

# socialist appeal

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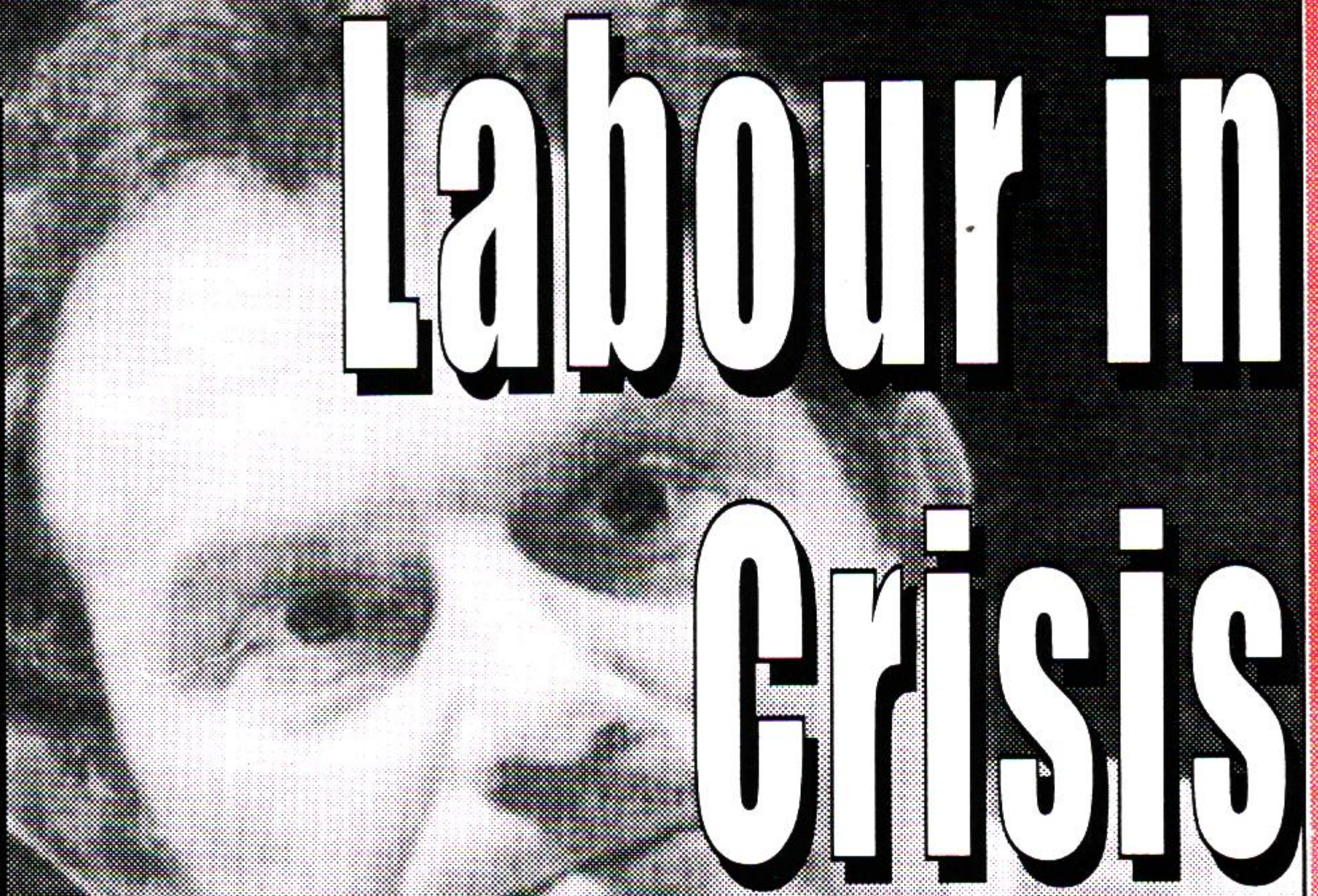
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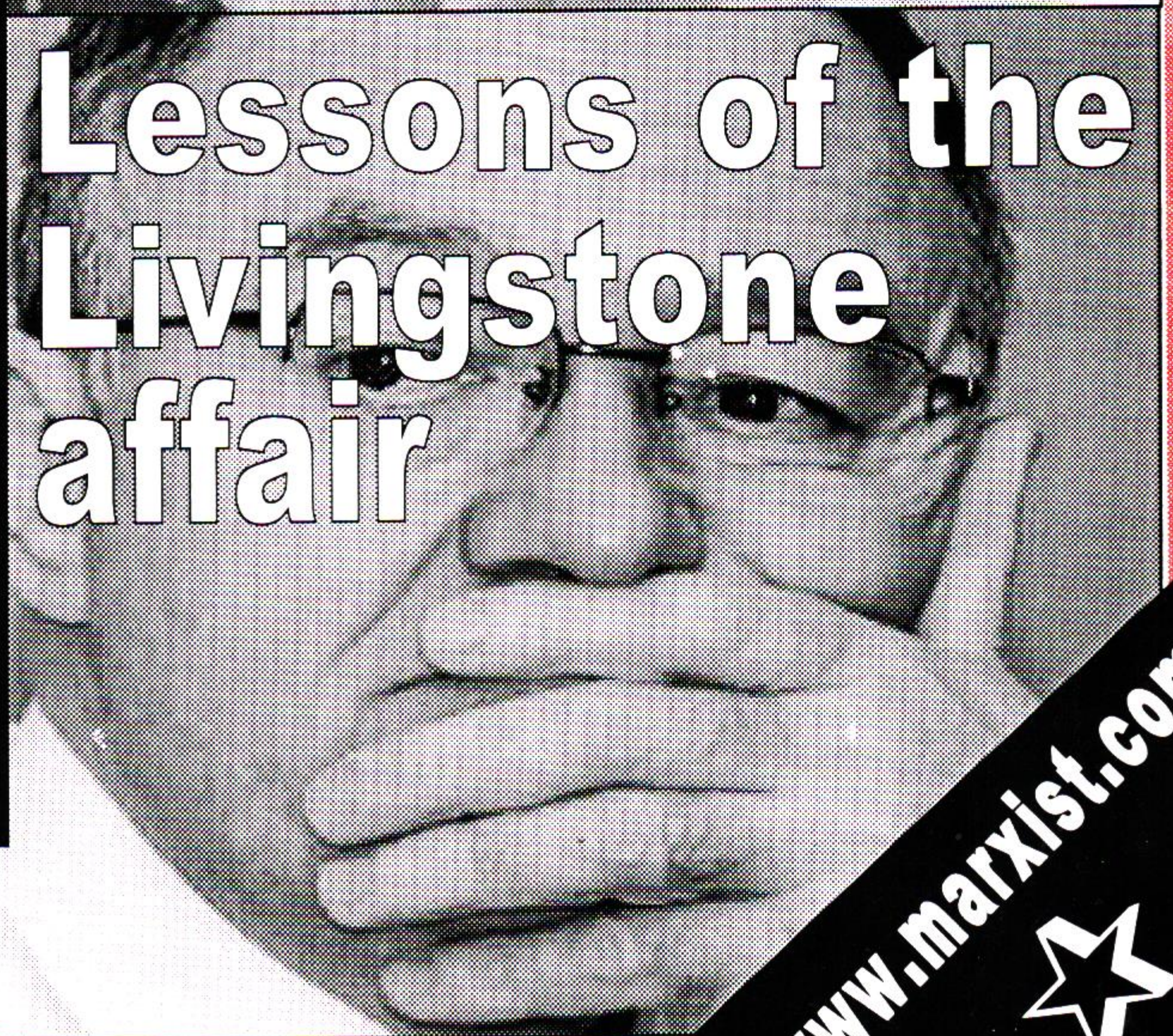
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# Labour in Crisis



# Lessons of the Livingstone affair

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# The Livingstone Affair

## How to really fight the Millbank Mafia

As we go to press, Ken Livingstone has not yet declared if he intends to stand or not as an independent candidate for London Mayor. The whole selection affair has thrown the ranks of the Labour Party - especially in London - into turmoil. There is widespread revulsion and anger at the blatant stitch-up by the Blairite machine to block Ken Livingstone becoming the Labour candidate, when he had clearly won the support of the majority of Labour members in the capital.

Even the capitalist press has been forced to recognise the dishonest actions of the rightwing leadership of the party. The Evening Standard described it as "Millbank's outrageous fix", while the Independent called the selection "gerrymandering".

The Blairites have been prepared to stoop into the gutter and resort to any underhand means to secure their man - Dobson - as the candidate. A well-orchestrated campaign was engineered in Millbank, and backed by Downing Street, to discredit Livingstone. Then, when they realised they would lose in a one-member, one-vote election, they wheeled out the electoral college to rig the vote. Pro-Livingstone unions were disbarred, while a handful of MPs, MEPs and London Assembly candidates were given a third of the votes!

While all London trade unions balloted their members over the issue, giving Livingstone overwhelming support, the right-wing AEEU leaders refused a ballot, and undemocratically put all their votes behind Dobson. Many AEEU members are furious at this manoeuvre, and recognise the hypocrisy of Ken Jackson, who is fond of lecturing the rest of the Labour movement about democracy. The spurious reason given was that the union couldn't afford it. The rightwing spends its members' money in far more worthwhile ventures - like holding its annual conference in Jersey. The same stitch-up was used by the South London Co-op Party to back

Dobson.

