

# CLASS STRUGGLE

No 14 July 1977 MONTHLY

FIVE PENCE

## GRUNWICK – MILITANT CLASS SOLIDARITY against police repression and opportunist treachery



The strike at the Grunwick mail-order film processing company has been the focus of class solidarity and militant struggle to an extent that has not been seen for several years. Militant working class unity has met with both direct repression and social democratic betrayal.

### FIGHT BACK AGAINST SUPER-EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION

Before the strike Grunwick's employed 450 weekly paid staff, mainly processors, printers and clerical staff. Nine tenths of the workers are black, mainly east African Asians. Most of the workers are women. One worker said: "We went to work there because we were new to the country and were not aware of rates of pay. We didn't know anything about unions". Grunwick is built on the super-exploitation and oppression of black workers. Wage rates were £28 for a 40 hour week and £25 for 35 hours for clerical staff. Overtime, sometimes up to 11 o'clock at night, is

compulsory. Women clerical workers had to put up their hands like children to go to the toilet. Holidays cannot be taken in summer, there is no compensation for this.

The average basic rate in the industry is £50 per week.

In the last 4 years, one strike of 6 weeks, and one of 4 weeks have been defeated.

Workers who talked of unions were sacked for petty reasons. In August 1976 a worker who had been given an extra quota of work, and failed to complete it was sacked. The anger of the workers at their conditions burst out. 250 walked out and joined the union, APEX. They were all sacked.

### CLASS SOLIDARITY

Grunwick workers' own militant struggle, received massive support from other workers. Many trade union branches, trades councils and black workers' organisations, like the Indian Workers' Association (Great Britain) have backed the struggle. Kodak workers have blacked all supplies. Shops have **broken links** with Grunwicks. Most important, because of the mail-order nature (cont'd on p2)

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ure of the firm, was the blacking of mail, in November 1976 by post office workers.

Labour Party Trade Union leaders worked to divert reliance on class solidarity into reliance on reformist illusions. Tom Jackson, the post workers' union leader, got post office workers to call off the blacking and the dispute went to ACAS, the arbitration service established by the Labour government. It took till March for ACAS to 'recommend' recognition of the Union by the company. Grunwick's still does not recognise the union of course. One striker, Kamlesh Gandhi, pointed out that this was a loss of 6 months to the strikers.

The strikers urged union leaders of the electricians and water-supply workers to black these services. They were told to take these requests through TUC leader Len Murray. When this was done, the union leaders still did not respond, despite many resolutions in support from union branches.

In June, in defiance of direct orders by Tom Jackson, postal workers in the Brent and Cricklewood branches of the UPW reimposed their blacking of mail, despite threats of court action against them.

The TUC, throughout the strike, has passed many resolutions in support of the strike, but the experience of the strikers shows that they cannot rely on Labour trade union leaders, or Labour government sponsored bodies like ACAS. They can only rely on militant class solidarity and action.

#### MASS STRUGGLE

The strikers stepped up their struggle, by calling for support for mass picketing to stop scab labour from June 13th. Supporters have come from as far as Belfast, Scotland, South Wales and Yorkshire. The police responded with extreme brutality attacking and arresting the pickets for "obstruction" and on other charges.

The Special Patrol Group, dreamt up by the last Labour government as a strike breaking and demonstration busting force, has also been used. The SPG is renowned in Brixton and other parts of London for racist attacks on black youth. On June 14th, Jyoti Patel, a strike leader was attacked by the SPG at the back gate. He was beaten up, to shouts of "Paki bastard"

by the police. He has been charged with assaulting the police. Pickets who protested were also arrested. This is just one example of the police activity.

The local police superintendent has resigned from the force and joined Grunwick's as a personnel manager. Despite threatening stories from Grunwick management, the mass picket is having effect. On the first day 11 West Indian women workers left the factory and joined the picket.

