

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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LUCAS WORKERS FIGHT CLOSURES

Lucas Aerospace has issued a bulletin proposing restructuring of its Engine Management Division. They state, "that these proposals are designed to integrate more closely the manufacturing facilities and engineering capability." As a result, 1400 will lose their jobs in Liverpool and 400 in Bradford. This rationalisation is in spite of record pre-tax profits for the year 1977-78 by the parent company, Lucas Industries. They are expected to be £77.3 million more than last year.

A Liverpool mass meeting voted unanimously to reject restructuring and oppose any run down at the Victor Works. A common union policy was adopted calling for :-

1. No movement of equipment or know-how from one site to another.
2. No acceptance of labour and staff transfers.

3. A Parliamentary inquiry into the role of the Department of Industry in this matter and the Company use of £56 million deferred tax.

NO HELP FROM OPPORTUNISM

Various tactics will be used to divert the struggle to save jobs. Appeals to MPs and Government ministers or the TUC and Labour Party. All these "saviours from on high" are quick to show sympathy. But what do they do to save jobs? Nothing!

Unemployment in Britain is about 1½ million. Yet they support the very same Labour Government which is managing the bosses interests. Wage cuts, and school and hospital closures lose them little sleep. Sympathy or not, they are helping prop-up capitalism which condemns more to the dole queue every day.

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MAY DAY - DAY OF WORKERS' CLASS STRUGGLE

May Day has been the traditional international day of struggle of the working class for nearly a hundred years.

It began in 1886 when American and Australian workers went on strike and demonstrated for an 8 hour working day to replace the sweat shop hours forced on workers. Despite brutal repression, including demonstrating workers being shot down by the police, the movement spread quickly to Europe. At a meeting of workers' representatives in Paris in 1889 it was decided to call a world strike on 1st May 1890 around the struggle for an 8 hour working day.



It was an immediate success. In Barcelona 100,000 demonstrated, in Stockholm 120,000, in Warsaw 8,000. Stoppages took place in 138 towns in France. In London 200,000 marched in two lines to Hyde Park, causing Engels to remark that "the English working class has joined the great international army" of labour.

From its origins in the 8 hours movement, May Day became the day of international class struggle against exploitation and oppression.

For the first time in our history, May Day has been made a Bank Holiday. Is this because the Labour Party and Government has found it supports this historic day of class struggle? Certainly not!

Rather, the Labour Party and opportunists are trying to divert the aims of May Day. They are trying to turn May Day from a day of class struggle and international solidarity into just a jamboree and picnic. The April edition of the AUEW journal dismissed May Day as having "a tradition of revelry. In Ancient times

Cont'd on p3

A BUDGET FOR THE MONOPOLIES

In what is probably election year, Healey and the Labour Party have gone to great pains to produce a budget which, on the surface, is supposed to benefit the working class immediately, and at the same time hold out yet again promises of riches "tomorrow". In reality, the budget is aimed at helping the British monopolies at a time of world-wide capitalist recession. The most important aim of the budget is to debase the currency. This means putting more banknotes - £2½ billion - into circulation even though there is virtually no increase in goods produced in Britain. The effect is to make the pound worth less - to decrease the buying power of our wages. This is the real rource of inflation which the capitalist press is hiding. It is a deliberate part of the state plan to continue to shift the burden of the crisis of the capitalist system onto the backs of the working class.

All this is done under the cover of helping the working class and particularly the lower paid. We are told that public spending on health, education and housing is being increased - in fact it is still far less in real terms than in 1974! We are told that our taxes are being cut - in fact we are still paying a far bigger proportion of our wages in taxes than in 1974! But not a word comes from the TUC union bosses to expose these cynical lies. It is left to the arch anti-worker Tory, Thatcher to point out that the real value of wages has fallen by £6 since Labour took office.

Such an anti-worker budget was inevitable. Tory and Labour will argue about the best way to save capitalism, but both are bound to attack the working class, because it is the only way the capitalist system can survive. Only the complete destruction of capitalism, and the construction of a socialist system, under the political power of the working class can rid us of the "economic laws" of capitalism. And that is something the Labour Party "left" and "right" has always opposed right down the line!

TUC BOSSES FOOL NO ONE

The working class is being treated to another spectacle of "left" posturing from the treacherous TUC. Last year, after two years of the TUC imposed "Social Contract", mass opposition forced trade union decisions for a "return to free collective bargaining". In the main a phase three was rejected. Last year Labour was clinging to the 12 month rule, for holding down wage claims. But the TUC helped Labour establish an undeclared 10% limit by their silence in the face of government demands. Now, as if there never were decisions opposing wage restraint last year, the new T&G boss Moss Evans has declared in mock defiance "No phase Four". Basnett, the treacherous union boss of the GMWU is making a hullabaloo about a thirty five hour week. But such honeyed words are a thin veil to cover up their real stand.

Moss Evans has promised the bosses that the T&G will be "responsible". Basnett has re-hashed the Social Contract giving it the new name of "economic contract". In complete contempt for the mass of union membership, the TUC has formally formed for a further year, a "tri-partite alliance" with the government and CBI. These are all clear indications of the urgent need fo fight their

treacherous misleadership if we are to "turn the unions into fighting class organisations"

TAX 'CUT' FRAUD

In order to lift the Labour Government's image at a time when a General Election is in the air, Healey made a big fanfare about his meas-ley tax cuts. The Budget gave nothing to the working class which isn't already being taken away. The Observer newspaper pointed out that without the Budget changes, income tax taken from the working people would have risen by a quarter due to inflation. With them, income tax this year will still rise by about 15%.

