

# CLASS STRUGGLE



POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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## TUC - TRAITORS UNDER COVER

That's what the placard outside one firemen's picket in Liverpool read. As the strike hardens, the firemen are learning more in eight weeks of struggle about the nature of trade union misleaders, than in years of Inquiries and negotiations.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee - the "inner cabinet" of the TUC - told the firemen to accept 10% in early December. On Dec. 21st the TUC General Council supported this. The TUC statement then took pains to point out that "the TUC are not a party to the 10% limit". Who are they trying to kid? The statement went on: "The General Council do not believe that a public campaign would be of assistance to the FBU in this very difficult situation." On the contrary, it's exactly what's needed to help the firemen win their just demands, and it's what thousands of firemen picketing the TUC were demanding!

IN CASE OF FIRE - BREAK 10%

The 10% limit is the latest of the Labour government's "phases" to hold down wages and make workers pay for the crisis that

the bosses' system is in. The firemen haven't claimed to be a special case. Their demand is for a decent living wage. It's a just demand - and the enormous public sympathy and material support for the firemen shows that working people recognise that. Liverpool saw the biggest demonstration for years when firemen marched through the city on 9 Dec. In Norwich, every factory except two made collections for the strikers. The Civil and Public Services Association, who sent a large donation to the firemen at their Annual Conference, also supported the firemen's complaint that the Social Security Department was clamping down on payments to striking firemen and their families, as a result of a special circular from the Department. (cont'd on p3)

## DELEGATION OF RCLB RETURNS FROM CHINA

A delegation of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain (RCLB) recently returned from the People's Republic of China. The delegation was invited by the International Liason Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). In China, the delegation had warm and successful talks with comrades from the International Liason Dept., and attended a banquet at the invitation of Comrade Keng Piao, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC, and head of the International Liason Department.

The delegation travelled to several places including Peking, Tsinan, Wushi, Shanghai and Changsha. They visited heavy industrial plants, small factories, agricultural areas, hospitals, colleges and housing estates, where they were warmly greeted. They talked a lot with ordinary workers and with Communist Party and state officials at these places, and learnt a great deal.

An interview with the leader of the delegation is printed on pages 8-10 of this issue, and the direct experience of members of the delegation will be used in writing articles on China in coming issues.

# TURN THE UNIONS INTO FIGHTING CLASS ORGANISATIONS

In December, 'Class Struggle' carried an article on the need for a systematic national struggle to turn the unions into fighting class organisations. That article introduced 5 basic slogans to give direction to the main thrust of the struggle. This article deals with the first of these slogans:

*NO CLASS COLLABORATION WITH THE BOSSES!*

Why is this slogan put first? It is because it sums up the general outlook of social democracy - of Labour Party politics. Social democracy claims that a promised land can be brought about if only the capitalists and the working class are 'reasonable'. To them, the way forward for the people of Britain is to "work together in the national interest". With such slogans, they try to paper over the class conflict. In the real world the capitalists' wealth is created by the labour of the working class. The capitalists are parasites living off the backs of the working class. But it is the capitalists who hold political power - state power. They hold it not just through parliament, but through the armed forces, the police, the courts, and the civil service. To keep this situation as it is, the Labour Party does indeed "work together" with capitalism.

The capitalist system, based on the exploitation of the working class, is a degenerate system. A system of economic booms, with bigger slumps, that crashes through crises, destroying industry and social services and throwing millions out of work. The social democrats claim that they stand for improving the lot of the working class, but they will fight tooth and nail against any challenge to the system itself. In the end they always defend the system.