#### MORE LABOUR TRICKERY

In response to intensified police harassment and the arrest of hundreds of strikers, the strike committee stated in its bulletin on June 16th: "We urge workplaces to undertake stoppages of work, so that our picket is swelled to the point where the police will not be able to harass and intimidate us".

That weekend APEX general secretary, Roy Grantham, tried to sabotage this call by calling for a limit of 500 pickets, and telling other workers not to support the picket. The strikers stuck to their decision and the mass picket continued.

Roy Grantham continued his reformist treachery, stating in a press interview that he wanted "effective control between the police and ourselves over the situation". He, and the APEX executive, ordered the strike committee to limit the picket to 500. On Friday, June 24th the strike committee stated: "We were not consulted about the statement and we totally reject Mr Grantham's views about picketing. Today's violence was caused by the SPG". They congratulated workers who had given support and called for them to "come in ever greater numbers". "We will not tolerate any betrayal of the goals", they said.

Grantham responded in a radio interview, that afternoon, that the APEX executive was in charge of the strike, not the elected strike committee! At the same time Labour leaders started calling for another Arbitration procedure.

The Grunwick strike has been characterised by police brutality and social democratic opportunist betrayals, but more importantly it has been characterised by militant working class action despite all difficulties. This is what will win the struggle!

# CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE STATE

The Grunwick dispute is just one of the many daily examples that show the true nature of the state. As Lenin said:

"According to Marx the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another."

This class nature of the state shows itself in two interconnected ways: firstly state forces are used to directly repress the economic and political struggles of the working class. The actions of the police, and particularly the SPG, at Grunwick's vividly shows this. Secondly, and closely connected, the state appears as a "power apparently standing above society which became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict and keeping it within the bounds of 'order', as Engels put it. As long as there are classes, class struggle will continue. The state cannot conciliate this struggle, or act in the 'national interest' or interests 'of the whole people' as the opportunists claim. It is "an organ of class rule". What it does do is to lay down and enforce rules for the class struggle. As Engels and Lenin pointed out, the state produces "large bodies of armed men" to enforce the rules when necessary. As Gibson, the police Deputy Assistant Commissioner, who is in charge of public order, said of the Grunwick dispute: "We are merely maintaining the rights of both parties." The Arbitration service, ACAS, is another example of a state body aimed at "moderating" the conflict and keeping it "within the bounds of 'order'". Having described the state as an organ of class rule and oppression, Lenin goes on: "it creates 'order', which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes."

Through this method it preserves the ruling class in power, whilst 'appearing' to stand as a 'neutral' in the class struggle.

The reformists and revisionists do everything in their power to confuse this understanding of the true nature of the state, and the revolutionary politics that arises from this knowledge. ■

All quotes from Lenin in this article are taken from his great pamphlet 'The State and Revolution'. Available from New Era Books. Price 25p + 7p postage and packing.

# Revolution

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Revolution 5 includes:

### CALL TO THE BRITISH MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT

At the present time the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain is small and disunited. But through active ideological struggle these negative features can be overcome. We must mobilize all positive factors for the socialist revolution. This article states the three main steps to be taken now in the struggle for unity. These are: to criticise small group mentality; to criticise the errors of the CPB(M-L) and to struggle to unite to form larger democratic centralist organisations.

### FIRMLY GRASP THE MASS LINE IN BUILDING COMMUNIST BASES

The central mass work task for revolutionary Communists is to forge strong links with the working class. This is the way in which the future revolutionary Communist Party will be built as a proletarian vanguard. In building bases in the factories revolutionary Communists must grasp and use the mass line, which is the method for learning from the masses, integrating with them and giving leadership to the struggles of the working class. It is an important weapon in struggling to integrate the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the British revolution.

Revolution 5 also contains an article on "The Ten Major Relationships" - a speech made by Mao, recently published by the CPC; an article on revisionism in Britain, which criticises the new draft of the British Road to Socialism, and shows how revisionism serves the bourgeoisie; and a Chinese article concerning relations within the family, which contains some important lessons on transforming the family into a fighting unit of the proletariat.

