

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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FASCISTS AND POLICE IN RACIST ATTACKS

The last couple of months has seen a sickening upsurge in racist attacks on black people. In London fascists have mounted an organised campaign on shops owned by national minorities and on pubs frequented by blacks. This vicious campaign started in mid-December with shop windows being smashed on a systematic basis. On the weekend of the 14th/15th January alone 32 attacks took place. A yellow mini and a white cortina were used in the attacks. Large stones, fired by a heavy catapult from the back seats of cars, smashed through plate glass windows often showering customers with glass. The Cock public house in Edmonton was attacked 5 times between Saturday and Monday. National Front and British Movement leaflets were left at the scene of one attack.

A spokesman for the Community Relations Council said: "I would say it is definitely an organised campaign by an organisation directed against immigrants and minority groups.... it stinks of Germany in the 1930's. I am normally a fairly level-headed person, but I'm really shaken about what has happened." Black shop keepers are obviously shaken by the attacks, but as Mr Khan, a Bangladeshi whose shop windows were smashed 4 times in 6 days said: "I'm carrying on trading. I'm not going to allow myself to be frightened." Refusal to be

intimidated is the common reaction of the black victims of fascist terror.

POLICE ALSO HARASS BLACKS

Such racist harassment of black people is by no means confined to the openly fascist parties. The police too frequently carry out general raids on black communities. At the beginning of December, for example, Newcastle police staged a dawn raid on the local Bangladeshi community, calculated to intimidate black people. In the end they arrested 7 people accusing them of being 'illegal immigrants'. Rupa Ali was one of those arrested. Only last year he was detained at Shildon, County Durham, again on the pretext of being an 'illegal immigrant'. This time round, he was held for 45 days without trial, and only released on the 20th January, as a result of mounting pressure - and then on bail of £15,000!

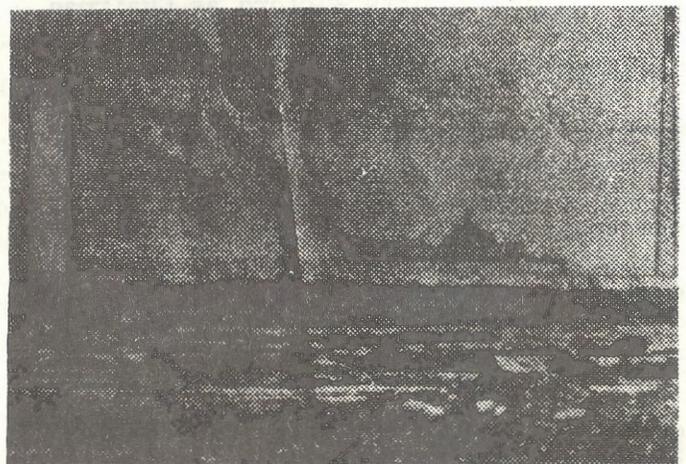
The aim of these attacks is to intimidate black minority nationals who have settled in this country, and to stir up racism by implying that it is immigration and not capitalism that is the cause of unemployment, bad housing, and wages and welfare cuts. What's more these attacks are carried on under a Labour Government which

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RUSSIAN SHIPS SHELL LIBERATION FIGHTERS

A report from the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) states that Russian destroyers have been shelling their positions in the port of Massawa in their war for independence of Eritrea from Ethiopia. This direct involvement of Soviet imperialism in the area is an extremely important development in the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union. It is the first time that the Russian military has been openly engaged in battle in other countries since the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Up to now, their troops have been called "advisers" and their fighting has been done by local people armed and often led

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Russian 'Alligator' class destroyer which shelled guerrilla-held positions in Massawa and landed Ethiopian soldiers.

claims to be 'socialist', but is in fact propping up capitalism using any dirty means necessary.

LABOUR RACISM

It was Labour who introduced the racist 1967 Immigration Act, and in doing so promoted the lie that it was immigration that was responsible for the ills of capitalism. It was Labour who promoted the recent white paper that would bring about a system of 2-tier citizenship discriminating against black holders of British passports. All this done at the same time as declaring their "implacable opposition" to racism. This smokescreen is just the same tactic as when they talk about "socialism" and the workers, whilst cutting wages and boosting profits.

The Tories, too, are now putting forward even more racist proposals against immigration, which would even stop women and

children coming to join their husbands and families.

Now the Tories are joining Labour in a "joint committee against racism" - which excludes immigration from its terms of racism.