The TUC big wigs and other opportunists like the "Communist" arty of Great Britain prettify Healey's budget as a "a step in the right direction." In doing this they show less guts than the Tory newspaper The Daily Telegraph. They have showed that, most taxpayers will get only £1.30 a week extra, payable from mid-July and backdated to April. Inflation will have already had time to reduce its real value. The Government calculates that the average take home pay is £62. Those that are in this bracket will get the princely sum of £2.27 from the budget. Even if inflation did fall to Healey's mythical figure of 7%, this amount would be wiped out in 6 months. But in fact the budget is inflationary will debase the real value of the currency by more than 7% The money stolen from the working class through increased taxation goes straight back into the coffers of the monopolies. In the 4 years ending on April 30th, the Labour government will have given over £1,850 million to private industry. The Labour Party certainly is the best bosses party!

LUCAS WORKERS FIGHT CLOSURES *Cont'd from p1*

KNOW YOUR ENEMY, KNOW YOUR FRIENDS!

A Lucas shop-steward has made the position clear. He told "Class Struggle":- "...in the fight to save jobs our allies are our fellow workers. The fight at Lucas concerns the whole working class. We must fight for the right to work because we will not save jobs any other way. We must fight to save our jobs, but we also fight for more. We must fight to end capitalism and build socialism which is the only answer to unemployment."

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK!

FREE GEORGE LINDO

(The following is taken from a statement from the Free George Lindo campaign)

On Wednesday, February 15th, George Lindo was convicted of armed robbery by an all white jury at Bradford Crown Court.

Two weeks later, on March 2nd, George, a 26 year old West Indian father of two, was sentenced to two years imprisonment by Judge Bennett at Leeds Crown Court.

The all white jury's verdict and the sentence handed out by Judge Bennett are out of order.

George Lindo was framed by the police. All the evidence presented in Court pointed to a police frame-up. At the time of the alleged robbery George was at his mother's home. In Court, he produced three alibi witnesses to prove it. The police could not produce any identification or forensic evidence linking George to the alleged robbery. Their entire case against George rested on a so-called "confession" which he was pressurised into signing while in custody in Bradford's main Police Station in The Tyrls. 15 hours in a freezing cold cell, 15 hours of isolation, hunger and constant pressure from police officers - that is all the so-called "confession" amounts to. On his release George returned to the Police Station and, in the presence of his solicitor, made a statement refuting the so-called "confession". The Bradford Police Force is an organisation of terrorists. They specialise in harassing and framing blacks.

On February 15th, less than an hour after the all white jury's verdict, a police officer called at the home of Mr. John Lindo, George's father. The officer, who was grinning all over his face, said that the Lindo's dog was "molesting" him. He then asked to see the dog license. Mr Lindo produced the license but on March 7th Donald Lindo, George's brother, was summoned to appear before Bradford Magistrates on March 22nd on a charge of allowing the dog out on the streets without a name disc. Donald is 12 years old. The Black Community has responded to the injustices meted out to George Lindo by the police and courts. Within hours of the jury's verdict a campaign was launched to free George Lindo, a campaign led by the George Lindo Action Committee. So far there have been no fewer than eight pickets of the Tyrls, Armley Prison (where George is being held) and

Leeds Crown Court. West Indians (both young and old), Asians and whites have hit the streets to register their protest.

"Class Struggle" firmly supports the campaign's demands. In the struggle to resist racist state violence and build worker's unity it is in the interests of the whole working class to voice these demands:-

1. George Lindo's immediate release
2. That the conviction be quashed
3. That the police officers involved in the case be dismissed from the force
4. That the police STOP framing blacks.

A George Lindo Appeal Fund has been set up and all contributions and messages of support should be sent to the George Lindo Action Committee, c/o The Studio, Rear of 8 Springbank Place, Bradford.

MAY DAY

Cont'd from p1

springtime represented the beginning of nature's year. Seeds in the ground had to be helped to germinate, hence the ritual orgies..." Not once is class struggle mentioned. This sickly article is a complete betrayal of the spirit of working class solidarity which is May Day today! May Day has just become another Bank Holiday to the opportunists.

Yet, the fine traditions of May Day will not be perverted by the Labour party or opportunism. Merseyside is an area that has lost almost 10,000 jobs this year with proposed redundancies at British Leyland, Lucas Aerospace, Courtaulds, Spillers, Western Ship Repairs at Birkenhead and many more. Because of workers' pressure a march is being organised on May Day to oppose unemployment and redundancies. No doubt the Labour Party and revisionist "Communist" Party will try to turn it into a jamboree which must be resisted.

The Labour Party has carried out the fiercest attack on workers seen for many years, with unemployment at 1,500,000 living standards reduced and poverty increasing. More and more workers are understanding the Labour Party to be the best bosses' party and are resisting these attacks. Many are fighting to save their jobs and opposing redundancies, others are contracting out of the political levy to Labour. (see April "Class Struggle"). While Labour try to make May Day into a jamboree, the storm of working class anger is mounting. May Day this year must be made a mass demonstration of opposition to these vicious attacks on workers ■

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TURN THE UNIONS



1. No class collaboration with the bosses!
2. Fight for democratic unions!
3. We won't pay for the bosses' crisis!
4. Stop paying Labour to attack workers!
5. Oppose oppression and discrimination of black and women workers at the place of work!

INTO FIGHTING CLASS ORGANISATIONS

OPPOSE OPPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION OF BLACK AND WOMEN WORKERS AT THE PLACE OF WORK!

The oppression of black people and women is an everyday feature of the imperialist system. It exists in every aspect of capitalist society. This series of articles on turning unions into fighting class organisation, can only look at discrimination at the place of work.

