

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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SUPPORT FOR STEEL WORKERS BUILDS UP (BUT TUC FAINT-HEARTED)

The first national steel strike since the 1926 General Strike began at midnight of New Year's Day. The strike is the outcome of the British Steel Corporation's offer of a 2% wage increase. This has since been raised to the measly sum of 6%. As we go to press steel workers leader Bill Sirs is showing readiness to compromise at approximately 10% plus a productivity deal. But this has been given a cool reception. The British Steel Corporation (BSC) bosses are demanding an end to the guaranteed working week and more job mobility. The guaranteed working week gives the workers 80% of their basic wage in the event of layoffs. It is clearly a hard won right which gives steel workers some security against the slumps in steel production which go with capitalist crisis. The BSC complain that such workers' rights are "restrictive practices" and that the guaranteed working week costs BSC £30 million a year. So what? It is better that the capitalists pay for the anarchy of capitalist production than the working class.

The bourgeois press and television news have been talking about BSC wage increases of 10% and even 16% being offered. But this is aimed at confusing public opinion. These figures have been plucked out of the air. They are estimates of what may be gained through local productivity bargaining.

STRIKE FAR REACHING

The strike called by the Iron and Steel Confederation (ISTC) of trade unions has won the full support of its 90,000 members. Bitter feeling is running high among steel workers following the announcement to axe 52,000 jobs. Areas of already high unemployment such as South Wales face a 1930's level of joblessness. The mining valleys could lose up to 21,000 jobs in the pits supplying the steel workers of Llanwern and Port Talbot.

Steel is a basic raw material for industry. British Leyland gets 80% of its steel from BSC. Metal Box, the huge canning monopoly, uses steel for canned foods and many other canned goods. BSC Chairman Sir Charles Villiers is claiming stocks of steel to last 6 weeks. If this is so, it is clear that the Government and the monopoly capitalist class they represent are preparing a major confrontation with the working class. Already, the bosses' press are talking about a three-day week throughout industry by the end of January. Consequently, the success or failure of the steel workers' struggle affects the interests and future struggle of the whole working class.

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RCL & CWM TO UNITE

On January 1st, 1980 the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League and the National Committee of the Communist Workers' Movement issued a joint statement announcing their decision to unite.

This development will greatly strengthen the ability of revolutionary communists to co-ordinate and improve their practical work in various fields of the class struggle, and to sum up their experience. Closely related to this is that by bringing communists together in a democratic centralist organisation to share their experience and knowledge unity will also enable the debate to advance further on programmatic questions - on the general strategic way forward in the struggle for socialism in Britain.

In all ways the united organisation will be stronger than both the RCL and the CWM, because it will enable us to combine our strengths and to help each other to overcome our different weaknesses.

INTEGRATING THE TWO ORGANISATIONS

The statement says that over the next 4 or 5 months there will be a process of integration at every level of the organisations. There will then be a unity conference which will formally establish a single democratic centralist organisation and a provisional central committee. Later there will be a congress to adopt a new programmatic document which will replace both the RCL Manifesto and the CWM Programme.

Unity between our two Marxist-Leninist organisations has long been an intention. Now it is becoming a reality. Discussions between the two organisations have gone on a long time, but it was necessary. If two organisations have important differences those differences have to be struggled over. If both desire unity and are principled, patient and genuinely want to understand and change the real world in which we live there is no reason why unity cannot be reached. But it takes time.

UNITY CAN ONLY LIVE IF IT COMES FROM REAL AGREEMENT

In the past other people have described this view of how to unite as the "snowball theory" and criticised it for being slow, but our experience shows that unity based on reaching agreement on the main questions is a real unity that lives, and it is also a fact that those who have criticised the "slow" approach have still failed to unite with anyone.

Of course there are still differences between the RCL and the CWM, but they are not differences on major questions of principle. They are no bigger than the differences which exist within both the organisations already. Such healthy differences are bound to exist and will ensure that lively debate will continue in the united organisation. We do not want a "pure" and sterile monolithic organisation.

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SUPPORT FOR STEEL STRIKE

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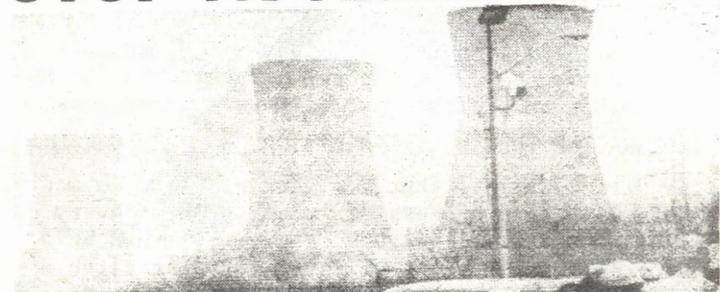
STEEL INDUSTRY DECLINE - WHO TO BLAME?