The promotion of racist immigration laws by Tories and Labour is done to promote the lie that immigration is responsible for the present crisis, to divide the working class and to divert attention from the real enemy - capitalism. It is such lies that feed the openly fascist and racist organisations, that lead to the attacks on black people by fascist thugs. The answer of the working class can only be workers' unity, opposition to racism, and the racist immigration laws, and united revolutionary struggle for socialism, which alone can improve the lot of all British people. ■

RUSSIAN COMPANIES SEEK PROFITS IN BRITAIN

The Soviet Union is always quick off the mark when there is a chance of making profits. One of the USSR's latest commercial ventures is to go into the passenger liner business. This year there will be 7 liners operating from British ports with a dozen cruises on offer, and passenger services from London to New York and Montreal. The cruises are being marketed by a company called CTC Lines in London, which is owned by Russian capital.

Another traditional area of cut-throat capitalist competition is the car exporting business, here too Soviet capital doesn't miss a trick. The 'Lada' car, built in the USSR, is based on the Fiat

model. The Italian monopoly 'Fiat' is a partner in this concern sharing profits with Russian state capital. The car is imported to Britain by 'Satra Motors', a United States company. In the USSR the prices of the various Lada models range from £4,300 to £5,860. In Britain the prices for the same cars range from £1,867 to £2,481. This cut-price dumping gains foreign currency for the USSR, and secures a foothold in the car market here for Russian capital. They expect 2½% of the market by 1981. Such dealings between Russian, Italian and US capital in the search for profit clearly give the lie to the so-called 'Communist' Party of Great Britain which calls the USSR 'socialist'. ■

Comrade Burford elected Chairman of RCLB Central Committee

The Central Committee of the RCLB has elected Comrade Chris Burford as Chairman. It has also elected Comrade Neil Redfern as Secretary.

The RCLB has had important successes on the road to rebuilding the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class. The leadership of the RCLB is now composed of a relatively stable group of tempered comrades who are able to lead the struggle to build the party successfully. The RCLB has a good collective leadership which has within it a number of experienced cadres.

Comrade Burford is our strongest comrade. In a short time he has played the decisive role in reversing the bad situation in the CFB before the formation of the RCLB. It was inevitable that the old CFB with

its rejection of Democratic Centralism and its wrong lines on a number of important questions, should face a great crisis. This happened and the disintegration of the CFB would have been inevitable unless someone came forward to uphold the correct line and get the members of the CFB to unite. This is what Comrade Burford did. This victory made the unity of the CFB and the CUA possible. It made all advances in the struggle for unity on principle a living thing.

We have confidence that with a strong collective leadership, with Comrade Burford at the head, and the correct line on party building, we can achieve the re-establishment of the revolutionary Communist Party of the working class before too long. ■

"WE'VE NOT SURRENDERED. WE'VE BEEN STARVED OUT"

For eight long bitter weeks the firemen spearheaded the struggle against the Labour government. On strike for the first time, their tactics - active involvement throughout the strike on the picket lines, winning and keeping the widest public sympathy without putting themselves forward as a "special case" - can be learnt from by all workers. They've won a promise of the same earnings as skilled industrial workers in two years time, but the fight for better wages now has been lost. Nevertheless the Fire Brigades Union won't be the same again. "The treatment we have received in the past weeks has turned us into a militant union", the Humberside Union chairman said.



Firemen greeted Grunwick pickets on hunger strike outside the TUC in December; both groups of workers demanded mass support for their struggles: both were sold out by the TUC: but both will learn the lessons of these setbacks and be strengthened in future struggles.

SOLD DOWN THE RIVER

Most members of the FBU Executive Committee never wanted to go on strike in the

first place. People who have to be pushed from behind don't make the best leaders. Knowing this, the resolution to the firemen's National Conference calling for the strike made any decision to go back dependent on a recall Conference, thus keeping matters firmly in the hands of the rank-and-file. After the strike is over, they are still keeping things that way. The EC accepted a disgusting clause to the agreement promising "no discrimination" against scabs. But the firemen aren't going along with that. As John Lewis, one of three EC members who voted against the deal said "The union's authority must be maintained at this time and our internal discipline is nothing to do with the employers".

NEED FOR ORGANISED UNITY

Just as the FBU's EC failed to lead the strike, so did the misleaders of other unions keep a lid on organised workers' support for the firemen. At the TUC they voted against a support campaign. An important factor in future struggles will be the action taken by other workers in support - which will mean getting the union misleaders off their backs too.

THE BEGINNING, NOT THE END

The firemen have learnt a lot through their struggle - during the course of it, stronger leaders have come to the fore: and in the coming months the rank-and-file will no doubt take steps to strengthen their union's militancy by getting shot of the misleaders. Already Newcastle has started the ball rolling with a vote of 'no confidence' in Terry Parry, the General Secretary.

Having tackled the Labour government head on, many have no illusions left in that. "I'll never vote Labour again" said one fireman. Now they're hitting the Labour Party where it hurts - in the pocket! - by mass resignations from the political levy. 300 men from Durham alone are stopping their 2pence a month donation in protest.