Similar methods were used by the Blairites to ensure the defeat of Rhodri Morgan in Wales and secure the election of Alun Michael, Blair's chosen candidate, as the leader of the Wales Labour Party. This blatant manipulation by the Millbank machine gave rise to widespread disappointment and anger, and the loss of seats to Plaid Cymru in the Assembly elections. Out of protest, Labour lost the rock-solid strongholds of the Rhondda, Islwyn and Llanelli. It was a severe blow against Alun Michael and the Blair leadership. Within months the whole thing began to unwind, and Michael was forced to make way for Rhodri Morgan.

Building on their underhand methods in Wales, the Blairites robbed Livingstone of his victory in London. Without doubt, Livingstone won the overwhelming support of the London Labour movement. Out of the number of votes cast, Livingstone polled 74,646, while Dobson managed to pick up 22,275. This constituted a massive rejection of Blair and his policies. But such niceties could not be allowed to stand in the way. Livingstone had to be stopped at all costs. Blairites cannot tolerate any opposition to their pro-capitalists policies. Livingstone has taken a firm stand against the privatisation of the London Underground - a policy supported by the bulk of Labour Party members - but anathema to the leadership.

These blatant Tammany Hall methods have also alienated many Blairites. In a letter to The Guardian, Councillor Simon Stanley, Kensington and Chelsea, protested:

"I voted for Blair as leader, supported him over Clause 4, approved of his rapprochement with Murdoch and the City and, yes, I voted for Frank. I could probably be described as an archetypal New Labour councillor, yet the patience even of loyalists like me has worn ever thinner by



the arrogant, ill-advised and politically maladroit antics of Downing Street and Millbank.

And now, try as they might, they cannot deny the dismal result of their handling of the selection process, because their strategies have brought the party to the verge of schism and they have only themselves to blame. I have not seen such crass and monumental incompetence as I have over devolution since the days of John Major's premiership."

(The Guardian, 24 February)

The rank and file of the movement correctly see both Dobson and Alun Michael as stooges of Blair. They are yes-men. They support all the unpopular policies of privatisation, and the government's pro-Tory policies on health, education and the economy. The big votes for Morgan and Livingstone were an open expression of opposition to Blairism.

Nevertheless, disgust with Blairite sharp practices is not enough on its own to explain the widespread support for Livingstone over Dobson. It reflects the growing disillusionment and disenchantment with the pro-big business policies of the government, also expressed in the low turn-outs in a string of elections. The latest being the Ceredigion by-election in January where Plaid Cymru retained its seat and Labour was beaten into fourth place behind the Liberals and Tories.

Blair is not trusted by the ranks of his own party. How can it be otherwise when



he has stated openly that it was a mistake to found the Labour Party, and once praised Thatcherism as a "necessary act of modernisation"? The Blairites, surrounded by the likes of David Sainsbury and Bob Ayling, are Tory/Liberal infiltrators who are attempting to subvert the Labour Party and change it into an openly capitalist party. This is the so-called 'Blair Project' which he is trying to foster at every stage.

### Opposition

The vote for Livingstone reflects a groundswell of opposition to this course.

However, the key question is: how can the opposition to Blairism be carried forward? Livingstone was absolutely correct to state that the election was "tainted" and demand that Dobson stand down. But the Blairites will not retreat.

Nevertheless, the idea of Livingstone standing as an independent candidate does not solve the problem. However understandable Ken Livingstone's frustration may be, and however much hundreds of thousands of Londoners may relish the idea of giving Blair a bloody nose, standing as an independent will not undermine Blairism or challenge the rightwing grip at the top of the Labour Party.

There is certainly huge pressure for Livingstone to stand independently. Polls have suggested that Livingstone could win in the first round, by picking up Labour, Liberal and Tory voters. Even a number of capitalist papers, like the Evening Standard, are keen for him to go it alone for a number of reasons. Some want Livingstone to split the Labour vote and allow Norris to win. The rightwing Economist magazine has raised this scenario, adding that this would be a crushing blow to Livingstone.

Others, like the London Region of the RMT, are urging Livingstone to stand, given his opposition to the partial privatisation of the London Underground. But even if Livingstone wins, there is no guarantee of this. The only real way to prevent privatisation is for the RMT to prepare the ground for all-out industrial action which will paralyse London, including the City.

A Livingstone victory as an "independent" would result in a very messy situation in the Labour movement. It could lead to a splitting away of Labour members with no strategy or perspective, and the isolation of many good activists from the trade union movement. That is why the left in the Labour party are generally opposed to Livingstone standing as an independent. His own Labour Party has also come out against the idea. A 70-strong meeting of the Brent East constituency expressed its "extreme anger" at the way the Labour hierarchy handled the much-ridiculed selection process. Crucially, the vast

majority backed a motion calling on their MP to "fight his corner inside the Labour party and not to stand as an independent outside the party." This is undoubtedly the view of the vast majority of Labour activists. They realise even if Livingstone wins, what happens after 4 May? How has this strengthened the struggle against Blairism within the party?

An "independent" Livingstone electoral campaign resting on a "popular front" of showbiz extras, disgruntled Tories, independent business people, and assorted ultra-lefts, standing against the Labour movement in London in the London Assembly elections would not provide the alternative needed.

The whole of working class history has shown that the only effective challenge to the rightwing leadership is rooted firmly within the working class and its organisations - above all the trade unions and the Labour party. The attempt by Scargill to form an alternative in his Socialist Labour Party has come to absolutely nothing. Even where Denis Canavan stood and won against the Labour party in Scotland, this has not served to strengthen the left or weaken the Blairites. We must learn these lessons if we are to build a real socialist alternative to the rightwing.

**T**he bulk of trade unions supported Livingstone in the selection process. Although some in the RMT and the FBU would like to push him as an independent, the vast majority realise, although the selection was a stitch-up, that it would be a blind ally. However, to register a protest is not enough. Affiliated unions must face up to their obligations.

One hundred years ago the trade unions created the Labour Party to promote the interests of the working class. Today, that party has been hijacked by Tory infiltrators. They have a tight grip at the top, but very little support in the rank and file. Policy making is in the hands of a clique at Downing Street. The trade unions must organise a fightback within the party. Ken Livingstone could play a pivotal role in galvanising opposition to Blair. A series of meetings should be organised in constituencies all around the country to pull that opposition together. Fringe meetings should be organised at every trade union conference beginning with the AEEU, to struggle for socialist policies and democracy. To walk out now would be to damage that struggle.

The time has come - given the massive vote against Blair's candidate Dobson - to take back the Labour party, clear out the Tory/SDP carpetbaggers, and fight for real socialist policies as the only alternative to Blairism and the policies of capitalism. ☆

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socappeal@easynet.co.uk  
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## Capital Idea



### Stick it!

The NUJ has reported that journalists working on the Yorkshire Post papers in Leeds have been told by management that they must have company advertising stickers on their cars or they will not be able to use the company car parks. Not surprisingly this led initially to a degree of humour, including fake management instructions about having Yorkshire Post tattoos on your foreheads or stickers on your backsides whilst making love. Some staff have even resorted to putting the stickers on and off the cars as they enter and leave the car parks. However the idea of turning journalists into mobile advertising sites does have its serious side since the union has pointed out that it is often not a very good idea to identify yourself as being a reporter courtesy of your own car!

### Running with Mr. Smiley

Adverts have been placed for security guards by, of all people, MI5. Evidently M, James Bond and the rest are in need of protection in this post cold war world. Oddly enough the job entails being able to run from the ground floor to the seventh in just four minutes. Four minutes! This will surely put the job out of range of all but the most athletic, and then some, applicants. What can they be wanting these would be protectors of our nations spooks to actually do? By the way has anyone noticed that the agency has its HQ at Millbank near another very secretive bunch of dubious characters! ☆

# Blair's Lib-Lab Vision

The celebration of Labour's centenary as a party should not only be a cause to look backwards but also a useful place to define a vision of the future. For many party workers and supporters that vision will be a socialist one, reflecting the aims and hopes both of those who founded the party and also those who fought for it over the past 100 years.

by Steve Jones

**B**ut was that what Tony Blair wanted to raise when the chosen ones, smartly dressed in snappy suits, assembled at the Old Vic on February 26th? Evidently not. After the audience had been entertained by assorted comedians, Tony got down to business.

On the one hand he felt obliged to make overtures to the activists by promising things like the aim of full employment and an end to child poverty. This in itself is an indication of the pressure he is starting to feel from below. But on the other hand, after praising the likes of Keir Hardie, he was keen to get onto his favourite subject - coalition.

The old Liberal line was touted out once again: "When we have won, we have established a broad coalition of support from all walks of life, all parts of the country. When we have lost, we have retreated to a narrow base", said Blair.

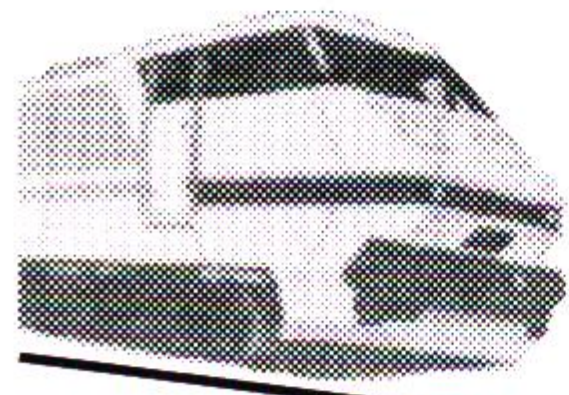
What he really means is that in order to win and stay in power we have to butter up to the so-called middle classes, in other words pander to big business. This approach is at the heart of New Labour "joined-up" thinking. But it is a myth. Where Labour has done well then it is because the workers have flooded out and voted for the party. In 1997, we saw a massive collapse of support for the Tories with people voting Labour but with little enthusiasm for Blairism. They just wanted to get the Tories out and hoped that Labour might be better. In that, the interests of the middle class were largely the same as that of the working class. However, those hopes have largely been disappointed. Many of the "reforms" have had little impact or been put off. Blair may chose to attack media reporting of the NHS crisis but the fact is that there is a real crisis as anyone who works for, or uses the NHS, will soon tell you.