This basic outlook of the social democrats inevitably shows itself in the activities of the Labour party in the trade unions. The Labour government and the trade union leaders together hatched up the social contract - a scheme to shift the burden of the capitalist crisis on to the backs of the working class. Over the last 3 years real wages have fallen, unemployment has more than doubled and health, housing and education programmes slashed. In 1977



workers' anger was rising so our union misleaders had to find a new way. They said there would be no 'phase 3' agreement. But they upheld the 12 month rule to break up the fightback. They say they oppose the 10% limit, but they told the firemen to go back to work. In public services the union misleaders are signing 10% agreements over the heads of the workers. The words have changed, but the class collaboration continues. When a dispute does break out into open conflict, the opportunists rush in to put the dispute into "arbitration". Bodies like ACAS are called in. But what are these bodies?

They are made up of capitalists, top civil servants, and often include some opportunist trade union leaders. What is "independent" about them? All they are are negotiating bodies for the capitalists dressed up as something else.

It is not only the top union leaders who promote such collaboration. At plant level also opportunists call for arbitration and oppose the independent struggle of the working class. They preach that there is no basic conflict of interests between the bosses and the workers, between the capitalist system and the interests of the working class. It is not at all unusual to find that when unemployment in a firm is threatened, instead of leading an active struggle against all loss of jobs, the shop stewards merely demand discussion on HOW MANY should go down the road. They even frequently demand the setting up of a joint management/shop steward committee to carry it out!

Looking at its overall plans of class collaboration, the government came up with the Bullock report. This report put forward plans to put worker directors on the boards of big firms. Many opportunist union misleaders enthusiastically support this proposal, which is nothing but a plan to involve workers' representatives in the planning of their own exploitation. It is a proposal purely and simply to damp down class struggle.

The opportunism of some union misleaders takes a more 'left' form. They oppose worker directors in private industry, yet when it comes to nationalised industry

**T**RAITORS

**U**NDER

**C**OVER

(cont'd from p1)

It's a just demand for the firemen - and it's a just demand for all workers who've had to face falling living standards while profits soar.

### FIGHT THE OPPORTUNISTS

To win their demand, the firemen are taking on the Labour government head-on; and along with the Labour government, their bootlickers in the TUC. Reports from Newcastle, Merseyside and the Clyde show that the TUC "let-down" is only making the firemen more militant and determined than ever. Of the decision not to support the firemen Mr. T. Smith, South Yorkshire branch secretary said "The TUC is now no longer representative of its members. It appears now that it

they love it. But nationalised industry is nothing more than state monopoly capitalism - Engels called it the collective ownership of the ruling class. So long as the bosses control the state, state control is bosses' control. Workers on the railways, in steel, in British Leyland know that they have to struggle just the same. So do the power workers, the postmen, the electricians etc.etc. This class collaboration with a 'left' face is the hallmark of the so-called 'Communist' Party of Great Britain.

To fight the bosses we need fighting class unions, and that means driving out the opportunists who collaborate with the ruling class in our exploitation. That is why we demand:

**NO CLASS COLLABORATION WITH THE BOSSES!**

From next month - February - 'Class Struggle' will be expanding from 10 to 12 pages. This will enable 'Class Struggle' to improve its coverage both in the number of articles printed, and also in the length of articles which will allow clearer explanations.

At the same time, the price of 'Class Struggle' will go up to 7p. This is partly due to the increased size, but also to increasing costs. This is the first increase since 'Class Struggle' was published in June 1976.

is merely an extension of the Labour government."

The firemen's struggle will be won in the teeth of fierce opposition from Scanlon, Murray, Basnett and their like. Breaking the Labour government's wage cut policy means breaking the grip of the opportunists in the trade unions.

**SUPPORT THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE!**

**GO TO YOUR UNION BRANCH AND DEMAND REAL SUPPORT!**

FREE COUNTRY? FREE PRESS? THE GOVERNMENT have slapped a 'D' notice on the press, "in the interests of national security", forbidding them to inform the public how much it's costing them not to give the firemen the rise they're demanding. The total cost in insurance, of paying the troops, of paying firewatchers to sleep in schools and old people's homes, would probably pay for the rise for a year or two.

