

# CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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## AFTER HADFIELD PICKET: FURTHER ATTACKS ON RIGHT TO STRIKE

While claiming to preserve the right to strike and picket, the Government of Tory servants of capitalism are bringing in new laws which completely take the guts out of these basic workers' rights.

Already the so-called Employment Bill is in an advanced stage of becoming law by this summer. The Bill proposes to restrict "lawful" picketing to workers own places of work. Solidarity pickets would be banned and it would even be illegal to picket the head office of the company unless you worked in the building. Legal immunities from being sued in court for breach of contract will be withdrawn. Workers making a strike call or taking part in picketing deemed to be "unlawful" will face legal action resulting in injunctions and damages. Failure to comply with the court's ruling means imprisonment for contempt of court.

Other proposals in the Employment Bill undermine workers' rights to a closed shop, restrict maternity rights for women and seek to impose secret ballots. The Bill is far-reaching in its attacks on basic trade union and democratic rights. It builds on legislation brought in by the Labour Government, in 1974 and 1976. Legislation which began to narrow down the rights won by hard struggle at the beginning of this century which was incorporated into the Trades Dispute Act of 1906.

But even the harsh new laws in the Employment Bill are not satisfying the Tories and the bosses they serve.

### NEW ROW

Following the victory of the steel workers' and miners' mass picket at the Hadfield private steel company, the Government rushed out a new "working paper". Denning's ruling that the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) were acting 'illegally' in extending the steel strike to the private sector had been overruled by the House of Lords. The row that blew up in the corridors of the bastion of bourgeois power on this matter had exposed that the workers were acting legally in blacking and picketing the private steel companies provided this was just to be in furtherance of a trades dispute.' So the new 'working paper' was brought out to plug this hole in the Government's anti-worker laws. In future, in order for workers to claim immunity under this clause of the 1974 and 1976 Acts they must prove to the bosses' courts that blacking or "secondary" picketing is:

1. Reasonably capable of furthering the trade dispute in question.
2. Taken in pursuit of that trade dispute and not for some other reason.

This is the language of bourgeois law and what nonsense it makes too. Workers should picture in their minds trade unionists pleading to a judge that blacking or picketing will help win their

struggle by bringing the bosses to their knees. A fat lot of notice a bourgeois judge will take of that.

### BOURGEOIS LAW MASKS BOSSES' DICTATORSHIP

"Let there be no illusion that the immunity provided under the civil law enables pickets to break the criminal law".

This was the angry warning given by the Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, QC, after the mass picket forced the closure of Hadfields. Havers expresses the anger of the ruling class demanding that they be masters in their own house. He is waving the big stick of state-force against effective picketing. But not, of course, in pursuance of the profit interests of the private and BSC steel bosses. Nothing so base enters into the considerations of the likes of Havers, Thatcher, Prior and their opposite numbers on the Labour benches. No. They take up the cause of people faced with "intimidation from mass picketing." Such hypocrisy is the stock in trade of the bourgeoisie and its lackey politicians bent of using splits in the working class to get its way.

However, it is clear that economic struggle alone cannot unite the workers against the vicious Tory laws. Political struggle is needed to preserve, defend and extend what are basic democratic rights. The steelworkers' militant struggle has done a great deal to cause splits in the Government on the one hand, and between BSC and private steel bosses on the other. If the momentum of this struggle is to be maintained it must be widened out into political demonstrations against anti-worker laws.



Imperial Typewriter's strike, 1974

## CELEBRATE INTER- NATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY INSIDE

# Liverpool workers and students march

500 Merseysiders set out to march through Liverpool on Monday 18th February to demonstrate against the cuts and rising unemployment. By the time we reached Pier Head the numbers had swollen to over 1,000. A large contingent of Meccano workers, mainly women, led the demonstration and injected some spirit into it with their militant slogans demanding to keep the work on Merseyside, and demanding official union backing.

Banners from the National Union of Seamen, the Fire Brigades Union, the Ford Halewood TGWU branch and Central College were flown.

Inevitably on Merseyside, where many areas have 1 in 3 people out of work, unemployment became the main concern.

The biggest applause at the end of the march was for an AUEW shop steward from the Massey Ferguson plant in Knowsley, which the company is intending to close down with the loss of 550 jobs. He pointed out that the Kilmarnock plant which used to employ 2,500 workers closed down despite protest marches, lobbying MPs and petitions. The lesson he said was the need to wage a "physical struggle", and explained: "We believe that we've got to fight at the site. Nothing leaves the factory". He left no doubt that the refusal to let the goods out would develop into an occupation, and said that they were working to gain the support of other workers throughout the combine.