The real irony is that whilst Blair's personal standing in the opinion polls is dropping, Labour is still riding high. But not through any efforts of their own. For this we can thank the Tories who remain stuck below the 30% line of support in the polls. Hence the nickname they have given themselves of "the flatliners", a reference to the way their support has remained stubbornly flat but also a reference to the flat line a hospital indicator makes when a patients heart has stopped. The only difference is that the Tories have no heart to stop!

Blair bases his remarks on the oft stated belief that it would have been better to have not split with the Liberals but remained together in a "glorious" radical coalition. This analysis falls on two grounds. Firstly, serious questions have to be asked about how radical the Liberals really are, as anyone who has seen a Liberal or Lib-Dem council in action can testify. Secondly, the Liberals (and Lib Dems) have largely been in decline anyway since the end of the 19th century, so their ability to draw in the votes is questionable to say the least. Workers were already looking for a new alternative when the "historic split" occurred. The reality is that the Liberals have always been a capitalist party, that is why Blair wants them in the fold now.

The founding of the Labour Party represented a serious attempt by the trade unions to create a political voice which would defend the interests of the working class not that of the bosses. That aim is reflected in the continuing links between the party and the trade unions. It is to Labour that workers will turn first to change society. The task they face is to transform that party so that it works in their interests rather than that of the bosses. The official celebration of Labour's 100 years should have been celebrating the great achievements of the organised working class in struggle against the forces of capital both nationally and internationally. It is here that we see the real radical forces of society, not in the acts of the Liberals and the one-nation Tories that Mr. Blair likes to praise so much. It is the organised working class that will decisively move to transform society once and for all, to end the poverty and exploitation that have marked the last century. ☆





# The Railtrack scandal

Railtrack and the rail operating companies are getting away with murder - literally. After last October's Paddington disaster which killed 31 people, the whole of the privatised rail system was in the dock. According to the government, Railtrack would be stripped of its responsibility for safety. Changes would be made.

Such was the public outcry against the fat cat rail companies that in an opinion poll 75% believed that the railways should be nationalised! They fully understood that public safety and the pursuit of private profit were incompatible.

However, four months later Prescott announces that Railtrack - a subsidiary of Railtrack to be exact - will in effect still be responsible for safety on the railways! It is like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank. All the talk of an independent safety authority has been ditched. The government has given in to Railtrack. According to one industry source it will mean very little and is "a matter of changing around the chairs." One survivor, David Taylor, called this decision "an insult" to the memory of the people who died.

After four months nobody has been brought to book for the murder of 31 people. Even Gwyneth Dunwoody, the chair of the Transport Committee, stated: "Not one

Railtrack executive - apart from the man in charge of public relations, has been required to resign. That is a cause for astonishment."

But why be astonished? These fat cats have been getting away with murder for years. They're above the law. They are untouchable.

The reply of Railtrack to the disaster was not to sack those responsible for the lack of safety, but the person in charge of public relations. All they were concerned about was the image of the company!

Has safety improved? New figures reveal that the number of trains travelling through red lights (SPADS) has increased by 40% this year. On average one train a day went through a red light in January. Safety experts explain that this figure is likely to rise further as drivers come under pressure to meet punctuality targets. According to the Health and Safety Executive: "The number of incidents is going up again."

The number of SPADS in 1998-99 was 639, a rise of over 46% on the previous year. It also revealed an increase in the number of bro-

ken rails in the same period from 801 to 937.

A new safety system is to be introduced at the cost of £2 billion. But who is going to pay for this system? According to the Government the money can be raised from Government subsidies (tax payers money) and higher fares. The rail companies are once again making passengers pay through the nose.

If Labour was worth its salt, it would take immediate action against these corporate murderers. The rail companies, including Railtrack should be nationalised with no compensation to the fat cat directors. All other aspects of public transport should be taken into public ownership so that a safe, fully integrated public transport system can be created. The industry should be also placed under a system of democratic workers control and management whereby representatives of government, the trade unions and passengers could ensure that safety is given top priority. ☆

## Guards Fight Back

**T**rain guards are set to take action in defence of their conditions, with stoppages taking place during March. Following the victory of train drivers on Connex-owned lines in southeast England, we could be seeing the biggest wave of strikes since privatisation came in.

The RMT achieved majority votes for action in 16 of the 23 rail companies where ballots took place. The guards are angry about proposals to redefine their roles, reducing them to what the union calls "Kit Kat sellers." This involves removing the shared responsibility for safety, giving lead responsibility to the driver instead. All that will be left for the guards to do is sell tickets and sundries. The union has given the bosses a week to cave in but after that strike dates will be announced. The companies may try and break ranks to split the union forces. The demand should therefore be clear-one settlement across the board or the action



continues.

The actions of the guards and the drivers on the Connex lines shows that militancy is on the up across the whole network. All this in the week when Prescott backtracked over his commitment to remove safety maintenance from the control of Railtrack and London Labour Party and trade union members showed what they thought of tube privatisation in the vote for London mayor. Since the Paddington rail crash last year, there has been a mood on the public's side as well that rail privatisation is a disgrace and has not worked, except as a source of easy profits for the few. This fiasco cannot carry on - the time has come for renationalisation without delay. ☆



# Nuclear Lies

**"Safety is, and will always be, our first priority."  
Statement from British Nuclear Fuels Ltd.**

We can all have a good laugh at Homer Simpson's lack of safety conditions at his nuclear plant at Springfield. It's just a cartoon. It's not real.

by Rob Sewell

However, the recent scandals surrounding BNFL over Health and Safety regulations are causing widespread concern and alarm. The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) has produced three damning reports on BNFL's operation in Sellafield. The nuclear energy industry is the most dangerous industry in Britain. We have long been fed a diet of propaganda that nuclear power was safe. We were not informed until the 1980s that the original nuclear plants were not built to produce electricity but to make plutonium for nuclear weapons.

The first NII report was about the

decline in safety standards. The second covered the falsification of data on plutonium /uranium fuel sold to Japan. The third is about the backlog of high level liquid nuclear waste stored in tanks (which has to be kept safe for 250,000 years).

Apparently, the move by the Blair government to privatise the industry resulted in detrimental changes within the company. The NII found that safety had badly deteriorated as thousands of jobs were axed to prepare for the government's bid to sell 40% of the industry. Safety across the Sellafield site "is only just tolerable" and there is a "poor safety culture in many areas of the site". The attempt to cut costs by 25% led to a fall in safety standards. When failures occurred, workers were blamed and sacked.

The NII states that deliberate falsification of nuclear data began as early as 1996. The discovery of false documents



on fuel exports to Japan has led to the closure of the mixed oxide plant. The Thorpe reprocessing works is also threatened with closure if the backlog of waste is not dealt with soon.

Five production workers were sacked in an attempted cover up and damage limitation exercise. It is crystal clear that these failures and gross negligence lie at the door of bad and incompetent management.

Jobs were cut to make BNFL more attractive to investors (it made £228 million last year). We have heard a string of lies about the cost of nuclear power (supposedly the cheapest fuel), the breaches of safety and radioactive leaks. Plutonium has been pumped into the Irish Sea from Sellafield over the past 40 years, with plutonium particles being washed up on shore - provoking alarm over cancer and birth defects.

Now, on top of the NII reports comes the news that BNFL issued false documents on its supply of nuclear fuel to Germany. Fuel which it has been using in its reactors since 1996. "BNFL had always assured us there were no indications of falsified safety documents. We are utterly astonished", said the spokesperson for Preussen Elektra.

The Labour Government must tackle this question immediately. Nuclear power must be phased out as soon as possible. Resources should be used to develop nuclear fusion as a possible source of energy which has no deadly by-product. A co-ordinated, publicly owned energy programme must be developed, which would include coal, gas, solar, hydro and wind power. This must include the re-nationalisation of the power utilities under workers control and management. Only then will it be possible to develop a safe, cheap but sustainable energy policy which could amply fulfil our future needs. ☆

## Corporate Murder - cheaper to let a worker die.

In "civilised Britain" working class life is cheap. According to the law of the land, company directors are individually responsible for keeping their share prices as high as possible. If they neglect this "fiduciary duty", they can be prosecuted and imprisoned.

As for the safety of their workforce, that is another matter. If they fail to provide adequate protection for their workers and someone is killed or maimed, they are, in practice, immune from prosecution! If unlucky, the company will suffer a small fine. Life is indeed cheap.

Despite all the talk of altering the law, nothing has been done. Perhaps it will mean too much "red tape" and "regulation" which is obviously bad for business.

Over the past 10 years, some 3,500 people in Britain have been killed at work. According to law professor, Gary Slapper, around 700 of these deaths should have resulted in prosecutions for corporate manslaughter. Only TWO small companies have ever been convicted of

this crime.

A company can only be convicted of manslaughter if a director or senior manager can be singled out as directly responsible for the death. If responsibility is shared by the board as a whole, the firm is innocent of reckless or intentional killing.

The problem is compounded by the toothless Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which is fearful of prosecuting anyone for anything. The Centre for Corporate Accountability calculates that of the 47,000 major industrial injuries in the workplace reported between 1996 and 1998, the HSE investigated just 11%. Of these, only 10% resulted in prosecution!

