

CLASS STRUGGLE

POLITICAL PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

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A GOOD BUDGET? YES, IF YOU'RE RICH!

Prescription charges up to £1 - that's five times the cost one year ago; petrol prices up 10p per gallon; beer up 2p a pint; road fund license up £10; child benefit up a measly 75p and pensions up barely enough to keep up with inflation. This is the picture of the latest bosses' budget. Income tax is reduced by 49p for the single person and £1.18 for a married couple. But this is nothing compared with what is being taken away. What is more the government expects revenue from income tax to increase from £19.6 billion in 1979 to £23.8 billion in 1980. So where is the actual cut in income tax? There is a cut in income tax for those employed. It is a pittance which will not keep pace with inflation, so by the end of the year increased paper wages will mean more tax than before, and even the extra pay will not match bigger prices.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AND SOCIAL SECURITY CUTS

In his budget speech, the Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, said "...inflation sets worker against worker..." Has he become converted to workers' unity? Of course not! In fact the budget measures are aimed at splitting workers by penalising the unemployed and the wives of strikers. Unemployment benefit will be taxed from April 1982. Earnings related benefit will be reduced next January and abolished in 1982. Sickness benefit will be taxed from 1982. Strikers will be assumed to have received £12 strike pay and their wives' social security cut. Dennis Healey said in reply that this meant the wives of convicts will get off "scot-free". Evidently, he wants this penalty extended. With 'friends' like Healey taking up the cause of workers on strike being victimised by the state, who needs enemies.

The government is making a gesture of tax reductions for employed workers whilst taxing unemployment and social security benefits. They are playing one section of the working class off against another. But these attacks

on the unemployed and poor will not just affect their living standards. They will result in a fall in the minimum standard of living of the class as a whole and by the operation of supply and demand in the labour market cut the wages of workers in employment.

BANKS ARE LAUGHING

The budget will bring about a real cut in living standards. Welfare cuts, house building cuts, education cuts causing the loss

of over 50,000 teaching posts, school meal cuts etc are an attack on the living standards of the working people.

While our living standards are falling, profits go up and up. All three of the high street banks report large increases from 1978 figures. The Midland Bank's pre-tax profits rose 36% to £315.5 million. British Petroleum, the oil company, made nearly four times as much profit as in 1978, totalling £1,620 million for 1979. ICI made so much profit that £1 million paid the salaries and fees of just twenty directors, and pensions of former directors amounted to another £2 million. These monopoly capitalists are exploiting us more than ever. That wealth is produced by the working class and should be providing better housing, health, transport and education.

Budget serves the big banks

The Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, made a great deal of play on how the Tories were helping the small businessman and the self-employed. If you look at such things as the raising of the threshold for VAT registration to £13,500 a year, this would seem to be true. But it is window dressing aimed at satisfying some of the Tory middle class voters and maintaining the illusions that any 'enterprising fellow' can 'make it' in the capitalist jungle. The reality is a lot different.

The 'small man' is being ruined and even big companies are being squeezed out of business by the intolerably high interest

rates set by the banks. While the rest of British capitalist industry with not only a zero growth rate but a falling one, suffers from the extremely high interest rates, the banks have been sitting back and taking in profits.

The bosses' financial paper, the Financial Times, reported on March 5th that at its press conference, Lloyds Bank said that UK profits were up 70% on last year, but later agreed a more accurate figure for the UK profits increase would be 90%. "It all depends on how you define the UK" they said.

OIL MONOPOLIES NERVOUS BUT HAPPY WITH BUDGET

In another piece of window dressing aimed at satisfying public opinion that the government were not letting the huge profits of the oil mono-

	PRE-TAX PROFITS			DIVIDENDS		
	1978	1979	% rise	1978	1979	% rise
Barclays	373.3	500	33.9	29.7	n/a	n/a
Lloyds	185.3	276.6	49.3	16.9	23.9	41.4
Midland	231.4	315.5	36.3	26.7	32.6	22.1
Nat West	305.7	441.5	44.4	29.1	40.8	40.2

Figures quoted in £million

Preliminary figures of the 1979 profits
Source: Labour Research Department.

polies go unnoticed, the Chancellor proposed raising petrol revenue tax by 10%. This amounted to 10p on a gallon of petrol which went to the new price within minutes of Sir Geoffrey finishing his speech. How is this hitting the oil monopolies? The tax is immediately transferred

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**Afghanistan
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EDITORIAL

The bosses' offensive is stepping up. The budget, as we show is a budget of assault on the working people of Britain. The rich will get even richer and we will be poorer. Factory closures will continue, unemployment will rise and to cap it all our dole and social security will be cut and what's left will be taxed. It's no good just complaining - we've got a fight on our hands - and we must force the unions to pick up the gauntlet.