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# STOP BRITISH AID TO SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

Europe, with its concentration of skilled workers, modern industry, banking and trade, has always been the focal point of contention between the two superpowers as they struggle for world domination.

After the last world war, US imperialism came to dominate many of the capitalist economies of western Europe, taking thousands of millions of pounds of profits from these countries, profits earned by the sweat and toil of European workers.

Now though, the fascist rulers of the Soviet Union are attempting to win this 'prize' from the US. During the last few years the USSR has been spreading smoke-screens of 'security in Europe', in order to create among the European people a false sense of security and 'detente'. Taking advantage of the crisis of capitalism in western Europe it has been intensifying expansion and economic infiltration, with the aim of elbowing out the US, and shaking off its own economic difficulties.

## LABOUR HELPS SOVIET IMPERIALISM

The Soviet Union thirsts after western European capital and technology. This is because frantic arms expansion and war preparations have produced a dislocated economy, with capital shortages and technical backwardness in many soviet industries. In order to try and overcome this weakness, the USSR has been intensifying trade and investment deals with western Europe, largely financed by low interest loans and credit from the west. In 1974 the Labour government gave £900 million worth of credits to the USSR. The low interests meant that the British people subsidised Soviet social imperialism to the tune of about £200 million.

The Soviet Union's most spectacular 'successes' so far have been in shipping. Its cargo-liner fleet is now the largest in the world. As a result of grants from the Soviet Navy for 'services' like spying, and because of poor wages, Soviet shipping agencies use low rates to win transport orders from big European companies like Phillips and ICI. The USSR also gets customers for its ships, by ordering its commercial negotiators in other industries to refuse to sign contracts with western companies unless the terms give the USSR control over selecting the shipping line and marine insurance agency. As a result, 84% of the cargo shipped between Britain

and the USSR travels on Soviet ships, and is insured by the Black Sea and Baltic General Insurance Co. in London.

## SOVIET BACK-STABBING

The Soviet imperialists claim to be the 'friend and natural ally' of the third world, but one look at the activities of NAFTA, the Soviet oil agency, shows how big a lie that is.

During 1973, while Soviet diplomats toured the Middle East encouraging the oil producing countries of OPEC to keep up their correct embargo on western countries imposed to support the anti-Zionist war, NAFTA salesmen scrambled round Europe selling both Soviet oil, and oil that the 'friendly' USSR had bought cheaply in the Middle East!

By 1975, OPEC had increased the price of oil to the West. A large part of the extra revenue the Middle East states receives goes to support the liberation struggles of the Palestinian and Southern African peoples. The Soviet Union once again showed itself to be a vicious enemy of the third world. NAFTA announced a 10% reduction in the selling price of Soviet oil, stabbing the peoples of the Middle East and Africa in the back. NAFTA are now talking about consolidating their new position by building refineries in Western Europe.

## 'LEARNING' FROM THE WEST

The Soviet Union attempts to overcome its technological backwardness, by setting up "Joint Companies" in "co-operation" with Western European corporations. In Letchworth the USSR has set up a company called UMO Plant Hire, which works with Massey-Ferguson building and selling construction plant. In this way the Soviet imperialists get a foothold into the British market, and get Massey-Ferguson to help them with their technical problems.

Setting up a banking network in Western Europe is also an important part of intensified Soviet economic penetration. In London the Moscow Narodny Bank has joined with the commercial bank Morgan Grenfell and Co. to form East-West Leasing. This gives them easier access to British customers and 'partners', as well as an entry

(cont'd on p5)

# UTTER HYPOCRISY

The last month has seen a massive press campaign against President Amin of Uganda. The press and the Labour government whips up anti-Amin hysteria, while weeping crocodile tears for the Ugandan people.

At the same time, the Silver Jubilee has been in full swing. The press lauds to the skies the 'great historical traditions' of the monarchy.