Black and women workers face a general and systematic oppression at work on top of the exploitation which all workers are subjected to under capitalism. Black and women workers are discriminated against in getting work. In the 18 months leading up to May 1975, for example, unemployment rose 65% for the general population, and 156% for national minorities. As a result, when they do get work they are forced into the lower paid industries. Often within a company black and women workers are placed in lower grade jobs. Frequently the night shift is operated only by black workers.

The racist immigration laws also impose particular oppression on a number of black workers, who work in Britain under the work permit system. This system is used to prevent these workers engaging in class struggle - to deport those who resist the bosses. It is being used now as a threat to workers involved in the Garners Steak House strike in London. This is just one of the reasons why we must demand an end to all immigration laws. In the final analysis they are a weapon against the interests of the whole working class.

We must fight all oppression and discrimination at the place of work suffered by national minorities and women workers. "Unity is Strength" is the most basic lesson to working class struggle. If our class, as a whole, does not fight the particular oppression suffered by sections of our class, we will remain divided. We will be weak. The only ones who gain are the capitalists and their lackeys.

Our opportunist trade union misleaders of course do NOT lead such a struggle. Frequently they outright oppose it. In 1973, for example, black workers at Mansfield Hosiery in Loughborough went on strike, because of bad pay, and because only white workers were given higher grade jobs. After their militant stand their union was forced to make the strike official, but only called out the black workers, and told the white workers to cross the picket line! The union connived with the bosses in dividing the workforce into two camps, black and white.

Another famous example was the 1974 Imperial Typewriters strike in Leicester. Again black workers struck against discrimination. They were not supported by the white workers, and again the union aided the division of the



workers. The result of this is an object lesson in the need for working class unity. Several months after the strike, Litton Industries who owned the factory rationalised its UK business. In the Hull factory, the workers occupied the plant. In Leicester, the divided workforce was unable to fight.

The Grunwick strike has been an excellent example of working class unity. Black and white workers, men and women, have fought side by side, receiving good support from other factories all over Britain and Northern Ireland. In this struggle, the TUC despite its militant proclamations at the 1977 Congress, has played the hatchet man for the bosses and state forces opposed to the strike.

In fighting the **bosses** we need unity. We must oppose oppression and discrimination against black and women workers at the place of work. We must demand that the unions take up this struggle. We must identify our enemies clearly. The enemies of black workers are not the whites, the enemies of women are not the men. It is the bosses, whose system is based on exploitation, oppression and discrimination, who are the enemy. It is the **bosses'** lackeys, the opportunist trade union misleaders who are the enemy.

UNITY IS STRENGTH!

OPPOSE OPPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION OF BLACK AND WOMEN WORKERS AT THE PLACE OF WORK!
TURN THE UNIONS INTO FIGHTING CLASS ORGANISATIONS!

PRODUCTIVITY DEALS – CARROT WITH THE BIG STICK

The present fight over the 10% wage freeze is virtually over with most industries settling within the guidelines. Many sections of the working class fought heroically, particularly the Firemen. But the opportunist misleadership by the TU and Labour traitors systematically worked to allow the bosses to pick workers off, one at a time. In August the battles begin again when the present wage freeze is due to run out. Already the Government is hinting at a phase 4 of 5%. In the meantime the Trade Union Traitors are peddling the government and bosses' line of negotiations for "Self-financing Productivity Deals". The basis of this line is that the workers can have what rise they like provided they pay for it! The worst examples are where workers are not replaced in a factory, so that one man does what originally was two men's jobs, for a small increase in wages.

On Humberside, workers at Laporte Industries began looking at a Self Financing Deal. All sections on the site were asked to discuss ways of saving money. From not replacing workers who leave, to picking up nuts and bolts. But it soon became clear that all that went into the deal did not come out! Workers were told that if the savings were small the workers could have the lot, but if through sacrifice the savings were large, then the Company

wanted a share for investment. The workers promptly stopped talks and eventually went on strike for parity with other plants (see previous "Class Struggle" report) in the Laporte Group. The result was that the Company began paying an 8% Productivity Supplement for which the workers were asked to contribute nothing in return! Shop floor workers nicknamed it "Hush Money" because it was paid to keep the workers quiet until the next round of pay talks.

British Titan Products is another chemical firm on Humberside. Here the workers were asked to give up washing periods, begin clocking on after nearly 9 years of no clocking and cut out weekend working rostered shifts. This would mean a loss of weekly pay all for 4½% increase. This too was kicked out by the workers!

Productivity Deals are a weapon against the working class and another attempt to put the burden of capitalism onto the backs of the workers.

WE WON'T PAY FOR THE BOSSES CRISIS!

LAUNDRY WORKERS EXPOSE OPPORTUNIST'S THREATS

At Queensway Laundry, a small workplace in Liverpool, a union official helped the boss to defeat a strike. Thirty workers came out on a one day strike on Tuesday 18th April, to get a new vanlad taken on to replace one who had left. They also wanted a closed shop, to bring back 6 workers who left the union, and supported the boss's refusal of a wage claim.

The boss replied with a lockout on the following day. The local official, Norman Williams, of the T&G Garston Branch, told the workers that the boss was going to sack them. He launched into an attack on the workers, saying the dispute was "out of procedure", and that the boss had every right to sack them. But he offered to go in and plead for their jobs! As for the unemployment caused by not replacing workers who left, he said, "The Labour Government is taking care of unemployment".

Most of the workers, who are mainly women, argued with him angrily, pointing out that the firm would definitely have to close down if they were sacked. A woman steward said, "Why should we go back in and let him trample all over us?" But eventually a small majority voted to go back to work.

The strike was lost, this time, but the boss made big losses too. And many of the workers learnt that they must fight hard against the class collaboration of the trade union officials, if they are to win their fight against the bosses.