STEEL AND THE DOCKS

The Steel workers are continuing their fight. That's not just a fight for money - it's jobs too. Other workers are being drawn more directly into it. In Liverpool, dockers who refused to touch a ship bringing in steel were suspended. Now the docks are closed and the all-out strike in Liverpool needs backing from the other ports.

SOVIET STRIKE BREAKING

And that takes us to another major issue. Whose

ship was blacked in Liverpool? It was a Russian ship. Other Soviet ships are importing steel across the channel. The Soviet Union is showing its nature again. Maggie doesn't mind this Soviet activity. She calls for a response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan but not when the Soviet Union is strike breaking and not when it is a case of the British capitalists making profits by exporting technology to the Soviet Union and the state lending money to the USSR to buy it. That technology will be used on the people of Afghanistan and help build the Soviet war machine

THATCHER SABOTAGES BOYCOTT OF SOVIET UNION

No wonder that Thatcher's hypocrisy is leading to her failure to persuade people to boycott the Olympic games. A boycott would be fine but Thatcher won't hit the Soviet Union where it hurts economically. To her it's just a gesture. Combine that with her anti-people tactics of attacking individual sportsmen and women and it is clear that Thatcher is in fact sabotaging the struggle against Soviet aggression.

From our postbag

Write to: The Editor-CS, c/o New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

CENSUS

Dear Editor,

The 1981 Census is emerging as a possible area for sharp struggle between anti-racist and the hard and soft purveyors of state racialism.

The Establishment is casting about to find out if its proposed questions on race and country of origin in the next census will be tolerated or, on the contrary, strongly opposed.

A non-compulsory mini-census was conducted in Haringey in April 1979, a London borough with a high percentage of immigrants. To the credit of the people of Haringey less than 3 in 5 of households returned the form completed.

Race first became of interest to the census takers in 1971 when questions on the country of birth of residents and their parents were introduced. It is not widely known, but over 1½ million people refused to reveal their parents' birthplace. When you consider

that only 434 prosecutions were made for failure to complete the form, it is obvious that the government is in a very difficult position. This is why it is adopting a softly, softly approach.

A few weeks ago, I went to an anti-racist and anti-fascist meeting in a London suburb. The issue was the racist nature of the census. The speaker in favour of the ethnic questions was a Labour MP and an experienced member of the race relations industry. He was, of course, passionately interested in redressing the balance of inequality and underprivilege which black people suffer. For this benevolent task, he said, it was absolutely essential to have the fullest statistics on the problems. This was the only reason he supported ethnic questions in the census.

While a few people were taken in by this drivel, mainly white careerists, there were a lot of young black people there who

knew he was talking nonsense. They militantly protested that the questions were obviously racist and that they had no illusions as to the ruling class's intentions towards black people.

The ruling class and its many lackeys, will present 1001 ingenious arguments why these questions are necessary, yet class conscious people know that it is all a trick and that these ethnic questions are for the purpose of further repression, harassment, control and even deportation.

Editor's note:

Since his letter was received, the government has stated its intention to drop some of the open questions on racial background from the census. The failure of the Haringey 'experiment' was cited as a major reason. The struggle has had, therefore, some success but questions on where you used to live etc are still to be included.

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inland: 4 issues £1.95
abroad: 4 issues £2.75

From New Era Books.

APOLOGY

The previous issue of Class Struggle was Vol 4, No.6 not Vol 4, No.5 as printed.

DEMO ON ANNIVERSARY OF SOUTHALL POLICE ATTACK

A demonstration will take place on April 27th to protest about last year's police attack on the national minority community in Southall and the Special Patrol Group murder of Blair Peach. The following day the inquest on Blair Peach re-opens.

The state rounded up 342 people and brought them to trial. Most of the cases have already been dealt with and there was an alarmingly high conviction rate. Six cases still have to come up in the Crown Court - all of them carrying prison sentences upon conviction. The demonstration will demand amnesty for the Southall defendants.

BLAIR PEACH MURDER COVER UP

The speed with which the victims of police violence were brought to trial contrasts with the marked reluctance to indict Blair Peach's killers. In fact, there is a massive cover-up going on! Blair Peach was killed by one of a six-man team from Number One Unit of the Special Patrol Group - Inspector Murray, Constables White, Freestone, Lake, Richardson and Scottow. That is not our conclusion but that of the police inquiry - the investigation team of Scotland Yard officers. The Sunday Times published the substance of their report on March 16th. It contained evidence of SPG homicide and that they had lied to investigators and that Senior officers of the Metropolitan Police tried to thwart the inquiry. In his wisdom, the Director of Public Prosecutions decided that the evidence was insufficient for prosecution.

Combine this amazing revelation with eye-witness accounts of Blair Peach being clubbed by the police and with the pathologist's report that the weapon used "could have been a lead-weighted rubber cosh or a hose-pipe filled with lead shot, or some other like weapon". Combine it with the fact that investigating officers found unauthorised weapons, including a rubber cosh in the SPG men's lockers but were interrupted in their inquiries and on their return the weapons had disappeared.