Whilst defeat cheers nobody, next time it'll be a yet stronger, more militant union that the government have to face. ■

"SPY IN THE CAB" STRUGGLE GROWS

A one week strike of Grimsby lorry drivers in January raised the campaign against the tachograph - spy in the cab - to a new level. The strike paralysed the docks and fish transport systems and picket lines covered all major factories in the area.

The drivers refuse to accept certain Common Market regulations. They point out that the tachograph is like having the boss in the cab with you. It records every movement. They would have to explain every stop. They could be done for speeding long after the event.

Another rule would limit them to 281 miles a day, which would mean more overnight stops away from home.

As usual, local TGWU officials tried to hold the drivers back. They tried to ban the strike committee from meeting in their local union office, but had to back down after the strikers had a sit-in there lasting several hours.

This strike is a strike against Common Market regulations. It is a justified struggle, but the "Get Britain Out" campaign has lost no time in seizing on the issue to win support for leaving the Common Market.

Last month, 'Class Struggle' argued clearly why European unity was necessary to fight the economic, political and military domination of the two superpowers, and that for these reasons British workers should support the existence of the EEC. At the same time, we pointed out that it was still a capitalist institution, and that workers needed to carry on the class struggle within the EEC, as they do every day in Britain. The lorry drivers' struggle is justified and should be supported by the working class, but the "Get Britain Out" campaign is a ragbag of people, who either dream of resurrecting the old British Empire, or who would allow the USA to get a bigger grip on Britain, or people who oppose the EEC because it hinders Soviet expansionism. They and their campaign should be resolutely opposed.

Suggestions and criticisms help strengthen the paper. Contact the RCLB
c/o NEW ERA BOOKS
203 Seven Sisters Rd.,
London N.4.

FORD WORKERS STRIKE

1000 workers in the Press Shop at the Fords, Halewood Body Plant, came out on strike on 9th January in protest against the Ford bosses' infamous "Nine-Point Plan".

What is the "Nine-Point Plan"? In Ford's own words they are "changes to working practices" designed to "overcome some of the existing inefficiencies" - in other words to increase the exploitation and oppression of the workers!

Work in the Press Shop can be hard, gruelling and boring. For many years these workers have applied a number of practices such as "working ahead", in order to have longer breaks. This gives Fords the required production and the workers longer rest periods. The "Nine-Point Plan" attempts to force the workers to work longer and harder. This would simply mean bigger profits for Fords.

MISLEADERS BACK-PEDAL

When the strike was only one week old the union leaders conceded in negotiations seven of the nine points, telling the bosses that there was "no disagreement". This was ludicrous, as the strike began in opposition to all nine.

So as we go to press, the strike continues on opposition to the two remaining points. The first point would, in the event of partial breakdown of machinery, force the workers to produce the same amount per shift on inefficient equipment rather than agreeing a new, temporary rate with the supervisor until the breakdown is fixed. The second point would stop the workers changing jobs each hour - to share out the heavier and 'easier' jobs on a line. The bosses will allow only one change per shift.

The workers are determined not to return until Fords back down. "There's no way we're going back under those conditions", said one worker, "it would only get worse if we gave in, anyway."

Last year Fords had over 25% of the home car market. Some months, four of the best selling 5 cars were Ford models; and they made £122 millions profit. But increasing competition in home and world markets forces even 'successful' multi-national giants like Fords to screw even more profit out of its workers, simply in order to survive. The Press Shop workers are determined that this increasing oppression stops here!

TURN THE UNIONS



INTO FIGHTING CLASS ORGANISATIONS

This article continues the series on the struggle to turn the unions into fighting class organisations.

FIGHT FOR DEMOCRATIC UNIONS!

The RCLB puts this slogan forward, because the way our unions work has a major influence on the effectiveness of our struggle. Many organisations which call themselves 'socialist' or 'communist' talk a lot about democracy in the unions, but nearly always this means to them methods of election etc. or the formal 'democracy' of the unions. Whilst this is important it misses the main point.

The main point is the method of work in the unions. In a recent article on Fords, we pointed out how the workers were not consulted in drawing up wage claims etc., how while the negotiations went on they were not kept informed, or their views listened to. The only time they took part was when there was a huge mass meeting of thousands to vote on whether to accept the deal or not. This lack of regular meetings does not just happen in Fords, it is the normal practice throughout industry. Shop stewards frequently say that such meetings would "undermine their authority". This is rubbish. Shop stewards should be elected as class leaders, but they should also keep in touch with their members views, and all trade unionists should take part in collective discussions. It is a fact also that in many trade union branches only 10 to 20 out of thousands of members attend meetings. The opportunists the people who talk of socialism, but sabotage the struggle - say this is because workers are "backward". This arrogant rubbish denies the real point that it is the behaviour of opportunist leaders that creates the situation.