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## GRUNWICKS SHOWS LAW IS TOOL OF BOSSES

"We kept our faith in legal means for a long time, and it didn't get us anywhere", Bipin Magdani, one of the Grunwicks strike committee told a public meeting. The House of Lords decision in favour of the Grunwicks' boss, Ward, is the latest of those useless "legal means". How could those ancient ruling class tricksters, with the full force of the bosses' state behind them, be expected to come down on the side of the workers?

The union leaders pretend to be on the side of the workers, but it is just as dangerous to have faith in them. Talking about the suspension from the union of four strikers who went on hunger strike outside the TUC, Bipin said: "All our efforts, picketing, organising, demonstrating, even getting beaten up, led to us getting sold down the drain."

The long strike has won some victories. It has even forced Ward to raise wages and improve conditions in Grunwicks, so that a recent report could say that they were average for the industry, although the strikers who made that possible remain outside the gate. More important the strike has inspired many workers in small, unorganised workplaces, and has shown how black and white workers can fight together. It has exposed the anti-union rightists like the National Association for Freedom, and shown up the opportunist union leaders as bosses' tools.

### OPPORTUNISTS RELY ON BOSSES' STATE

Workers have always won trade union recognition and rights through struggle and solidarity. But APEX leader Grantham painted a rosy picture of the legal machinery set up by the state, and forced the Grunwicks' strikers to rely on it. The arbitration service ACAS, set up by the Labour government, proved impotent. Grantham didn't want mass pickets, but had to give in to rank and file pressure. So he used the mass pickets to press for a Court

of Inquiry - the Scarman Tribunal. The tribunal produced a grudging decision in favour of recognition, but it was not worth the paper it was written on. Nevertheless Grantham ordered the mass pickets to stop. The workers ignored him and went ahead.

Other union leaders hid behind the law to prevent blacking of Grunwicks' supplies by their members. The post boycott was just tightening the stranglehold when postal union leaders Jackson and Stagg stepped in with threats and forced the workers to handle the mail. Now the class conscious postal workers who resisted are being fined up to £500 by their own union! The bosses are willing to accept unions brought in by means of courts and tribunals. They know they can use those same legal means to keep the unions in their pockets. So Grunwicks' boss Ward was a thorn in the side of the capitalists and their parties, Labour and Tory, so long as he refused to accept the ACAS and Scarman decisions. But the bosses united when the strikers used militant class action, and their Labour government praised the police who attacked and repressed the mass pickets.

The union leaders are trying to re-ignite workers' faith in "legal means" by changing the law to make ACAS "stronger". APEX is sponsoring a law to require bosses to give information to ACAS. The MP introducing this is Edward Fletcher, chairman of the so-called 'left wing' Tribune group.

The lessons of the Grunwick strike must be learnt. Depending on the capitalist state does not win union struggles, it makes the unions more and more part of the state machinery. And workers are rarely defeated by the bosses directly, but by the unions working for the bosses. The fight to get effective blacking and mass pickets at Grunwicks is a fight to make unions serve the interests of the working class. ■

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# STRENGTHEN EUROPEAN UNITY AGAINST SUPERPOWERS

Eighteen months ago, the nine countries of the Common Market, or European Economic Community (EEC) agreed that direct elections to a European parliament should take place in 1978. With the exception of Britain, all the rest have made arrangements for this to happen. The Labour government has been dragging its feet on this however, and now says that it is unlikely to be able to get legislation passed on time.

The so-called 'left' Labourites, and the revisionist 'Communist' Party have claimed that this is a victory, saying that anything that weakens the EEC represents a step forward for the British people. Revolutionary communists reject this opportunist view. While it has certain reactionary aspects, the strengthening of the EEC at the present time is a good thing, as it weakens the two imperialist superpowers, the Soviet Union and the USA.

For some time, the world has been divided into three main parts. The USSR and the USA make up the first world. These two powers exploit and oppress people throughout the world, and are locked in a bitter struggle for world hegemony (domination). The main force opposing the two superpowers is the third world, which includes the genuine socialist countries, and the developing countries most heavily exploited and oppressed by imperialism and colonialism.