WHOSE JUSTICE?

An ordinary person gets convicted even if there is no evidence because policemen go into court and swear blind to a pack of lies. Police murderers tell their lies to an internal inquiry and don't go to court - even when there is clear evidence against them.

BROAD RESISTANCE TO STATE RACISM

The Tory government have passed their new rules to tighten immigration especially against husbands and fiancées of black women in Britain and against dependants. There was massive protest following on from the November 25th demonstration of over 20,000 people against racist laws. A number of Tory MPs even abstained on the new rules because they don't want to lose all the national minority vote in their marginal constituencies.

Opposition to state racism is increasing on both local and national levels. But as working class resistance grows to the bosses' attacks on workers' jobs and standard of living, the government will step up its racist attacks to divert the struggle and divide the working class. Repression is forcing black people out of Britain now. It is only a short step to widescale legalised repatriation as advocated by Enoch Powell and MPs like Ronald Bell. At the same time open fascists like the National Front and the British Movement are stirring up a gas chamber mentality.

CARL RECONVENED

Immigration authorities and police are committing new atrocities daily but in response anti-racist groups and defence committees are being built in many localities. On a national level there is a need to coordinate this fight and to link it firmly with other struggles of the working class. The conference on March 22nd of the Campaign Against Racist Laws (CARL) - the body which organised the November 25th demonstration - resolved to continue the campaign as a "unifying body for a broad-based national campaigning by black and anti-racist organisations."

BROAD-BASED CAMPAIGN

Avtar Jouhl, President of the Indian Workers' Association (GB) told the conference that CARL should be as broadly based as possible to hit state racism. The campaign against racism is an integral part of the working class fight in Britain. He called for

collective activity against immigration laws, the SUS laws and to mobilise around individual cases. In Birmingham, he said, there was a meeting of over 400 people in the Sparkbrook area against harassment of Pakistani and Kashmiri people. The fight was on the shop floor as well. For instance, in a West Midland's factory, 74 black workers recently went on strike and were immediately sacked. Immigration laws violate the UN Charter, human rights and civil liberties. The Heath government's Industrial Relations Act was violated by workers and smashed. The new "Employment Bill", really an unemployment bill, will also be opposed in this way. Similarly, we must oppose immigration laws and defend so-called "illegal immigrants" against such illegal laws.

FIGHT IMMIGRATION ACTS AND NATIONALITY ACTS

CARL is pledged to fight the implementation of the new laws, and the 1971 Immigration Act, by mass campaigning and defence of victims, as well as supporting cases taken to the European Commission of Human Rights. It will fight the proposed Nationality Act with its attempts to produce second-class citizenship for black people here and statelessness for British citizens abroad. It will oppose police attacks, like in Southall last April and the use of the SUS laws. And it will support the coming Black Freedom March from Bradford to London.

BLACK FREEDOM MARCH

The Bradford Asian Youth Movement has taken the initiative to organise a 22 day Black Freedom March from Bradford to London. It will pass through many towns and cities and it is important that support committees are set up. A steering committee of black organisations will be set up on April 6th to organise the march. In the next two issues Class Struggle will publish the organisers statement and details of the march.



REMEMBER BLAIR PEACH - DISBAND THE SPG
AMNESTY FOR THE SOUTHALL DEFENDANTS
DOWN WITH RACIST LAWS
NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
SUNDAY 27 APRIL 1980
ASSEMBLE 1PM SPEAKERS CORNER, MARBLE ARCH
MARCH VIA SCOTLAND YARD AND DOWNING STREET TO
RALLY IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE

THE BUDGET measures have been taken in the name of reducing inflation. In his Budget speech, the Chancellor boasted that this latest package of measures aimed at lifting capitalism from its current depths of crisis would bring inflation down to 5% by 1984. This indeed is optimistic. Even if the measures succeed, it is clear at whose expense it will be done - the working class and masses.

It would seem, from the speeches and statements of bourgeois economists, that the ruling capitalist class (ie the monopoly capitalists) do not want inflation. Nothing could be further from the truth. What the monopoly 'bosses are afraid of and don't want is runaway, uncontrolled inflation. But they do want and need inflation. As Keynes, the theorist of state intervention put it,

"A movement by employers to revise money-wage bargains downwards will be much more strongly resisted than a gradual and automatic lowering of real wages as a result of rising prices."

This automatic lowering of real wages means that workers have to fight hard to catch up with the rising cost of living before they can think about improving their living and working conditions. By using this method of keeping wages down, the monopolies can ensure that wages and labour power stay low in relation to the total value produced by the workers. A constant fall in the real value of wages through inflation which debases ie reduces the value of the currency, enables the monopolies to increase profits because they still increase prices to maintain the market value of commodities.