Although the HSE's own report suggests that 70% of workplace deaths result from "management failure", it manages to prosecute only 19% of cases. Even if it secures a conviction, the penalties are pathetic. In Britain, a human life is now worth on average £18,000. It is far cheaper for the bosses to murder a worker than improve workplace safety. ☆



# Ford: Bosses launch new offensive

The announcement made on the 18th February to Dagenham workers of 1350 job losses by July, with the introduction of a single shift to the Body and Assembly Plants in August was met with shock and despair by the workforce. There had been rumours of redundancies following the January Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee (FNJNC) meeting. It had been announced that a new Chairman of Ford of Europe, Nick Scheele, had been moved in by Jac Nasser, the Ford Chief Executive Officer, as a hatchet man to "remove the barriers to profitability in Europe". At that meeting it was reported that Nick Scheele had stated that the 'Modern Operating Agreement' that was supposed to secure Dagenham as a launch plant for the Fiesta replacement "wasn't worth the paper it's written on". He said that instead of having a joint launch with the Cologne plant the replacement would now be launched only in Cologne by the end of 2001 and produced at Dagenham by 2002.

The further announcement of the 1350 job losses has come after the signing of an agreement to separate the components division of Fords next July into a separate supplier Company called Visteon. This followed an agreement and recommendation reached at the Ford European Works Council meeting in January and unfortunately accepted by the workforce in the Belfast, Swansea, Enfield and Basildon Plants. After July Ford workers in the Visteon Plants will no longer have a contract of employment with the Ford Motor Company and after six years will no longer have joint negotiations with the other Ford plants. Inevitably after six years Ford will then move to drive down costs by threatening what will then be supplier plants with closure unless cost reductions are made in the wages and conditions of the workforce. Without the strength of collective action in all the Ford plants the workers in the Visteon plants will be in no position to resist. With the Halewood Body and Assembly plants rumoured to be coming out of the FNJNC this year to come under joint negotiations with Jaguar, it only leaves Dagenham, Bridgend, Southampton, Aveley, Leamington, Daventry, Dunton, Croydon and Halewood Transmission Plant as members of the FNJNC, with Dagenham the only main

assembly plant. This has meant a serious weakening of the collective bargaining strength of the remaining Ford Plants. As we warned in the *Socialist Appeal* last December "The Company will continue to press ahead with their onslaught on conditions given the weakness of the leadership". The weakness of the unions at the European Works Council, the Visteon convenors and union national officers in recommending and accepting the separation of Visteon without a fight, has now left the field clear for the Company to take on the Dagenham workers.

## Shareholders

Despite a £20 billion 'war chest', allowing the acquisition of Volvo and Kwik-fit last year and with profits of \$28 million in Europe and world-wide profits of \$5.4 billion for the first nine months of 1999, with total earnings for last year likely to break all previous records, the greed of the company directors and shareholders continues the drive for even greater profitability for European operations. Although there is a 'boom' in the economy and record car sales in Europe there is increasing competition and over-capacity in car production with an estimated 20% (equivalent to 4 million cars) over-capacity in Europe. Nick Scheele's estimate of Fords current over-capacity in Europe is 337,000 vehicles. The announcement of the 137,000 reduction in capacity at Dagenham will obviously not meet this figure.

Ford in looking for further acquisitions as a result of this competition which will add even further to its over-capacity. Recent rumours have linked Ford to a take-over of BMW causing a rise in the BMW share price on the strength of the rumour. As we pointed out in the November issue of *Socialist Appeal* "mergers and acquisitions have become a mania in the present boom, the capitalists desperately scrambling for profitable fields of investment cannot increase production in an already bulging world market, so they buy up existing production and make a profit out of sacking workers and closing plants. These mergers always lead to job



cuts, under the guise of rationalisation". The Company have announced a further 'review' and rationalisation at the end of April. Rumours have been floated that the 10,000 workers in the Genk Plant in Belgium could be under threat.

The current 1350 job losses at Dagenham are likely to be met through voluntary redundancies and early retirements. The main reason for this is the mood of despair in the workforce. The national union officials have called the redundancy terms "generous". A worker aged 41 with 15 years service will receive £30,144. This can hardly be called "generous" when faced with the prospect of unemployment and no dole payable for voluntary redundancy. Within two years the money would be gone! This amount doesn't even match the annual salaries of Tony Woodley or Duncan Simpson! Compared to the obscene profits of Ford shareholders these amounts are peanuts. The union leadership should be offering a fightback to Ford workers. The threat to oppose any compulsory redundancies must be met with a call for action and plans made to link the fight against redundancies with other Ford workers throughout Europe.

By a Ford Shop steward



# Health crisis deepens

Not a day seems to pass without a new story appearing on the crisis inside the National Health Service. The flu crisis of last winter was just the most public expression of what has become a deep rooted problem. In truth the flu crisis was no worse this time than in previous winters, yet the NHS appeared to be at the point of collapse. Why? The statements from the authorities seemed to imply that the reason was the severe shortage of emergency beds. But the demand was not markedly higher than at other time. What has happened is that the process of gradual cuts has finally caught up with them. According to *The Guardian* newspaper, the number of acute care beds in English NHS hospitals has dropped by 16% over the last ten years. The prospects for improvement are not good either - most of the new hospitals being built under the PFI arrangement will have even less beds available. Now we see that the chief executive of the NHS has had enough and handed in his notice, despite having just had his contract extended.

No wonder people are up in arms. One of the main reasons Labour was elected was to protect and improve the

NHS. It was made very clear by voters that they expected the new Labour government to set about repairing the damage done by successive Tory governments. A recent poll even suggested that over 75% of people would prefer income tax not to be cut by a penny if that money was then ploughed into the health service. That is how important people think the NHS is. Yet the government is failing. Gimmicks such as NHS direct (the DIY phone service) and the use of PFI to fund new projects are not good enough. People are starting to get angry. The Labour movement should be getting angry as well. We need to put more pressure of the Labour leadership to take action and we mean real action, socialist action. That means abandoning the obsession with the market and giving proper funding to the NHS. The wealth is there in the hands of the profiteers, the drug and private healthcare companies and the rest. Nationalisation without compensation of even just these companies would release tremendous resources and there is more where that came from not only to solve the problems of the NHS but the rest of society as well.

Thousands of parents have been angered by the Government decision last September to ban individual vaccines for Mumps, Measles and Rubella.

Many parents - ourselves included - turned to individual vaccines after growing evidence that the new combined vaccine, MMR, may be linked to autism and other disorders.

Problems arose with MMR in the early 1990s during the mass MMR vaccination programme - Operation Safeguard - held to avert an apparent 'measles epidemic'. Two brands of MMR were withdrawn after they were linked to outbreaks of Mild Meningitis.

While the spotlight was thrown on the new triple vaccine, it emerged hundreds of parents were blaming MMR as the cause of subsequent autism and bowel disorders in their children.

The most distressing case was that of Tracy Steel from Glasgow. Her triplets had their MMR jabs at 17 months - and all three are now suffering from disorders.

Alongside this anecdotal evidence, various medical institutions began to raise questions about the safety of MMR. The Utah State University in the US pointed to a possible link between autism and the measles virus. Back home, the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine in north London alerted the health profession that they had found evidence linking the MMR

vaccine to Crohn's disease, a bowel disorder.

Meanwhile, investigators into 'Gulf War Syndrome' also questioned whether the cause could be linked to the multiple vaccines pumped into soldiers before embarkation to the Middle East.

At any other time, the reassuring noises from Government officials would probably have soothed parents' nervousness. But we had heard all it before over BSE. Whenever I heard Department of Health officials assure the media that MMR was safe, I kept getting this overriding image of Tory Minister Selwyn-Gummer stuffing his daughter's mouth full of beefburger in what must have been one of the sickest photo-opportunities of all time. After BSE, how can we ever trust that lot again?

Even so, I still had a fairly open mind when our daughter's turn for the MMR jab came in August 1997. Then Labour's new Health Minister Tessa Jowell said there would be a special enquiry by the Medical Research Council; that was good enough for me - single jabs please, we told our GP.

He couldn't agree to it until we had seen the consultant paediatrician at our local hospital. We dutifully trotted off for what was one of the most bizarre 'hospital appointments' I have ever encountered.

We were greeted by the deputy con-

sultant who wanted to give our daughter a medical examination. What for we asked, we're only here for a discussion? She said it was merely routine, but we felt the inference was that somehow we were neglecting our daughter's health.

After politely telling her where to get off, we were wheeled into the office to be greeted not only the consultant paediatrician, but also his deputy, the senior registrar, a health visitor and two junior doctors.

We were sat in the middle of the room, and they sat around us in a circle, virtually shouting their defence of MMR and firing questions. It was like an aggressive religious cult 'conversion' session.

Fortunately both my husband and I are experienced trade unionists and know intimidation tactics when we see them. But for the uninitiated, it is easy to see how they could be brow beaten into caving in.

If we had an open mind before hand, our hackles were now up. It took 12 months of virtual guerrilla warfare with our local practice, but we eventually got the single jabs - even after they told us that the single measles vaccine was no longer available; we researched a chemist who was still getting supplies in from France and ordered it ourselves.

The more you look into MMR, the more suspect the Government's faith in it becomes. The attraction of multi-vaccines for the quasi-accountants who now run the



health service are obvious. Three vaccines in one means two less vaccinations to be administered- with all the resultant savings in staff time, resources etc; a solution made in cost-effective heaven.