In an intermediate position in this struggle, lie the developed countries of the second world. These countries exploit third world countries as well as their own working class, but are also subjected to superpower exploitation, oppression, control and threats.

Because of this in recent years, the EEC, which is made up of some second world countries, has increasingly come out in support of the third world in some of its most important struggles against the superpowers.

## LOME AGREEMENT

For many years, third world countries have suffered from extremely unequal trade relations with imperialist countries, having to sell raw materials on the cheap, and buy finished goods at high prices. Within the United Nations, third world countries have struggled to get a better deal, but have been obstructed right down the line by the two superpowers. In 1975, the EEC went against the

USSR and the USA, and signed the Lome Agreement with 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, establishing more equal trade relations between the EEC and these developing countries. This represents a considerable setback for superpower plans for the domination of these areas.

## THE EEC AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The EEC has angered the superpowers by developing friendly relations with the Middle East states. After the outbreak of the Middle East war in 1973, the oil-producing states joined together in imposing an oil embargo on the imperialist powers. Both of the superpowers said that they considered this action to be an act of war, and threatened to send in troops. The EEC however, demanded that "Israel put an end to the territorial occupation which it has maintained since 1967" and "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be taken into account." In 1976 a conference between the EEC and the Arab League and Palestine Liberation Organization was held, which has helped to break superpower domination of Europe's oil supplies and to weaken Soviet and US control and influence in the Middle East.

## EUROPEAN INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SUPERPOWERS

There are other examples of the EEC giving support to the struggles of the third world, most notably in the last year over the 200 mile fishing limits, and at Law of the Sea conferences. The EEC has not been doing this for any benevolent reasons, but to strengthen itself, so that it can oppose superpower domination.

Immediately after World War 2, the USA owned over 70% of all West European industry, but since the Common Market has started to free itself from the grip of US imperialism, this figure has dropped to below 50%, and is still dropping. In recent years the USSR has started to penetrate the economies of Western Europe, but is finding things difficult. Without being united, the countries of Western Europe would be weaker, and less able to stand up to the superpowers.

## PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM BEST WAY TO UNITY

The EEC is a monopoly capitalist institution, and there is no way that we can use elections to vote socialism in, and capitalism out. Because it is capitalist,

(cont'd on p6)

# A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN PULLING out all the stops to prevent Britain's 10,000 fuel tanker drivers winning their struggle for a pay claim in excess of the 10% limit. The government have drawn up a plan to ration petrol and other oil products if the drivers take strike or other action to back up their claim. The Ministry of Defence has also concocted a plan to use the troops to drive the tankers.

William Rodgers, the Minister of Transport, has told the oil companies that they must not breach the 10%. While the road haulage industry has been told that if they agree to increases over 10% the government could impose sanctions, withdraw government work, and international road transport permits. One of the haulage firms concerned is the nationalised company National Freight Corporation. Minister Rodgers has told the Corporation's chairman that he would rather the corporation "went bust" than have the 10% limit broken!

NO WONDER THE BOSSES OF THE BIG STORES and shops have been so pleased with their bumper Christmas takings. Prices for a list of food and drinks normally bought at Christmas are almost double what they were four years ago - the Christmas just before the present Labour government was elected - according to a recent survey.

FORMER LABOUR LEADER SIR HAROLD WILSON has recently sold one of his houses - for £29,000. He bought the five-storey house in Westminster while still Prime Minister for £20,000, and was originally asking £37,500 for it. So who was it

## STRENGTHEN EUROPEAN UNITY AGAINST SUPERPOWERS (cont'd from p5)

it does not take a really firm position in opposing the superpowers, and its unity is constantly threatened by internal squabbles. Revolutionary communists do not hide this fact, and know that real unity between the peoples of Britain and the third world will only come about after we have built socialism. But we should support the positive role played by the EEC and demand that this is strengthened, while at the same time struggling against its reactionary side, instead of copying the 'C'PGB, Trotskyites, and 'left' Labourites in blaming all the evils of British capitalism onto the Common Market.

that finally bought the house at its 'knock-down' price, giving Wilson a mere £9,000 profit? It was a Tory MP. In his politics as well as his style of living, Wilson has more in common with the bosses than the workers he claimed to represent.

