

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

Vol.2 No.18 from November 3 to 17th

fortnightly 7p

GOVERNMENT MOVES TO STARVE OUT FORD WORKERS

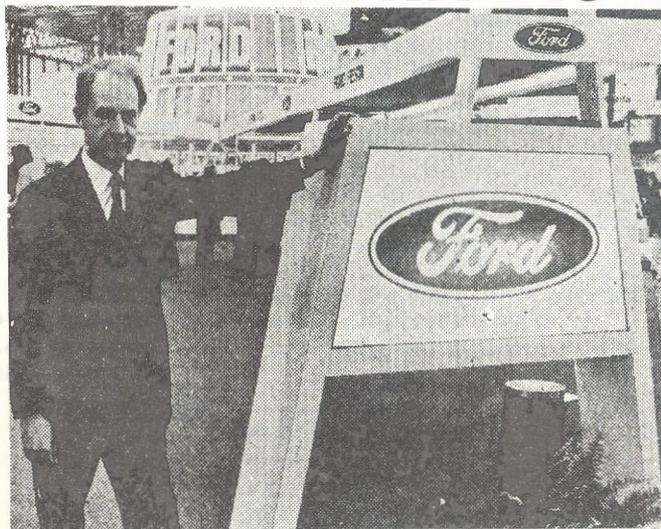
All strikers are entitled to claim Supplementary Benefit (Social Security) for their dependants along with their rent, rates etc. Single strikers living alone are entitled to their rent plus "reasonable" living expenses. Needless to say any tax rebate or strike pay is immediately deducted. A claimant completes a form giving details of income and hands it in either at the local DHSS office or a special office for strikers's claims.

But not so with Dagenham Fords workers. The union misleaders have agreed to a DHSS demand that all claims should go by post to an office miles away in North London. They refuse to deal with any claims in person and the phones are permanently "jammed". Workers run the risk of losing their rent book, child benefit book, wage slips etc, all of which have to be sent along with the form. The claims take at least a week and are regularly delayed, and refusals and underpayments, which are common, have to be challenged by post. This has meant that countless workers have been suffering severe financial hardship, with many facing the threat of eviction for non-payment of rent.

It is common knowledge to anyone who has ever had to claim Supplementary Benefit that every penny has to be fought for and it is given begrudgingly as if in charity rather than by right. In their constant battles with the DHSS bureaucracy, the experience of the firemen in their strike last year was to claim in groups militantly demanding what was rightfully theirs. This proved successful and the men became educated. So also did the state. They quickly learned that groups of united workers couldn't be intimidated and deceived as easily as individual workers. This is why Ford strikers now have to claim individually by post.

DHSS WITHDRAWS FORD WORKERS' RIGHTS

The order has gone out, especially for Fords workers, that those taken ill while on strike are not eligible to sickness benefit until visited by



Sir Terry Beckett stands before the empty Ford stand at the Motor Show in Birmingham

someone from the DHSS. If they are not satisfied that that the workers' claim is genuine then they have to go before the DHSS medical board. All this could take weeks. It is unheard of. Normally sickness benefit is paid automatically on production of a doctor's certificate. The medical board is only used in cases of long-term illness, invalidity or industrial injury. With over 57,000 workers on strike and winter approaching there must be hundreds of workers ill. Sickness benefit is paid for in weekly contributions and is paid by right. But the Labour Government sees fit to take away the rights of those workers who dare to threaten their 5% wage restraint. The London borough of Barking is even refusing to issue free school dinners to Ford workers' children.

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ZIMBABWE LANDROVER FUND PASSES TARGET

CONGRATULATIONS! In September, "Class Struggle" published a call from the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain (RCLB) to raise a further £1,200 by December 2nd. This target has already been passed! The aim of the fund is to buy a Landrover, which will be sent to the fighting people of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) as a gift from the British working class. The RCLB has bought the Landrover and it will be on its way within days. The revolutionary armed struggle of the Zimbabwean masses is forging ahead. The British and US imperialists and their reactionary agent Smith are jacking up their brutal repression and vicious attempts to split the unity of the Zimbabwean masses and their unity with the front-line African states in a last ditch attempt to protect their interests. The Landrover is a concrete expression of which side we are on. We are on the side of our class brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe. Their enemy is our enemy. Their fight is our fight. The target figure of £1,200 has been passed but that doesn't mean that we should just sit back now. The fund raising campaign will continue until December 2nd as planned. We want more money to pay for transportation costs etc. Any extra we collect above this will be a valuable contribution to the people of Zimbabwe, who need funds not only for the armed revolutionary struggle, but for building up the liberated areas, for the people's welfare. ZANU CONDEMNS US HELP TO SMITH - see back page



INTERNATIONAL UNITY HITS HENRY FORD II

The Ford workers strike is biting hard with Ford (UK) Ltd. completely paralysed. The development of international solidarity which is scaring the pants off the Ford billionaires is the struggle's greatest strength. What is more, such international unity is proving essential for winning the smallest victories against the powerful Fords empire.