It is the bureaucratic wranglings and back-stabbings, it is the failure to promote free discussion where workers can speak out without being shouted down, it is the failure of the opportunist leaders to give clear information which allows proper discussion instead of confusion in the meetings. It is the way meetings are

run - and sometimes the times and places they are held - which reduces the involvement of workers in the unions.

In addition, it is frequently the case that workers are actively discouraged from attending meetings and told to rely on the leaders instead. But leaders who don't encourage the involvement of all members in decision making can never be 'relied on'.

There are many other points of lack of democracy in the way unions work. In this issue the article on the lorry drivers in Grimsby points out how union officials tried to prevent the strike committee from meeting in their own union offices! One of the most common examples of lack of democracy is that a strike is "unofficial" - even though the workers involved have voted to strike - unless the national leadership decides otherwise.

It is all these, and the million and one other problems that we must change to promote real shop-floor democracy in our unions. At the same time we must take up the struggles for formal democracy: the election of officials, who should be recallable at conferences and so on. As we organise to take up these struggles, we will find that "militants" as well as "moderates" will oppose us. We will have to fight "left" opportunists as well as the "right" opportunists in the struggle to turn the unions into fighting class organisations. ■

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

IN 1976, THE FIRST FULL YEAR OF THE LABOUR Party's social con trick, profits soared by a staggering 27% to £14.6 billion.

Bourgeois politicians say that increased profits will mean more money invested in British industry and a rosy future for us all. This 'jam tomorrow' argument just doesn't meet the facts. During the same period investment actually fell by 65% - compared with 1970. While the working class tightens its belts British capitalists invest abroad and the Labour Party leads further attacks on the British worker.

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS RECENTLY CALLAGHAN stated that he constantly tried to convince Trade Unionists that moderate wage demands were more likely to produce a real improvement in the standard of living than 'exaggerated and runaway wage claims'. His idea of a 'moderate wage' claim is less than 10%.

In the same week, the Price Commission, set up as window dressing for the social con trick, used its new powers for the first time. It reduced the 'exaggerated' claim for a price increase of 43% by Fisons the fertilizer company to a more 'moderate' 20%. Clearly, prices can rise by twice the maximum allowed for wages and still be acceptable to the bosses' party.

EVEN THE 10% LIMIT IS NOT DRASTIC ENOUGH for one of the country's largest employers the British Steel Corporation (BSC). In talks with the industry's biggest union the ISTC the Corporation has refused to improve its six percent pay offer, unless there is an agreement which could mean the loss of 25,000 jobs - or more than 10% of the workforce.

BSC continues to provide proof that nationalisation under capitalism doesn't protect jobs for the working class. Only Socialism can guarantee the right to work.

IN NOVEMBER 1975, 11 MEN DIED IN A RAIN of molten metal at a BSC plant at Frodingham near Scunthorpe. Last month the company were fined a total of £700 for not ensuring the safety of two men and not supplying three others with protective clothing! This works out at £63.65 for each man's life.

Shortly before this decision on January 9th, four men plunged to their deaths and five others were seriously injured when an industrial lift dropped 100 feet down the shaft of a cooling tunnel on a new

power station site in Kent. There are no emergency rescue teams on this site and men screamed in agony for over half an hour while a rescue team was organised. Employers have refused to provide even these basic safety measures for the simple reason that safety costs money. In September 1977 there were 33 fatal 'accidents' at work in British industry. In October there were 51.

For Capitalism profits come first, lives are cheap.

A RECENT REPORT BY THE "ROYAL COMMISSION on Wealth" shows that the top 1% of the population owns a quarter of all personal wealth - that includes money in the bank, ownership of houses and so on. Looking at the top 5%, that is 1 in 20 of the population, they own nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ of all personal wealth.

We may produce the wealth in the factories and mines, but they own it.

GORMLEY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL Union of Mineworkers (NUM), has been made a director of British Investment Trust, a company in which the NCB pension fund has big investments. He is already a director of Vancouver Wharves. If you add his director's fees to the £1000 he gets as a member of the National Research and Development Corporation, and the £7,500 he gets as President of the NUM, it is not surprising that he is so divorced from the rank and file, that he continually sells them out.