THE POLICE ALWAYS SEND THOUSANDS TO protect the fascist National Front's racist marches. It was disclosed recently that Martin Webster, leader of the NF, was a guest speaker at a conference of senior police officers on public order in Durham.

A WORKER IN MOSCOW RECENTLY WROTE TO Pravda complaining about how he had been treated. The letter was not published. In it he said that he had complained about the conditions and long hours in the factory where he worked. He was given the sack for this. He then carried on his complaint through the 'official channels'. Nothing happened. Then in May his right to stay in Moscow was revoked, and the police kicked him out of his flat. This man was a worker and a Communist. He now says "In the Soviet Union they don't care about people any more. I don't want to work for the Soviet Union or the CPSU any more." He has renounced his citizenship.

THE NEWSPAPER 'ROTE FAHNE', THE CENTRAL organ of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) recently reported that at the beginning of October the workers at the 'Fritz Heckert' factory in Karl-Marxstadt, East Germany, went on strike. They were protesting against the government's prices policy. At the same time as increasing prices for the mass of workers, the East German revisionists are extending the 'Intershop' system where high-up party and state officials can get high quality goods with Western money.

The reaction to the strike was one of naked repression. Security police were sent in. 50 workers were arrested, and not heard of again for a month. Not a word of all this was printed in the East German press. Meanwhile the government is strengthening the apparatus of repression. They are training a contingent of 13,000 auxiliary police. A new prison has been opened with room for 2,500 - some of the cells are so small that it is considered a form of torture just to be put inside them.

# ZIONISM CAN NEVER MEAN PEACE

During a five day visit to London, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's so-called 'peace initiative' in the Middle East was applauded by Jim Callaghan. Callaghan's support for the Zionist Israeli government means support for the colonial and racist policies of the Israeli government and a denial of the just rights of the Palestinian people.

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 by seizing the homeland of the Palestinian people. Menachem Begin as leader of the Zionist Irgun terrorist gang took part in this. He took part in the seizure of the Palestinian homeland using murder and atrocities to drive the Palestinians from their territory. On his hands are the blood of thousands of Palestinians but now he is no longer a terrorist but a 'respectable' leader of the fascist state of Israel.

The so-called peace initiatives are nothing of the sort. They are a plot by the US imperialists to maintain their influence in the Middle East. Each round of talks has been preceded by visits by Begin or Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan to the USA and the Palestine Liberation Organisation has been refused a seat at any talks. There can be no peace in the Middle East until the question of Palestine is solved, the Palestinians returned to their homeland and their national rights restored.

## ZIONISM IS AGGRESSION

The Israelis continue to be the most savage war mongers in the Middle East.

## WORKERS' OPPOSITION IN THE USSR

"We are a vast army of Soviet unemployed thrown out of the gates of Soviet enterprises for attempting to exercise the right to complain, the right to criticise, the right to freedom of speech."

This is the beginning of an open letter written in the Soviet Union by 72 working people from 42 cities who lost their jobs for protesting against bad working conditions and corruption. Those who bravely signed the letter insist that they represent thousands of workers who have met a similar fate. The example of Vladimir Klebanov, of Makeera in the Donetsk industrial district shows the sort of thing that happens. Vladimir Klebanov was a miner. In 1968 he became a foreman. At that time he refused to send men into the mine when safety equipment was missing or broken. He also refused to demand

They refuse to withdraw from Arab territories they occupied in the 1967 Arab - Israeli war. Israeli tanks still occupy the Golan Heights in Syria, the Gaza Strip and Sinai Desert belonging to Egypt, and the West Bank, part of Jordan. Tens of thousands of Israelis have turned Arabs from their land in these areas and set up armed settlements. Such colonial settlements are going ahead now - and at an ever increasing rate!