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BRITISH IMPERIALISM OUT OF ZIMBABWE

In its January/February issue, 'Zimbabwe News' - the official organ of ZANU - published a comprehensive list of British imperialist companies who have subsidiaries in Zimbabwe. Among the 148 named British parent companies are the big monopoly corporations whose names are household words throughout Britain. Also included in the list are a number of nationalised industries. There are many lessons from these simple facts. It is clear that despite verbal support of "sanctions", British imperialism continues its super-exploitation and oppression of the people of Zimbabwe. It is clear that nationalisation has nothing to do with "socialism" - that nationalised industries are enthusiastic participants in the rape of Zimbabwe. It is clear that when Owen and Vance rush around the world portraying themselves as "independent arbitrators" - as impartial referees in the struggle between Smith and the people of Zimbabwe led by ZANU and the PATRIOTIC FRONT - they are nothing of the sort. On the contrary they represent the interests of British and US imperialism. Their concern is only to gain a smooth transition from a settler regime backed by imperialism to a neo-colonial Zimbabwe. They are not interested in the freedom of the people of Zimbabwe, but in

the continued domination of imperialism - in the continued super-profits of the monopolies.

Most importantly for the British working class, it is clear that the fight for socialism - for the political power of the working class - demands support for the people of Zimbabwe, who are inflicting defeat after defeat over our own ruling class. This list shows their enemies are our enemies, their fight is our fight!

These are just a few of the British monopolies who have imperialist interests in Zimbabwe:

Associated Portland Cement. BICC. BOC. British Electric Traction. British Petroleum. British Steel. Brooke Bond. Chloride Group Ltd. Dunlop. GEC. Hawker Siddeley. Hill Samuel. ICL. Hoover. Lonhro. Lucas Industries. Metal Box. Plessey. Reed International. Shell. Spillers. Unilever. Wilkinson. Woolworths. Rio Tinto Zinc. Courtaulds. Barclays.

"Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom" Lenin .

"Where there is oppression - there is resistance" - Mao Tsetung.

ARMED PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE WINS VICTORY AFTER VICTORY



Of Zimbabwe's (Rhodesia's) 50 districts, 39 are now semi-liberated. Of these 29 have been written off by the colonial regime and the other 10 can only be reached by the enemy by helicopter. Semi-liberated means that they are controlled by the people of Zimbabwe but that the colonial forces still control the air. These areas no longer fall under Smith's administration. The people of Zimbabwe are replacing the old state apparatus in these areas with their own.

LIBERATION VICTORIES COST SMITH DEARLY

According to War Communique no.15 from ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army), which covers October 1977 to January 1978, in this period 381 enemy troops were wiped out, 36 enemy vehicles destroyed, 4 fighter planes and 4 helicopters gunned down, 8 trains derailed and 9 of the big racist settler farms devastated. The ZANLA guerrillas engaged the enemy in 39 ambushes and effected 27 acts of sabotage.

In his New Year Message Comrade Mugabe states that the enemy's strategic military air bases and several police stations have been razed to the ground and that the combination of rural operations with urban guerilla warfare is causing over 2000 settlers to leave the country every month. The successes of the Liberation forces means that the colonial regime is now paying as much as 600,000 Rhodesian dollars a day to wage the war, which led to the devaluation of the Rhodesian dollar at the beginning of April. Comrade Mugabe said: "By December 1977 the whole country had turned into one vast military operational zone."

The task is now to fully liberate the semi-liberated areas which means gaining control over the air. A major problem is the transport of the heavy anti-aircraft guns needed to shoot down enemy aircraft. This is yet another reason why means of transport are of vital importance to the people of Zimbabwe and why it is imperative that we collect enough money to buy a Land Rover

DIVISIVE PLOTS ARE MET BY BULLETS

The great political and military advances won by the Zimbabwe people, led by ZANU and the Patriotic Front, has forced British imperialism into a corner. Now they are trying every trick to divide the people of Zimbabwe, to confuse and divide the peoples of the world and most of all to divide the Patriotic Front. The imperialists do not have a chance if the people remain united against them - their only temporary hope is division.

ONLY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT REPRESENTS ZIMBABWE!

Firstly, behind the scenes, British imperialism helped set up the "internal settlement", which would maintain the imperialist rule of Zimbabwe, the economic power of the monopolies, and the control of land by the white settlers whilst putting some black faces in the government (as articles in the February, March and April issues of "Class Struggle" showed). They hope that black faces in the government will cause division. But the support of the Zimbabwean people for the Patriotic Front, and the strength of their armed struggle meant that Owen and Vance could only call the internal settlement "a step in the right direction". Now they attempt to sow divisions in the Patriotic Front. They try to sow doubt and division between ZANU, led by R. Mugabe, and ZAPU led by Joshua Nkomo, the two forces united in the Patriotic Front. "Nkomo is the man most likely to compromise" said the Sunday Times. When Sithole, one of the black traitors who has joined Smith's government met Dr. Owen, the British Foreign Secretary, in London, Owen said: "How you handle Nkomo seems to me to be crucial. If you can include one of the external nationalist (in the "internal settlement") that would help in gaining recognition at the earliest time".

Joshua Nkomo has already given his answer: "You must not associate my name with that treasonous and faked agreement," he said. The militant unity of the Patriotic Front is being proved on the battlefield, where they continue to advance day by day.

Another divisive tactic is the imperialists' attempt to split the frontline African states who are supporting the struggle. The imperial-

ists, for example, are trying to force Zambia to its knees by squeezing the credit rope around its neck. Again, the frontline states maintain their united support of the Patriotic Front.

