

CLASS STRUGGLE ★

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LORRY DRIVERS' VICTORY BRINGS ATTACK ON PICKETING

For three successive years workers have seen their living standards slashed by the Labour/TUC "social contract" wage cuts. But tens of thousands of workers have already crushed Labour's hope of a phase four. The most recent victory, that of the lorry drivers, is surely the most emphatic. Many won their claim of £65 for a 35 hour week in full, while most have settled for around £64-65 for a 40 hour week.

But just as the tide of class struggle against the 5% has risen over the last few months, so also has the counter-offensive by the capitalist class and state, and their politicians.

VICIOUS COUNTER-ATTACK FROM BOSSES

Every dirty trick in the book has been used to sow disunity and confusion amongst strikers, and

the working class generally. They've tried to turn women (under the name of "housewives") against men. They've picked out small groups of strikers against the strikes and magnified their numbers so they seem to be a majority. Starting with the nine-week Ford strike and the pay struggle at Vauxhalls, they have been opposing the principle of mass meetings and have been pushing secret ballots instead. Strikers' families, at Ford's Dagenham and elsewhere have been obstructed from receiving social security payments. The Government has threatened a "State of Emergency" and the use of troops to carry out "essential services". All this is designed to sabotage the workers' fightback, and make sure that the workers pay for the bosses' crisis.

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INVASION OF KAMPUCHEA CONDEMNED



Waving the flag of Democratic Kampuchea, a woman led a forty strong picket from the Vietnamese Embassy through the streets of London in a militant demonstration condemning the brutal Soviet-backed invasion of independent socialist Kampuchea. Chanting "Hands off Kampuchea", and "Vietnamese Army go home", and "Soviet troops out", the demonstrators headed for the Soviet Embassy, distributing hundreds of leaflets to bystanders, which explained the importance and relevance of the invasion to the British working people. By the time it had reached its rallying point, the number on the march had doubled.

The demonstration was jointly organised by the RCLB, Communist Workers' Movement (CWM), and Association of Indian Communists (Marxist-Leninist) (AICML).

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It was joined by the Bangladeshi Workers' Association, black workers, Eritreans, Thai students and veterans from the 1960s solidarity campaign with the Indo-Chinese people.

An Eritrean told *Class Struggle*, "In Eritrea we face the same problems as the Kampuchean people. We are not fighting Ethiopians or Cubans, but the Soviet Union. We demonstrated on December 16th against the Soviet Union. Now we have come to help the Kampuchean people."

The Thai students faced constant police harassment. Wearing balaclavas to hide their identity from the Thai authorities, the police threatened them with arrest unless they took them off.

That evening at a powerful public meeting, 70 people, many from different nationalities of all continents, came to support the Kampuchean people. The platform of the meeting was flanked by the banners of the RCLB and the CWM, with the flag of Democratic Kampuchea above, and draped with a portrait of Pol Pot - the leader of the Communist Party of Kampuchea - and the slogans "Total Support for the Kampuchean People", "Down with Soviet-Vietnamese aggression".

The meeting opened with the Chairman reading messages of solidarity from the Committee of Patriots of Democratic Kampuchea (France) and the Kampuchean Committee (Netherlands).

The first speaker, from AICML, told the meeting that Vietnam had been a vanguard fighter against imperialism for 30 years, but in the short time from the liberation of their country from US imperialism in 1975, to 1978, it had itself become a small expansionist power. While the Vietnamese people had struggled so heroically, the leadership had let Soviet social imperialism into the country and had become its puppet.

The CWM representative paid tribute to Malcolm Caldwell, the anti-imperialist intellectual who firmly supported the struggles of the Kampuchean people, and accused the Hanoi regime for murdering him whilst he was visiting Kampuchea in December. He continued by describing the strategy of the Soviet Union in South East Asia. He said the Soviet Union was in a stalemate in Europe, so was carrying

out a flanking manoeuvre to gain control of the Pacific sea routes, to be in a position to strangle Europe. It was also trying to rig up a Warsaw Pact-style "Collective Security System" in the area. The speaker pointed out most strongly that the National Liberation struggles in the area were led by well-tempered Communist Parties who had absolutely no illusions in the benevolence of the New Tsars in the Kremlin.

The RCLB speaker demolished the lies put out by the capitalist press about Democratic Kampuchea. It was the American war-machine that had committed genocide by murdering 800,000 Kampucheans in their war against Indo-China. A barrage of publicity had tried to blame the Communist Party of Kampuchea, who had to restrain the people from revenging themselves against those who had brutally exploited them for so long.

The charges of "forced labour" he said was what the bosses constantly bleat when they find out that they have to work for the first time in their lives.

He paid tribute to the far-sighted policy of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea who had saved the war refugees from starvation, built up a strong agricultural system to feed its population, and who had long-prepared for the inevitable invasion of their country by Soviet aggressors.

The Bangladeshi Workers' Association speaker explained that it was the people of the third world who were taking the brunt of Soviet aggression and it was the third world who were the main force in the struggle against it.

Contributors from the floor expressed their determined solidarity with the Kampuchean people, and a message of support was sent to them.

The singing of the *Internationale* brought the meeting to a close with a feeling of militancy, unity and optimism.

PALESTINIANS OPPOSE NEW ZIONIST SETTLEMENTS

The Israeli Government recently decided to spend a further 700 million Israeli pounds for expanding its settlements in occupied Arab territories. A