During the recent civil war in Lebanon, the Israelis bombed Palestinian refugee camps and sent troops to occupy Lebanese territory. How can these actions be described as in the interests of peace? They are the actions of gangsters.

In 1974 Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO told the United Nations: "I announce that we do not wish one drop of either Arab or Jewish blood to be shed; neither do we delight in the continuation of killing, which would end once a just peace, based on our people's rights, hopes and aspirations has been finally established...."

The Palestinian struggle is a just struggle and will continue until a just peace has been won.

compulsory overtime of his men. He was charged with slandering the state and sacked. He was then committed to a mental hospital.

Workers that oppose exploitation and oppression in the Soviet Union have no recourse to Trade Unions, because the unions are run by the ruling 'Communist' Party. The situation in the USSR since the Khrushchev/Brezhnev clique came to power at the death of Stalin shows the truth of what Mao Tsetung was saying, when he wrote that now: "The Soviet Union is under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie".

The working class is continuing its struggle against state monopoly capitalism in the USSR, despite the fascist repression.

# INTERVIEW WITH RCLB DELEGATION TO CHINA

The editor of 'Class Struggle' asked the leader of the recent RCLB delegation to China some important questions on its return.

EDITOR: Welcome back! First can you tell us how the Chinese people welcomed the delegation?

ANSWER: In a word - enthusiastically. China is a socialist country which abides by the principle of proletarian internationalism. This means that the Chinese people regard it as their duty to support all genuine revolutionary and progressive struggles throughout the world, and to strengthen their unity with the working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world.

Also, the Chinese Communist Party gives a very high priority to strengthening its unity with other genuine Marxist-Leninist Parties and organisations throughout the world. The RCLB delegation went to China at the invitation of the Chinese Communist →

## HEROIC STRUGGLE OF AZANIAN PEOPLE

In September last year the South African racist police murdered Steve Biko the young black leader of the Black Consciousness Movement. One month before a young Indian dentist, Hoosen Hattejee was also murdered in prison. They are two of the countless black people detained and murdered by South African security forces. Thousands more are in prison.

Steve Biko's family and friends were able to publicise his murder and further exposed the racist and fascist colonial dictatorship in South Africa to the world. The Vorster Government thought the world would believe its lies so they set up a so-called inquest into Biko's death. They were mistaken. The evidence against them was so great that not even their imperialist backers, the US and Britain could ignore the truth as they usually do. This did not of course prevent a verdict whitewashing the police. But this is not surprising. Fascist South Africa rules through terror and lies and it is proud of it. In fact one of the Nazi Nationalist Party candidates stated during the recent whites only General Election, "I would have killed Biko".

This election was brought forward from April 1979 because of increasing opposition to apartheid both internally and externally and was an apparent victory for the fascists. But there is no way out for racist South Africa. They will never be able to stem the just struggle of the black people for true liberation.

The black people of Azania (South Africa) make up more than 80% of the population. Under apartheid they are denied even the most fundamental democratic rights. But

it is not just Vorster to blame, as the bosses' press and the treacherous Labour Party quickly pretend. Apartheid could not have continued for so long had Vorster and also Smith not had the backing of Anglo-American imperialism. British imperialism's colossal profits obtained abroad are soaked in the blood of the heroic struggles of the black people. Britain alone has over £1 billion invested there. But now these blood suckers are worried.

The black people of Azania have intensified their struggle in the last five years. It has been strengthened by the victories of the Zimbabwe liberation fighters. There have been massive strikes in the face of armed police by black workers against starvation wages and apartheid. The demonstrations led by the Soweto students and the rent strikes by black women were fully supported by other black, "coloured" and Indian workers and youth throughout the country. Many have died in these struggles or been imprisoned but as one young schoolgirl who had a leg shot off by the fascists during the Soweto uprising said, "I'm lucky. I can continue the fight when I get an artificial leg. They can shoot us and kill us but we will win."