Labour and Tory alike blame wage increases for inflation. But this lie is used to weaken the resolve

INFLATION: CURSE OF CA

and split workers fighting to maintain living standards whittled away by inflation and government cuts in public spending. As Marxists have always insisted, big firms fix their prices according to what the market will bear in order to get maximum profit rather than what they pay out in wages. Whatever the state of the market, the monopolies will raise their prices if the market will stand it. If a wage increase has occurred, the monopolies will raise their prices to lift profits, if the market will stand it. But if the market will bear it, they will still lift prices whether or not a wage increase has occurred.

The real cause of inflation is the capitalist system. The domination of the economy by the monopolies and government spending are the two prime reasons for the continuous advance in prices in modern capitalist society. There is only one way to eliminate the scourge of inflation from human society and that is to eliminate its source - the capitalist system - through socialist revolution and socialist construction.

In February, the index of retail prices rose by 1.4% to 248.8. This represents an annual inflation rate of 19.1%, the highest for nearly four years. The graph illustrates the inexorable rise, which covers all goods, including luxury items which at the present time are tending to fall in price because demand is falling. This tends to distort the picture of the rising price of necessities.

State deficit causes inflation

IN CAPITALIST society everything from a pin to a giant factory, even a person's labour power, is bought and sold on the market. Such goods are commodities. All capitalist production is commodity production. The millions of commodities which are bought and sold every day by companies, governments and consumers, require a certain amount in money supply to effect the transactions.

The stock of money (principally in coin, paper money and cheque accounts) used for the circulation of commodities is called the money supply. When production rises, there are more commodities to be circulated, so a greater supply of money is required. If production and the money supply grow at the same rate there is no problem. But modern monopoly capitalism cannot work in this way. The government and the state, especially since the Second World War, steps up its spending, increases the amount of credit or runs an internal deficit to give an artificial impetus to the flagging capitalist economy. Since this credit and deficit does not represent the circulation of goods and wealth produced, the rising level of demand caused by the credit to industry, results in rising prices for labour power (wages), raw materials, plant and equipment etc.

STATE DEFICIT

The income and expenditure of the British state was summed up in the budget as £101.4 billion collected through Income Tax, National Insurance and tax on goods, while £109.9 billion was spent by the government. That is a deficit of £8.5 billion. This deficit is financed by printing money (12%), national savings (16%), British Government Stock (62%) and other means (10%). The British Government Stock represents stocks and bonds floated to banks who in turn use this credit to make loans to industry. All this devalues money and is the cause of inflation.

Because as Marxists, we expose how capitalism is caught up in a mass of insoluble contradictions which the system cannot solve, it does not mean we support the measures taken by the Tories to reduce the state deficit. Like the Labour Party before them, they are only concerned with shifting capitalism's crisis on to the backs of the working class. This is being done by more cuts in health and social security and many other economic measures which put up unemployment, rents, prices, etc. There is no reason why health and social services cannot be enlarged given Britain's industrial development and the huge funds diverted to aid the capitalists. But apart from forcing some concessions from the capitalist class and government, the working class needs political power and genuine socialist construction before this can be achieved.

Out of government spending of £109.9 billion only £10.5 billion goes on health, £7.2 billion on social security, £14.7 billion goes to local councils for their spending on education and housing etc.

Of the remaining two-thirds, £10.6 billion is spent on defence and the rest in the form of industrial grants and in construction programmes to help transport of industrial goods.

Help to industry (ie money to capitalists) is where most of our taxes go and why the government overspends.

Of the £101.4 billion raised in taxes, £85.6 billion at least comes directly from the mass of the people, but only £32.4 billion is spent on services to the people.

BUDG

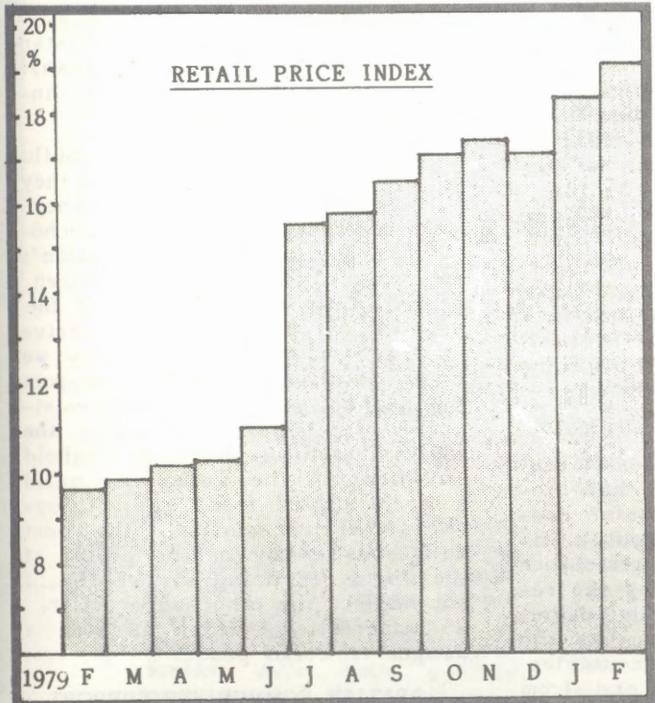
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CAPITALISM

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK



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BUDGET SERVES THE BIG BANKS Cont'd from p1

to the public through higher prices at the pump. And in the course of time fuels price inflation of items in the shops. Furthermore, portions of this tax may finish up in the oil millionaires' pockets through the process of tax deferment.