With the usual arrogance and self-righteousness of bourgeois politicians Sir Keith Joseph declared to the press:

"I think it will be very serious for the steel workers themselves. There is already too much steel in the world. They will lose customers who will go elsewhere. The steel industry will finish up smaller than it need be otherwise."

He should continue to make such sanctimonious statements. Because the blood of class conscious workers will boil even more and their determination to fight be hardened. Just who is sucking the blood of steel workers? Keith Joseph innocently proclaims that productivity per steel worker is lower here than in France and Germany. But goes on to ignore the fact that BSC pays less in wages for every tonne of steel produced than almost anywhere else in the EEC. The steel cuts plus increased productivity are expected to increase steel output per man per year from 141 tonnes to 185 tonnes. That is an increased productivity of almost a third, or 31%. This brings productivity above France's level, whilst the BSC with only 2% increase in basic wages, continues to benefit from lower labour costs per tonne of steel.

STOP NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



The announcement, in December, that the Government is to order at least ten nuclear reactor power stations from the United States will have stirred concern among many workers and intellectuals.

The type of reactor proposed is the pressurised water reactor (PWR) - the same type of reactor whose safety has been questioned in France, Germany and the States, most notably at Harrisburg, Three Mile Island. British scientists have been developing the advanced gas-cooled reactor (AGR) for years because it is believed to be more safe than PWR, but these attempts to design safer nuclear reactors are to be swept aside because it is cheaper to import the less safe PWR.

The programme is to start in 1982 despite the fact that a report by the nuclear inspectorate has said that they will need two to three years to clear a specific PWR design for safety. Energy Secretary, David Howell, announcing the programme, said that he hoped they will have completed their examination of specifications during 1981.

LEUKAEMIA

Gas-cooled reactors are believed to be safer than Water-cooled reactors. But even here there are proven dangers. Last year a Manchester University research team published information that people who live near Fylde coast and eat fish and molluscs from the Irish Sea run a greater risk of developing leukaemia (cancer of the blood). Investigations were based on a 12 year Cancer Registry of the region and showed a doubling of the incidence of leukaemia and similar disorders in the area of Fylde Coast and Wandsale. There is also a rise in Blackburn, Burnley, Preston and Lancaster.

And who benefits from this increased exploitation of steel workers? The bankers who have floated steel investment loans to the Government. BSC boss Sir Charles Villiers is pleading poverty. He complains that British Steel made a £300 million loss last year. But what he omits to tell who he regards as the "gullible public" is that £200 million of this was interest payments to the Government. What is more, in floating a loan for BSC (1972 Development Strategy) the banks were taking no risks. They did this by loaning fixed-interest debt capital. This allowed the banks behind the Government to avoid all the risks of failure a financier would normally have to bear.

The deadline of steel production to a new low of 15 million tonnes per annum results from capitalist rationalisation of steel production to ensure higher profitability for the big banks.

UNITED STRUGGLE ESSENTIAL

The Government are preparing a major confrontation with the working class. With the aid of the TUC opportunist misleaders they hope to inflict a defeat on the working class of the scale of the 1926 General Strike sell-out. And with conciliatory attitude of Bill Sirs and Co, BSC have every reason to believe they can succeed. Instead of preparing

← Three Mile Island

A Consultant haematologist's (blood specialist) approach was that "we must continue to monitor the situation... it would be unwise to come to any firm conclusion whether this is caused by radiation". On the other hand, in sharp contrast to this scientific approach, two official spokesmen reacted with flat denials or evasion.

British Nuclear Fuels Association reacted with the statement "highly speculative" and glibly said "people eating fish landed in the North West received about the same small amount of radiation in a year as from one jet flight across the Atlantic". This is indeed complacent. Surely this depends on how much fish one eats and the extent to which radiation pollution is increasing.

The National Radiological Protection Board stated that "A whole lot of things can cause leukaemia, including chemicals, and there is a big chemical industry in Lancashire". Tell that to the victims or their relatives. All the bosses worry about is keeping their factories running and raking in a lot of money. What does it matter to them whether they pollute the water with chemical waste or nuclear waste. They cannot "afford" to waste money on preventative methods and research. Ordinary working people will just have to lump it!

NUCLEAR SAFETY CRUCIAL

Of all industries, safety in the production of nuclear power is even more crucial. The accident at Harrisburg, Three Mile Island, USA, brought this nuclear power station to a critical state. Even with the power of the working class and socialist relations of production, nuclear power production must be fool-proof technically and 100% safe. The consequences of accidents causing a nuclear explosion are too far-reaching. Britain's earthquake over Christmas 1979, the vibration from which were felt for 100s of miles is a reminder of the hazards facing the production of nuclear power. The British Government's decision to allow the development of 10 of the less safe water-cooled reactors is a backward step and must be firmly opposed.

Contributed.