Fords is a huge monopoly capitalist company based in the United States. Its investments abroad are some of the tentacles of US imperialism in its economic expansion throughout the world. The International Division of Fords was formed in 1949 to co-ordinate its international operations which today straddle Europe; Latin America; Asia-Pacific; the middle East and Africa. According to 1976 figures, Fords international operations which accounted for only 31% of the company's sales, brought in 44% of Fords profits. This indicates that Fords gets a higher rate of profit from its overseas subsidiaries than from the United States operations. This is a measure of the cruel exploitation on the Fords production line.

FORDS EMPIRE BUILT ON WORKERS MISERY

Fords is notorious for its ruthless tactics in gaining concessions from governments for opening factories and plants. This is particularly the case in Europe which is the heart of Fords international operations. In September 1977, Fords announced that it was to open a new engine plant at Bridgend, Wales. This was presented as a 'great victory' by the government and local Welsh dignitaries. But just what had been paid for the 'favour'?

Holland, Belgium, France, West Germany, Spain and Ireland all competed for the plant. Berlin's authorities offered staggering concessions to attract Ford into what is a declining city. But it was at a meeting with Callaghan, Scanlon and Jack Jones that the most lucrative offer was made to Henry Ford II. They agreed to pay half the cost of the investment. The working class is therefore paying Henry Ford through taxes for the 'privilege' of manning sweat-shop production lines.

The Ford bosses use the same tactics to split and undermine the Ford workers' struggle. Prior to the announcement that Fords were opening at Bridgend, Ford workers' strikes were attacked as jeopardising further Fords investments in the UK. The formation of Fords Europe in 1967 was part of a package aimed at rationalizing European operations. It integrated production throughout Europe. But to by-pass the power this gives to workers in particular plants, Ford has ensured that no one plant is the sole source of a particular component. This was done particularly after the 1969 strike in Britain which brought production in the Cologne and Genk plants to a standstill. The total integration of Ford's European operations increased Fords threats of moving to more profitable areas if the workforce did not toe the line.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY ESSENTIAL

Throughout Fords the most harsh regime rules. In the United States, Fords has its share of the 65 carworkers who drop dead at their jobs on the factory floor everyday. Throughout the US some 16,000 die in the plants every year. In May 1972 a Ford worker in Ohio fell to his death through the Foundry roof.

On a normal day at Ford in Britain, more than 3,000 workers will be off sick. The body plant at Dagenham has 80 to 140 eye injuries reported to medical each month. Noise makes deafness an 'occupational hazard'. It is impossible to catalogue the

total misery of the Ford production line. But still Henry Ford II wants more profit.

Workers at Dagenham are told it takes them 75% longer to build the Cortina than it takes the workers at Genk. German Ford workers are told that the appreciation of the Deutschmark makes German plants less competitive than Britain or Spain.

It is clear that to resist the Fords bosses and really drive them into a corner, there needs to be the closest unity of Ford workers internationally. The unity arising out of the current struggle in Britain must be built upon in the future. ■

FORD WIVES BACK STRIKE

At an anti-strike meeting outside Ford's Southampton plant the wives of some Ford workers were demanding a secret ballot on whether the men should stay out. They were opposed by Ford workers and their wives, who interrupted the meeting by chanting and waving banners saying the strike must continue until the claim is met. As usual the papers focussed on the women who opposed the strike, using silly terms like "petticoat rebels" (Sunday People) to describe them.

Certainly most strikers have their wives support but that doesn't ordinarily get any publicity. Wives opposing a strike can be sure of headlines because they are a useful tool for the bosses, who have a clear interest in trying to drive a wedge between men and women and get wives to keep their husbands in line. It's because of the oppression of women that they sometimes succeed.

As housewives, women work in conditions of isolation, with no experience of the strength of collective action. From day to day they have to look out for the interests of the family. They know exactly what effect the drop in income caused by a strike will have, but often they have no confidence that the strike can succeed.

Women who work outside the home are generally still responsible for shopping and looking after the family, and the media play on this by referring to all consumers as "housewives" as if men never bought anything and were unaffected by inflation. The next step is to pretend that inflation is caused by the irresponsible wage claims of men who have no concern for their families. There are two lies here - one that inflation is caused by wage rises, and the other that all workers are men, as if women didn't work outside the home and go on strike too! These lies are ridiculous when you look closely at them, but their constant repetition can have an effect, especially on women confined to their homes.

Working class men and women have the same interests even though their experience is usually different. The whole family shares the exploitation and oppression of the working class under capitalism. The whole family suffers when wages fall through inflation, and stands to gain when workers like those at Fords resist wage cuts. The history of working class struggles has proved that when the whole family stands together this increases the fighting strength of the workers. The ruling class knows this - we must be sure we know it too and debunk all attempts to divide men and women. ■

What is going on in your factory or locality?
By sending contributions, we will be able to expand the coverage of the struggles of the working class.
Write to the "Editor-CS", c/o New Era Books.