## WEALTH BUILT ON THE BLOOD OF THIRD WORLD PEOPLES

While 1½ million are unemployed and countless workers slave on the breadline, the Queen, the country's largest landowner, lives in 4 palaces and is paid £1 million a year. Her personal wealth is at least £43 million, and her profits from investments are taxfree.

Every pound of the royal family's vast wealth is stained with blood.

The Queen and her forbears presided over the whole bloodthirsty history of the British Empire. In India local craftsmen

## STOP BRITISH AID TO

## SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM (*cont'd from p4*)

into, and experience of, Western banking and financing.

## KICK THE SOVIET PLUNDERERS OUT

While all this Soviet activity is a threat, not just to European workers, but to European capitalists as well, many capitalists and governments go along with it, as they pursue their endless search for profit. In the 1930's individual capitalists and governments did deals with German fascism, only to make Nazi Germany strong enough to go to war. Like the Nazi's, the Soviet fascists are preparing for war. We should smash their plans at every opportunity -

**NO MORE GOVERNMENT AID TO SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM!**

**SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM GET OUT OF EUROPE!**

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were starved to death by the import of cheap British manufactures. The population of Dacca, where cloth was woven, fell from 150,000 to 20,000 in 20 years. In 1857, the first Indian war of Independence was crushed. Indian patriots were killed by being fired from cannons, and mass hangings. 6,000 men, women and children were killed in Allahabad alone. In Amritsar, in 1919, British troops opened fire on a peaceful meeting, murdering 379, and wounding 12,000. To reap profits from opium addiction, British imperialism fought 2 wars against China, to force China to allow import and sale of the drug.

In 1879, in southern Africa masses of the Zulu people were murdered, after the battle of Ulundi, where thousands of Zulus had been killed. British occupation expeditions in Africa in search of profits, bloodily suppressed the resistance of the Matabele and Mashona. In Kenya and Uganda, Africans were deprived of their land which was given to white colonialist planters.

Since the second world war British troops have fought imperialist wars in Palestine, Korea, Malaysia, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden and Ireland. This is the 'tradition' the imperialist Labour government and the press want us to cheer!

## WHY THE ANTI-AMIN CAMPAIGN?

Obviously, the concern of the British imperialists is not for the Ugandan people or 'human rights'! British imperialism wants to assert its 'right' to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. The third world people are winning great successes in the struggle for independence. In particular the struggle in southern Africa against racism and colonialism is making great gains. British imperialism wants to stir up racism, to divert support from the struggles of the peoples of the third world, and to divide black and white workers in Britain.

The stand of our class must be clear. Uganda is an independent third world country oppressed by imperialism. It is for the Ugandan people themselves to solve their own problems, and they will surely do so in a way which serves their own interests. British imperialism only wants to serve its own profit and power. British imperialism stay out!

# THE CHINESE PEOPLE UNITE

Last October, just after the death of Chairman Mao, four leading members of the Chinese Communist Party - the 'Gang of Four' - were arrested for plotting an armed rebellion. Throughout China the workers and peasants came together to celebrate their **defeat**. According to some Canadians working in China who attended one of these meetings:

"It was the happiest celebration we've ever witnessed in China, with lion-dancing, fireworks etc., despite a steady drizzle of rain. Many people told us that it was like the celebrations held at Liberation."