Whilst Owen and Vance try in every way to sow confusion and division, the people of Zimbabwe go marching on. The unity of the Patriotic Front with the people, and the unity of ZANU and ZAPU in the Patriotic Front, shows itself in the successes of the armed struggle.

POWER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT!

GEORGE SIMBI MURDERED BY FASCIST REGIME

On April 18th, it was reported that George Simbi, a Zimbabwean nationalist leader had been murdered by Rhodesian racist troops.

According to a statement by Smith's colonial regime, he was shot dead while breaking a curfew as he was driving down a road on his own farm. George Simbi was a member of the delegation led by comrade Mugabe to the 1976 Geneva Settlement Conference. He was a supporter of the Patriotic Front.

3 weeks earlier racist troops opened fire on a bus full of black workers which was running late, and was still on the road at the time of the curfew. Several black workers were killed and many more wounded.

Such fascist atrocities, which are admitted by the Smith regime, against the black people of Zimbabwe are continuing despite the "internal settlement". A few black faces in the government does not change the nature of the regime. Clearly the regime is oppressing the people, and it is the people - not a few "terrorists" - who are fighting the regime! ■

ZIMBABWE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

There will be a slide show on the struggle of the Zimbabwe people, with speakers from ZANU and RCLB .

Angel Community Centre, Angel Rd.,
Edmonton, London, N18.

SATURDAY, MAY 20th. 2.30pm to 5.00pm.

Send a landrover to the liberation forces in Zimbabwe!

The Zimbabwe Solidarity Campaign, launched by the RCLB has set itself two basic tasks:

1. To expose and oppose British imperialism in Zimbabwe and to develop the spirit of working class internationalism.
2. To give concrete support to ZANU and the Patriotic Front.

In Zimbabwe our class brothers and sisters are fighting our common enemy: the British ruling class. Their enemy is our enemy. Their fight is our fight.

Concretely, our target is to send a landrover, as a gift from the British working class to the liberation fighters of Zimbabwe. Show your solidarity. Give generously to the Zimbabwe fund. If you can't afford money, you can help by providing old bedding and clothes for the liberation fighters and refugees. Every penny, every blanket will go to Zimbabwe.

RCLB members and supporters will be collecting at factory gates, or you can give donations to any member of the RCL. If you can't do either send donations to: J. Bayley, c/o New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Rd., London. N4. enclosing a note saying it is for the Zimbabwe fund.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM OUT OF ZIMBABWE!

ONLY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT REPRESENTS ZIMBABWE! POWER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT!

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

TWO SPILLAGES OF DANGEROUS CHEMICALS IN ONE day brought the total of such incidents to four in a fortnight in the Avonmouth complex near Bristol. There is always the danger that several spillages could occur at the same time resulting in an environmental disaster. The Avonmouth complex has been described by a scientist at the Bristol Polytechnic as "a chemical time-bomb". Despite the fact that Avonmouth residents have frequently expressed concern and anger at the dangers nothing has been done to lessen them. Capitalism repeatedly shows how little it is concerned with people or their environment in its search for profit. ■

EIGHTY WORKERS AT A BRYNMAWR FACTORY RECENTLY went on strike in support of a revised pay structure for women employees and were then threatened with the sack if they did not return to work. The workers at the Cooper's Felts Company walked out after fifty women were suspended for refusing to operate the piecework system. The women, who only qualify for a weekly wage if they complete a certain amount of work in a given time, want parity with the men who are paid a basic wage which does not depend on piecework rates. The struggle for equal pay and conditions for all women is a just one, the workers at Brynmawr have given a strong lead to the rest of us. ■

WORKERS AT AEI CABLES LTD. EXERCISED FIRM control over a shop steward who opposed the workers' rejection of a £5 a week bonus pay offer. Shopsteward and branch secretary Bob Churchill was tied hand and foot and dumped outside the managements' office. Around his neck was hung a placard stating firm opposition to the AEI bosses' pay offer. Shop stewards who wish to maintain the workers' respect must heed such summary criticism. ■

THE BRITISH INVESTMENT TRUST, TAKEN OVER BY the NUM pension fund last year and whose administration includes members of the Union's executive, has been accused of investing millions of pounds in slave-labour in South African pits. The accusation was made recently in "The Yorkshire Miner" one of the Union's newspapers. ■

AT THE RECENT INQUEST IN BIRMINGHAM ON THE tragic suicide of a 16 year-old, the coroner Dr. Richard Whittington concluded that "he found the position of being unemployed an embarrassment." While more and more youngsters face the prospect of long dole queues the Trade Union mis-leadership connives with the bourgeoisie to limit even more the job openings available to the working class and their children. Unemployment is a result of capitalism, the answer lies not in suicide but in uniting to fight back against a system which holds life so cheap and replacing it with one which serves the people. ■

ONE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH THE RICH STAY RICH is by keeping their money in the family. A couple can receive £5,000 from each of their parents and £2,500 from each of their grandparents without paying any kind of tax. Just by marrying each other the bosses' children can avoid paying tax on £40,000 of their unearned income. ■

2,000 BUILDING WORKERS WILL DIE AND 400,000 will be seriously injured over the next ten years unless there is a drastic attempt to enforce safety standards. A report recently published by the Health and Safety Executive draws attention to the fact that "cost was the decisive factor". Most of these accidents could be avoided with proper equipment, proper training and adequate supervision but this costs money and, under capitalism, lives are cheap. ■

130TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1848 CHARTIST DEMONSTRATION

(Contributed by a reader)

One hundred and thirty years ago western Europe was experiencing its most revolutionary spring so far. In February 1848 the French monarchy was overthrown. In March popular uprisings temporarily drove the troops of the feudal regimes out of Vienna, Berlin and Milan.