Most of the other speakers spent their time not



talking about the actual issues and the need to build a mass movement, but calling on people to bring back a Labour Government. In particular the Labour Party representative, Terry Harrison, called on people to vote Labour in the coming council elections and claimed that Labour would not implement the cuts. But many of us were left with a bad taste in our mouths, because we could remember that during the Heath Government similar speeches were made about not implementing the "Fair Rent Act" in order to get votes. We haven't forgotten that the first act the new Labour council did was to put the Fair Rent Act into operation.

Liverpool, *Class Struggle* Correspondent.

## Haringey opposition to cuts

On February 16th about 300 people marched to Duckett's Common from 4 different starting points in the London borough of Haringey. Called by the Haringey Campaign Against the Cuts, the rally coincided with the Labour-controlled council's discussion on which cuts they will implement.

MPs, Norman Atkinson and Reg Race, gave very unconvincing speeches attacking Tory Government policy. Alan Fisher, General Secretary of NUPE, made the most revealing, if unintentional, comment of the day when he reminded the audience that his union had fought cuts under the Labour Government as well. But all the speakers called for the return of a radical Labour Government to implement "alternative policies". Well we all remember what that means - the same old wine in different bottles.

For workers in NUPE, Haringey's cuts are already biting deep into their wages. The school meals service has been so drastically reduced that the Authority have refused to put kitchen staff on a bonus system because they are already working at

way over the bonus speed. Conditions in many kitchens do not even meet the requirements of Health and Safety legislation. The Area Health Authority have begun to close the casualty department at the Prince of Wales Hospital in Tottenham. When it closes, there will not be a single accident and emergency unit in the area. Ambulances will have to take cases to either the Whittington or North Middlesex Hospitals which are a long way away. The North Middlesex cannot cope with this extra pressure and is itself suffering from lack of funds. Recently parts of its geriatric block have been inspected and recommended for closure due to "appalling conditions and fire risk".

The latest Housing cuts in Haringey will mean a reduction in bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families, re-letting of empty properties without doing repairs and decoration before the new tenant moves in and restricting Housing Action Areas. Haringey Borough's Labour Council is continuing to seek ways of making further cuts.

Haringey, *Class Struggle* Correspondent.

From our  
postbag



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### NUCLEAR POWER

Dear Editor,

The article "Stop Nuclear Development Programme" in the January 10th issue of *Class Struggle* falls down on some important scientific questions. It is important to correct these as there is already too much ill-informed comment put out by the back-to-naturalists who predominate in the anti-nuclear movement. Such comment serves to obscure the very real dangers with which nuclear fission power generation faces the workers and all other people of

the capitalist countries.

The gravest error in the article is the sentence "The consequences of accidents causing a nuclear explosion are too far reaching". This is simple scare mongering. The processes involved in a nuclear bomb and a nuclear reactor are different due to the different concentrations of fissionable material and other conditions needed for quite different rates of energy release. It requires a reactor to produce the raw materials to be refined to build a bomb but that does not make the reactor itself a potential bomb! Reactor fuel is just far too impure to make a bomb and fail-safe devices in all reactors exist to ensure the level of fissionable material gets nowhere near high enough for uncontrolled fission i.e. bomb. The explosion risk at

Harrisburg was not nuclear but chemical in nature. A build up of hydrogen gas produced a large bubble which, if it had exploded, would have showered the surrounding area with highly radio-active fission products from the reactor core. Therein lies the horrific callousness of the bourgeoisie's quest for maximum profit.

A secondary error in the article was the call for 100% safety in nuclear power. This is sheer idealism. No form of power generation is or can be 100% safe. As it is, nuclear power has the best record of safety of all the various means of power generation in operation. The main problem is that in the pursuit of profits the bourgeoisie plan to make it less safe by risking a "Harrisburg" and that nuclear fission is inherently "dirty"; it produces long term radioactive waste which is highly lethal and for which no satisfactory solution has been found. These two points alone are enough to necessitate a call to "Stop the nuclear development programme" but such a call must be based on science, not on subjective emotions.

A good start for such an approach is *Nuclear Power* by W.C.Patterson - available from New Era Books.