We were not too surprised when the Medical Research Council investigation in September 1997 called by Tessa Jowell gave MMR the all clear. The Chief Medical Officer called together 37 independent experts to study five separate reports on possible linkage. It all sounded very impressive - until you found out that this 'grand investigation' took less than a day to complete!

There was then more worrying news from America. In March in 1999, an enquiry in California found there had been a three fold increase in autism (the US pioneered MMR vaccinations) and leading health experts are calling for a halt on all multi-vaccinations until there has been proper research.

**T**he latest British medical expert to join the growing throng of concerned voices over MMR is neuropsychologist Dr. Ken Aitken. He was one of the 37 experts called by the MRC for their investigation. He's now having second thoughts saying evidence linking MMR to Heller's Syndrome, a similar condition to autism, should be investigated further. He is appearing as an expert witness for the 600 'MMR families' that are currently taking the Government to the High Court. Another 2,000 families are in the pipeline awaiting clearance for legal aid.

When you look at vaccination programmes, you can only feel unease. I couldn't understand the hostile response I'd received for asking for single vaccines- until I found out about the Immunisation Target Payment System.

A GP who immunises 90% of children on his patient list gets paid £2,000 a year. Well fancy that! What's more, as parents vote with their feet on MMR, so GPs are striking them off their register to keep their quotas up, according to a report issued by the Royal Society of Medicine in September 1999.

What's also clear is that the drug companies rule the roost. The producers of the two MMR brands that were withdrawn in the Meningitis scare of the early 1990s were Smithkline Beecham and Merieux UK. Yet guess who won contracts to produce the next round of MMR vaccines for Operation Safeguard? The same two companies.



The profit motive has to be withdrawn from the provision of health care. How can the multinational drug companies be trusted to make sound decisions when they are governed by commercial pressures to make money?

Vaccines have played an essential part in ridding disease and illness from society. The National Health Service and the free vaccination programmes were major reforms won by the labour movement.

But with capitalism still in control, it means the profit motive still dictates the development of health services. The multinational pharmaceutical companies dominate the whole profession; it compartmentalises any thinking into the 'medical model', of looking for sticking plaster remedies to patch up the consequences of an ailing society (from which the drug companies make millions), rather than looking to tackling the root cause - social deprivation, poor housing conditions and low pay.

Vaccinations, although important, are not the be all and end all to fighting disease.

**L**ook at measles. A hundred years ago in Britain, measles was a major child killer- 1,200 died per million cases. By the 1960s and the major reforms implemented by Labour Governments (Council house building programme, the NHS, social services etc), there were very few deaths from measles. Yet the first measles vaccination programme did not take place until 1968.

Today it is the Third World that needs wide spread vaccination programmes. In 1998, the death rate from measles in the UK was 0.02% - yet in Ghana for example it was 15%. Yet still the drug multinationals target the 'affluent' West because that's where the money is to be made.

The drug multinationals must be nationalised and put under the control of their employees, the health and technical trade unions, and- in the UK - a panel of medical experts appointed by the Labour

government. That way the profit motive can be removed and instead 'safety first' can be the watchword, while the benefits of the medicines they produce can be targeted at where they are needed most - not where the most money is to be made.

In Britain, an urgent task for the health unions is to demand a proper system of monitoring vaccines. At the moment, all we have to rely on is the 'yellow card' system operated by GPs. Every time they record an adverse affect

from a vaccination, they are meant to fill in a card and send it to the Government's Committee on the Safety of Medicines. One survey found that only 13% of GPs were doing this, and with the carrot of £2,000 being dangled before them every year, we shouldn't be too surprised.

**T**he lack of monitoring was exposed by the MMR/Mild Meningitis scare. In this instance, according to the medical journal, *The Lancet*, the statistics show that GPs only reported one adverse affect per 143,000 MMR doses administered. It was even lower for hospital based paediatricians - one per 250,000 doses. Yet when the actual hospital admissions for Mild Meningitis were tallied against the number of children vaccinated, the ratio was one per 11,000!

The Government has responded to opponents of MMR by speaking darkly of the threat of a measles epidemic in the UK by 2001, if parents continue to vote with their feet and refuse MMR. That just makes parents more angry - if this threat is real then make single vaccines available for those who aren't convinced about the safety of MMR. Surely the priority is to make sure this epidemic doesn't happen, not bludgeon parents into accepting the Government's preferred method of vaccination?

The Government will face growing protests if it doesn't back down. Already, when the single vaccine ban was ordered, parents in Brighton protested outside their GP.

The problem will not go away. As one of the parents taking the Government to Court told *Pulse* magazine: "I have never been militant in my life. But when ordinary parents are forced to doubt those to whom we have entrusted the protection of our children, then how can we possibly let it rest."

**By a Birmingham UNISON member**



# Fashion Victims



## Textile and clothing workers worldwide

There's a saying among girls in the slums of Bangladesh: if you're lucky, you'll be a prostitute - if you're unlucky, you'll be a garment worker. The fashion industry is big business. It makes a lot of money - but the workers in the industry don't see much of it.

by Mick Brooks

All over the world, textile and clothing workers are poor. Yet they work hard. They say nobody ever got rich through hard work. But it's not true. The people who work hard never got rich through working hard. But the rich got rich by getting other people like us to work hard for them. That's the way of the world under capitalism.

In 1992 Michael Jordan earned \$20 million for endorsing Nike running shoes. What does that mean? Michael is a famous basketball player in the United States. He lets them use his photo on their adverts. That doesn't sound too hard, does it? The Nike brand name - just the brand name on shoes - is supposed to be worth more than \$8 billion. That's why Nike had no problem breaking the Michael Jordan record by bunging Tiger Woods \$90 million in a sponsorship deal this year. Anyway, Michael got more on his 1992

deal than the entire 30,000 strong work force in Indonesia who make Nike shoes full time. In that year they banged out 19 million pairs of trainers.

Nike is a big firm. They're the 77th biggest firm in the USA and 167th biggest in the world. They're worth \$17 1/2 billion on the stock exchange. Last year they made \$553 million profit from their workers.

Disney is an even bigger outfit. They're the 20th biggest corporation in the USA and the 35th biggest in the world. They're worth over \$43 billion on the stock exchange. They made \$1,380 million (nearly \$1.4 billion) from 71,000 workers in 1995. That's \$19,436 - very nearly \$20,000 for each worker. Their name on items of clothing and merchandise is supposed to be worth \$32 billion.

Their chief executive officer Michael Eisner made \$200 million in 1996 from his

salary and his stock options.

What's a stock option? It's a right for management to get shares in their firm for next to nothing, that's what. It's a way for rich people to get even richer with very little effort.

How does Disney get to make so much money? Kids love their cartoons. We don't know who draws the cartoons. The reason we don't know is because the workers who make up Pocahontas or the Lion King sign away all their rights on the design to the Disney Corporation with their employment contract. But we do know Michael Eisner didn't design anything.

Anyway Michael Eisner's \$200 million in 1996 works out at \$97,600 per hour - that's just under \$100,000 for one hour's work. Eisner gets paid as much in one hour as 325,000 Disney workers would earn. The workers in Haiti are the ones who make the Pocahontas, Lion King and Hunchback of Notre Dame T-shirts and pyjamas and sew the ears on Mickey Mouse toys. At the N.S. Mart, L.V. Myles and Classic Apparel factories in Haiti Disney workers are trying to bring up a family on a minimum wage of 28 cents an hour.

Let's look at L.V. Myles. Management say they're paying their workers 42c an hour. We don't think they're telling the truth, but we'll give them the benefit of the doubt for this little calculation.

At L.V. Myles twenty workers get out 1,000 pairs of Pocahontas pyjamas every day. The pyjamas sell in Wal Mart (a big American shopping chain) for \$11.97. So twenty workers produce \$11,970 worth of goods in a day (\$11.97 x 1,000). Each one gets paid 42c an hour for eight hours (8 x 42c = \$3.32). So collectively they earn \$66.40 (20 x \$3.32)

They get just over 1/2 of one per cent of the value of what they produce. Put another way, when another pair of Pocahontas pyjamas rings up the tills in the United States for \$11.97, the machinists who made it will get just 7c. That's exploitation, no doubt about it.

But exploitation is not just a thing that happens in Haiti and other third world countries. Let's look at what happens to textile workers in the United States. The figures come from the research department of the American textile workers' union UNITE.

If an American woman spends \$100 on a dress:-

- \$54 goes to the shop. But all the retailer does is pass the goods along and hang them up for people to look at. What about the rest of the money?
- \$18 goes on materials. The manufacturing firm just buys these in.
- \$16 is manufacturing overheads and profit. This is a tricky one. Heating



and lighting are costs, just like fabrics and zip fasteners. But some of the 'costs' will really be a share of the profits. Rent, for instance is really a part of the profit that gets syphoned off by another section of the property owning class. Adam Smith said of landlords that 'they love to reap where they have not sown'. Anyway, to keep the story simple we'll assume \$15 of those \$16 really are costs and the poor old manufacturer only makes \$1 on a \$100 dress. What does that leave?

Just \$12 goes to the worker who makes the dress. But that's the one who produces the wealth!

Let's go over it again. Of the \$100:

\$18 is materials

We are saying \$15 are other overheads

Total costs = \$33

Then there's wages - \$12

How about profits?

There's the \$1 that goes to the manufacturing boss of course

But then there's that retail markup of \$54.

So the real profit from the worker is \$55 out of \$100 - more than half the value.