'MORNING STAR' SINKS LOWER

The "Morning Star" co-operative has lost its pathetic court case against Express Newspapers which sought a ban on the use of the name "Daily Star" for their new "Sun" type rag. In court, the case was described melodramatically as a modern day "David and Goliath" contest by the "Morning Star". It was more like a storm in a tea cup.

The "Morning Star" maintained that the use of the name "Daily Star" would cause confusion among their readers. Just what kind of readers the "Morning Star" is out to attract these days we do not know. But if they fear losing sales to a paper which is going all-out to outstrip the "Sun" in sex trivia, they certainly do not have a high opinion of them.

In fact, what this whole court case fiasco indicates is that the "Morning Star" which is the political organ of the revisionist Communist Party of Great Britain is trying totally to compete with the press on a capitalist basis. The melodrama surrounding the "Morning Star" court action was also a cheap publicity gimmick.

Such moves by the CPGB to save their paper from collapse marks a new depth to which their revisionism has sunk in their efforts to dress up a capitalist line as Marxist and Communist. It is impossible for a genuinely revolutionary paper to compete with the capitalist press in the sense the "Morning Star" tries. A revolutionary newspaper cuts a path for itself and revolutionary Communist leadership, and wins the support and confidence of class conscious workers by being a weapon in the workers' class struggle against capitalist rule. The "Morning Star" and the "Daily Worker" before it, ceased to be this with the adoption of their programme of peaceful transition to socialism and class collaboration.

WOMEN IN STRUGGLE

Women in Northern Ireland are active in the struggle there against British imperialism. The campaign to end internment mobilised thousands of women, and in the present struggle for Political Status many women are working in the Relatives Action Committee. These women are doing things that in the past they would never have believed themselves capable of, like writing leaflets and speaking at marches. In Armagh Gaol, 25 women in "B" wing are locked in their cells for 22 hours out of the 24 because they are refusing to work as part of their protest for political status. Every two weeks the governor reviews their punishment, which includes 14 days loss of remission for refusing to give up their struggle.

MOVE TO STARVE OUT FORD WORKERS Cont'd from p1

The Labour Government has been badly shaken by the strong unity and militant determination of the Ford workers. They are terrified that their pay policy will be smashed. In a desperate attempt to smash the strike and preserve Fords' giant profits they are trying to starve the workers back. This is yet another example of which class the Labour Party serves. In order to preserve the rule of the capitalist class, the Labour Government is increasingly attacking the living standards and democratic rights of the people.

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

■ A RECENT COURT CASE DISCLOSED THE ACTIVITIES OF A gang of fascist thugs in the Stepney area. They have made more than 300 attacks on Asians and homeless people in the last 3 years. In one incident a vagrant was battered to death with a heavy gas cylinder and the words 'National Front' daubed on a nearby wall with his blood.

Meanwhile at the Front's new headquarters in Great Eastern Street, Shoreditch on October 19th, a fight between Front members spilled out onto the street and led to a passing cyclist needing 65 stitches to a head wound. "Some of our youngsters got a bit overexcited," said fuhrer Webster. These are the men who are trying to hide their vicious racism and cult of violence behind a facade of respectability.

■ BECAUSE OF THE ANARCHY OF PRODUCTION UNDER CAPITALISM, the Common Market has a 'surplus' of some 217,000 tonnes in its butter mountain. It's not 'surplus' to the needs of the people of Europe, of course, just 'surplus' in the sense that capitalism can't sell it at the required profit. Even more of the stuff's piling up, so in order to cut their losses they're proposing a special Xmas offer of butter at 10p a pound cheaper. Rather than making us grateful for this unexpected 'gift', this absurd situation shows the necessity of socialism, where production is based on social need, not profitability, and the people get the advantage of cheap and efficient food production, all the year round.

■ AT LEAST A DOZEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN BRITAIN ARE charging higher rents to overseas students in polytechnic and college accommodation than to students from England and Wales. Already these students are paying higher fees for their courses, and such racist surcharging on accommodation, unopposed by the Dept. of Education and Science, is without any justification.

■ THE GPO HAS FORBIDDEN THE COMPANIES INVOLVED IN the development of the new digital telephone exchange system, known as System X, to divulge any details of how it works. An advert in Electronics Weekly does however say it will make possible "a range of applications almost as significant as the invention of the telephone itself".

One of these "applications" will be of particular use to the state police snoopers. System X routinely keeps a record of each number that is rung, thus giving anyone with access to it a map of who is ringing who, and how often. At the moment this low level surveillance has to be set up each time the state wants it, but under System X it will be done automatically on every phone.

■ THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IS TO PAY THE SWISS DRUG company Hoffman La Roche £45 million to build a new factory in Scotland. No doubt this huge gift of taxpayers' money will be justified on the grounds that it creates 450 jobs. However it seems that the Government has always had a soft spot for Roche, and their high prices gives them no twinges of conscience. In 1973, it was found that Roche had made between 1966 and 1972 £24 million superprofits by selling the ingredients for the tranquillizers, Librium and Valium, in Britain at forty odd times the normal price. The new factory will produce Vitamin C at eight times the price of another brand used by the NHS.