Steel workers demonstrate their disgust at the latest pay offer, here, picketing at Aldwarke, near Rotherham.

the working class for a bitter struggle, Murray for example is echoing the bosses' cries regarding the consequences of the strike. In a completely defensive way he says:

"If there is a stoppage it would be easy but totally misleading to blame it on the unions."

This is nonsense! The glove has been thrown down again and it must be picked up in the spirit of the railwaymen and drivers who will black imported and BSC steel. Dockers of the TGWU (Transport and General Workers' Union) have also refused to handle steel. The London-based International Transport Workers' Federation has instructed its world-wide affiliates to ban all movements of steel in Britain. United workers' struggle will force a climb down by the Government and it will be a national class struggle to make the bosses pay for their crisis.

**DOWN WITH TUC FAINT-HEARTEDNESS!
TOTAL BACKING FOR THE STEEL WORKERS!**

DPP DROPS JIMMY KELLY CASE

In complete disregard of the facts of the case, the Director of Public Prosecutions has decided that the Merseyside Police have no case to answer in connection with the death of Jimmy Kelly. No police officer will be charged with the murder of Jimmy Kelly whilst in police custody. The police claim that Kelly was found on a piece of wasteground in Huyton, Liverpool. Thus putting the blame for his death on neighbouring thugs. But this flimsy story conflicts with the evidence of eye-witnesses in a nearby block of flats who saw the arrest of Jimmy Kelly. What is more despite the fact that Kelly's jaw was broken in two places and his body bruised in 32 places, the Home Office pathologist brought in by the police quickly reported "no evidence of a beating".

After the DPP's announcement, members of Jimmy Kelly's family were shattered by the news, Mrs Lilly Shaw, Jimmy Kelly's sister said: "I did not think a decision like this was possible". Speaking for the Jimmy Kelly Action Committee Mr Banks said: "We have been keeping a low profile while the Director was making up his mind, but now we will be renewing our campaign for a full independent enquiry".

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

■ THE DEATH RATE IN OXFORDSHIRE IS 20% BELOW THE average in this country, the Office of Health Economics says in a report published towards the end of last year. "Lancashire appears to be the place to avoid", wrote the *Daily Telegraph*, "since the chance of living to a ripe old age there is lower than in the rest of the country". The death rate in the North West of England is 10% above the national average, and although the *Telegraph* professes to be at a loss to explain the differences, it thinks it might have something to do with "white collar workers having a better chance of living longer than manual workers".

■ HEALTH AND SAFETY STATISTICS FOR THE FIRST quarter of 1979 are a reminder of the great numbers of workers killed and maimed every day. In Mining and Quarrying 12,389 accidents were reported, of which 28 were fatal; Metal Manufacture - 5,485 reported, 14 fatal; in Construction - 7,540 reported, 26 fatal; and so on. One more example, by way of contrast - in insurance, banking, finance and business services 10 accidents were reported, of which none were fatal.

■ STAFF AND PATIENTS AT ST. BENEDICT'S HOSPITAL, Tooting have been getting together recently to fight closure plans. The Merton, Sutton, and Wandsworth Area Health Authority is trying to cut £6 million off its £90 million budget this year, and St Benedict's is one of the sacrifices they plan to make. In response, nurses, porters and cleaners have united to prevent attempts to move the patients, and the patients are backing their action. Pickets, who have been successfully persuading ambulancemen not to move patients, have been keeping warm, thanks to coal provided by two geriatric patients. Attempts by the state to destroy our Health Service, which has taken years to build up, will not succeed against united opposition like this.

■ THE VEIL OF SECRECY AND DECEIT HAS MOMENTARILY been torn aside and exposed British violation of the Geneva Convention on Chemical and Biological Warfare and the callous hypocrisy of the capitalists. In 1957, a Ministry of Defence experiment involved the chemical Zinc Cadmium Sulphide being sprayed by aircraft along the coast from Isle of Wight to Dover, and up the east coast to Newcastle. Cadmium produces very painful bone malformation.

The British "experiment" was inspired by American tests of 1950, when the US army sprayed 117 square miles of San Francisco (population 800,000) with a pneumonia causing bacteria called *Serratia Marsecens*. Within months, 11 people caught the disease and a 76 year old pipe fitter died.

■ DEPO-PROVERA IS A LONG TERM CONTRACEPTIVE FOR women. It is given as an injection that lasts 3 months. In the United States it is banned because when administered in large doses to dogs and monkeys it caused cancers of the womb and breast.

The stated side-effects of Depo-Provera are irregular bleeding, weight gain and loss of periods. Other known side-effects are depression abnormal hair growth and the unknown, long term side effects have still to be seen. About 1,000,000 women in 70 countries use Depo-Provera. Mostly these are in Third World countries. It has been used as part of the programme of "population control" that the US imposed on the Third World countries on the basis that population control would prevent future revolutions. This policy was one of genocide for those peoples. For instance, in Puerto Rico, 1/3 of women are sterilized. Half of these women are under 30.