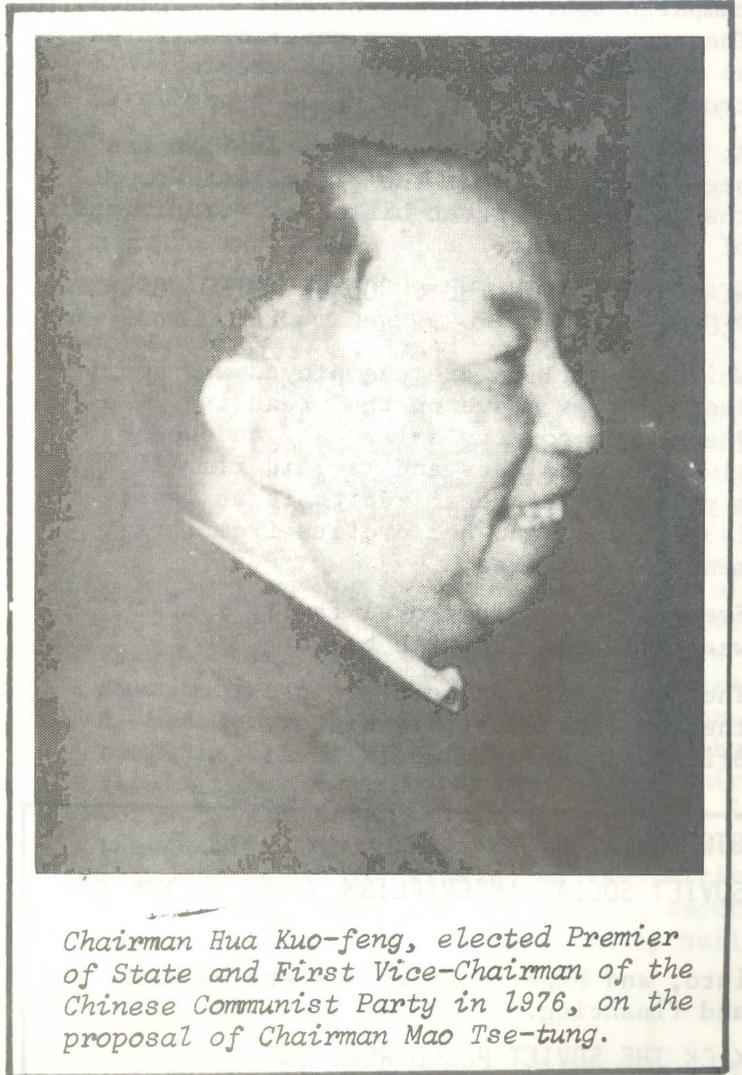
In May of this year Chinese Vice-President Yu Chin-li said that since the fall of the 'Gang of Four' "relations have been **closer** among comrades in our Party, **between** the Party and the masses, **between** the cadres and the masses...Up and down our country an atmosphere of unity in struggle now prevails."

## LEARNING FROM THE PEOPLE

For the past nine months the Chinese people have been coming together to talk about the activities of the 'Gang of Four', and to try to understand how it was that they did so much damage to the economy of the country and came so close to overthrowing the government. In this **way**, through relying on the masses of the people, the Chinese Communist Party was able to collect evidence of the Gang's crimes, and also to educate itself and the Chinese people on the need to strengthen the power of the working class and peasants against their class enemies.

## A COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY BASE

The testimony of the Chinese people shows that for many years the 'Gang of Four' had been plotting together to seize power in China. In order to do this they set up a secret faction inside the Communist Party. They were strongest in the great industrial city of Shanghai, and they used their positions there to build up a power base. They held high positions in the Party, and in particular, they and their supporters had control over the press. This allowed them to play up their own roles as great revolutionaries, and



*Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, elected Premier of State and First Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party in 1976, on the proposal of Chairman Mao Tse-tung.*

also to hide their real intentions for a long time. They recruited thugs, careerists and other bad elements from among the population and promoted them within the Party in order to strengthen their own power. Any honest people who spoke up against their activities were persecuted.

## "SEIZE POWER AMIDST THE CHAOS"

The point of all this was so that they would be able to "stabilize Shanghai, create turmoil in other places, and seize power amidst the chaos". To this end the Gang resorted to a number of tactics. In 1974 they formed a secret 'Cabinet' to co-ordinate their opposition to the

# AGAINST THE 'GANG OF FOUR'

Chinese Communist Party. They compiled dossiers on leading members of the Party fabricating evidence and distorting speeches in order to show how they were 'Counter-revolutionaries'. Above all they directed their attack against the veteran revolutionaries who had fought with Mao Tsetung in the long, hard years of the Chinese revolution. They labelled such people - right up to and including Chou En Lai, 'Bourgeois democrats' who stood in the path of the 'real' revolutionaries.