■ A SUPERVISOR AT ALDERMASTON ATOMIC WEAPONS RESEARCH plant discovered that he had between ten and twenty times the permitted level of plutonium in his body when he asked to see his records. Twelve other workers at the base had concentrations higher than the recommended maximum. Health and safety at work will only be guaranteed when it is in the hands of those who take the risks, the workers.



CORRECT MISTAKES TO SERVE THE

The struggle to rebuild the vanguard Communist Party of the proletariat (the working class) is not an easy one. Once established, the Party faces a difficult road in leading the proletariat to win state political power. The Party will face and have to stand up to severe tests if it is to deserve the name of vanguard fighter for the proletariat. There is the constant danger that the Party will pursue an incorrect line, lead the proletariat up a blind alley and become divorced from the masses. No sane person would guarantee that such errors will not be committed. In fact in the complicated struggle to understand how to wage revolution in Britain, some mistakes are inevitable. Even a common-place process like a baby learning to walk and growing up is difficult until the child has learned how to do it. The same is true of the much more complicated revolutionary process led by a Communist party. The important

thing is to strive to make as few mistakes as possible, and in order to learn quickly and serve the working class well, revolutionary communists must adopt a correct attitude to mistakes when they are made. This distinguishes a revolutionary Communist Party from all bourgeois (capitalist) parties.

Only a revolutionary party of the proletariat using the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought can do this consistently. Communists have no interests separate from those of the masses and are therefore not afraid of standing up for the truth and to admit it when they're wrong. The bourgeoisie (capitalist class) on the other-hand, because of their ideology which protects the rule and interests of a minority of exploiters, promote individualism and teach people that to admit a mistake is a sign of personal weakness. The most ridiculous image used to depict the perfect man or woman is the superman character shown in comics, books and films. Such ideas have nothing to do with actual life.

SOME MISTAKES UNAVOIDABLE

Marxists are materialist and not idealists in their thinking. This means that Marxists recognise that man's ideas arise out of the objectively existing world. The world is made up of things and processes. There are natural laws and laws of the social development of society which exist independently of the thinking of individuals and groups of individuals. These scientific laws cannot be abolished. So, if we are to continue to make progress, we must struggle to

"The attitude of a political party to its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the Party is and how it in practice fulfills its obligations towards its class and the toiling masses. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions which led to it - that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties; that is the way it should educate and train the class, and then the masses." Lenin

NEW POLICE POWERS DIRECTED AT WORKING CLASS

"Class Struggle" has exposed many cases of police attacks on working people, particularly national minorities. These include the frame-up and unjustified prison terms imposed on George Lindo and the Virk brothers. Increasingly, the bourgeois (capitalist) press reports cases of plain clothes police attacking working people, even in their homes. Of course the bourgeois press try to explain these attacks away by saying they are the isolated acts of a few rogue cops. However, police chief McNee let the cat out of the bag in his submission to a Royal Commission on criminal procedure. He brazenly admitted that the police frequently resort to 'pious perjury' to get convictions and 'methods bordering on trickery'. McNee makes such arbitrary police power sound mild and necessary to catch the hardcore criminal. But it is not against such gangsters that these powers are directed. In 1977 alone, 11,978 complaints (according to official records) were investigated against metropolitan police officers. This amounts to a staggering one in every two of London's 22,000 strong force. Such numerous examples of the police riding rough shod over the peoples' supposed legal rights are not 'trickery' to catch hardcore criminals or the activities of rogue cops. They are the everyday occurrences in a systematic policy of strengthening state repression against the working class masses.

GROWING USE OF MILITARY-STYLE POLICE OPERATIONS

National minorities have taken the brunt of some of the most vicious police attacks. The police have used their powers under the 1971 Immigration Act to conduct massive house-to-house searches on the pretext of looking for 'illegal immigrants'. In Deptford, London, last year 60 black youths were dragged from their beds at 5.30 a.m.,

stripped, searched and beaten during a so-called 'anti-mugging' operation. This was the latest in a long series of military-style Special Patrol Group operations. The police rely on racism to carry out such activities which they expect to be unrestrained by public outcry. They bank on racist indifference promoted by imperialist propaganda and encouraged by opportunist misleaders of the working class. Racism is helping the police to build up experience and get people used to methods which can be used against the working class as a whole. Already, the Special Patrol Group is being used against picket lines in industrial disputes; such as in the 1974 Miners Strike, the building workers' strike and at Grunwicks.