Of the \$100 selling price \$55 is unpaid labour while only \$12 is paid. To put it another way, if the machinist is paid by the piece - and most clothing workers do piecework - and produces the dress in 67 minutes, they're working just 12 minutes towards their wages and 55 minutes for other people.

Marx first showed how workers are exploited. The value of a commodity can be resolved into three parts. First there is what he called constant capital. This is the raw materials, depreciation on machinery and other things needed to make the commodity in question. These pass their value unchanged to the final product, that's why he called it constant capital. Then there's what the inland revenue calls added value (as in value added tax). This all comes from the workforce. All the sweat shop owner does is to shout at the workers.

This new value is divided into two parts. The other part of capital laid out by the boss goes on variable capital. This is laid out on wages to keep the workers going. Marx called it the purchase of labour power. Wages differ widely between countries, as we shall see. But in all the countries where capitalist production predominates, at the end of the week or month the workers have no alternative but to keep on working for the bosses in order to make a living.

Marx called that part of his capital the boss lays out on wages variable capital. He did so because the buying of the workers' ability to work is the source of the capitalists' surplus. The unique quality of labour power is that putting it to work produces new values. This surplus value, as Marx calls it, is divided into rent, interest and profit - the revenues of all the unproductive classes. In our example a large part of the surplus is squandered on the sales effort. Think of all the other areas of the economy brimming over with money - such as financial services - which basically represent a drain of potentially useful surplus value.

To rewrite our example in marxist terms:

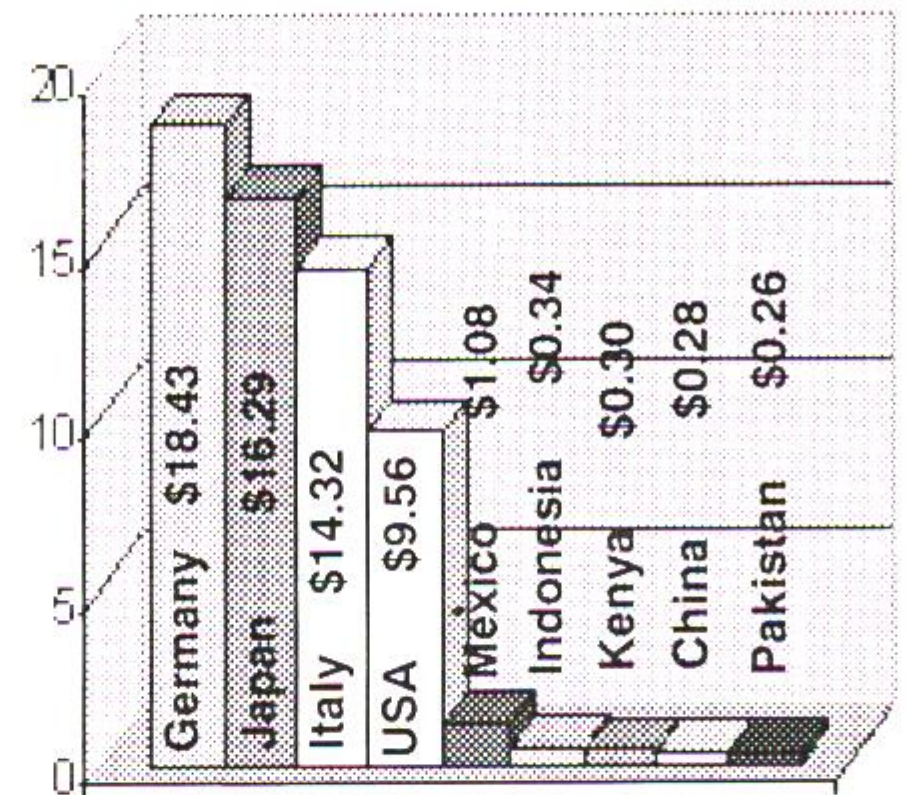
- Constant capital is \$33
- Variable capital is \$12
- Surplus value is \$55
- The rate of surplus value or rate of exploitation (the amount of time the worker puts in to reproduce the elements of their wages compared with the amount of time the worker puts in enriching the capitalist class) is more than 450%.

Here's how the rich get rich and the poor stay poor. And it's true whether you work on a farm or in a factory, and whether you dish up burgers or write computer programmes. The rich get rich off our unpaid labour.

We've seen fashion is big business. We've seen that the big companies that dominate the industry make a lot of money out of their workers. But they're always looking for ways to make even more. That's why Disney's Pocahontas pyjamas are made in Haiti - because they can pay the workers there only 28 cents an hour,

and they can't get away with that in the USA.

Fashion companies these days are multinational. They're footloose and they play the field. This is what employers pay clothing and textile workers in different countries for an hour's work. The workers don't get all of this money in wages always, because in rich countries it includes national insurance payments:

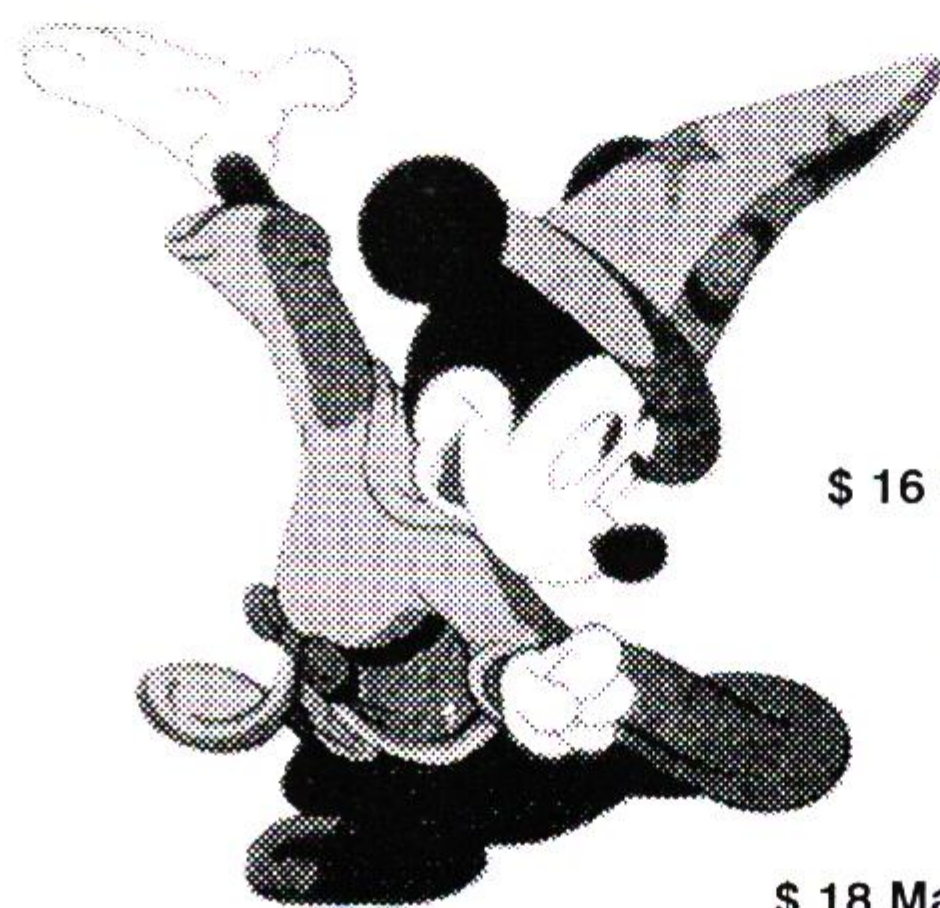


So a German worker costs the boss more than seventy times as much as a worker in Pakistan. Now you can see why Nike shut down their plants in New Hampshire and Maine. First they went to Korea and Taiwan. Later they decided they could pay even less and make even more money by basing their operations in Indonesia, Thailand and China.

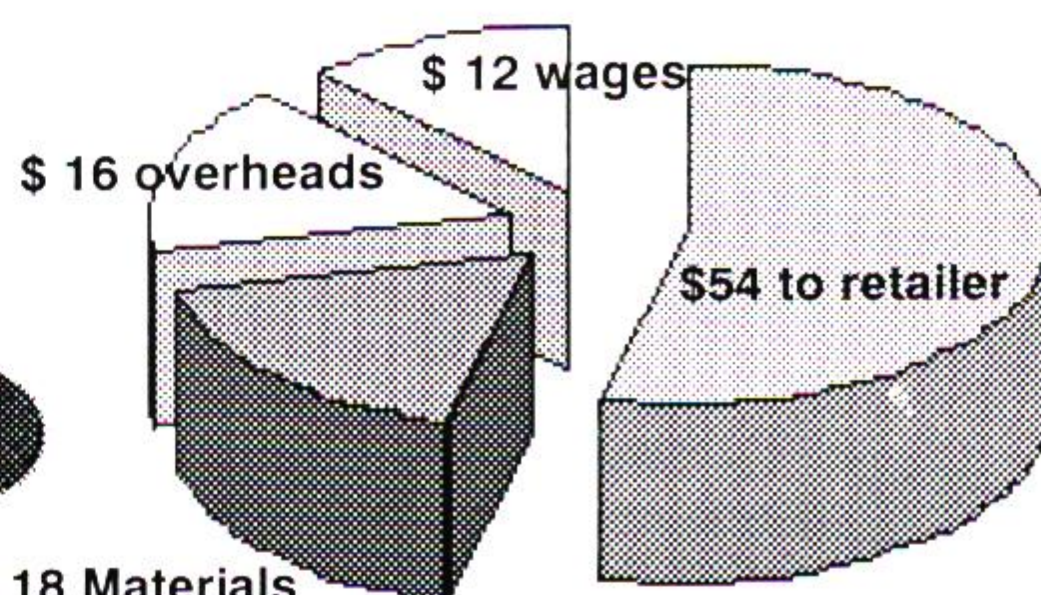
The bosses are always out to get that little bit more out of the workers. One obvious way they do that is to get you to work longer hours.

