women of our two countries and organisations will be strengthened, being part of the same common international struggle for the rights and the emancipation of the women and socialism, a struggle in which the future and victory are ours.

Revolutionary greetings  
Headcouncil of the  
Women's Front of Denmark.

Dorte Grenaa

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THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN  
(MARXIST-LENINIST)

In its message of greetings to the Founding Conference of the WUB, the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), hailed the founding of the Women's Union of Britain and expressed confidence that it would seriously take up the task of organising the women in unity with the other democratic forces in society, to secure their genuine emancipation and realise the aspirations and demands of the women for a better life, a life without oppression, racism, fascism and war.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF DENMARK (MARXIST-LENINIST)

In its message of greetings to the Founding Conference of the Women's Union of Britain, the Communist Party of Denmark (Marxist-Leninist), hailed the formation of the Women's Union of Britain, and stressed the importance of such an organisation of the women to fight against war, imperialism and reaction, and in the struggle for equality and emancipation.

THE COMMUNIST GHADAR PARTY OF INDIA

In its message of greetings to the Conference, the Communist Ghadar Party of India hailed the founding of the WUB as an important step forward in the work of organising women in Britain in defence of their rights and for genuine emancipation. It said that the founding of WUB was a further step in building the militant unity of the women, as part of the entire working class and people, in order to advance their struggle for their rights and to create a society free of all inequality, exploitation and oppression.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND (MARXIST-LENINIST)

The Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) hailed the formation of the WUB and wished it every success in its work, in the struggle against the basis of all oppression and exploitation, against the capitalist system and imperialism.

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A message of greetings on the occasion of International Working Women's Day was also received from the DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S UNION OF JAPAN.

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## Photographs of the Celebrations for International Working Women's Day



A Representative of the Women's Union of Britain proposes a toast to International Working Women's Day at the celebrations held after the Founding Conference.



Gift presented to the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) in recognition of the great assistance and support given by the Party towards creating the conditions for the formation of the Women's Union of Britain.



Representative of the Communist Youth Union of Britain toasts International Working Women's Day and the founding of WUB.



Progressive Cultural Association Singers performing during the celebrations for International Working Women's Day.

## **To Contact**

# **WOMEN'S UNION OF BRITAIN**

For all information of membership, meetings, activities, etc., write to:

**WOMEN'S UNION OF BRITAIN,**  
c/o 172 Wandsworth Road, London SW8

### **BIRMINGHAM**

The Birmingham Branch of the Women's Union of Britain is holding a series of talks and discussions.

For all information concerning these meetings write to:

Birmingham Branch WUB,  
c/o 229 Rookery Road,  
Handsworth, Birmingham

### **LIVERPOOL**

For information concerning WUB activities write to:

WUB, P.O. Box 22,  
Liverpool L69 8AR

### **GLASGOW**

For information concerning WUB activities write to:

Glasgow Branch WUB,  
Box 50,  
43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

### **SOUTH WALES**

For information concerning WUB activities write to:

WUB, c/o Box 12,  
108 Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

### **CENTRAL LONDON**

A series of monthly meetings is being organised by WUB in Central London. For details write to:

WUB, c/o 172 Wandsworth Road, London SW8

### **EAST LONDON**

For information write to:

East London Branch WUB,  
c/o 172 Wandsworth Road, London SW8

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Printed and published by Workers' Publishing House,  
172 Wandsworth Road, London SW8

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