MCNEE CALLS FOR STRONGER ANTI-WORKING-CLASS POWERS

The police already have wide powers under the Prevention of Terrorism (PTA) Act to arrest without warrant and hold 'suspects' for up to seven days for interrogation. Since the PTA became law, 3,265 people have been detained for periods of up to seven days. But in his submission to the Royal Commission, McNee has pleaded for even more police powers. These include the power to

- 1) Hold 'suspects' for 72 hours before bringing charges.
- 2) Oblige 'suspects' to answer questions with the courts drawing inferences from a 'suspect's' silence.
- 3) Compulsorily taking of fingerprints of everyone in the area in which a crime has been committed.
- 4) Extended search powers to include people present in a particular area.
- 5) Setting up of road blocks to search cars at a place which a senior officer believes will be fruitful in 'crime prevention'.

These proposals are justified by a so-called

THE WORKING CLASS

understand these laws and use the knowledge gained to our advantage.

In the course of getting to know these natural laws and laws of social development man must engage in the practice of using the knowledge we have to change the world. This is done in the fields of production, scientific research and class struggle. In general those things which do not work or bring wrong results are wrong and we have to go back and think again. Such things are mistakes and no dishonesty on earth will help solve the problem. Only recognising failure and summing up experience will help us draw the correct lessons. The revolutionary party of the proletariat, therefore, in waging class struggle must be strictly scientific and not be afraid to uncover its mistakes and correct them.

INCORRECT ATTITUDE TO MISTAKES LEADS TO BOURGEOIS LEADS TO BOURGEOIS DEGENERATION

It is of decisive importance for the vanguard Party of the working class to be vigilant about seeking out and correcting mistaken ideas and positions. Not to do so will certainly lead to the Party taking a casual attitude to its shortcomings which at a later date may lead to covering them up. Such a Party would sooner or later begin to give weak and incorrect leadership to the proletariat. The way would be wide open to bourgeois ideas penetrating the Party and getting a firm hold. Our greatest weapon in ensuring vigilance in the Party and rooting out what does not serve the working class in our thinking and in our work is the method of consistently making

breakdown in 'law and order'. It does not take much imagination to see how these new powers will be used against the workers' economic and political struggles.

THE STATE IS AN ORGAN OF CLASS RULE.

The monopoly capitalist class, that is the ruling class in Britain, presents the state as though it were neutral and above classes. This serves to conceal the nature of the state. Lenin wrote:

"The doctrine of the state serves as a justification of social privilege, a justification of the existence of exploitation, a justification of the existence of capitalism - and that is why it would be the greatest mistake to expect impartiality on this question...."

The state arose as a 'public power' protecting the rule of privileged classes. In doing this, it increasingly sets itself above and alienates itself from society. This was revealed most clearly in the report that the police spied on the TUC. The TUC which is dominated by Labour misleaders is a social rather than a military prop for the bourgeoisie. But still as the General Secretary of the Tobacco Workers Union said at the recent conference, the Special Branch has dossiers on most delegates. Even as he was speaking, Special Branch officers were spying on the conference through a two-way mirror.

Only the monopoly capitalist class benefits from such surveillance and military style repression. The state is nothing other than the organ by which this handful of billionaires enforces its class rule. In no way can such a machine of repression and state terror be reformed to serve the interests of the working class. To take state power under the leadership of a revolutionary communist party, this whole apparatus must be smashed by proletarian revolution.

criticism and self-criticism. To fear criticism is wrong. Why not get rid of incorrect ideas? They hold us back. Criticism and self-criticism strengthen the vanguard Party, not weaken it.

LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS

Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought guides the thinking and practice of revolutionary Communists. Because the world is changing all the time it must be applied to the study of new problems, or the revolutionary Communist Party will find itself out of step. Part of keeping in touch with events is learning from the achievements and mistakes of others. There is a wealth of experience in the revolutionary struggles of peoples and Communist Parties in other countries. Learning the lessons of their experience will enable the working class in Britain to avoid some pitfalls. By adopting a habit of criticism and systematic correction of errors in its work, and absorbing the positive and negative experience of foreign Parties, the revolutionary Communist Party will ensure that it "fulfills its obligations towards its class".

This is the third of a series of articles, which will deal with certain key aspects of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought concerning the Party of the working class. The first two articles of the series "The Vanguard Party needs the Most Advanced Theory" and "The Party must be a Vanguard Party with deep roots in the working class" appeared in "Class Struggle" Volume 2, Numbers 16 and 17.

■ THE CAPITALIST PRESS IS ORCHESTRATING A HATE CAMPAIGN against the hospital supervisors, who are struggling for grading demands. They are attacked as "immoral murderers". It is true that sick people suffer in any hospital dispute. Hospital staff take this into account. The government knows this. Hospital staff are badly paid and have bad conditions because the government relies on their reluctance to take direct action, and uses this to hold them over a barrel. Blame must be laid where it belongs - at the hand of the Labour government who are using patients as hostages against hospital workers.

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The Manifesto of the RCLB puts forward the stand of Marxism-Leninism on the major questions facing the working class, both internationally and nationally. It points out that our central task today is to rebuild the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class. The Manifesto is the founding document of the RCLB. The publication of the Manifesto marked an important step forward towards the drafting of the Party programme. The Manifesto is available from New Era Books. Price 30p (plus 7p postage and packing).