These revolutions were largely under the leadership of the industrial bourgeoisie, the capitalists, who were seeking to overthrow the outdated feudal rulers so that capitalism could develop unchecked. The revolutionary battles, however, were fought and won by the working classes. Within months the victorious bourgeoisie - haunted by the "spectre" of proletarian revolution - were everywhere to join up again with the most reactionary forces in order to crush their former allies.

In Britain, the Chartist movement, the world's first mass working class party, was already ten years old. In the spring of 1848 this movement made its last great effort to capture state power through parliament. Two million signatures were collected for a petition demanding universal male suffrage and other reforms, which was to be presented on 10th April 1848 after a mass procession from Kennington Common to Westminster.

With reaction reeling in many European countries, the British government were well aware that this demonstration posed the danger of an armed uprising like those on the continent. 9,000 troops were accordingly concentrated at strategic points in London to reinforce the police. Public buildings were turned into virtual fortresses against the "mob". Some 70,000 "special constables" were enrolled and armed.

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BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF NORTHERN IRELAND

In the recent years that the British army has patrolled the streets of Belfast and the 6 counties, British imperialism has faked a neutral role of "keeping catholic and protestant apart." The history of British rule in Ireland shows what a lying pose this is.

The dominating interests of the British ruling class has been to exploit Ireland's agricultural wealth and a fear that Ireland would become a base for a rival power. For example, in the early 17th century the English crown confiscated the whole land of Ulster and sought to swamp the native Irish with mass immigration of English and Scottish tenant farmers. Such ruthless measures were bound to fail and kindle the resistance which in time would force British rule out of 26 of Ireland's 32 counties.

But this mass immigration of mainly protestant and presbyterians into Ulster has become a source of religious division in Ireland which is utilized by British imperialism to keep Northern Ireland under British rule.

Sectarian divisions between catholic and protestant are promoted by a systematic policy of economic and political discrimination against catholics. Such discrimination divides the working class and weakens it. It ends inevitably in the poverty of protestant as well as catholic workers, and in greater profits for the British imperialist monopolies. The British ruling class through their Unionist stooges cannot hold onto Northern Ireland without such feudal discrimination. Consequently, when the first Northern Ireland civil rights marches took place in 1968/1969, they were seen not as a reform movement but as a threat for Stormont and British rule. The immediate reaction was for Stormont to ban the marches

and carry out wholesale repression. But these failed and the movement spread like wildfire among the catholic working class. The notorious 'B' specials carried out violent attacks on catholic housing estates. In defence, barricades were built and public revolt in Britain against the 'B' specials compelled the British Government to disband them and send in the troops as "neutral peacekeepers." Ulster unionism was now in deep crisis with prominent Unionists like Faulkner and O'Neal recognizing the need for reforms and others refusing to make any move against Unionist privilege.

The struggle of the catholic working class in the face of such brutal repression by the RUC, 'B' specials and later the British army was bound to develop beyond the stage of a campaign for civil rights in jobs, housing etc.. The catholic areas which faced constant attacks and sectarian violence demanded defence. The Provisional IRA emerged in 1970 as the organization prepared to do this. Its support in Catholic ghettos spread.

ELITIST STRUGGLE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

As long as the IRA was defending the catholic areas from sectarian terror, they had the warm support of the catholic masses. When they moved from a defensive to an attacking posture, the weakness of their petit-bourgeois ideology and opportunist leadership lead them into sectarian terror and bombing campaigns. These have played into the hands of British imperialism. They have undermined the mass anti-imperialist struggle in Northern Ireland and increased divisions among the working class and broad masses. Now is not the time in Northern Ireland for armed struggle to win independence. At a time when proletarian leadership is weak and divided, armed struggle

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TURKEY'S RUSSIAN WHITE ELEPHANT

In 1967 Turkey signed a "Treaty of Technical Cooperation" with the USSR. In 1969, the Soviet Union started to build the Seydisehir Aluminium plant. The plant came into operation in 1974, but could only work at less than half the planned capacity. Production costs were so high that the plant lost 583 million Turkish Lira (TL) in 1975. Each ton of alumina cost more than double the world market price.

The original Soviet proposal was that Turkey would repay the cost of the plant at 2½% interest over 15 years, but due to the Soviet delays and inefficiency, production costs rocketed, and Turkey had to pay the USSR for them! Interest charges spiralled from 30 million TL to 150 million TL a year. On top of this Turkey is having to repay the "loan" by selling the USSR alumina at 600 TL per ton below world market prices, which is far below production costs!

The energy consumption of the plant is so immense that parts of Turkey suffer blackouts so that it can run. The USSR, of course, leapt to the rescue and is now flogging Turkey 35 million TL worth of electricity a year - another source of profits for the new Tsars of the Kremlin.

In all, the plant will burden Turkey with a debt to the Soviet imperialists of 70 billion TL over 15 years. For every 1 TL borrowed, Turkey will repay a staggering 56 TL! On top of the aim of making super-profits through this imperialist manoeuvre, the USSR is also aiming to use it to make Turkey politically subservient. Brezhnev stated: "The level of economic and technological cooperation between the Soviet Union and Turkey is such that it now helps gradually to shift relations with Turkey from the sphere of economics to politics." The Treaty of Friendship is no more than a treaty of bondage!



INTERNATIONAL NOTES

SPAIN

In only 14 months after establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, three Russians have already been expelled from the country. The latest diplomat, Yuri Issaev, the Political Councillor at the Russian embassy in Madrid, was kicked out of Spain, for spying. ■

FRANCE

The Amoco Cadiz which ran aground on the North Brittany coast released 230,000 tonnes of crude oil into the Atlantic ruining 200 miles of French coast line, fouling beaches and killing marine life- which was the basis of the livelihood of over 2,000 Breton fishermen. The disaster has thrown local fishermen out of work and onto government subsistence. Their annual harvest of shellfish worth \$7million and oysters worth \$8million will be ruined for years.