As well as these 'splitting' activities, the 'Gang of Four' used their followers to stir up trouble in many parts of the country. They distorted Mao's own words in order to encourage people to work less for the building of a strong, self-reliant China. They said that 'production' was a bad thing. The result of this was that in places where they had influence there were actual shortages and hardship.

Not content with this, the Gang also tried to build up a military force to support their plans. Since they had little influence in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) they reorganised the 'People's Militia' in Shanghai. They took the factory workers' militia away from the leadership of the factory committees and put them under their own direct control. They forced the Shanghai PLA Garrison to hand over funds and weapons to this militia. They even ordered factories to stop doing what they were supposed to do, and to produce mini machine guns for their own use. On the death of Chairman Mao they called on their followers to distribute arms and ammunition to the Militia and to prepare for an uprising. Their plans were thwarted when militia units refused to follow their orders, and exposed their plots to the factory committees.

## CLASS STRUGGLE

The plans of the 'Gang of Four' were a direct threat to the workers' dictatorship in China. It would be quite wrong to see in these events simply a 'power struggle' in China. Mao Tsetung showed us how class struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie continues after the socialist revolution. He said that the new bourgeois

ruling class would be found inside the Communist Party itself if the Party became separated from the people. This is exactly what happened with the 'Gang of Four'!

## COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES

They gained a lot of prestige during and after the Cultural Revolution by claiming to be radicals, and by attacking anyone who opposed them as 'Bourgeois' or 'Counter-revolutionary'. In this way they not only won over careerists, they also confused many genuine Communists. We now know that - far from being radicals-- the 'Gang of Four' were in fact counter-revolutionaries. They lived lives of luxury cut off from the ordinary people. They granted themselves massive salaries out of the wealth produced by the working people. Mao Tsetung said that "The masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant". The 'Gang of Four' claimed that they themselves were the heroes, and they looked down on the masses and tried to mislead them.

In the field of production, their policies would have opened the way to the restoration of capitalism. A striking example of this comes from Wenchow where a follower of the Gang led a factional struggle which seriously disrupted the economy. Shortages led to the growth of speculation, and private enterprise, black markets and the further division of the land into private plots. Since the struggle against the 'Gang of Four' and their ideas started, production has increased.

## TWO ROADS

There are only two lines, two roads - the socialist road, or the capitalist road. If the plans of the 'Gang of Four' had succeeded, it would have led to the restoration of capitalism in China, as has happened in the USSR. They did not succeed because the Chinese Communist Party is a great Party which has been strengthened through many difficult struggles, and because the Chinese people - "the real heroes" - stood up and blocked the path of the four counter-revolutionaries. The mass movement to expose the 'Gang of Four' has further united the people and the Party. ■

# WESTLAND WORKERS GROWING RESISTANCE

In early June, following the renewal of their pay claim, 2000 production workers at Westland Helicopters (WHL) Yeovil site began a campaign of one day strikes. WHL responded by announcing the transfer of Gazelle helicopter production to Weston-Super-Mare 7 months ahead of schedule. Tooling and partly assembled helicopters were to be moved to beat the workers' struggle. In mid-June the move began but was immediately stopped by machines and tools being chained down by the workers. In one incident a machine was towed across the factory on the company's instructions, only to be towed straight back and firmly secured. Dozens of workers were suspended without pay in such incidents.

Before Easter WHL announced large-scale redundancies to cover-up the withdrawal of their own pay proposals for the shop floor, following pressure from the government, CBI and Engineering Employers Federation through the parent company - Westland Aircraft. Redundancies were aimed at enforcing discipline in the factory and accompanied by a statement that there would be no pay increase. During May the bosses secured 850 voluntary redundancies throughout the factory. Many workers have fought for the right to work through opposing redeployment. Many more have grasped that job cuts mean speed-up for the thousands left in work and massive unemployment, especially among youth. Two sections continued this fight, the stores and the inspectors, in the face of suspensions. It will be a real step forward when all the unions grasp that fighting redeployment and speed-up is in the interests of the work-

ing class. That the bosses must be fought in an all-sided way.