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To contact the RCLB, write to: The RCLB, c/o New Era Books

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TIBET — A FLOURISHING SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Within China there are a number of different nationalities, as well as the majority Han population. The Chinese communists have always aimed to preserve the particular traditions, culture and languages of the minority nationalities and have fought hard against any ideas of superiority or discrimination on the part of the majority. In several places the national minorities are organized in autonomous regions with considerable local authority.

TIBET - A REACTIONARY FEUDAL REGIME

One of the largest of these autonomous regions is Tibet. Tibet has been a part of China for about 700 years, but, isolated as it was by high mountains, it has preserved its own language and customs. Before the liberation of China in 1949 many of those customs were of the most reactionary and barbarous kind.

The whole country was in the hands of less than 300 feudal families - some of them the heads of large estates, others government officials and others high priests (lamas) in the monasteries. They were headed by the Dalai Lama. These nobles owned all the land in Tibet, and held absolute political, economic and military power. They owned slaves to work in their houses, and to work in the fields they had serfs. Most of the people of Tibet were serfs, and they and their families virtually belonged to the landowners. They had to work for them, hand over 70% of their own crops to them, pay all kinds of heavy taxes to them, and when, inevitably, they got into debt they had to borrow money from them at exorbitant rates.

In order to protect their privileged positions the lamas and nobles had all manner of laws to oppress the ordinary people. Torture and execution were commonplace. According to the Tibetan legal code if any "inferiors" (serfs or slaves) offended the upper classes they would be punished by having their eyes gouged out, legs chopped off, tongues or hands chopped off or being thrown over a cliff or executed at once. If any serf saw his wife or daughter being raped by a lord, his eyes would be gouged out.

This terrible oppression and economic exploitation meant the whole country stagnated: there was no development of agriculture or industry, and the idea of health or education for the people was unheard of. Between 1790 and 1959 the population of Tibet fell from over two million to only 870,000.

Inevitably the Tibetan people fought back, and between 1908 and 1951 there were nearly 100 serf uprisings in Tibet. However, the people were not able to overthrow the nobles until after the liberation of the rest of China.

TIBET AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

In 1950 the new people's government of China began negotiations with the Tibetan authorities for the peaceful liberation of Tibet. The reactionary landowners tried to obstruct these negotiations, but under pressure from the people and in fear of the Chinese Liberation Army (P.L.A.) they finally agreed to what was called the 17 Point Agreement. According to this, the PLA was allowed to enter Tibet in order to strengthen China's national defence against imperialism, the Tibetan people were given regional national autonomy, the existing political system in Tibet remained intact, and officials continued to hold office as before. Social reforms were to be carried out by the local government of Tibet, and the economy was to be developed



Young and old face a bright future in the new Tibet
step by step taking account of the actual conditions. The religious beliefs of the Tibetan people were to be respected.

Clearly this agreement did not introduce socialism into Tibet. It was a step away from feudalism, but it left the main initiative for reforming the social system in the hands of the Tibetan people themselves. It was important that the communists did not force socialism on a people who were not ready for it. As Mao put it in 1957:

"According to the 17 Point Agreement reached between the Central People's Government and the local government of Tibet, the reform of the social system must be carried out, but the timing can only be decided by the great majority of the people of Tibet and their leading public figures when they consider it practicable, and one should not be impatient."

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Even this was too much for the reactionary ruling class in Tibet. They did not want to carry out social reform at all, and at every turn they obstructed the work of the communists. In 1959, supported by the US imperialists, the majority of the ruling class scrapped the 17 Point Agreement, attacked the PLA units stationed in Lhasa and declared the "independence of Tibet". After two days fighting the rebellion of the serf-owners was put down by the PLA. The mass of the population supported and actively helped the PLA and opposed the feudal rebellion.

The Lamas had hoped to preserve their privileges by the uprising. In fact they only speeded up the process of reform. While the rebellion was being put down, the people demanded reform of the system which continued to oppress them. Between 1959 and 1961 the "Democratic Reform" was carried out throughout Tibet. The slaves were freed, the serfs were given land and all feudal privileges were abolished. Rents and interest rates were reduced. For the first time the people of Tibet were really their own masters. This was confirmed in September 1965, when the Tibetan Autonomous Region was formally established.

THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The Democratic Reform was the basis for a rapid expansion of agriculture and industry in Tibet and for the development of the whole region as a part of socialist China. In 1964 a socialist education movement was launched among the masses. The ex-serfs learned that in the rest of China people's communes had been set up to develop self-reliant socialist agriculture. They discussed this, and tried to apply what they had learned to Tibet. In 1965 the first experimental communes were set up.

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NUCLEAR HYPOCRISY

The Labour government has stepped in to put pressure on Emerson Electrical Industrial controls, in an attempt to force it to cancel the export of electrical control equipment to Pakistan.