The Bretons blame the big multinationals (Shell's oil, Amoco's tanker) for the damage

CHARTIST DEMONSTRATION

Cont'd from p8

When the day came, several hundred thousand people marched through the City and across the river to Kennington. Despite this tremendous mobilisation, however, the reformist wing of the Chartist leadership managed to persuade the demonstrators to comply with a government ban on the procession to Westminster. The demonstration dispersed, and the continuing failure of Chartism to develop a revolutionary leadership ensured that within a few years the movement was only a memory.

Nevertheless, Chartism as it was during the "hungry forties" remains a glorious chapter in British working class history. ■

NORTHERN IRELAND

Cont'd from p9

against the British army is adventurist and can only lead to defeat. The kind of proletarian leadership which combines the struggle for Northern Ireland's independence from British imperialism with the struggle for socialist revolution must be built.

But in building it we firmly place our faith in the working class and the broad masses of the people of Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland's independence from British imperialism can only be won by the broad masses of the people, both protestant and catholic. The struggle against the special oppression of the catholic working class is part of this struggle for the unity of the Northern Ireland workers. ■

but similar spillages show compensation is never likely to be paid. Shell and Amoco deny responsibility.

Big demonstrations of Breton fishermen denounced the French government's time wasting for failing to deal with the spillage promptly and concentrating on cosmetic actions to save beaches in tourist centres.

The giant multinationals are a law-unto-themselves, completely irresponsible and callously disregard the effects that they have on the lives of people. ■

FRANCE

On March 17th the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of France and the Marxist-Leninist Revolutionary Communist Party made public their commitment to unite and form a single Marxist-Leninist Party in France.

This follows the joint campaign of the 2 organizations in the French elections. They formed the "Worker and Peasant Union for Proletarian Democracy" which polled 28,000 votes. More importantly for the first time the 2 organizations worked together at all levels. The prospects for unity are excellent. This will be a great thing for the French working class. ■

AFRICA

16 African countries including Mozambique, Madagascar, Angola, Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia and Tanzania are taking steps towards economic cooperation with the formation of the East African Economic Community. EAEC will be a preferential trading area whose formation is directly due to dissatisfaction with existing trade agreements between the Third World and the imperialist countries. The community will be setting up institutions to deal with finance, marine and shipping, mineral developments, veterinary and agricultural research. More and more the Third World is standing up to and resisting imperialist exploitation. ■

WEST GERMANY

In Germany a massive campaign has been led by Marxist-Leninists to raise funds for ZANU. Their aim is to raise enough to equip a fully motorised ZANLA company by May 1st. ZANLA is the Zimbabwean army led by ZANU. They have already collected several hundred thousand marks. In March the West German imperialists stepped in. An administrative tribunal has impounded part of the funds donated by German workers, taking control of a bank account containing 105,000 marks (£28,000) which was opened by the KBW (Communist League of West Germany). The Tribunal has complained that the campaign "would lead to difficulties in foreign affairs with Rhodesia". The German workers are continuing their militant support for ZANU and the Patriotic Front, and have launched a struggle to get back the stolen ZANU funds. ■

THREE YEARS SINCE DEFEAT OF USA IN INDO-CHINA



APRIL 17TH 1975

Two young soldiers of the National United Front of Kampuchea are greeted enthusiastically in Phnom Penh.

Three years ago, the United States imperialists were kicked out of Indo-China. On April 17th, the people of Kampuchea (Cambodia) led by the Communist Party of Kampuchea, gained the final decisive victory over the United States aggressors and Democratic Kampuchea was founded. Two weeks later, on April 30th, Vietnam was liberated. On May Day 1975, victory rallies were held in Democratic Kampuchea and in Ho Chi Minh City (formally Saigon) in Vietnam.

These great victories marked the turning point in the struggle against US imperialism. The vast US war-machine had been defeated by people's war. The USA had dropped three times as many bombs on Indo-China as had been used in the whole of the Second World War. It had spent \$4 billion on its war effort in Kampuchea alone. It had used a ½ million US troops in Vietnam, not to mention the big conscript puppet armies. It had developed the most modern technological devices, from chemical weapons, to electronic intelligence devices, to laser guided bombs. Despite all this US imperialism was defeated.

US imperialism was defeated because the liberation war was fought by the people. The people of Indo-China fought heroically to lift the yoke of foreign oppression. They drowned US imperialism in a sea of people's war. As Mao said: "The revolutionary war is a war of the masses, it can be waged only by mobilising the masses and relying on them". People are stronger than technology, and the people of Indo-China gave a brilliant example to the oppressed people and nations of the world, when they showed that under revolutionary leadership a small country can defeat a big imperialist power.

SOVIET IMPERIALISTS OPPOSE DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

With the defeat of US imperialism in Indo-China the Soviet social imperialists have gone on the offensive in an attempt to replace it. Its main attack has been directed against Democratic Kampuchea.

USSR SUPPORTED LON NOL

Throughout the national liberation war in Kampuchea, from 1970 to 1975, the Soviet Union gave its support to the reactionary Lon Nol-clique installed by the CIA. Lon Nol took power in 1970, whilst Sihanouk, the then head of state who had tried to maintain neutrality towards the Vietnam struggle, was visiting Moscow. Sihanouk was kicked out of Moscow immediately and went to Peking. There he supported the National United Front of Kampuchea, led by the Communist Party of Kampuchea, which included all forces opposing US imperialism.