As the Chancellor himself had to admit, since the last budget world oil prices have increased dramatically. Not just through increased oil prices decided by the Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC) but through the operation of market forces where oil billionaires cause and cash-in on shortages. North Sea oil prices which follow world prices have risen by more than half from about \$20.70 to some \$33.75 a barrel.

	Sales		Profit after tax	
	1978	1979	1978	1979
EXXON	33,800	39,745	1,439	2,024
Stand. Oil	12,815	14,984	620	843
Texaco	15,171	18,423	444	848
Mobil	19,446	22,589	589	947
Gulf	10,362	12,317	409	622
Royal Dutch Shell	29,212	34,830	1,086	3,051
BP	17,560	22,706	444	1,621
	138,366	165,594	5,031	9,956

Figures quoted £million

These huge profit increases are largely due to the rise in oil prices in the last year. The doubling of North Sea oil prices in 1979 results in enormous 'windfall' profits to the producing companies even after payment of tax. Referring to such 'windfall' profits the Chancellor said that whether these should be taxed will be 'considered'. The oil monopolies were happy that nothing would be done at this stage, knowing full well in a few weeks time the matter will be forgotten.

A struggle began last year when Jaswinder Brah started the union among the women at the Chix factory in Slough, by handing out about 100 union forms in the changing rooms and toilets. All the women signed up. Now the women are on a picket line fighting for union recognition. Just before Christmas, whilst on the picket line, Jaswinder was arrested. She was charged with assault and threatening behaviour. The police say she was swearing. The Slough police must now be trained in the Punjabi language, because Mrs Brah doesn't speak English. Mrs Brah's experience and the struggle going on at Chix like that of Grunwick's highlights the special oppression in industry of women, especially Asian women.

Mrs Brah said "The employers - think of us as children and treat us like dogs."

North Shields juvenile panel was faced with the case of a 16-year old boy who had admitted indecently assaulting an 11-year old school girl. He was fined £30. The reason for the leniency was that if anything other than a fine was imposed it would have meant his rejection by the army. The Whitley Bay teenager was told, "What you have done is a very serious But we are not going to bar your way to joining the army."

As waiting lists reach record levels, with 12,500 in Newcastle, the Newcastle Housing Authority has 1,266 empty houses, 4,414 "difficult to let homes" and 5,530 classed as substandard in its area. Sunderland Borough boasts 4,567 substandard dwellings and 1,127 standing empty. Decent housing has always been a bourgeois electoral slogan but never a fulfilled promise - and it will remain that way until the people take power into their own hands.

Nearly 100,000 council houses are empty in England despite one million households on waiting lists according to the Government's figures just released by Shelter.

The figures show that 99,000 council houses are empty. That's about 2.2% of England's stock of around 4,660,000 council houses. Of these 22,000 have been unoccupied for more than a year.

The worst offenders are the inner London boroughs. Compared to 2.2 out of every hundred of council stock standing empty, Kensington has 11.4, Islington 11.1, Lambeth 10.3, Southwark 8.2, Camden 8.1 and Tower Hamlets 8.0.

An article by two Shelter officer in the organisation's magazine, Roof, says that the present government policies will make the situation worse. The massively reduced housing investment programme will mean that many houses waiting for repair will have to stand empty for at least a year through lack of funds.

Two full-time workers at the AUEW Head Office in Peckham, South London, were sacked last month. Trevor Eward, a research worker, and Alan Hughes, the union's Education Administrator, were sacked for gross misconduct, according to Sir John Boyd, General Secretary of the AUEW. Their crime was to produce, in their own time, two papers critical of the AUEW leadership's handling of last year's national engineering dispute and of the AUEW's lack of response to the Tory Employment Bill.

CONFERENCE CONDEMNS SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN



Afghan guerrillas celebrate the capture of Russian armour.

"It is high time that all those who oppose the Soviet social imperialist aggression on Afghanistan a third world country, and a neutral country, take action to support the Afghan people. As Indians, we have a special duty because that aggression is closely connected with the policy of Soviet social imperialism in the Indian sub-continent."

The General Secretary of the Indian Workers Association (GB), Comrade Teja Singh Sahota, made this call to action at a conference on Afghanistan convened by the IWA(GB) in London on March 23rd

US IMPERIALISM ON DEFENSIVE

He said US imperialism was the policeman of the world after the Second World War but its defeat by the people of Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos and the growth of Soviet social imperialism put US imperialism on the defensive.