BH

## VIETNAM CHEMICALS

Dear Editor,

I watched with disgust the recent news programme *World in Action* reporting on the result of the American Government's spraying programme during the Vietnam war using agent Orange which contains dioxin. The after effects suffered by the Vietnamese people are immense.

In one particular part of Vietnam the rate of miscarriages amongst pregnant women was very high. There are birth defects such as one child being born without eyes and Vietnamese soldiers contracting liver cancer. The land and sea is said to be poisoned for about 150 years. Where there was once forest, now there is only barren land.

The American soldiers did not escape either. Vietnam veterans have put in a claim for treatment and compensation. Not only for themselves, but their children too who have been born with defects such as having no arms like in the Thalidomide disaster.

The list is too long to put all in a letter to your paper. But what prompted me to write is the lengths to which governments such as the US Government will go to protect what is not their own. They moralise that they were trying to stem the tide of communism. For all "free" nations. What hypocrisy!

The truth is that they were only protecting their own vested interests and did not count the cost in human suffering or think about it.

LE

## HOSPITAL LAB WORKERS

Dear Editor,

16,000 hospital laboratory workers are in dispute over emergency duty payments. This work is voluntary. The last increase was in 1975. In December 1978, the four unions - ASTMS, NALGO, NUPE and COHSE - lodged a joint claim: an increase from £3.00/4.20 to £10 for the standby fee (available for 16 hours through the night) and from £4.55 to £7.50 for a "call out" (up to 2 hours actual work). This is for testing urgent specimens from patients.

Throughout 1979, management refused to negotiate. They tried to end the voluntary nature of the work.

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# A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

■ A THREATENED STRIKE BY 27,000 WELSH MINERS HAS been described by the Coal Board Chairman, Sir Derek Ezra, as being "totally against the coalfield and the people who worked in it."

The rundown of the Steel Industry could cause an estimated loss of 7,500 Welsh mining jobs. But Sir Derek can only make a mockery and shows utter contempt for the concerns of the mineworkers and their families when he scoffs, "I can understand the anxiety of mineworkers in South Wales who believe their jobs to be threatened, but the way out is certainly not to add to the coalfield's financial burden by taking industrial action."

Sir Derek would like the Welsh miners to turn the other cheek instead of "Making the bosses pay for their own crisis."

■ SENIOR POLICE OFFICERS IN BRITAIN WOULD LIKE Parliament to strengthen their powers to ban and control public gatherings. This would enable them to divert marches, disperse counter-demonstrations, and remove articles from demonstrators, such as poles from banners, which they say might be used as weapons. The calls were made to the Home Affairs Committee of the Commons, which is investigating deaths in police custody. Written evidence to back up their cause comes from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir David McNea and the Chief Police Officers. They also want the power to ban assemblies by direct appeal to the Home Secretary, instead of having to talk to their local councils first. If these powers are granted it will legalise police attacks on demonstrations.

■ HUMANA, THE US PRIVATE MEDICINE GROUP IS NEGOTIATING to take over St George's at Hyde Park Corner, London which ceases to be a National Health hospital in June. It already has the Wellington Hospital (with room charges ranging from £140 to £250 a day, excluding treatment) and with St George's ideally placed to receive company directors struck down by coronaries after heavy lunches in the Park Lane hotels, the US group visualise a favourable investment with a handsome dividend. Hospital staff who became suspicious that the hospital was about to go private have draped a gigantic banner across the facade of the hospital, proclaiming "Occupied - defend the NHS."

■ ANYONE TEMPTED TO BELIEVE THE CONSTANT propaganda that the country is bankrupt and there is no money for anyone or anything - read on! The Royal Yacht *Britannia*'s current repair programme is to cost £5 million. The yacht has spent nearly one-fifth of her life being refitted and is used by the Royal Family for only a few weeks each year. This is the fourth such overhaul since 1970 and in addition the annual running costs are £2 million. The yacht is financed from the Defence Budget and has a helicopter landing deck, a swimming pool, a garage for two limousines, a cinema and sumptuous apartments. Nothing so mundane as package tours to Majorca for the Royal Family.

■ A 13 YEAR OLD SIKH BOY WAS REFUSED SCHOOLING because his religion requires him to wear a turban. At the County Court in Birmingham the boy's father is suing Park Grove private school for rejecting his son unless he cut his hair and discarded his turban: both of which are forbidden by his faith. This sort of discrimination against minority groups here is widespread: commenting on this case the Secretary of the Independent Schools Association said he thought 70% of private schools would do likewise. We support all fight-backs against such discrimination. A similar case has just been successfully fought in Manchester where an 18 year old Pakistani, Farhath Malik, won a case against British Home Stores which refused her a job because she wore trousers for religious reasons.

# CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WORKING

International Working Women's Day is not celebrated as a gesture to the struggles of working class and oppressed women throughout the world. It is celebrated to highlight the struggle for women's emancipation as a powerful component of the proletarian (working class) socialist revolution. The ruling class seeks to keep women isolated in the home and worrying about petty things. Thus dulling class consciousness of millions of women and weakening the working class. Divisions between men and women are fostered at the factories by the bosses and the trade union opportunists. Women's wages are regarded as pin-money to supplement the man's income. All such things hold the working class back. The importance of women taking a part in class struggle, not behind the men, but alongside men, applies not just to women but the whole working class.

The whole range of issues which increase the misery of men under capitalism hit women harder, and women have their own particular demands which need the backing of all workers - men and women.

## JOBS

Unemployment stands at 1½ million. But this figure doesn't reflect the true level of unemployment, particularly as it relates to women. Women who are made redundant are politically, invisible. They do not swell the ranks of the unemployed. Statistically they become housewives. Of the women who are actively seeking work, three quarters are not registered as unemployed. As many as 80% of the women who lose their jobs get neither dole nor social-security.

## PAY

The bourgeois press would have us believe that women's wages are used for the luxuries of life, colour telly, holidays abroad, flash motorcars etc. In reality a woman's hard-earned wages are more likely to go on food, clothes and heating bills.

It is a fact that women's wages have helped to increase living standards since the war. But these improvements are fast fading away at the present time of economic crisis.

The Equal Pay Act has not changed the fact that women workers earn less than the national average. For men and women doing the same job there is equal pay in many factories. Although the bosses have found ways round paying women the same as men by re-classifying the jobs. But women still find themselves having to take jobs in the low pay or badly organised industries ie the food industry, rag-trade, homeworking.

## HEALTH

In the field of struggle against cuts in the NHS, nurses and hospital ancillary workers have played a leading role. In December last year, nurses, porters and cleaners began picketing St. Benedicts Hospital in Tooting. Patients backed their picket and 2 geriatric patients brought coal for their fire. Ambulances arriving to ferry 155 geriatric patients to other hospitals were turned away. The Area Health Health Authority want to close the hospital by June this year.

The militant struggle of nurses at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson women's hospital against closure won support throughout the trade unions.

In May last year workers in Hemel Hempstead left



What says women have no say in Iran!

## WOMEN IN THE IRANIAN

Workers' Notebook in *Class Struggle* volume 4, number 2 printed a short article exposing the hypocrisy of the *Sun* newspaper in calling the Ayatollah Khomeini backward about women. The point about the *Sun* did not really go far enough. Both the British press, and the US and Soviet press have tried to use the question of women to attack the revolution in Iran.

The events around March 8th, International Working Women's Day, in Iran last year show clearly how Iranian women see their freedom. Three or four days beforehand Khomeini had given a speech solely on the question of women to an assembly of women in Qom. He thanked them for taking such a great part in the revolution; he reminded them that they have equal rights with their brothers and should benefit from that; finally he called on them to continue the revolution to the end, to build a new society.

One or two days later in a speech to the Government he said, "Also in the ministries of the Islamic Republic, women should obey the Islamic *hajib* (the Islamic clothing). This was one sentence in a four hour speech.

*Khayan*, a Soviet influenced newspaper, made this one sentence their main front page story.

On March 8th, all the women's organisations were mobilised to march. 15,000 took to the streets at the start. Slogans attacking the Ayatollah and Government were mainly shouted by the "Organisation for the awakening of women", formed by the Trotskyite Iranian Socialist Workers Party.

# IG WOMEN'S DAY

## March 8th celebrated for over 100 years

their factories and took part in a successful demonstration of about 10,000 men and women demanding the building of a new hospital.

### DAY CARE AND MATERNITY

The first thing to get the chop in the Government's education cuts was nursery education. Demonstrations were held throughout Britain against these measures by men and women. Such attacks on day care have the effect of stultifying the development of infants and forcing women back into the home. Nursery child-care gives the opportunity to women to work. But even then there are still serious restrictions. Taking the child to the nursery and picking him or her up means that women can usually only work part-time. A far better system for women is the availability of creches and kindergartens at the place of work. This is a demand which should be taken up by men and women workers.