At the moment the use of Depo-Provera in Britain is restricted. But anyone could predict the women it is used on - black, non-English speaking and working class women.

IRELAND BLEEDS UNDER OCCUPATION



200 protestors wearing blankets in sympathy with H-block prisoners, march across County Tyrone in September, 1978. 15,000 marched in total

The people of northern Ireland face another year of occupation by a foreign army. Military rule has brought its usual spate of deaths, injuries and repression. On January 1st, British troops shot at two teenagers who crossed a check-point in a stolen car. Doreen McGuinness, aged 16, was killed, and the 17 year old boy with her sustained serious injuries.

Sean Cairns, aged 20, was shot dead in his home in west Belfast, and his 60 year old father was wounded. Police say neither was connected with any paramilitary organisation. We will probably never know whether the murder was committed by Loyalist gangs or by the British army - for Sean and his family it doesn't matter now.

On the same day, British soldiers shot dead two of their own colleagues by mistake - Private Gerald Hardy, 18, and Lieutenant Simon Bates, 23. In a war, soldiers expect to get killed. But this should bring home sharply to British soldiers that they are just being used as cannon-fodder by the British ruling class. Even more British people will realise the need to get the troops out of Ireland, even if they do not yet see that British imperialism has no right to be there.

Since 1969, 327 British soldiers have died for nothing in Ireland. More terrible is the fact that 1,438 civilians have been killed. In addition, there are the dawn raids on people's homes, torture and brutality in detention, kangaroo trials without jury or public observation.

Prisoners in the Maze prison have been conducting a campaign for political prisoner status. This is a just struggle, because they are victims of a foreign military regime, jailed for taking part in a struggle for national independence. On January 1st, a peaceful march of 3,000 relatives and supporters was organised to oppose the inhuman conditions in the Maze prison's H-block, and to demand political prisoner status. The authorities stopped the march after 3 miles, although required notice for a 10 mile route had been given.

PROTESTANTS ARE PART OF THE IRISH NATION

Despite all their talk about "political initiatives", no British Government, Tory or Labour, intends to find a solution to the Irish question. This is because they refuse to recognise that Ireland is

one nation, with the right of any nation to unity and freedom from foreign domination.

The Protestant people in the north are part of the Irish nation. Of course many Protestant workers have higher standards of living and less unemployment than Catholics. They have benefited from the discrimination which is part of the imperialist divide-and-rule policy. This means some are willing to accept the ravings of Ian Paisley that they are British and not Irish.

Of course the Protestants in the north do not want to live under an Irish state tied up to the Catholic religion. It is not democratic for the Church to control people's lives, education, even jobs, or to exclude rights to divorce, birth-control and abortion by medieval dictates from Rome.

But only the national struggle of the Irish people can change these things. And only the national struggle can stop companies from Britain, the US, Germany, Japan, etc., sucking out vast profits from Ireland. That struggle requires the participation of the Protestant working people.

British imperialism has continued to blind the Protestants to their real interests. But only the united struggle of the Irish people can put an end to the horrors caused by British military occupation, the exploitation of Ireland by imperialists and the division of Ireland.

Contributed.

REVOLUTION THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE RCLB.

Building the revolutionary Communist Party to lead the working class is the central task for all genuine Marxist-Leninists in Britain today.

Revolution, the theoretical journal of the RCLB has been founded to be a sharp weapon in the struggle to build that Party.

Revolution, Volume 4, Number 2 will be coming soon.

It includes articles on:

- * Against ACW's hopeless dogmatism
- * New Long March - a continuation of Mao's revolutionary line.

* Statement from Democratic Kampuchea

* Anniversary of Comrade Stalin's birthday

* Statement from Chairman of Polish CP

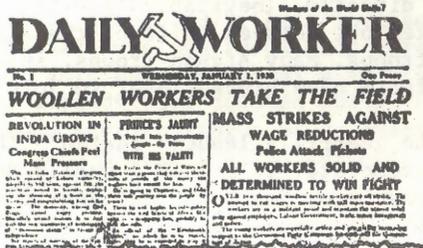
Price 35p. Back issues available from New Era Books

'DAILY WORKER' FOUNDED 50 YEARS AGO

The first edition for 1930 of the *Morning Star*, the daily rag of the revisionist Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), carried a spread commemorating the founding of the *Daily Worker* on January 1st, 1930. The spread tried to claim that the *Morning Star* continues the revolutionary traditions of the *Daily Worker* 50 years on. But even the headline revealed that the *Morning Star* is not a patch on the *Daily Worker* of 50 years ago. The headline read "Our birthday challenge to Thatcher's wreckers". Presumably if Margaret Thatcher was, in the opinion of the *Morning Star*, doing a good job of heading the British capitalist economy all would be well. This obvious meaning of calling Thatcher a "wrecker" loses the "C"PGB policy-makers no sleep at all, because it fits in with their treacherous line that the bourgeois state can be peacefully transformed into one serving the working class. Change Thatcher for, say, Benn and an era of socialism in Britain will be ushered in. This is not the revolutionary tradition of the *Daily Worker*! Its the same reformist garbage which the Labour Party has used to mislead workers for decades.