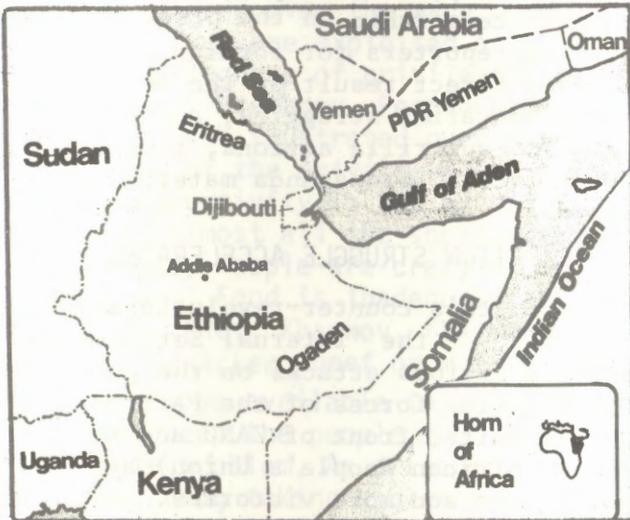
THE BRITISH RULING CLASS, WHICH HAS BEEN working to overcome the present crisis of capitalism by shifting the burden of the crisis to the backs of the working class, is now being supported by Poland! An article in the Warsaw weekly 'Politika' on the crisis in Britain says: "only the British worker can break the vicious circle by honest work". It sees "a few encouraging signs" of this, where "workers have refused to follow their shop stewards and take part in strikes provoked by them". "Unfortunately, such cases are rare", the article says.

A 68-YEAR-OLD RETIRED WORKER IN LIVERPOOL died of a heart attack recently after police had called at his flat to arrest him for non-payment of rates. But the man, who lived alone and suffered from arthritis, should never have been approached by the police because his rates were being paid by the Social Security. The man's neighbour said "I say the State killed him because nobody cared enough."

by these "advisers" or by Cubans, armed and transported by the Russians, as in Angola.

The statement by the EPLF is backed up by Somalia, and by the captain of a Greek freighter who saw the destroyers and Russian amphibious vehicles of the 'Alligator' class in action: "I watched them firing salvoes of 25 rockets at the Eritreans".

The liberation fighters control nine-tenths of Eritrea. The port of Massawa in Eritrea is one of Ethiopia's last strongholds. It is of great importance to the Ethiopian military Junta - the Dergue - as it is its only deep sea port, and of strategic interest to the Soviet Union as from it they can control the vital sea routes in the Red Sea. Despite the combined efforts of the USSR and the Ethiopian Junta, three quarters of Massawa is now controlled by guerrillas of the EPLF.



RUSSIANS COPY AMERICA'S VIETNAM TACTICS

The successes of the EPLF have also led to other Vietnam-style responses by the Ethiopian Junta. Statements by the EPLF and the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) have exposed the use of napalm and anti-personnel cluster bombs against civilians in towns and cities inside the liberated area in an attempt to demoralise the local

people who solidly support the liberation fighters. These were dropped by MiG 21 planes. These events too are confirmed by independent eye-witnesses.

As an article in the December issue of 'Class Struggle' pointed out the massive military intervention by Soviet social imperialism, and its satellites, is not only to support the Ethiopian Junta in its struggle against the Eritrean people, but also in its struggle against the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) which is fighting to liberate the Ogaden region. The massive injection of Russian arms, and the direct involvement of Cuban troops in the area, has allowed the Ethiopian Junta to retain a toe hold in the Ogaden, although the WSLF controls most of the region.

Cuban military and intelligence units are also active inside Ethiopia itself against the revolutionary struggle waged by the Ethiopian people led by the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP).

ETHIOPIAN MILITARY COMMAND LED BY RUSSIANS

In mid-January, Soviet defence minister Marshall Ustinov and a top ranking Soviet Air Force commander visited Ethiopia, at the same time as Cuban defence minister Raul Castro.

Reports from Somalia point out that now a Supreme Strategic Military Command has been established in Ethiopia, which is dominated by high ranking Russian officers and three Cubans. This Supreme Command is intended to co-ordinate an attack to prop up the Ethiopian Military Junta and provide a stable base for the Soviet social imperialists in the area, who have already recently been kicked out of the Sudan and Somalia because of their colonial activities. Such increased aggression by the Soviet Union only serves to expose its true imperialist nature behind its socialist mask, and thus strengthen the peoples' opposition to it. ■



Eritrean guerrillas riding a captured Russian T54 tank on the road to Massawa

MORE VICTORIES FOR PATRIOTIC FRONT DESPITE REPRESSION

As a result of the gains of the people of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) in their militant struggle, Ian Smith's racist and colonialist regime has responded by stepping up repression, whilst at the same time trying to negotiate an 'internal settlement' which will leave the basic oppressive system untouched.

THE 'INTERNAL SETTLEMENT' FARCE

The 'internal settlement' will supposedly end white minority rule in Zimbabwe. In fact, what Smith is proposing is that whilst there would be a majority of blacks in parliament, they would be elected along racial grounds, with the whites holding a third of the seats which would under the 'new' constitution be allowed to block any major changes in law. The colonialist army and police would remain basically unchanged, and most importantly the property rights of the whites would remain unaltered. That is that the imperialists who control the economy would remain in control, that the farmers who got their land by driving out the black people would keep their land, and that the wealth of the privileged whites would remain! The objectives of these 'proposals' is to get the more privileged of the blacks onto the side of the colonialist regime, and to split the unity of the black people by appearing to 'compromise' whilst keeping the basic system intact and protecting the interests of imperialist companies - mainly US and British ones.