The Government's Employment Bill which attacks trade union rights, also contains measures which restrict maternity rights. Maternity rights in Britain are already the worst in the EEC. The Tory's legislation will make this worse by making it more difficult for all women to return to work after maternity leave and by taking "job-back" rights from some women altogether.

Women are involved in struggle on all these and other important questions of women's oppression. They are part of the workers' class struggle and involve the vital interests of all working class people. At the time of International Working Women's Day let men and women workers resolve to make 1980 a year for drawing even more women into struggle against capitalist rule and getting rid of all ideas which look down on or despise women's struggles.

## AN REVOLUTION

So many women left the march when this happened that there were only 3,000 left at the end.

On March 9th 100,000 women demonstrated in support of the Government. A group in the Association of Women Lawyers and Jurists presented the Ministry of Justice with a resolution calling for women not to have to wear the chador, nor be attacked for not wearing it.

On March 10th, the Government passed a resolution saying that it was a crime to attack or insult women based on their clothing or for any other reason; the penalty for breaking this law is 3-8 months in jail.

The Iranian people now have freedom, independence and democracy. This was fought for and won by Iranian men and women fighting shoulder to shoulder. Women are part of the Iranian people, so they have these things that they fought for. Iranian women have formed their own democratic progressive organisations which have a duty to pursue the specific demands of women and to raise the consciousness of women regarding their role in society. Here they can build on the positive effects of the revolution.

The struggle of the Iranian people, including women, against the US and Soviet imperialists goes on and no credence must be given to these predators because they claim such concern for the rights of women. Their only real concern is to subject Iran to their rule and to steal its oil and wealth from the Iranian people, men and women. Contributed.

March 8th, 1857, the clothing factories in New York lay silent. Thousands of women workers were demonstrating in the streets, raising their voices in unison to protest the intolerable working conditions and starvation wages. They were sick and tired of working 12 hours a day.

The bosses were frightened and they called in the mounted police who brutally attacked the women. But they were wasting their time. A just cause cannot be silenced for ever.

On March 8th 1908, the movement began again. Working conditions hadn't changed in 50 years. Now women were also demanding the right to vote and an end to the brutal exploitation of children.

In 1910 communists decided to pay homage to this

Cont'd on page 8

"Mobilization of the female masses, carried out with a clear understanding of the principles and on a firm organizational basis is a vital question for the Communist Parties and their victories. But let us not deceive ourselves. Our national sections still lack the proper understanding of this question. They adopt a passive wait-and-see attitude when it comes to creating a mass movement of working women under communist leadership... They regard agitation and propaganda among women and the task of rousing and revolutionizing them as of secondary importance, as the job of just the women communists... In the final analysis, it is an underestimation of women and of their accomplishments. That's just what it is! Unfortunately, we may still say of many of our comrades, "scratch the Communist and philistine appears". To be sure, you have to scratch the sensitive spots, such as their mentality regarding women. Could there be any more palpable proof than the common sight of a man calmly watching a woman wear herself out with trivial, monotonous, strength and time-consuming work, such as her housework, and watching her spirit shrinking, her mind growing dull, her heart beat growing faint, and her will growing slack?

(Lenin. From Clara Zetkin's *Recollections of Lenin* pp On the Emancipation of Women, P 114).

### Available from New Era Books



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# SOAMES' FORCES RESPONSIBLE FOR BOMBING

Three bomb blasts rocked the Rhodesian capital, Salisbury, on February 14th. Two exploded in churches; one in the city centre, one in a rich white suburb. The third exploded in a car killing its two occupants outside another church in the black township of Harare. A fourth bomb in another church failed to explode. That bomb was in a brief case painted with a slogan supporting the ZANU(PF) Party led by Robert Mugabe.

Clearly we were expected to believe that ZANU (PF) were responsible for a wave of intimidation and Zimbabwean voters were expected to turn against ZANU. Certainly the press did all they could to paint this picture.

But then came a problem. Who was in that car that blew up? The British press had already said that the occupants of the car were clearly responsible for the bombs, and had been caught when their final bomb exploded as they were about to unload it.