This is the heroism that liberation struggles and socialist revolutions are made of. No amount of promises by Vorster of "powersharing" for coloureds and Indians as a prop to apartheid will split the unity of the oppressed workers and peasants. Their heroic struggle for the complete liberation from colonialism, and all imperialism will not be diverted by either soft soap or terror! ■

We are unable to carry an article on the RCL Fighting Fund this month due to lack of space. The fund-raising campaign will continue to the end of February. Please give donations to the person you buy the paper from, or send a cheque/postal order to: J. Bayley, c/o 203 Seven Sisters Road, London N4, with an accompanying note to show the money is for the Fighting Fund.

Party, and was only one of many such delegations from many different countries which have visited China in the last year or so.

Our welcome reflects this. We were welcomed as Communists representing the working class and people of Britain. Our reception was very militant. In some factories the workers put up posters saying 'welcome to the delegation of the RCLB'. In a commune we visited the children put on a show of revolutionary songs for us. This warm welcome was not for us as individuals but because the Chinese working class and people recognise the great importance of the unity of the workers, people and Communists of all countries in their common struggle against the superpowers and imperialism generally.

ED: Who holds power in China?

ANS: Without doubt - the working class! China is a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This means that the vast majority of the people, led by the working class, run society in their own interests and exercise dictatorship over the small number of bad elements who want to return to the miseries of the old society.

Unlike Britain - where 'democracy' means putting a cross against the name of some Tory or Labour politician - China is really democratic. An example is that all factories, communes, schools, hospitals, neighbourhoods etc, are run by Revolutionary Committees. These Committees are elected regularly and are composed of the leading members of the particular concern. This means that all decisions are taken by the people directly concerned, and not by some manager or bureaucrat appointed by the bosses or their state as in Britain. In one factory we visited the workers themselves had just decided to use part of the funds left over after the state had taken its share, to build a new welfare clinic.

ED: How have the Chinese people greeted the downfall of the "gang of four"?

ANS: The Chinese people were overjoyed at the downfall of the "gang of four". The people spontaneously held great parades throughout China in support of the Party Central Committee and Chairman Hua. After one day there was not a bottle of wine or spirits to be had in China because of the celebrations being held everywhere.

Everywhere we went people were falling over themselves to tell us about the "gang of four". This gang said that anyone who worked hard for socialism was a capitalist roader. In a pencil factory we visited only 5% of the state plan was fulfilled in 1974 because of the "gang of four's" sabotage. In a guesthouse we visited we were told that Chiang Ching had made a stoker put coal in the boiler piece by piece so she wouldn't be disturbed by the noise!

Is it any wonder that the Chinese people hated the "gang of four" who were themselves the biggest capitalist roaders? Now the Chinese people are working hard and enthusiastically to build socialism in China.

ED: What makes the social system in China better than that in Britain?

ANS: Basically, the fact that the working class holds state power. In Britain if you work hard you mainly help the capitalists to get richer and do yourself out of a job. This is why most workers in Britain oppose productivity bargaining. But in China if you work hard you improve the standard of living of everybody and reduce the burden of work. This means that the Chinese workers and people work not only hard but also enthusiastically.

For example, in a machine tool factory we visited the workers had themselves designed a laser-guided precision grinder. In Britain workers have no incentive to do this sort of thing because all they'll do is to make the boss richer. In a hospital we visited the doctors always consulted the patients before giving any treatment - their motto was 'everything for the people'. The staff in this hospital had developed a suction method of removing tumours so that only a small incision had to be made. In Hunan we saw thousands upon thousands of peasants working collectively to level a hilly area to help mechanisation. In a pencil factory a new machine was being installed to do the work of several workers - this meant expansion of production, not the sack, as in Britain.