INCREASED SUPPRESSION

Alongside this tactic, Smith's regime is increasing its attacks on the Zimbabwean people, who are not fooled by talk of an internal settlement.

On the one hand, the Rhodesian army has carried out brutal massacres on Zimbabwean refugee camps in neighbouring Mozambique. On 30th November, a press release produced by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) said: "The racist enemy forces of Ian Smith supported by those of Johannes Vorster, the racist Prime Minister of South Africa, attacked two of our transit camps...civilian centres where our people have been engaged in serious, self-reliant projects such as education, agriculture, poultry, piggery, health and crafts". It described some of the callous and inhuman incidents: "in one case, thirty five children of 9 to 14 were burnt in a class room, in another, 8 patients being taken to

Chimoio hospital were shot dead and the ambulance burnt. In another case, some 25 patients who were in hospital were cold-bloodedly shot dead and the hospital set on fire". Agricultural equipment was also destroyed. The statement pointed out that the attacking forces included Israelis, British and other west European mercenaries, and were equipped with material from these countries. Replying to Rhodesian propaganda - reprinted in the British press - that the attacks were on military bases, the statement went on: "We have repeatedly stated that we run no military camps whatsoever in Mozambique. Our military bases are well established in Zimbabwe where thousands of our fighters have penetrated the whole length and breadth of the country and are pursuing the enemy every day and every hour".

The colonial regime is also increasing suppression in other ways. At the beginning of January, for example, it imposed even more censorship on the press - including reporters for foreign papers. This is a direct result of the successes of the liberation struggles, and bans reports of guerrilla actions, allowing only 'official' propaganda material to be printed.

BUT LIBERATION STRUGGLE ACCELERATES

Despite Smith's counter-revolutionary dual tactics - the 'Internal Settlement' talks and vicious attacks on the people - the liberation forces of the Patriotic Front (a united front of ZANU and the Zimbabwe African People's Union) are winning more and more victories. Last December forces of the Patriotic Front attacked Grand Reef air base, which has been a centre for attacks on refugee camps in Mozambique. 20 planes, 2 armoured cars, 18 trucks and a major power line were destroyed, and 400 troops wiped out. Apart from this the "Zambia Daily Mail" reported that ZAPU forces killed 658 and wounded 1,062 enemy troops in the last 3 months of 1977, and raided enemy bases and camps and destroyed many military and economic installations. In January 2 guerrilla raids were reported within a mile of the capital, Salisbury.

As the ZANU press release said: "Already the enemy's position is weak. We have stretched his forces to the limit as we encompass the whole of the country with our operations. Numerous farms have been deserted, his local administration has

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STUDENT IN RUSSIA DENOUNCES THE SYSTEM

A member of the RCLB was recently given a statement by someone who comes from the third world but has been studying in Russia for some years. As he is still a student there, we cannot print his name or give further details. As he points out in his letter: "KGB - the very name of it is a terror for the general people. The activities of KGB is so wide that no one risks his life in talking about KGB. If anyone is apprehended by KGB it means the dooms of his life. KGB is not only active for their own people but also active after the foreign students".

THE RUSSIAN SYSTEM

The statement says: "The economic situation of the Soviet Union day by day is deteriorating and the burden is bearing on the common people. I think it is due to the loss of control over production by the Soviet workers. As a result inflation is growing up. Differences are increasing among the peoples over the wage. Common people that they are exploited and oppressed by a group of privileged class, of which leads Brezhnev. People have become very much frustrated over day to day dealings of the privileged class...As a result productivity is day by day decreasing. Almost all the shops are without goods. People are crazy after foreign goods. Food is inadequate. Cities like Odessa, Kiev, Kharkov, Krasnodov,... are without chicken, beef or mutton... Wines are always available in shops. These wines keep the people from thinking of the state problem. As a result, alcoholism, drug taking and criminal violence are increasing...

...medical treatment is free. But to take admission in hospital, it is difficult to find a place...the privileged class always get the upper hand in getting beds in hospital...now it is easily visible of two classes of people in the society".

USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE

The statement goes on: "So Soviet Union

has in recent years been attempting to increase its plunder of eastern Europe, the USSR practices through the COMECON. Students in Russia from Hungary, Poland and other eastern countries treat the USSR as their enemy. Their countries are very much dissatisfied over the dictatorial attitude of the Soviet Union over their countries. (One of the Polish students once told me that he was very much astonished when he found that the Polish eggs are more cheaper in Moscow than in Warsaw). The same complaints I also have heard from the students of Bulgaria and Hungary".