AFGHANISTAN IS NEW DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET EXPANSION

In Czechoslovakia, the Russian invasion was to preserve its existing influence. In Angola, Ethiopia and Kampuchea, the Soviet Union used its satellites, Cuba and Vietnam, to do its dirty work. But the Afghanistan invasion went further, it was a direct invasion of a neutral country, using the same tricks as Nazi Germany. The Russians told one lie after an-

other to justify their invasion. They claimed to have been invited in but why should the Afghan President, Amin, invite them in for them then to kill him? And how could he suddenly become a 'CIA agent' when the Soviet Union claimed him as a comrade up until the invasion? They claimed there was 'outside interference' but how could the Afghan people carry out outside interference in their own homeland? There was outside interference - from the Soviet Union since they installed their puppet Tarraki, and the Afghan people had long fought that outside interference.

BROAD OPPOSITION TO INVASION

The truth was that the resistance of the Afghan people had increased so much that Russian control was impossible without a direct invasion. Afghan resistance has continued to grow, as the recent general strike in Kabul showed. Also opposition to the Soviet invasion from 104 countries in the United Nations and from the Islamic countries isolated the Soviet Union. In response, the Soviet Union stepped up its aggression in Afghanistan and tried to win over other countries by pushing so-called 'detente'. The appeasement of Russia by some Western countries aided and abetted the invasion. The fate of Afghanistan must be decided by the Afghan people themselves, not in Moscow or in Washington.

The Indian government, he pointed out, is taking a strange line. India has the same 'friendship' treaty with the Soviet Union that Afghanistan has. The Indian government has now recognised the puppet Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea and is opposing Pakistan's re-armament. It is bankrupt logic to think Pakistan, much weaker militarily and politically, could be a threat to India.

Comrade Sahota ended his statement on behalf of the IWA(GB):

"Let us unite to fight the Soviet social imperialist scheme to subjugate the Indian sub-continent. Soviet aggressors out of Afghanistan! End the Indo-Soviet Treaty! The Afghan people are sure to win!"

BANGLADESH SPEAKER ATTACKS SOVIET EMPIRE BUILDING

"Some people in Britain say the Soviet Union haven't got a plan behind their invasion of Afghanistan. We who come from the area can't accept that".

A speaker from the Bangladesh Workers' Association said that after the Treaty was signed between India and the Soviet Union in 1971

Pakistan was dismembered. Although there were contradictions within Pakistan, that was a matter for the people of Pakistan (now Pakistan and Bangladesh). But the Soviet-backed Indian invasion was another matter.

The Soviet Union is out to build an Empire. Some people say they will get out of Afghanistan. They still haven't gone out of Czechoslovakia. The Americans didn't get out of Indochina of their own accord. Only the resistance of the peoples of the world can drive imperialists out. That is why we must mobilise people to support the Afghan people in their resistance. We should not allow the Soviet Union to have a foothold anywhere in the world but build a world united front against Soviet social imperialism, the most dangerous enemy of the people of the world. In doing so, we should not neglect the other superpower, US imperialism, which is still a danger to world peace.

BRITISH COMMUNISTS SUPPORT THE AFGHAN PEOPLE

A speaker on behalf of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain and the Communist Workers Movement said it is necessary to unite as many people as possible against the most dangerous superpower and in support of the Afghan people. If we do not do this, how can we further our struggle in Britain? The Afghan people are overcoming their differences to unite. The Islamic nations, especially Iran and Pakistan, are uniting to support them.

Countries like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are saying to the EEC and the Americans, "We want weapons from you, but we will not allow a single of your soldiers on our soil." This is correct

The Afghan people want support from anywhere. They have many enemies but the main one is the Soviet Union. We cannot put conditions on our support for the Afghan people. It is not a question of supporting one superpower against another but of supporting the peoples of the world against Soviet social imperialism, the most dangerous superpower.

In reply to the discussion, Comrade Sahota stressed the danger to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh from Soviet social imperialism. The main enemy of the people of the Indian sub-continent is the same as the main enemy of Afghanistan - Soviet social imperialism. The Soviet Union is daily instigating the Indian government to attack Pakistan.

SOVIET IMPERIALISM IS MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY BUT US STILL AN EXPLOITING SUPERPOWER

FALSE ACCUSATIONS AT AFGHANISTAN CONFERENCE

A handful of people at the recent conference on Afghanistan tried to confuse the issue by taking sideswipes at the RCLB. In particular, one speaker said the RCLB were trying to recruit the people of Afghanistan into a struggle between the two superpowers on the side of US imperialism. He claimed the RCLB were saying US imperialism was blameless and wanted to see Soviet influence in Afghanistan replaced by other imperialists. He said he refused to accept that Soviet social imperialism was the most dangerous superpower. Those who said this were supporting the imperialist interests of the British bourgeoisie.