The contract involves several large inverters - devices which ensure a steady supply of electricity. These are important in cases where a breakdown in supply would seriously damage the machinery being run or would cause a danger, as in the case of an air traffic control system or a nuclear power station.

Pakistan is developing a nuclear energy programme. The spread of nuclear energy is opposed by the imperialists, and particularly by the two superpowers, Soviet social imperialism and US imperialism. They claim to be concerned that third world countries may develop nuclear weapons on the basis of such a programme. This they say will endanger peace. What touching pacificism! Whilst the two superpowers and the imperialists arm themselves to the teeth with nuclear weapons on the one hand, they stand for "peace" and oppose nuclear development in third world countries on the other. Sheer hypocrisy! Is it countries like Pakistan who are carrying out aggression? Is it countries like Pakistan who are trying to dominate the world? Is it countries like Pakistan who plunder the economic resources of the third world? No. It is firstly the two superpowers who are trying to dominate the world, and secondly the minor imperialists, like the British ruling class who live off their plunder of other countries. These are the aggressors. Their concern for "peace" is nothing other than an attempt to prevent the third world from defending themselves with the same weapons that the superpowers are stockpiling at such a frantic rate as they build up their war preparations. ■

TIBET

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By 1977 communes had been formed in farming areas throughout the region. This movement has been so successful that in 1975 Tibet had twice as much livestock as in 1958, and produced 2½ times as much grain. In fact the region now produces all the grain it needs.

Industry too has developed. Before liberation there was no modern industry to speak of. Now Tibet has heavy industry, including hydro-electric plants, coal-mining, chemical and machine factories, as well as many small industrial concerns and collectives of traditional craftsmen. Lhasa, the capital, is becoming an industrial city with factory workers making up 1/3 of its population. In the old days Tibetans did not make a single screw or safety match, and the market was flooded with foreign goods.

This progress has been possible because the Communist Party has not forced the Tibetan people to do things against their wishes, but has had a policy of uniting with them and educating them. As a result the ordinary people have been fired with enthusiasm for socialism. They see that the wealth which they are creating is building a better life for themselves and not for the corrupt priests and landowners. New roads and houses have been built. For the first time the masses of the people have access to education - there are now nearly 5,000 schools in Tibet, compared with only 2 before 1950. There is a health service which serves all the people.

Tibet is still poor, but within a space of 20 years it has advanced from a dark feudal serfdom to a flourishing socialist society. ■

INTERNATIONAL NOTES



CHINA: After a heated struggle at the congress of the International Gymnastic Federation China was restored to its rightful place in the Federation, and recognition was withdrawn from the false representative of China from Taiwan. The vote was 39 for 9 against. This is a blow to the USA and its cohorts. When China was liberated in 1949, the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek retreated to Taiwan province - an island off the coast of the mainland - where he has been protected by the USA ever since. The Chiang gang claims to be the government of the whole of China, and for a long time sat in the United Nations (UN) and on all sorts of international bodies. They have now been kicked out of the UN and off many other bodies. The USA has tried to say that both should be represented. This is designed to legitimise the existence of two Chinas and its own occupation of Taiwan province. Quite rightly the Chinese government refuses to accept this and takes its rightful place on these bodies on the basis of the expulsion of the Chiang gang. In sporting fields only the Chinese sporting bodies can represent China. Athletes from Taiwan province are invited to take part in the games organised on the mainland. China is still excluded by US manoeuvres from many bodies, including the Olympics, but with the support of the third world and other friendly countries the Chiang gang is step by step being kicked out. China will finally resolve the problem by liberating Taiwan. ■

NORWAY: Otto Risanger's book "The Russians on Svalbard - Who are they? What are they doing?" exposes Soviet military stockpiling on Svalbard, according to a report in "Klassekampen", the daily paper of the Workers Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). Addressing a news conference about his book, the author showed that Soviet M I-8 helicopters, which can launch 57 mm rockets, at the Kapp Heer base, are for military use. The book exposes several Soviet functionaries as KGB agents.

The Svalbard Islands are Norwegian territory and are de-militarised according to international agreement. Signatories to the agreement (which includes the USSR) are entitled to fish, hunt and explore resources on the islands. The Soviet social imperialists however are using the islands for military purposes in violation of the agreement and thus attacking Norway's sovereignty. ■

SOVIET UNION: The Soviet Union is continuing its large scale research and development of chemical and biological weapons. One of its development projects is the use of botulism in war. Botulism is the disease which killed two people in Britain recently after eating a tin of salmon. The Soviet Union sees the possibility of this as a useful weapon and it makes up part of its war preparations. Four out of every five Soviet military exercises are carried out with troops wearing protective clothing, and with chemical and biological weapons. ■

NORWAY: Finn Sjue, a former editor of "Klassekampen", is being tried in Norway for spying and treason. On January 11th, 1977, when he was editor of "Klassekampen", the paper disclosed four internal telegrams from the NATO exercise "Teamwork" carried out in central Norway. These proved that NATO's defence plans included dropping nuclear bombs in Norway and west Germany in the event of a Soviet attack. The purpose of the charges is nothing other than an attempt by the bosses' state to prevent the communist paper from making more disclosures. ■