PEOPLE FIGHT BACK

"Now it seems to me that the Soviet people are more vocal in expressing their disgust over the high-handedness of the bureaucratic rule...underground subversive activities are on increase. Also last year there are 4 bomb explosions in Moscow". The statement gives details that the author has heard and continues: "The Soviet authorities publicised all the occurrences as mere accidental cases of short circuits".

OTHER POINTS

The statement also pointed out that although the USSR is a federation of several national republics, the Russians dominate everything: "All the top executive posts are held by the Russians, not not only in Russia, but as well in other republics". It also says that citizens of these republics are treated as second-class citizens, and that there is: "discrimination in dealing with them in state affairs".

The foreign students, as well as the people of Russia are given political education: "the main propaganda of the USSR aims at China...nowadays the students have to participate in special lessons on anti-maoism... USSR treat China as their number one enemy".

This statement has not been printed in full as it is very long, but the editor has tried to pick out some of the main points. Some of the worst spelling errors have been changed - the author isn't English - and the subheadings are the editor's.

MORE VICTORIES... (cont'd from p8)

collapsed, his economy is crumbling, daily he suffers losses in the battlefield, daily we are consolidating our hold in

the semi-liberated areas. We cannot, and never will, lose...Our cause is a people's cause and the people will definitely win!"



INTERNATIONAL NOTES

MEXICO

The state-owned Mexican Petroleum Co., PEMEX, has cancelled an order to the US Steel Company for 80,000 tons of pipes for natural gas. The US import-export bank had approved credit to PEMEX for the purchase two months previously, but after the USA demanded to be supplied with lower priced gas, on top of usual credit terms, PEMEX cancelled the order. More and more third world countries are fighting the unfair trading of the two superpowers and other imperialists. ■

MALAYA

A radio report from "Voice of the Malayan Revolution" broadcast on December 31st stated that: "In 1977, our army smashed numerous enemy armed attacks, dealing telling blows at the enemy politically and militarily and further consolidating and expanding the base areas and guerrilla zones." It reported that under the leadership of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM), the Malayan Revolutionary Armed Forces and people engaged the enemy in 127 battles, wiping out over 500 enemy troops. A New Year message by the Central Committee of the CPM broadcast by the radio station spoke of the good situation in the Malayan revolution. Dwelling on the situation internationally, the message warmly supported the victory over the 'gang of four', and the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in China. On New Year's Day it carried a further broadcast supporting the world-wide struggle against the two superpowers and warned: "If the Soviet Union and US imperialism should dare to launch a world war that would definitely accelerate their own doom". ■

AZANIA

The Unibell district of Cape Town, which had a 15,000 population of black workers and their families, was destroyed last month when the racist Vorster Government sent in bulldozers to flatten their homes. Although only built from cardboard, oil cans and corrugated iron, the black workers chose to live there so that they could be with their families, who were there "illegally". No other accommodation had been available to these families and none was offered after their homes were demolished. Government officials gave out rail tickets to the 'homelands' where, according to the South African regime's racist policy, all blacks are supposed to belong. ■

LIBERIA

When Liberian President William Tolbert received the new Soviet Ambassador to Liberia in January, he pointed out strongly: "We are in dire need of agricultural prosperity and technical know-how, not unnecessary guns or bombs; we need fair prices for our goods, not commodities that ruin our economy; we need renewed endeavours for peace, tranquility and progress, not exercise or demonstration of power politics of selfish interests!" ■

SOVIET UNION

224 of the 238 foreign warships sailing through the Turkish straits, which connects the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, in 1977 were Soviet warships. (from Turkish News Agency)

The Soviet Union has added 6 missile carrying warships to its fleet in the east Mediterranean (Kuwait paper - 'Al Siyassah) and two to its Pacific Fleet (Japanese Defence Agency).

The Soviet Union has been building nuclear submarines at the rate of 10 to 12 a year for the past few years, and now have a total of 950 submarine-launched nuclear missiles. The size of the Soviet Navy and its deployment are clearly well in excess of defensive needs. As the Chief of the Soviet Navy, Gorshkov, has boasted; the USSR has changed its naval strategy from "offshore defence" to "attack in distant seas". ■

JAPAN

The Japanese Foreign Minister ended a visit to Moscow on the 12th January, without issuing a joint Soviet-Japanese communique, which would be normally done after such a visit. This is because when he tried to negotiate the return to Japan of four of its islands which the Soviet Union is occupying, the Russians blandly replied that there were "no territorial problems" between the two countries. The USSR is also trying to stop Japan signing a friendship treaty with China, which would state its opposition to any power attempting to establish hegemony (domination) in Asia. ■

VISIT TO A PENCIL FACTORY IN CHINA

(A report from a member of the recent RCLB delegation to China)

While we were in China, we visited several factories. One of these was the Friendship Pencil Factory in Tsinan, which is about 220 miles south of Peking. The factory was set up at the time of liberation by 40 uneducated workers - many of them beggars. When they were deciding what sort of factory to set up, they thought about what they could do for socialism and the people. Realising that the campaign against illiteracy was important for the revolution, they decided to make pencils!