A member of the Indian Workers' Association (Great Britain) countered the arguments of this handful. He said that these people obviously thought that:

- 1 The Soviet Union and United States were both exactly as dangerous as one another - no more no less.
- 2 If we stand with the Afghan people we would be unwittingly supporting US imperialism.

He added that it is important to understand why Soviet social imperialism is more dangerous than US imperialism. There are people in third world countries, like India, who still think the Soviet Union is their friend, and a bastion of socialism. They are like the monk in the Chinese folk-tale

Monkey, who can recognise demons when they attack in their real form, but not when they disguise themselves as beautiful women. Monkey, who is much cleverer than the monk, could see through the demons' disguises.

The US imperialists are still strong but they have had their teeth broken. The Indian people are facing the next danger, Soviet social imperialism, and the speaker said he could envisage a time when Russian troops would be fighting on Indian soil. Demons disguised as beautiful women are much more dangerous than those who appear with their fangs bared.

Another IWA(GB) speaker said that Stalin had correctly made an alliance with British and US imperialists against German fascism under Hitler. That didn't mean that Stalin didn't see the oppression by British imperialism of British workers and of the colonised peoples. But he saw the need to oppose the most dangerous enemies of the world's people at that time. The working class in Britain will oppose Thatcher and NATO, but, in opposing the invasion of Afghanistan, they will oppose the Soviet Union. US imperialism was weakened by the peoples of the third world. It wouldn't have been if we hadn't supported the Indochinese people. Similarly, we must now oppose Soviet social imperialism.

An RCLB speaker condemned those who attacked people for things that they hadn't said in the first place. No one had said we should ignore, let alone defend US imperialism. But we have to defend the Afghan people, who have been attacked by Soviet social imperialism.

It is no accident that it is the Russians who are directly invading the countries of the world - Czechoslovakia, Angola, Ethiopia, Kampuchea and Afghanistan. But that doesn't mean the other imperialists have changed their nature and no one has said that.

During his summing up, Comrade Sahota, said that the Afghan people knew US imperialism exists and will exist for a long time. We cannot put conditions on our support for the Afghan people. It is up to them to decide who they will get guns from. No speaker had said we should not oppose US imperialism, but we are talking about the Afghan people's struggle and their main enemy is Soviet social imperialism. The Afghans are being butchered by the guns of the Soviet Union, not the USA. We should unite to support them against Soviet social imperialist aggression.

Class Struggle Correspondents.

In the next issue of Class Struggle we will publish a related article on how different countries have responded to invasion and what their reasons are. It will deal with questions of trade boycott, military response and the Olympics.

AFGHANISTAN: SOVIET AID → SOVIET INFLUENCE → SOVIET INVASION

How did the Soviet invasion come about?

In 1953, Daoud came to power in a coup. He started to rely on the Soviet Union after trouble in Pushtunistan, when the US imperialists were interfering in Pakistan. He sent officers to the Soviet Union to be trained. After Stalin died, the Afghanistan government started to lean heavily on the

Soviet Union for military and economic aid. Karmal, the present puppet, first came to prominence in 1965. He was a self-styled communist, closely tied to the Soviet Embassy but also to the Afghan king. He was then popularly known as 'the Royal Communist leader'.

SOVIET UNION BACKS TARRAKI COUP

Another self-styled communist, Tarraki, came to power after murdering Daoud and his family in a coup in 1978. He was in alliance with Karmal and the strong man, Hafizullah Amin, who engineered the coup. Karmal was sent to Eastern Europe as an ambassador. The Russians were delighted with the fake Marxist regime and called the coup the 'April Revolution'. The Soviet-Afghanistan Treaty was signed in December 1978 and Tarraki's government signed some 40 long-term trade agreements with Russia

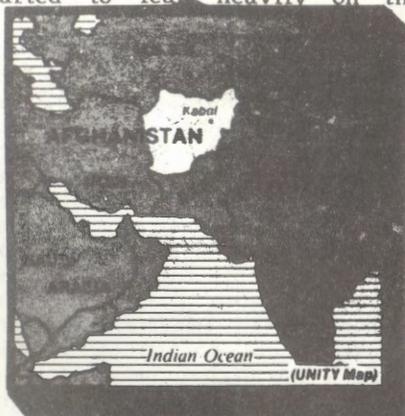
Much emphasis was put on the 'reforms' carried out by Tarraki. In fact, the land reform policy was turned into a reward scheme for Tarraki's supporters, and the modernisation programme without land distribution merely made the rich richer and the poor poorer. Resistance started in Nuristan, in Eastern Afghanistan, and quickly spread to other areas. The strong man, Amin, tried to put down the rebellion by massacres and massive imprisonment but the only result was to increase the rebellion and cause wide-scale desertions from the Afghan army.

AMIN TO POWER - HE IS PRO-SOVIET BUT ARE THEY PRO-AMIN?