By the end of the year the National United Front controlled 70% of the country. In 1973, American imperialism began massive bombings against the Kampuchean people, killing hundreds of thousands. The USSR continued to support Lon Nol.

When the USA sent convoys of arms, petrol and napalm along the Mekong river from Vietnam to Phnom Penh, the capital of Kampuchea, a Soviet insurance company - GOSSTRAKH - insured the supplies against capture or destruction.

SOVIET UNION ATTACKS LIBERATION WAR

On May 23rd, 1973, Pravda described the liberation war against US imperialism and its puppet Lon Nol as "harmful" and "fratricide". It complained that the war was plunging the country into "political and economic chaos". As the liberation struggle won victory after victory, many countries closed their embassies in Phnom Penh. Along with the USA and ISRAEL, the Soviet Union stayed to the end. They were finally kicked out with the Americans by the liberation forces. The Soviet Union gave no support to the Kampuchean war of liberation, quite the opposite. Nothing could be worse for its plans than a strong self-reliant, socialist state in South-East Asia.

SOVIET OPPOSITION CONTINUED AFTER LIBERATION

Since liberation the Soviet superpower has continued its outright opposition to Democratic Kampuchea. It stirred up contradictions between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea, in order to fish in troubled waters. It reprints the lies of the US imperialists about Democratic Kampuchea. It has even taken part in attacks on Kampuchea. One Vietnamese soldier captured in Kampuchea reported that 20 Soviet "advisers" were attached to his regiment. Russian soldiers have died in Kampuchea. Tank corps orders in Russian have been monitored on the radio.

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VISIT TO A WORKERS' VILLAGE IN SHANGHAI

The housing problem in Britain is no nearer to solution than it was before World War 2. Crash programmes of workers' housing carried out since the war have recreated the problems instead of solving them. High rise and deck access methods of building have been employed to solve the housing problem on the cheap for capitalist builders and the finance houses but at a very great expense to the working class. In London, Manchester, Liverpool and other big cities in Britain, a number of high rise and deck access estates have had to be closed down or have fallen down. Homelessness is a greater problem today than it has been since the war. Rents for workers' housing is sky high and local authorities act as rent collectors for the monopoly finance brigade of the City of London who are the real owners of "public housing" because of the local government debt to the City of many billions of pounds.

Can this situation change with socialism?

China is a country which had a housing situation in 1949 many times worse than Britain's. Things are far from excellent in China but socialism has enabled the people to start to tackle the problem free from the shackles imposed by moneylenders and capitalists. Compared with 1949 the progress has been staggering.

THE WORKERS' VILLAGE

The RCLB delegation to China had the opportunity to see some of this progress in a "workers' village" erected in Shanghai in 1964.

We were first introduced to a retired worker who was the head of the neighbourhood committee for the village.

The village had a history which goes back before 1949, the year of liberation. Preserving the record of the history of the workers' struggle throughout the life of the village was very important to the workers there. Before 1949 huts little higher than dog kennels were all the shelter workers in that area had. The old man told us that in those days the people could not put their heads up in two ways; firstly they were oppressed by local bullies and despots, secondly; they could not stand up in the huts they lived in! Those old huts were demolished in 1952 and bigger huts and some brick houses were put up. But replicas of the old huts were kept as a reminder of the past. In 1964 the state granted money to build the new village.

DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

Cont'd from p11

The revolutionary friendship of the Vietnamese and Kampuchean people, forged in their common struggle against US imperialism, will live through the present problems. The contradictions between the two countries will be solved by struggle against the Soviet social imperialists' aims to dominate the area, and by complete withdrawal from all occupied territory, as the basis for genuine border negotiations.

WORKERS' FLATS AND A THRIVING COMMUNITY

The flats are well built in clean and reasonably well spaced surroundings. They have the appearance of early post-war flats in Britain. They are not luxurious it is true, but they are very adequate. Nowhere else in the third world can workers expect such a high standard of housing. Also the community is alive! The neighbourhood and house committees promote a proud public spirit in the village. This kind of spirit exists in many places in Britain but is often absent especially in rootless new estates.

The village houses 1,830 households and 7,500 people. It is composed of thirty five 5-storey buildings with a school, nursery, kindergarten, bank, co-op medical clinic, shops and two neighbourhood run factories. The community was well planned and not slung up in a hurry.

The school and kindergarten on the estate make it easier for the women to work. In Britain, a great obstacle to women's equality, and in particular the equal right to work, is the deplorable state of child care. Socialism removes obstacles to the woman's right to work by ensuring all round care of children. Retired workers play an important part in this. For women who are still housewives the village workshops provide an easy means to take part in productive labour.

OLD PEOPLE HAVE A PROUD PLACE

When a worker in Britain has completed his working days he becomes "a problem". If he can't make a profit for the capitalists then the state wants him to eke out his last days as cheaply as possible. Not so under socialism! The wisdom and experience of the old is employed after retirement in the neighbourhood committees. They do a good job. Not only do they manage the village well but their leadership ensures peace and the protection of workers' property without the use of the police or the threat of force.

HOUSING IS CHEAP FOR WORKERS IN CHINA

It costs a Chinese worker about £2 a month for rent. Socialism provides all necessities cheaply. When necessities are paid for by a family in the village there is always some thing over to save for other things.

SOCIALISM WILL SOLVE BRITAIN'S HOUSING CRISIS!

Socialism is not a magic wand that brings Utopia overnight. Things are not Utopia in China after 29 years of socialism. But socialism with the unrestrained power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat, gets the profiteers off our backs who have an interest in keeping housing scarce and dear. We have nothing like the problems that China had in 1949 or even still has, but unless we assert the power of the working class we cannot even solve a small problem. ■