DAILY WORKER EXPOSED LABOUR TREACHERY

The first edition of the *Daily Worker* upheld class struggle and exposed Labour traitors. Its first headline read:



At the beginning of the main article the paper stated,

"The workers are in a militant mood and maintain the utmost solidarity against employers, Labour Government, trade union bureaucrats and police".

Can such clear opposition to the Labour Party and TUC bosses be seen in the *Morning Star* today. Never! Labour attacks on the working class are excused as mistakes rather than the systematic policy of a bourgeois party which has learned to hit the working class in ways the Tories could never succeed.

The early *Daily Worker* upheld proletarian internationalism. An article in the first edition headed "Revolution in India Grows" sided with the Indian masses against British imperialism.

Over the *Daily Worker* banner the slogan "Workers of the World Unite" was printed. In line with the "C"PGB desertion of proletarian internationalism this has been dropped in favour of a meaningless bourgeois jingle describing the *Morning Star* as "The one that's different".

TRIBUTE TO DAILY WORKER

The "C"PGB is not fit to pay tribute to the foundation of Britain's first working class daily because they do not uphold its revolutionary traditions. From the outset the paper cut a path as the revolutionary daily political organ of the then revolutionary CPGB through boycott and suppression by the capitalist class and state. Fleet Street howled with fury, branding the paper as interference in the internal affairs of Britain by Moscow. In response to the reporting of soldiers' bad living conditions, the capitalist press speculated on and demanded the arrest of the *Daily Worker* editor. Support for insurgent armed struggle against British imperialism in India was frantically described as "rank sedition". London wholesale newsagents boycotted the paper. But the determination of the CPGB's small but active

membership defied these difficulties.

The early CPGB of the 1920's, 30's and most of the 40's had many theoretical and political shortcomings. But in these days it upheld proletarian revolution and led the mass struggle of the working class in Britain. This was betrayed with the adoption of its programme of peacefully transforming capitalism through Parliamentary reforms. The Party's degeneration was accelerated with the revisionist betrayal of Khrushchev.

We are still struggling today to rebuild the revolutionary party of the working class and build on the traditions of the *Daily Worker*. This is the only genuine tribute to the papers' founding in 1930.

contributed.

Judge attacks jury verdicts

Following the acquittal by a jury in an Old Bailey trial of 4 anarchists on charges of conspiracy to rob and use of firearms, Judge Alan King Hamilton made an unprecedented attack on their verdict. The verdict of not guilty was arrived at despite attempts to rig the jury by running their names through the police computer. The row over jury vetting which preceded this trial revealed that members of the public can find themselves black-listed on the police computer for registering complaints against the police or being related to known political activists. A television debate on jury vetting exposed the class interests of this practice when a representative of the state prosecution declared that fascists on juries is not a problem. It was only aimed at what he chose to call anarchists, revolutionaries or enemies of the state.

Judge Hamilton said that the "evidence" against the anarchists "could not confuse a child". Commenting on this a freed defendant, Ronan Bennett said that the remark was "patronising" and "insulting to the jury". The evidence which "could not confuse a child" is not known to us. Judge Hamilton seems to rely totally on the 4 anarchists' association with Stewart Carr, the fifth defendant. Carr pleaded guilty to conspiracy to rob at the beginning of the three month trial and made a long confession to the police. This confession was not admissible as evidence during the trial. Carr had a long criminal record of 65 offences. But despite this, the judge was lenient on him giving him only 9 years. He saved his biggest tongue lashing for the jury's acquittal of the four anarchists, who maintained that they were innocent of the charges throughout the trial.

For the judge it seems that the four anarchists one time association with Carr and his implication of them in his confession is enough to prove guilt. But Carr is just the kind of person the police and special branch have used as provocateurs in the Irish Republic and Britain to frame republicans on charges of bank robbery. This practice was exposed in the Dublin trial of the Littlejohn brothers who turned out to be British police agents. And the frame up of Pat O'Brien by Kenneth Lennon in 1974.

The state by picking on anarchists who have very little support among the masses hopes to quietly get away with creating precedents for trampling on basic legal and democratic rights. No matter what we think of the individualist fanaticism of some anarchists, we cannot act neutral in the face of blatant state attacks on our rights.

AFGHANISTAN INVADED

On the night of December 27th 1979, the Soviet social imperialists took another major step in the their expansionist drive.

Soviet troops already in Afghanistan occupied the streets of the capital, Kabul, while thousands of troops accompanied by heavy armour arrived in wave after wave of transport planes at Kabul airport. Soviet troops are still deployed on street corners throughout the city. And all roadblocks are manned by Soviet, not Afghan troops.