Their decision was approved by state planning authorities who gave them a grant of 40,000 yuan to do their work. They began by making their own tools. Today they have built up the factory so that it now makes pencils on automatic and semi-automatic machinery. 600 workers now work there in 5 workshops.

WORKING CLASS IN POWER

The factory is run by the 'Revolutionary Committee' which is elected by the workers. As is normal in China, the factory branch of the Communist Party stands for only a third of the seats. The strong support of the mass of the workers means that the Communist Party branch plays the leading role, but the Revolutionary Committee runs the factory.

Production targets are set by the state after close consultation with the workers. The workers discuss how much they can produce before any decision is made.

The 8 grade wage system which works throughout China, is operated in the factory. The workers decide who goes on what grade on the basis of the workers' political stand - that is their attitude to building up socialist China and their attitude to serving the people - their skills, and how hard they work. (A recent national decision gave 42% of the people wage rises. Those receiving increases were judged by their fellow workers in the above way. No one on the higher grades received an increase. There has been no inflation in China since liberation.)

Because there are no capitalists, and the workers are involved in decision making, the role of the unions have changed. Now their role is one of seeing to the health, safety and welfare of the workers in the factory. They are independent of the state.

PRODUCTION

The surplus created by the workers above what is needed for their wages, is divided in three ways. One part is retained by the factory for expansion of production.

Another part provides improved welfare for the workers at the factory. This pays for health care and hospital treatment of the workers, for nurseries, where women workers at the factory can leave their children and so on. The third part goes to the state.

Production of the factory increased every
(cont'd on p12)

On Saturday 18th February the London branch of the RCLB will be showing

THE EAST IS RED

the famous film about the Chinese revolution. After the film a comrade recently returned from China will lead a discussion with slides, relating the film to the present situation in China.

PLACE: Holborn Library Hall TIME: 7.00 pm
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year from the beginning, with a big surge forward at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. In a capitalist country such as Britain, increased production just puts extra profits into the capitalist's pockets or leads to redundancies. In socialist China increased production leads to a better life for all workers, and is transforming the whole country. So the workers work hard and bring in new techniques. In the Friendship Pencil Factory the workers have just built a new machine for mixing graphite which does the job of 15 workers. In Britain that would be 15 redundancies. In socialist China it just means more pencils are made.

The workers at the factory did not take the attitude that everything was rosy. They said they wanted to do more work automating the factory and that they were far from satisfied with the presentation and packing of the pencils. Although the pencils produced are of good quality, the Secretary of the Revolutionary Committee was eager for criticisms from the RCLB delegation. He was pleased when one comrade pointed out a problem with one of their pencils. It is this sort of all-sided self-critical attitude, which enables the workers to tackle problems squarely and improve quality.

THE 'GANG OF FOUR'

In 1974, when the careerist 'Gang of Four' had most influence, production at the factory slumped. The 'Gang of Four' were a small group in the top Party leadership who tried to seize power for themselves. Some people followed them because they thought they would get cushy jobs. Others were confused. Henchmen of the 'Gang of Four' in the Pencil Factory attacked the factory leaders and workers who worked hard, and said they were "putting production before revolution". Leading comrades were treated to harassment and abuse, so that they couldn't eat or sleep for days. But they knew that they were right, and that they were working in accordance with the leadership that Mao Tsetung had given and they did not bend. Many workers at the factory in this period were being turned away from work and encouraged to be idle. The 'Gang of Four' never had the self-critical attitude of the sort shown by other Party leaders, and that the factory leadership displayed to us. Now they have been smashed. There was absolutely no doubt that the workers at the Pencil Factory were delighted by the crushing of the 'Gang of Four'. Now the factory is surging ahead again.

BUILD UP THE WORKING CLASS PRESS

February is the last month of our fund-raising campaign and it is almost certain that we will surpass our target of £1,500. We urge all members and supporters to continue their efforts for the rest of this month. The more money we collect - the more improvements we can make to our publications!

We are putting the money we have collected so far to good use. We have bought some new equipment already, which is allowing new formats for 'Class Struggle', and for 'Revolution' our theoretical journal. 'Class Struggle' will now come out regularly in a 12 page edition of folded A3 paper. The fund has bought capital equipment to do this, but a price rise is still necessary for the extra monthly costs of paper, distribution etc. New equipment will allow us in the future to have more and better photographs. All these developments will help to develop our paper as a more effective weapon in the struggle to rebuild a party of the working class - the revolutionary Communist Party.

How to pass on the money - If possible, give it to the person you buy 'Class Struggle' from - or you can send a cheque or 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. We will not publish names and addresses.

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