## BOSSSES CORNERED

The bosses are in a desperate position in meeting deliveries on the new Lynx helicopters under production at the Yeovil site. WHL had planned to be producing 12 machines a month, but so far it has only averaged 2! It is seeking to move workers from Gazelle work to concentrate on the Lynx. And there have just been 850 redundancies! Deliveries of the Lynx to the British army is 18 months behind contract, as are all foreign contracts. A twist to the bosses' crisis is that in large parts of the factory they are many months ahead of schedule. Hence WHL's contradictory policies. This is clearly expressed in the managing director's letter to all hourly-paid workers. He said that the company "is not prepared to pay any more money at present" at the beginning, and finishes, saying they are willing to "explore with the unions a solution" to the pay claim.

Throughout these struggles Westland bosses have sought to divide workers and undermine their organisation and leadership. Objectively the bosses are weak. Referring to the redundancies and the company's wage freeze, one worker said "most people feel they have been punched on the nose twice by the company and they won't take it again". Another worker summed it up, "The bosses certainly made a mess of the Lynx - many workers realise that the bosses have problems, but they also realise that the bosses are shoving them all onto us!" ■

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# A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN MUST HAVE A really vivid imagination. He keeps giving those forecasts of economic recovery for Britain being just around the corner. But the facts show the opposite.

In the construction industry new contracts placed in the first quarter of this year were 15% down on the same period last year. This resulted in more than 2,000 architects being laid off in the last 12 months, while tens of thousands of building work workers remain unemployed. The steel output for April was down by nearly one fifth of the total for the same month last year.

These are both key industries, in that production in industry generally is affected to some extent by their performances. Furthermore, industrial investment for the first quarter of this year dropped 3% from the total for the last quarter of 1976. Far from recovery, capitalism in Britain continues its plunge into crisis ■

LIBERATION FIGHTERS IN ZIMBABWE (RHODESIA) recently dealt more blows against the racist Smith regime. A railway bridge and a stretch of track between Salisbury and Bulawayo were destroyed. The attack was described as the biggest reported in this district. Guerillas also destroyed many high-tension electricity pylons, causing a one-day power cut in Salisbury.

The racist regime's government, meanwhile, has announced that conscription to the Rhodesian army will be increased to more than six months a year for men aged between 17 and 35. This desperate move is a futile attempt to hold back the growing successes of the Zimbabwean people. ■

AFTER 2 YEARS OF SOCIAL CONTRACT/WAGE CUTS and with rents, fares, fuel costs, etc., increasing, working class families are having to eat less food. Official figures issued recently show that people in Britain consumed 2% less food in the last six months than in the previous six months. And it wasn't because the 'ignorant workers' are spending all their wages on beer and cigarettes, as consumption of these fell also - 7½% and 5% respectively. ■

HOT ON THE HEELS OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S nationalisation of the British aerospace industry comes news that the French government is to take a one-third stake in the firm Marcel Dassault-Breguet Aviation (makers of the Mirage jet fighters). According to the bosses' paper the 'Financial Times' this will bring the company under the "effective control" of the government. The other two big companies in the French aerospace industry - Aerospatiale and Snecma - are both already fully State-owned.

The opposition alliance of the so-called 'Communist' Party and the Socialists, had planned to nationalise this company if they win next year's general election. But here they have been beaten to it by the French conservative government. No disagreement there about what is in the interests of capitalism!