By morning the Afghanistan President, Amin, had been executed along with much of his family. Reports from Afghanistan have said that he and six of his daughters were shot by a Russian firing squad, while his wife, brother and nephew were killed shortly afterwards.

BRINGING IN A NEW PUPPET

Babrak Karmal, who was in exile in eastern Europe, proclaimed himself the new President. It was not until January 2nd however that Radio Kabul even claimed itself that Karmal had been seen in public in Afghanistan - even then it was not confirmed by any other source. In fact it is increasingly clear that Karmal was nowhere near Afghanistan at the time of the coup. This is confirmed by the fact that his proclamation as President was first broadcast by radio from Soviet territory and only later relayed by Radio Kabul and his first public appearance was 7 days after the coup.

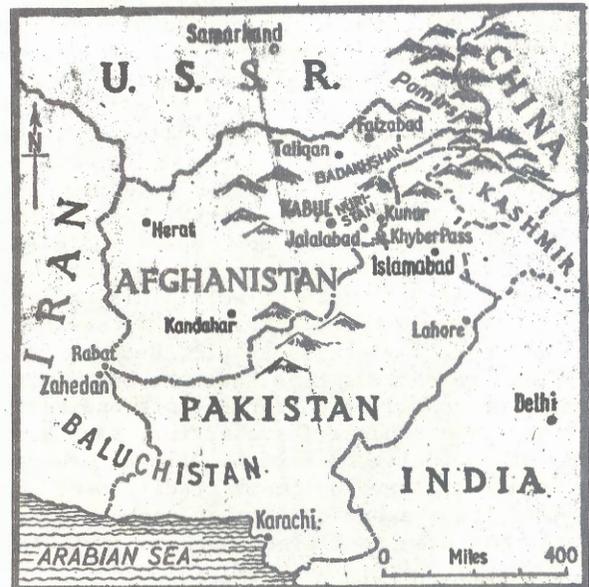
NICE WORDS COVER INVASION

Karmal denounced Amin as a US agent, a fascist and a mass murderer, and stated that he wanted a compromise with the moslem guerrillas, that he would respect religious beliefs, that he wanted "democracy" and that socialism was not yet on the agenda. While Karmal hypocritically spouted about "democracy", "conciliation", "peace" and "independence", the Soviet troops and tanks pushed on. Thousands more drove across the north east border along the main route to Kabul. Many thousands more swept over the north west border, through Herat to the south west of Afghanistan, and from there along the Pakistan border. By January 3rd, it was estimated that the Soviet occupying force was between 50,000 and 100,000 strong. Troops armed with multi-barrel "organ pipe" rocket launchers and backed by tanks and air support moved into the liberated zones occupied by moslem guerrillas, who had been fighting for independence for nearly two years. Fighting between the rebels and Soviet forces was reported as particularly intense in Badakhshan, Nirstan and Paktia Provinces.

WHERE IS THE AFGHAN ARMY?

But what had happened to the Afghanistan army itself? For nearly two years the Afghan army, backed by Soviet "advisors" and equipped with Soviet weapons, had been fighting in a vicious war against the rebels. The moslem independence fighters had liberated many mountainous regions. The army was demoralised. Many soldiers, dissatisfied with growing Soviet control during the regimes of President Tarakki and President Amin, had deserted to join the guerrillas. Now suddenly the Afghan army was nowhere in sight. The Soviet troops were doing all the fighting.

Where is the army? It is confined to barracks. The Soviet Union has backed one faction of the ruling alliance to force Afghanistan down into the status of an absolute colony. It does not even trust those it has previously supported, who were



themselves pro-Soviet! The Soviet Union has now attacked both the independence fighters and the previous pro-Soviet Government in order to rule Afghanistan directly. Inevitably fighting has already broken out between units of the Afghan army and Soviet troops. Many Afghan troops, including a complete brigade have crossed over to join the rebels.

One of the guerrilla leaders stated: "The takeover is now complete. It is now a wholly Russian war. The Afghan army has been confined to barracks and disarmed". The rebels have also predicted that the Soviet imperialists will suffer the same fate as the British did last century.

As a symbol of the absolute nature of Soviet domination, it was reported on January 3rd that the Soviet Rouble was to become Afghanistan's official currency.



GREAT JAMAICAN COMMUNIST PATRIOT DIES

On the 28th of November 1979, Comrade Milo Miles, a leading member of the Youth Forces for National Liberation of Jamaica, and another comrade, Bernard Thomas, died. Their car collided with a train on the Linsted bypass in St Catherine, Jamaica, while they were travelling to meet members of the Rasta movement in the area in order to strengthen the unity of the revolutionary movement.