ZANU CONDEMNS U.S. HELP TO SMITH

As was reported in the last issue of "Class Struggle", the United Nations (UN) Security Council passed a resolution condemning the flagrant violation of UN sanctions by the USA, in admitting Smith and his black traitor friends into the USA. The British representative showed the true colours of the imperialists by refusing to vote for the resolu-

tion. "Class Struggle" also reported the manoeuvrings of the British and US imperialists in piling economic pressure of Zambia to force it to partially open its border with Rhodesia. We print below extracts from two public statements by ZANU on these issues both signed by Robert Mugabe, president of ZANU.

"We are not surprised at either the invitation extended to the Ian Smith regime by right-wing capitalist elements in the United States or by the granting of visas to Ian Smith and his black collaborators by the United States state department...

In Zimbabwe, United States imperialism maintained a behind-the-scenes role during the Johnson administration because when Ian Smith declared UDI he had assured the United States imperialists and their British partners that the Zimbabwean masses would never break their chains in a thousand years...

When the masses of Zimbabwe, under the leadership of ZANU launched the armed struggle in 1966, imperialism was ruffled but not scared. But, when during 1972 and 1973 ZANLA forces intensified the armed struggle, beginning in the North East and gradually spreading southward to engulf half the country, United States imperialism naturally panicked and sent Henry Kissinger to try and bail out their local agents... The war spread all over the country in 1976-78. Correspondingly, the United States involvement became more and more overt. It could no longer trust local agents nor its United Kingdom partner to hold the line. The result was

"We have fully studied and analysed the raison d'etre (reasons) underlying Zambia's action and understand this to be extreme economic necessity... we also appreciate the fact that the opening of the border is only partial in that it will in principle be restricted to the importation of phosphates and the exportation of copper..."

The statement then points out that Zambia's action strengthens the enemy economically and politically and provides them with foreign currency and is embarrassing.

"We hope it is not too late for us to appeal to the good judgement of Zambia to review its decision and examine other possibilities which we hear

the open demand by the United States, and Britain's acquiescence to it, for direct participation in the negotiations in Geneva, Malta and Dar-es-Salaam.

Since the Dar-es-Salaam conference the armed struggle has escalated to engulf over 80% of Zimbabwe. We have now fully consolidated our hold in many semi-liberated base areas and for the first time the regime is on the verge of collapse. The deadly blows we delivered at Grand Reef and other enemy bases, the shelling and encirclement of Umtali and other smaller towns and cities, the mass flight of settlers from the country-side into towns and from towns out of the country, have created a crisis for United States imperialism. Imperialism has had no choice but to come out in its true colours. It has decided to summon the leading local agents, (Ian Smith, Sithole, Muzorewa, and Chirau) to render an account and to plot ways together of saving the illegal murderous regime...

In these circumstances we are now compelled to state that, at all future conferences on Rhodesia, the United States government participation is to be excluded".

R. Mugabe, President of ZANU. 12.10.78

do exist and whose effect will not only avoid giving our enemy economic, military, political and psychological solace but will also save us great embarrassment.

We wish to appeal strongly to the OAU to all African States severally, and to the United Nations to come to the rescue of Zambia with emergency measures and ready assistance of the nature that will assist her in meeting her present economic demands, uphold UN sanctions against Rhodesia and avoid action whose effect is to negate the progress in our war effort".

R. Mugabe, President of ZANU. 12.10.78

ZIMBABWE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Zimbabwe solidarity campaign launched by the RCLB has set itself three basic tasks:

1. To expose and oppose British imperialism in Zimbabwe and to develop the spirit of working class internationalism.
2. To raise money to send a landrover to the liberation fighters in Zimbabwe.
3. To force the British government to recognise only 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 in 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, 203 Seven Sisters Road, London N4., enclosing a note saying it is for the Zimbabwe fund.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM OUT OF ZIMBABWE!
HAND OVER POWER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT!
DOWN WITH THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLOT!
SUPERPOWERS KEEP OUT OF ZIMBABWE!

STOP PRESS

* Muzorewa, a member of the illegal Rhodesian government, has been allowed into Britain again. While here he will consult with the representatives of British imperialism, and do propaganda for the racist Ian Smith.

* Over 1500 people attended a Symposium of Solidarity in Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 21st. They called on the Federal Council of Switzerland to condemn the internal settlement of Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau and its massacres of civilians. It also called on them to provide aid for refugees and to recognise the Patriotic Front as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Zimbabwe.

* Smith and his cohorts have promised to "abolish all race discrimination in Rhodesia". They will not of course return the land stolen from the Zimbabwe masses to them. "Race discrimination will be replaced by ability to pay" the Rhodesian racists and the imperialists say - and we know who can afford to pay! The armed liberation struggle of the people will not be diverted by such petty fake concessions.