All of these things can only happen under socialism - which is why it is an infinitely superior system to capitalism.

ED: Is the socialist emulation movement meant only to increase production output?

ANS: Socialist emulation is where workers learn from each other; sometimes this takes the form of a competition. Its immediate purpose is to increase production, but increased production is essential to strengthen the socialist system as a whole.

The "gang of four" caused a lot of damage by slandering socialist emulation as 'bourgeois competition' and spread such nonsense as 'better a socialist train running late than a capitalist train on time'. Workers and peasants who tried to emulate the

model industrial enterprise, Taching, and the model commune, Tachai, were accused of 'slavishness'. As a result the enthusiasm of the masses for socialism was dampened and many enterprises and communes failed to reach their production targets.

All these ideas of the "gang of four" were rubbish! The only justification of socialism as a system is that it allows production to flourish and thereby makes man the master of nature, not the other way round. When workers compete with each other to produce more and better they are doing it not only for their own good, but also for the good of everybody, because what they produce is the property of everybody, not just of some capitalist. This is socialist competition. The Chinese people are building up the productive forces to make the basis of socialism stronger in China. This is of immeasurable importance to the people of the world, as China provides great political and material support to the world's revolutionary people.

ED: More workers in Britain want the British government to ally with China and the rest of the third world to oppose Soviet and US world domination. Is it right for Britain to draw closer to China and what are the problems involved?

ANS: It certainly is right! It is in the interests of everybody in Britain and in China that China and Britain are friends. Sooner or later a new world war will break out - in that situation it will be essential that Britain has close ties with China and other third world countries to help it defend itself against the superpower aggressor.

The two superpowers will be defeated in the long-term, but in the short-term we must build the broadest possible international united front against them and their war policies. This mainly must comprise the working class and the third world people and countries. But even small capitalist countries like Britain can play a part, even if an unreliable one. It's much better though to have Britain as an unstable friend than as an ally of the superpowers - that's the choice.

The main problem is that the British ruling class is scared. It knows that its days are numbered so it looks to the US for protection and tries not to offend the Soviet Union. We must struggle hard to make the ruling class oppose the superpowers and ally with the third world, especially China. There are small signs of this happening, for instance the government's recent invitation to a Chinese trade delegation - we support this and the expansion of trade with China, instead of with the Soviet warmongers.

D: Can China become an advanced socialist country by the end of the century and still stay red?

ANS: This is the wrong way of putting the question! You should say - can China stay red without building an advanced socialist country by the end of the century? The answer to this is - probably not!

When the 'gang of four's' absurd line that if you only look after revolution, production will take care of itself was in command in some areas, production in those areas virtually came to a stop. What happened then was that capitalist elements - black marketeers, embezzlers and speculators - stepped in, and capitalism began to grow again. In some parts of the countryside the collective economy was affected to such an extent that a free market emerged again because the communes could no longer provide sufficient basic foodstuffs. In one county over 80% of the land of the production teams was divided up among the individual households. In one tractor plant production in 1974 was only 20% of that of 1973. I've already told you about the pencil factory we visited.

All this shows that it is necessary to build an advanced socialist economy to prevent capitalist restoration. A thriving economy strengthens the base of socialism and the masses' enthusiasm for it, and makes it very difficult for capitalist elements to thrive. What is essential is that production is under the direction of a correct political line and that class enemies are struggled against. The relationship between revolution and production is summed up in the slogan 'grasp revolution, promote production'. The Chinese people are doing this by grasping the key link of class struggle and struggling to turn China into a great, modern, powerful socialist country by the end of the century.

ED: How would you sum up what you learnt on the delegation's visit?

ANS: Briefly, that the smashing of the 'gang of four' was a great historic victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, that socialism is an infinitely superior system to capitalism, that China is a great world revolutionary base area for the working class and oppressed peoples and nations, and, lastly, the tremendous importance of strengthening unity between the working class, people and Communists of the whole world.