The death of these two revolutionary fighters is a great loss to the Jamaican people. In particular, Milo Miles had a strong grasp of scientific socialism and of the realities of the struggle in Jamaica, and had proved to be a strong leader. He will be sorely missed, but the selfless work he did in his lifetime will not be forgotten. His example will continue to inspire Jamaican revolutionaries and others who had the fortune to meet him.

From client state to colony

In April, 1978 Afghanistan was shaken by a coup led by officers from the Army and Airforce. President Douad, a friend of the Shah of Iran, was overthrown. He was no loss. The Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) came to power. It appeared that Afghanistan was advancing to greater independence and democracy. But it soon became clear that this was not the case. The PDP was riddled with factionalism and the dominant factions to different degrees were all pro-Soviet.

The head of the "Khalq" (masses) faction, Tarakki, was proclaimed President. His faction was joined by the "Parcham" (flag) faction headed by Karmal, who became Deputy Prime Minister. Amin, too, was a Government leader. The coup, itself, was backed by the Soviet Union, and soon Soviet personnel were in evidence as "advisors" in government departments and in the military forces. Trade deals were signed and arms supplied. Within a year a treaty of "friendship" and "co-operation" was signed between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union.

But resistance to the new controllers of Afghanistan also grew. As Afghanistan became yet another client state of the Soviet Union, guerrilla fighting spread throughout the country. The factional infighting within the PDP grew more and more intense. In September 1979, Amin launched a second coup and Tarakki was overthrown and murdered. A few weeks later Amin charged Karmal with high treason. Karmal had already been demoted during the factional struggles and sent to Prague as an ambassador. So he stayed in Czechoslovakia as an exile.

GROWING STRUGGLE

In Afghanistan the guerrilla fighting got more intense. The social imperialists sent in more "advisors" and more aid, and attached more strings. But the Afghanistan army grew more demoralised and suffered more desertions and lost more territory. Over 100 Soviet "advisors" were themselves killed in the fighting. Even in Kabul, army units rebelled and were forcibly put down by Soviet forces, who were now allowed to establish garrisons within Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan got worse and worse - from the Soviet point of view - and Afghanistan occupies a vitally important position in Soviet expansionist strategy.

YET ANOTHER COUP

In December the social imperialists played their last card. Afghanistan had to be secured, and it needed more than neo-colonial domination to do it. Only outright invasion, a total takeover and the suppression by massive military force of the rebels could create a "stable" Afghanistan. And in Karmal, the most slavish Soviet puppet, they had a man who was prepared to front as President. On December 27th the third coup was achieved through an all-out Soviet invasion.

SOVIET AIMS

That is the history of Soviet aggression against Afghanistan. The reasons for it are part of Soviet global strategy. It extends the Soviet push towards gaining a warm-water port in the Arabian Sea. This can be gained by one more step after Afghanistan. Already the Soviet Union is seizing on national grievances of the Baluchistan people in Iran and Pakistan. It is fanning the flames, helping to create a secessionist movement, and will support a struggle to divide up Iran and Pakistan, to set up an "independent" Baluchistan state. In reality such a state would be as independent as Afghanistan is

today, but the Soviet Union will have access to the Arabian Sea.

Its domination of Afghanistan also increases the Soviet expansionist threat to Iran and Pakistan as a whole.

These are the real reasons for the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, but what do they claim?

SOVIET LIES

The excuses given by the Soviet Union and their puppet Karmal are totally self-contradictory lies.

1. They claim that the Soviet Union (acting under the "friendship" treaty) was protecting Afghanistan from foreign aggression. Who from? They don't say.
2. They claim that the moslem rebels are backed by the CIA. Are these the foreign aggressors? It is probably true that there are some pro-US elements, and even that the CIA would help even those who don't like the USA purely to cause problems for the USSR. But are the Islamic revolutionaries really a US force? What about Iran? Is it pro-USA? Of course not.
3. They claim that Amin, who fought the moslem rebels, was a US agent! They've got to be joking.
4. The Soviet imperialists claim they were "invited" by the leaders of Afghanistan. Who by? They don't say. By Amin? They killed him. By Karmal? He wasn't President till after the coup! He wasn't even in Afghanistan.
5. They say Amin was a murderer. Yes he was. He was their hatchetman.
6. They claim the Soviet Union was not involved anyway! They must think we are idiots.

Despite all the lies the fact remains that following the Soviet-backed Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea last Christmas, the Soviet Union has invaded Afghanistan this Christmas. In both cases a huge smoke-screen of lies and a mass of red herrings have been put forward to hide the fact that the Soviet Union is trampling underfoot the right of all peoples to determine their own future and live in independent countries free from foreign domination and aggression.

NEW STAGE IN SOVIET AGGRESSION

The social imperialist invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was to quell a national liberation struggle in its own sphere of influence. Soviet domination over Angola, Ethiopia, Yemen and Kampuchea were carried out by proxy, using Vietnamese and Cuban puppet forces. The brutal direct invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet forces marks a new turn in Russia's aggressive war policies. The social imperialists are becoming more open and confident and are taking more risks to secure their global ambitions.