Lina Rodriguez Meza, a clothing worker in New York explains. "When it's busy, we work up to sixty to sixty-three hours. The conditions in the factory are not good. The bathrooms are outside on our floor." (toilets to you and me) In the factory where I work, almost everyone is from Ecuador. Those people work hard. And since they come very far from their land, they come and are afraid of losing their jobs, so they enslave themselves. Almost no one goes to the bathroom, they feel embarrassed. The bathroom is outside. You have to leave the factory, go to the hallway. It's a bit dangerous because anyone can enter the bathrooms. Also, there's a part in the building that is unprotected. You can easily fall into that empty space".

Lina's in a difficult position. Nobody wants to put in over sixty hours in a week. But the basic rate is so low. And in the fashion industry work is completely casual, as she explains. "Last week we only worked for fifteen hours. And now we worked two days in a row, but it seems like we're going to be off again."



**\$100 Dress**





Lina actually needs the overtime to make ends meet. She is a worker in the richest country in the world.

What's going on here? As we have seen, there is a compulsion on the capitalist class to try to get more and more out of us, to raise the rate of exploitation. One way to do this is what Marx called the extraction of absolute surplus value. This means exploiting the worker over a longer time. For instance if a worker does four hours to earn their keep and then puts in another four hours to help the boss out, the rate of exploitation is 100%. But if the worker can be induced to slave for ten hours a day, then that extra two hours is a free lunch for their boss. In Marx's time the capitalists just used their class power to lengthen the working day. Since workers were usually paid by the day, the struggle over the length of the working day was a basic form of class struggle. Read Marx's classic chapter 'The working day' in Capital, even if you never get round to the rest of the book.

Critics of Marx say that's all out of date. What is happening to Lina and millions like her shows that the extraction of absolute surplus value is still a very effective way of lining the bosses' pockets. That's why it's still going on as we enter a new millennium in the heart of New York. We all know the jobs - security guards, caterers, cleaners, drivers, railway workers - where it's understood that you'll have to work overtime to make enough to feed a family on because the basic rate is so low.

Just as they shop around looking for cheap labour, so clothing firms will take on women if they're cheaper than men. And they'll take on children if they're cheaper than both.

No goods are so characteristic of childhood as toys, of course. Yet some kids never get to play with toys, because they're too busy working to make them. Half of the toys bought for American children are imported from China these days, for Disney Mattel and Eden Toys. Chinese kids work for 13 cents an hour making Barbie, Sindy, Power Rangers and all the other famous names. These workers have had their childhood stolen! They are working 12 to 16 hours a day - up to 112 hours a week - and getting less than \$50 in a month. Protective clothing? - forget it. Relaxation? - sleeping 16 to a room in dormitories and being spied on.

The markup on Disney imported toys from China has been worked out at 1,000%. In other words these Chinese children work little more than an hour a day to earn the elements of their wages. All the rest of the time they're working for free, for the employers. Such generosity

with their time!

The International Labour Organisation estimates that 73 million children around the world are working full time. That's one in eight 10 to 14 year olds.

Let's hear from Wendy Diaz who's been working for Global Fashion in El Salvador since she was thirteen. "At Global Fashion, there are about 100 minors like me, thirteen, fourteen years old - some even twelve. On the Kathy Lee pants (trousers) we were forced to work almost every day from 8.00am to 9.00pm... Sometimes they kept us all night long, working...working all these hours, I made at most...31 U.S. cents. No one can survive on these wages....The supervisors insult us and yell at us to work faster. Sometimes they throw the garment in your face, or grab and shove at you. The plant is hot like an oven. The bathroom is locked, and you need permission and can use it twice a day. Even the pregnant women they abuse. Sometimes the managers touch the girls, our legs or buttocks. Many of us would like to go to night school but we can't because they always force us to work overtime. We have no health care, sick days or vacation....They said they would fire us all if we tried to organise. I am an orphan. I live in a one-room home with eleven people. I have to work to help three small brothers."

But this story is not just about workers suffering passively. Workers are fighting back - when they can. When workers in a Disney factory tried to set up a trade union to get that \$5 a day that's the legal minimum wage over there, Eisner responded by sacking 150.

Now and again we win a few. Iqbal

Musih, the small twelve year old boy, bent over the loom since age four, won his freedom through the Bonded Labour Liberation Front of Lahore, Pakistan. He has since learned to read and write, freed hundreds of other children, spoken at government hearings in Europe and America, won the Reebok Youth Action Award and received a standing offer for a scholarship from Brandeis University. He planned to become a lawyer, much like Ehsan Ullah Khan, the man who heads the BLLF and freed him. Iqbal was fond of saying at rallies, "I used to be afraid of the master. Now the master is afraid of me."

On Easter Sunday in 1995, during a visit with his mother in the village of Muridke, thirteen bullets from a sawn-off shotgun were fired into Iqbal's stomach, head and chest while he was riding his bicycle. Iqbal Masih's murder, which the BLLF believes was carried out on the orders of the carpet manufacturers, has never been solved. International statements by Benazir Bhutto's government on the subject proved to be a joke. "the culprit" they announced" had been taken into custody: he had found Iqbal sodomising a donkey and had shot him out of moral outrage." Then the story changed. The man himself was sodomising the donkey, was discovered by Iqbal, and shot him." Pakistanis had a good laugh when these stories came on the news," said one, "Even we didn't believe them". ☆

Part one of a two part article. Make sure you order next month's Socialist Appeal for part two.

## Evans' view







# Youth for Socialism

## Youth School great success!

**O**n the weekend of January 29/30th we held the first Marxist Education School organised by Youth For International Socialism (YFIS). The common theme of the discussions was "revolutions" and the aim was to study some of the most important events in working class history and draw the main lessons from them.

We started with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and we discussed the key role of the Bolshevik party in the taking of power by the working class.

We also felt it was very important to discuss the Spanish Revolution of 1931-37. We saw the film "Land and Freedom" by Ken Loach on this subject and then we had an interesting debate about the Stalinist betrayal of the revolution and other aspects of the process which feature in the film (like the role of women, the role of the Church, etc).

Later on we had a question and answer session with Ted Grant in which we had the opportunity to comment on a wide range of issues from science and economy, to history and society, always from a Marxist standpoint. We finished the first day with a social.

On Sunday we discussed the lessons of the German revolutionary process from 1918 to 1923 and the consequences of the betrayal of the Social democratic leaders for the whole of the

European labour movement.

Finally, Peter Johnson, from the US explained the current situation in that country and the growing interest in Marxist ideas. He is the editor of the [newyouth.com](http://www.newyouth.com) web site so we also commented on the use of the internet to spread socialist ideas and the impact which our web pages are already having all over the world. As a practical application of this discussion we showed all comrades how to get an e-mail address and the basics of the web.

All those present, around 25 comrades, felt that the school had been very useful. The general mood at the end was: "when are we having the next school?" It is also interesting to note that there were comrades present from many different countries (Austria, Ecuador, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, Australia, etc) giving the meeting a genuine internationalist flavour.

A common thread throughout the weekend was the need to strengthen the work through the Marxist discussion groups and societies at the different universities and to establish them where they don't exist yet. The enthusiasm of all those present was also reflected in the amount of money raised at the bar, the bookshop and the collection: £230.

By Espe Espigares

To get involved in YFIS see: [www.newyouth.com](http://www.newyouth.com)  
PO Box 2626, London N1 7SQ

## Once upon a time in a job centre...

Friday Morning. I woke up very happy. I have an interview at the job centre and this could be the great day on which I will get a job.

After 15 minutes waiting an old woman called my name. We sat down and she began:

-Mr Daniel Garcia?

-Yes, I am (she looks very kind)

-Where are you from?

-I am Spanish

She looks at some papers on the table, then she looks at me, she turns again to the papers:

-So, you are a computer engineer?

-Yes

-But your English is very bad, isn't it?

At that moment I thought that this old woman must be really clever. She must be a real professional because in just three sentences she was able to have an opinion about my English, really amazing. After this little reflection, I answered:

-Well, I'm not Shakespeare but...

-I see -she said- but you are looking

for a job in the IT industry, and I think your English is not good enough. On the other hand you are Spanish, and you cannot just wait for a good job in this country, you must be more open-minded and new opportunities will come to you.

-That sounds good -I said- What new opportunities are you thinking about?

-Well, you can work in a restaurant or in a sandwich bar for instance...

At that moment she didn't look so kind anymore. I gave her my CV wondering why nobody had asked me for it before:

-I have been very open-minded during the last five months. As you can see in my CV I can do any job in the IT industry. I'm not looking for a £40,000 job, although I am qualified to do it. I'm just trying to find any job with computers because that is my profession and it is the best I can do.

Then she looks at her papers again and starts using her computer and I carry on thinking about the meaning of the word "open-minded" and my possibilities in the

job market. She looks at the computer again and says:

-I have something that will help you to get a job. It is a one-week course about how to make a CV, how to speak in an interview, and so on. It will be Monday to Friday six hours a day, 30 hours in total.

-But that is a lot of time, isn't it?

-Yes but it is a free service for the unemployed, we even pay the travel cost!  
-Well, I think that 30 hours to learn how to make a CV... As you saw I've got one already.