Moscow sensed trouble and advised Tarraki to get rid of Amin. However, Amin got his knife in first. He came to power in September 1979, after a coup in which

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INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY AT ARMAGH GAOL

On March 8th, over 500 women battled through British army and RUC obstruction to demonstrate in support of the women incarcerated in Armagh Gaol. One hundred and fifty of the women were from Britain and their lively demonstration and protest was a great support to the women in the prison who are locked up 23 hours a day without toilet facilities.

The leader of the women in the prison has since smuggled out a message which says,

"The picket on Saturday was a great morale booster since most of the girls could hear the crowd shouting from our cells... despite the desperate conditions especially the threat to our health, morale remains good."

She went on to report,

"Since we have no access to toilet facilities all bodily functions have to be carried out here in the cells. Some POWs were supplied with chamber pots, others have to do with the floor.

"Our cells are covered with urine and excreta. When our chamber pots were full we used to be able to empty them out of the window, but now the windows have been boarded up.

"Little air circulates in the cells. The stench is overwhelming. No light penetrates the boarding. One would think it was continual nightfall here in Armagh."

The courage and determination of these women is inspiring. And the solidarity shown by the demonstrators outside the prison also sets an example to us all.

BRITISH JUSTICE

Last June, a British soldier ran out of one of the army forts in West Belfast and fired into a group of passers-by. One of them was seriously wounded, having his spine, stomach, one kidney and his spleen smashed up. This victim will spend the rest of his life on painkillers.

In court, the soldier concerned, Gary Gibson of the 1st Kings Reg-

TUC HATCHET MEN

The TUC have taken it upon themselves to become even more blatant hatchetmen for British imperialism by threatening to expel Thameside Trades Council from the official trade union movement.

The Thameside Trades Council had planned to call a trade union delegates conference on Ireland on March 1st. Not surprisingly, the National Front thugs organised for a demonstration against the right of Ireland to self-determination. The Fleet Street barons also kicked up a storm.

MURDER MILE

Class Struggle has reported on three previous assassination attempts on Murder Mile on the Ormeau Road in Belfast - two of them successful. Since our last issue there has been a fourth attempt - luckily the victim escaped a hail of bullets and ran to safety. Now the public is expected to presume that such attacks occur because the security forces are not around to prevent them. But a fortnight ago, the following episode occurred.

A stranger walked into Charlie Farrell's bar in the lower Ormeau Road. He asked for a drink in an English accent. The suspicious locals asked him his identity and he claimed to be a pilot from Adlergrove Airport. The bar manager asked him to leave. The manager said "I placed my hand on his arm. He span around with a gun clasped in his two hands pointed directly at the middle of my chest." The occupants of the pub scattered for cover as the gunman calmly backed out of the door muttering "You bastards".

Who was this man? Readers with ideas on the subject should put them on a postcard to the Special Air Services, c/o Secretary for State, Northern Ireland.

iment explained that he thought Irish people "laughed at him". His explanation was well received by Judge William Doyle in a court in Belfast last week. Gibson was given a two year suspended sentence!

There has never yet been a prison sentence given out to a British soldier for shooting or murdering an Irishman. So far as British justice is concerned, Irish life is not cheap - it is free!

Then the TUC stepped in and ordered the Trades Council to cancel the conference.

On March 3rd, a full meeting of Thameside Trades Council met and voted 28 to 3 to call the conference again. Now the TUC is threatening to disaffiliate the Trades Council.

Thameside Trades Council has developed its opposition to imperialism in Ireland over a long period of time. In 1976 it voted 19 to 17 to support self-determination for the Irish people, and for a phased withdrawal of British troops. In 1977, it affiliated to the Trade Union Committee against the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). In July 1978, the 49 delegates passed a motion "deploring the systematic ill-treatment and torture of Irish prisoners in England and Ireland and supporting the demand for POW status" with only 9 votes against it. In November 1979 it voted for stronger motions including for the abolition of the PTA and the immediate withdrawal of British troops.

Now for taking a stand against imperialism, they are threatened with expulsion from the official trade union movement.

You can help by proposing motions condemning the TUC action at your trade union branch and trades council and sending copies to the TUC and Thameside Trades Council.

Thameside Trades Council can be contacted through:
Dave Hallsworth (Hon Sec),
186 Kings Road,
Ashton-under-Lyme,
Lancs. Tel: 061-330-7231.

AFGHANISTAN Cont'd from p7

Tarraki was killed. Amin still could not suppress the Afghan people's struggle for independence from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union continued to call him 'comrade' but...

THE NEW PUPPET - KARMAL

Fearing the loss of their investment and influence in the wide-scale national resistance, the Soviet Union sent in their own troops and killed Amin with his family and supporters in the Presidential Palace on December 27th, 1979. Karmal was brought in from Prague to set up a puppet government directly backed by Soviet troops.

The Social imperialists, and Karmal, would do well to remember that the Afghan people fought British imperialism at the height of its power for many decades... and they won.