Nationalisation means rationalisation. Again, as in Britain, a reduction in the workforce will follow. In fact the government statement says that the purpose of the deal is "in order to rationalise the structures of the country's aircraft construction industry." ■

THE NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY, ROY MASON, recently announced new tactics to be adopted by the British Army in Northern Ireland. The changes result in the army placing more emphasis on "under-cover operations", described by Mason as "SAS-style activity." Already, about 60 of the ruthless SAS soldiers have been involved in "plain-clothes operations" in South Armagh since January 1976, and Mason announced in December that SAS operations would be extended to other areas of the country, including Belfast. More troops who have been specially trained in this under-cover activity are being sent over to Northern Ireland shortly. ■

These changes coincide with the news that the new Commanding Officer of the British army in Northern Ireland will be Maj.-Gen. Timothy Creasey. He has already had plenty of experience in this subversive type of work, in leading the troops defending Oman and Dofar - the oil rich state in the Middle East, still dominated by British imperialism. No doubt the army's further experience of undercover work in Northern Ireland will come in useful for the bosses some time in the future. Here in Britain, maybe! ■

# U.S. TRIES TO STOP THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

The US leopard will never change its spots. At the recent International Economic Co-operation Conference in Paris, the US led many of the industrialised countries in fighting to reverse the developing trend of co-operation between developed and developing countries. The Conference took place after over 2 years of preparation and fierce struggle. That the Conference was finally called is due mainly to the united and persistent stand of the 19 third world countries taking part. Two agreements were reached a) to set up a common fund to stabilize prices of raw materials and b) to set up a special aid fund to help the very poor countries pay off foreign debts.

## RAW MATERIALS

The just demand of the third world countries that prices for raw materials be fixed according to the level of inflation in the industrial countries was rejected. The US has time and again tried to divert the discussions on raw materials in general, into a specific discussion on energy: this is no accident - what they are really worried about is their oil! The US even proposed the setting up of a permanent panel on energy, in an attempt to guarantee the supply of oil to industrial countries at prices they would find acceptable. This attitude was firmly rejected by all third world countries. The Foreign Minister of Algeria said: "We are opposed to regular consultations between oil-producing countries and developed nations to the extent that such consultations would be aimed at restricting or limiting our freedom of action". This "freedom of action" must include the freedom to demand realistic prices for their raw materials - realistic, that is, in terms of the world market and not as a result of unequal treaties between big powers and little countries.

## DEBTS

The developing countries collectively owe \$200,000 million to industrial countries. The Conference has agreed to set up a 'special aid fund' of \$1,000 million to help them pay the debts. It is a drop in the ocean!

How did such big debts arise in the first place? The short answer is, through imperialist and colonialist plunder of their national resources and economies; it is

an established imperialist practice to buy raw materials cheap and sell goods dear. The third world is weighed down by a hundred unequal trading agreements. This tendency has increased in recent years, because of the economic problems inside the industrial countries. The imperialist ruling classes not only screw their own working classes into the ground to try to solve their crises - they take advantage of the economic weaknesses of the third world as well.

The third world countries demanded the cancellation of their foreign debts. This is a demand we must support, since they are debts caused by plunder and exploitation. But only 2 countries, Canada and Sweden, agreed to cancel the debts. All others, including Britain, refused point blank.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW?

The main forces in the struggle against the 2 superpowers, USA and USSR, are the countries of the third world. They are standing up in unison against imperialist exploitation and oppression. Their fight for a new economic world order based on equality and justice is a courageous and realistic one, which is in the interests of oppressed people everywhere.

The smaller imperialist countries are caught in the middle of this struggle. As imperialists, they oppose the just demands of the third world; but they too suffer from superpower domination, and try to steal a march on them. As the weaker imperialists they are more likely to compromise with the third world.

The British ruling class is desperately trying to hang onto the coat-tails of US imperialism to preserve its imperialist interests. Other small imperialist and developed capitalist countries, like France, Canada and Sweden, see that it is in their interests to continue talks and compromise further. Only in this way can they break the economic stranglehold of US imperialism and make sure that Soviet social imperialism cannot take advantage of their economic problems.

This trend of further isolating the two main enemies of all the peoples and nations of the world - Soviet social imperialism and US imperialism - is excellent.