## SELOUS SCOUTS RESPONSIBLE

On the 17th February the two men were identified. One was Lieutenant Edward Piringodo, holder of one of Rhodesia's highest military "honours", the Silver Cross. The other was Corporal Morgan Moyo. Both men were members of the notorious 1,600 strong Selous Scouts who specialise in this sort of activity. The Selous Scouts have carried out many such atrocities in the last few years, including the 1978 Elim missionary massacre, and set the scene to make it look as though ZANU (PF) had been responsible.

Since the ceasefire the Selous Scouts have been active under the command of Lord Soames, the British Governor of Rhodesia. He has not ordered any Rhodesian units to barracks, but has confined the liberation forces to the assembly areas.

## ASSASSINATIONS AND ARRESTS

The British press has faithfully followed Lord Soames and tried to brand ZANU (PF) as intimidators

who are forcing the population to vote for them. But examples like the Salisbury bombings show the reality. Every dirty trick in the book has been used to harass ZANU and to smear them. Several ZANU organisers in the election were assassinated, many arrested on various pretexts. Robert Mugabe himself has survived many assassination attempts.

On the other side of the coin Soames has come up with few specific charges against ZANU. When he did, he produced a map supposedly showing areas where "ZANU intimidation" prevented other parties from campaigning. One of these areas was Mount Darwin. As John Mousley the official British election supervisor for the area himself said: "ITS JUST NOT TRUE". He produced figures showing that by February 20th ZANU had held 9 meetings there, Sithole's party had held 22, and Muzorewa had held 26!

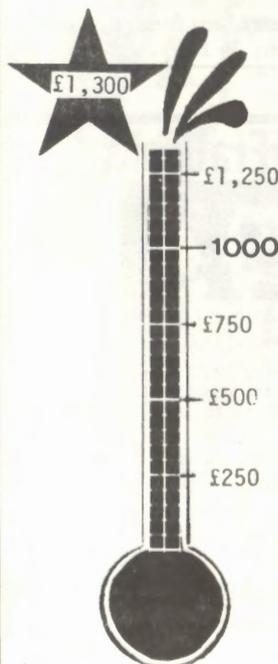
## AN ATTEMPT TO STOP ZANU SUPPORTERS VOTING

The Mount Darwin area is an area which strongly supports ZANU (PF). Soames was building up lies with the possibility in mind of using emergency powers (which he had given to himself a week earlier!) to prevent the entire area from taking part in the election. These were the sort of manoeuvres that lay behind the British organised "free and fair election".

On February 22nd Robert Mugabe wrote to Lord Carrington in London. He catalogued the manoeuvres and pointed out the specific ways in which the British Government and its representatives in Salisbury have violated the ceasefire agreements. Robert Mugabe commented: "In these circumstances of the flagrant violation of the Agreement by your side, you cannot expect us to accept any further burden in upholding our side of a deal you have deliberately chosen to destroy... The Governor has thus no remaining right, legal or moral, to insist that my men remain in assembly places. If I order my men to remain in the assembly places, as indeed I shall, this will be out of Cont'd on page 7

## ZANU FUND

## WELL DONE!



In just a few short weeks readers of *Class Struggle* have dug far enough into their pockets to raise about £1,300 for the ZANU ELECTION FUND.

We have not finished the final accounts but the response has undoubtedly been fantastic. One working class couple sent in £100.

But the money has not only been raised by reader readers donating their own money, but also through fund raising.

One initiative, in particular, was excellent. On February 22nd a benefit dance featuring Reggae group Misty and new wave group The Passions, was organised. About 500 people took part and £415 was raised. A ZANU (PF) T-shirt was raffled and books and posters sold.

We do not consider the money that we have raised for ZANU as some sort of charity. British imperialism has for years plundered their country, and we know that in advancing the cause of liberation in their country the heroic people of Zimbabwe are playing their part and making great sacrifices in the worldwide struggle for liberation and socialism. Every blow they have struck for their own freedom has hit the same people who rule us.

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## ANOTHER DEATH ON MURDER MILE

Another killing has taken place on "murder mile" in Belfast - a carbon copy of the murder reported in *Class Struggle* a fortnight ago. John Morrow was gunned down after leaving a pub. This brings to thirty the number of Catholics gunned down in this area.

The lower Ormeau Road area, where "murder mile" is located, is a recently created ghetto, people with Catholics driven out of their homes by loyalist intimidation in the early 70's. Since they arrived there they have faced waves of sectarian assassinations. In May 1974 a local pub the *Rose and Crown*, was subjected to a bomb attack, killing six people. Five members of the Bankmere Star Football team, the local club have been killed; two of them were Protestants, killed because they befriended Catholics. One family, the McCartans, have lost two sons and a brother-in-law at the hands of loyalist assassins.