As we go into a new decade the Soviet Union has shown us what to expect - increased momentum in the Soviet expansionist drive as it sets out to challenge the US for world domination. The response of the people of the world must be increased unity against superpower hegemonism and particularly against Soviet aggression.

RCLB LONDON PUBLIC MEETINGS	
January 11th	BRITISH IMPERIALISM. THE SUPERPOWERS & THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE.
February 8th	BRITISH CAPITALISM IN CRISIS.
Place: THE ROEBUCK PUB. TOTTENHAM COURT RD. LONDON W.1 Time: 7.30pm Day: Fridays	

CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR PATRIOTIC FRONT

"Rhodesian forces who clashed with a ZANLA guerrilla group 25 miles south of Umtali on Saturday night, killing two, injuring several others and capturing 10, were acting under the Governor's authority, Mr Fenn, (the Governor's spokesman) said. He declined to answer persistent questions as to whether the Governor had authorised the Rhodesian forces' action before or after the incident took place".

This bland report in the *Daily Telegraph* on 31st December reveals a number of significant points.

If the Governor is "authorising" military actions by the racist troops after they do them, as he clearly is from the refusal to answer the question, then he is clearly acting as a spokesman for the racist forces. Secondly the ceasefire agreement says that both the racist forces and the Patriotic Front guerrillas will be confined to assembly areas and barracks. Yet the Governor, Lord Soames, accepts the military activity of racist troops, while criticising the slowness of the guerrilla forces to assemble. More than that he is using racist troops as patrols to monitor the ceasefire, despite the agreement that both forces are to be treated equally.

Finally the use of racist troops by the Governor shows that the Patriotic Front were dead right when

they argued for a bigger external force to monitor the ceasefire. They pointed out in advance that the Governor would use the racist forces this way.

At the same time Lord Soames refused to extend the time limit for the guerrillas to reach their assembly points, despite the fact that he knows that it takes time for the world to get round guerrilla forces.

Events are showing that the British Government is by no means an impartial force. It views the racists as the "official forces". It is concerned only with protecting British imperialist interests. The Patriotic Front has waged a people's war for years and forced the imperialists and the racists to the negotiating table. They won a number of concessions from the imperialists and signed an agreement knowing well that it still did not fully recognise the national and democratic rights of the Zimbabwean people, because it gives a basis for struggle on a new front, whilst still keeping their forces intact in case of betrayal.

Our task must be to support ZANU and the Patriotic Front. We must demand that the British imperialists stick to the agreement they signed, and stop their blatant support for the racist forces.

Contributed.

RCL AND CWM TO UNITE CONT. FROM FRONT PAGE

A BIG STEP INTO THE 1980's

Already the RCL and the CWM have learnt a great deal from each other through the discussions, and both have improved their work. Now we are about to take a big step forward. We have just entered a new decade, this is a great start. The struggle to rebuild the party of the working class is advancing and will continue to advance.

UNIFICATION BETWEEN THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN AND THE COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT.

The Revolutionary Communist League of Britain and the Communist Workers' Movement have agreed to unite into a single democratic centralist organisation.

For more than two years the RCLB and the CWM have sought to unite. The two organisations have struggled to deepen our unity on major questions of the class struggle nationally and internationally. Over this period we have strengthened our common language, and in the course of overcoming the major differences on programmatic questions we have been able to increase our co-operation in party-building and other revolutionary work.

There are now no longer any basic differences of principle dividing the RCLB and the CWM. Accordingly from the 1st January 1980, our two organisations will begin the process of integrating their work at every level. Before summer a unity conference will be held formally uniting the two organisations and establishing a provisional Central Committee. The unity conference will be followed after a period of a few months by a Congress consolidating the ideological, political and organisational unity and adopting a revised programmatic document.

The unity of the RCLB and the CWM has been won through comradely and patient struggle. Our strong desire for unity is being transformed into a real and deep unity based on integrating Marxism-

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Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the actual practice of the British revolution. The united organisation will be based on uniting the different strengths of the RCL and the CWM, and on helping to overcome each other's weaknesses. It will be a qualitative step forward in the establishment of a single leading centre for the rebuilding of a revolutionary Communist Party in Britain.

The British working class needs its own party. The revisionists destroyed the Communist Party of Britain many years ago. The rebuilding of our party will be the central task of the united organisation. That party must be built through rallying the most advanced workers in the course of the mass struggle. The united organisation will also continue to struggle to unite other Marxist-Leninists.

The new decade brings with it a new situation in the movement in Britain. The 1980's will see a revolutionary party of the working class established in Britain once again.

The Central Committee of the
Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

The National Committee of the
Communist Workers' Movement.

(Public statement, 1st January 1980)

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