Refugees driven out of their homes by terror to another area where they face constant harassment and assassination. That is the situation of the Catholic people of "murder mile", a microcosm of life in Britain's oldest colony.

## EVIDENCE WITHHELD

Two of the six Irishmen currently serving time for the Birmingham pub bombings were probably convicted because vital evidence at their trials was withheld by the police. According to a report in the *Guardian* newspaper, forensic experts found traces of nitroglycerine on the hands of the two men. Patrick Hill and William Power, and it was chiefly due to this evidence that they were found guilty of the bombings. However, it has since been disclosed that cigarette smoke can produce the same effects as nitroglycerine when submitted to the tests like those carried out by the forensic experts. The swab tests on the hands of both Power and Hill were carried out immediately before police interrogation and both had spent the hours before smoking heavily. Defence lawyers believe that the swab tests contributed towards "a miscarriage of justice." Their misgivings were summed up by a solicitor involved who said, "It's a pity this evidence was not available at the time of the trial." All six men deny responsibility for the bombing and claim they were framed by the police and Special Branch.

### SOAMES' FORCES RESPONSIBLE Cont'd from page 6

a sense of moral duty to my people to avoid precipitating further conflict and suffering."

### SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS

He went on to expose the existence of 6,000-7,000 South African troops in Zimbabwe - including several hundred based at Salisbury Show Grounds who who have been invited in since the takeover by Lord Soames! "Is this in preparation for military action aimed at overthrowing the Government we intend to form..." Robert Mugabe asked. "We read this to be the present British-South African Rhodesian strategy, especially when it is realised that both Smith and Muzorewa have vowed never to accept defeat but to work strenuously to overthrow any elected Government to which they are opposed".

### SOAMES BACKS DOWN ON VOTING ISSUE

Robert Mugabe warned Lord Carrington to stop Lord Soames from using his illegal powers to ban candidates in the election or to prevent whole areas from taking part. In the end Soames backed down on these issues. But there can be no doubt that every effort has been made by the imperialists to try to stop ZANU gaining an absolute majority. The effort was made because they know how popular ZANU is.

At the time of going to press the election results have not been announced. We will see how effective Soames' manoeuvres have been. Whatever happens we will continue to support the force that most strongly stands for total independence, democracy and social progress - ZANU (PF).

## BRITISH ARMY MURDER

Two weeks ago, a little nine-year old boy, Hugh Maguire, was killed by a British army Saracen. He lived in the New Barnsley Estate, a Catholic ghetto subjected to constant harassment by the so-called security forces.

A number of eye-witnesses saw the Saracen leave the road and mount the pavement in pursuit of two young boys. The brave British soldiers managed to catch up with one of the nine-year olds and crush him to death.

A hastily arranged post-mortem failed to pin the cause of death on the Saracen attack, and no charge has been brought against any British soldier.

## NATIONAL FRONT RUNS

For years the National Front have been trying to get a toe-hold in northern Ireland and they are known to have good contacts with various paramilitary groups in the north.

Last weekend they planned to hold a picket in front of the American Embassy in Belfast to protest against the United States decision not to sell weapons to the RUC.

However, some student groups and the Sinn Fein announced a counter-demonstration. Faced with the prospect of militant resistance the National Front called off their picket.

## REVOLUTION

THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

*Revolution*, Vol 4, No 2 is out now. It includes

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Price 35p. Back issues from New Era Books.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Organised by the RCLB continuing the series of monthly meetings on the fight against British imperialism. Held on Fridays at 7.30pm at The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London W1.  
March 7th: Imperialism and the working class. April 4th: Imperialism and Racism.

# PROTEST AT ARMAGH

Last year, women against Imperialism (WAI), an Irish working class women's group held a protest picket outside Armagh gaol, the women's gaol. They were able to shout directly over the wall to prisoners in "B" block, who shouted back and sang. A gang of forty loyalists gathered and the forty or so women retreated because they had accomplished what they'd set out to do - send solidarity greetings to the women stuck inside for opposing British rule. But the SPG blocked the exits with armoured jeeps, and thirty armed RUC men hauled off the first eleven women they could get their hands on. The women, the "Armagh Eleven" were held for four hours and charged six months later - some for assault and some with obstruction and disorderly conduct. As for the women inside Armagh, three weeks ago the guards made a surprise attack on several women prisoners in the early hours of the morning bursting into their cells. The only form of protest that the women are able to make is to go "on the blanket". Up to now they had not done this as part of their struggle for political status as they are allowed on change of clothes per month from home, and have thus not had to wear prison uniform.

This year WAI will be back again - with many more behind them. About two hundred people are expected, including many women from groups in Britain whom the WAI has appealed. At a public meeting in Liverpool a speaker said, "Britain is involved in the suppression of the Irish people. We want to see if British women are prepared to do something about their Irish sisters".

Since last year, the situation in northern Ireland has deteriorated. At this women's meeting in Liverpool, the vicious treatment dealt out to women by state forces was described by the WAI. One woman, eighteen years old at the time, had her house searched. The army kept asking her "Where is your husband. They know perfectly well where he was - in Long Kesh. Then they took her and her fourteen month old baby down to Castlereagh where they interrogated her for eighteen hours. The baby became very distressed at being subjected to such an ordeal. The mother was constantly taunted with threats of having the baby taken away from her and she was told that she would be named in court as an unfit mother. But they eventually had to let her go. In another case a pregnant woman was forced to stand touching the wall with her fingertips for four hours. She was subjected to three vaginal searches. When threatened with further standing, she willed herself to do it in order to avoid further searches.

Faced with a situation like that, the speaker from WAI said, "We can't get to issues like abortion and contraception because we've got this to face first." A clear pointer to their slogan "no national liberation without women's liberation."

## MARCH 8TH CELEBRATION: Cont'd from centre page

outstanding militancy and during a meeting of the 2nd International (made up of socialist parties from all around the world), Clara Zetkin, a leader of the German Social Democratic (Communist) Party, proposed that March 8th be declared International Working Women's Day.

Since then, every year around the world, March 8th is the time for gatherings and activities recalling these historic struggles. All workers must, along with the masses of women, take inspiration from these battles for women's rights, to push forward the struggle for their emancipation, put an end to capitalist exploitation and oppression and to build socialism.

# RCL-CWM PRESS FUND

On January 1st, 1980, the Revolutionary Communist League and the Communist Workers Movement announced their decision to unite.

Unity gives us many opportunities to advance revolutionary politics in Britain. One of the most important results will be the development of our revolutionary press. Unity will bring the merger of the editorial committees of *Class Struggle* and *New Age*. This will improve the content of our paper. But that advance must also be accompanied by improvements in our presentation. We want to produce a 12-page fortnightly paper by summer and we need new equipment to improve the layout and look of our paper.

Our aim is to develop the liveliness and readability of *Class Struggle* and to involve more people in writing for it. We want workers in the factories, people on the housing estates, activists in many struggles to help build up *Class Struggle* as their own paper. We want you to write for it, to organise around it and to sell it.

But it also takes money. We can't do everything at once but we can make a good start. We urge all readers of *Class Struggle* and *New Age* and all those who want to see a genuine revolutionary paper produced in Britain again to dig deep into their pockets. Send a lump sum now or send a little every week. If you can only afford 10p it is welcome. It all builds up.

Unity gives us opportunities but we need money to take them all.

## HELP BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION



All donations to NEW ERA BOOKS, 203 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4. Please include a note saying it's for the RCL/CWM Press Fund.

## LETTER: Cont'd from page 3

They wanted to bring in shift work to replace the existing system. The unions opposed this. The dispute could not be resolved by ACAS. In December, management walked out of the national negotiations.

The unions have taken action. Some members have withdrawn from the emergency service all together. Others are only processing one patient per call, thus increasing the cost.

Management would rather let the service break down than meet our reasonable claim. They don't care about the safety of patients.

In early February, Secretary of State, Patrick Jenkin intervened (so much for Tory non-intervention!) He ordered that the dispute be settled. £5 for standby and £5.40 for a call out were written into our pay and conditions. These figures were turned down by the unions last year. Normal negotiation procedures were ignored.

It has been difficult to get all four unions to agree. Indeed it has been mainly ASTMS that has taken action. There has been a lack of leadership and coordination from the national union officers. We still haven't got a regular dispute bulletin. Despite all this the membership appears ready to resist this forced settlement and fight for the right to negotiate. Reports are coming in of increased action being taken throughout Britain.

Midlands, ASTMS Shopsteward.