-These are vital questions for finding a job, and it reminds me that your English is disgusting, so you must go to the library and join an English course.

She gave me some papers to sign and an appointment for next month, that made me assume that the interview was over.

-Think about work in a restaurant while you're looking for an IT job.

-I don't mind working in a restaurant but with a 60 hours a week job it is very difficult to look for something else.

-Whatever, but remember you are not in your own country and you are perfectly capable of working in a coffee bar.

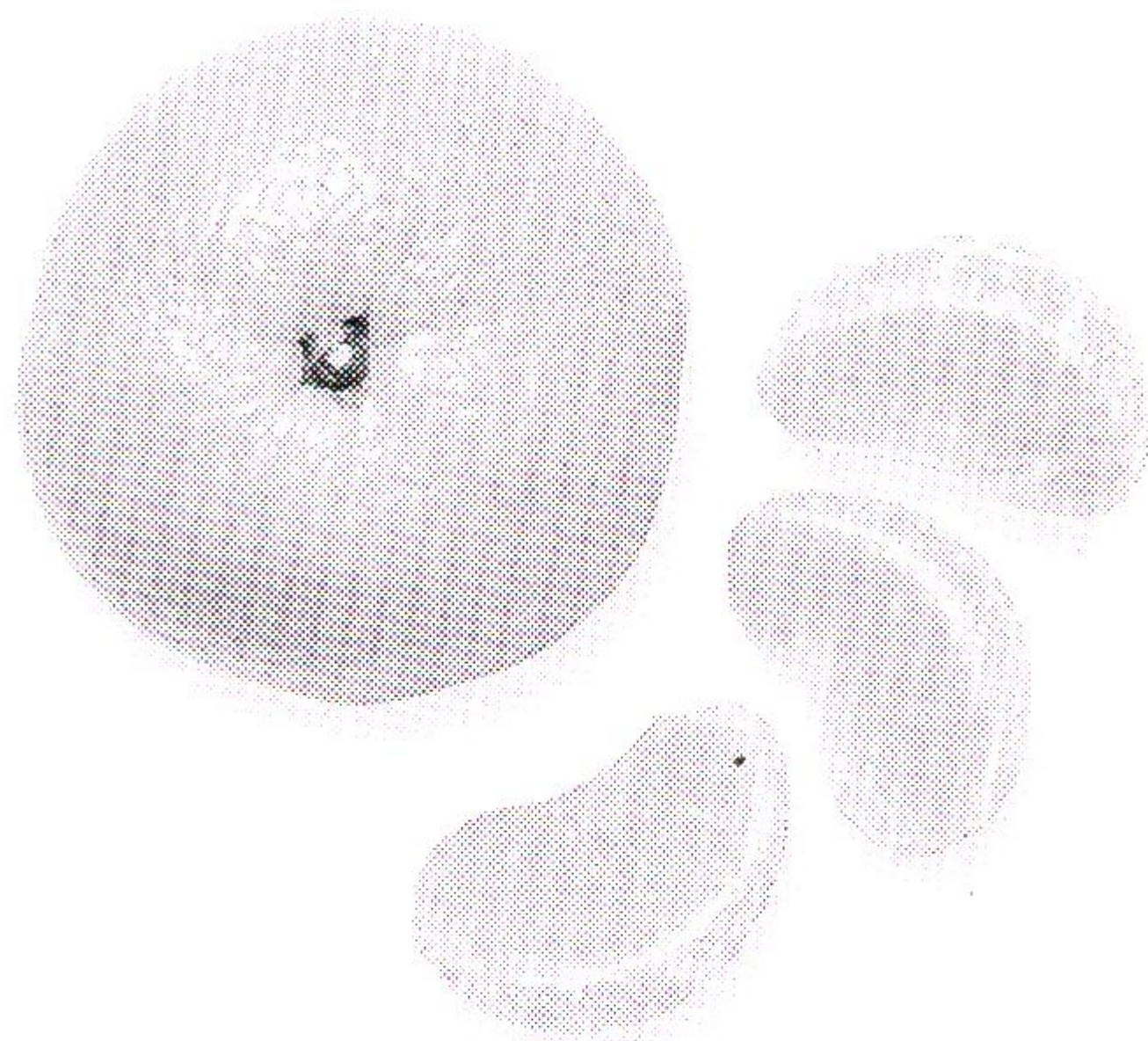
-OK. Have you got a job to offer me?

-No, sorry the job centre isn't the best place for that. Have a look in *TheLoot* newspaper, any private job agency or maybe on the Internet. ☆



# Genetic engineering

## Who Benefits?



Genetic engineering has come upon the world with a rush, accompanied by the usual claims of being a way of feeding the earth's poor and removing want. However these claims need to be examined in the light of what has actually been done to date, and what is planned for the future. In fact the impetus for the development of genetic engineering, namely the rapid pursuit of maximum profits and further control of world agriculture runs counter to the stated aims as well as encouraging unsafe science.

Why are such risks being taken? They are being taken in the name of short term profits and market domination. Much genetic engineering is linked to producing crops resistant to specific brands of herbicide e.g. Monsanto's Roundup, which has been implicated in claims of raised hormone levels in people.

by Alan Durant.

The change is already here with no public consultation. In 1997, 15% of the U.S. soybean crop was grown from genetically modified (GM) seed. By this year if the Monsanto Corporation's timetable unfolds on schedule, 100% of the U.S. soybean crop (60 million acres) will be genetically engineered. Other food crops such as cotton, corn, potatoes, tomatoes and others are lagging only slightly behind. This poses a real threat to food supplies and health.

It is often argued by proponents of GM that it is only a continuation of what has been done historically. Although a form of genetic engineering of food crops and animals has long been practised, through the process of selective breeding, now we have taken a leap "forward" by incorporating genetic material from one species into another to give new traits to the recipient. Scientists have altered foods by inserting into them genes from bacteria and viruses. Many more such products containing DNA from insects, fish and even humans are being researched and soon will be headed for our dinner plates. Foods altered through genetic engineering often contain proteins and other components that have never before been part of the human diet. The process of putting alien genes into plants and animals to favour certain traits or to confer resistance is at best an inexact science with unpredictable results. Genes don't necessarily control a single trait. A gene may control several different traits in a plant. Without careful study, plants with undesirable characteristics may be released into the global

ecosystem.

One of the excuses for this head long rush into genetic engineering is the claim that it will enable us to feed the world. However, neither Monsanto nor any of the other genetic engineering companies appears to be developing genetically engineered crops that might solve global food shortages. Quite the opposite.

If genetically engineered crops were aimed at feeding the hungry, then Monsanto and the others would be developing seeds with certain predictable characteristics:

- (a) ability to grow on substandard or marginal soils;
- (b) plants able to produce more high-quality protein, with increased per-acre yield, without increasing the need for expensive machinery, chemicals, fertilisers, or water;
- (c) they would aim to favour small farms over larger farms;
- (d) the seeds would be cheap and freely available without restrictive licensing; and
- (e) they would be for crops that feed people, not meat animals.

The new genetically engineered seeds require high-quality soils, enormous investment in machinery, and increased use of chemicals. There is evidence that their per-acre yields are about 10% lower than traditional varieties (at least in the case of soybeans), and they produce crops largely intended as feed for meat animals, not to provide protein for people.

The genetic engineering revolution has nothing to do with feeding the world's hun-

gry. The plain fact is that fully two-thirds of the genetically engineered crops now available, or in development, are designed specifically to increase the sale of pesticides produced by the companies that are selling the genetically engineered seeds. A good example of this are Monsanto's round up ready crops. Monsanto's patent on Roundup runs out in the year 2000, but any farmer who adopts Roundup Ready seeds must agree to buy only Monsanto's brand of Roundup herbicide. The farmer gains a \$20 per acre cost-saving (compared to older techniques that relied on lesser quantities of more expensive chemicals), but the ecosystem receives much more Roundup than formerly. To make Roundup Ready Technology legal, the US Environmental Protection Agency had to accommodate Monsanto by tripling the allowable residues of Roundup that can remain on the crop. This increase of chemicals used on crops can lead to the development of resistance in insect pests, and knock on effects to the wider ecosystem. It is possible that resistance will reach such a level that these chemicals which world farming rely on will become useless.

There are other risks involved with genetic engineering. Genes can travel to nearby, related plants on their own. This is called gene flow. In 1996 gene flow was discovered to be much more common than previously thought. According to *Science* magazine, many ecologists say it is only a matter of time before an engineered gene makes the leap to a weedy species, thus creating a new weed or invigorating an old



one.

Most people are opposed to genetic engineering. A recent poll in *The Guardian* found that 85% of people wanted genetically modified food separated from natural crops and 95% wanted this food to be labelled. Of course there is resistance to this because the GM companies believe correctly that the majority of people would not buy GM food if it were clearly labelled. In the U.S., every other food carries a label listing its important ingredients, with the remarkable exception of genetically engineered foods.

There is another side to this difficulty in identifying what has been GM modified. If GM foods cannot be identified this will prevent epidemiologists from being able to trace health effects, should any appear, because no one will know who has been exposed to novel gene products and who has not. This also applies to GM crops fed to livestock.

The power that huge multinational companies like Monsanto wield allows them to blackmail national governments, and this influence is growing.

Monsanto has spent upwards of \$8.8 billion in recent years buying numerous U.S. seed companies. Two firms, Monsanto and Pioneer (recently purchased by DuPont), now dominate the U.S. seed business.

This monopolisation extends to effect the lives of us all, especially peasant farmers in the developing world. Monsanto

planned to introduce its genetically modified seeds accompanied by its patented "technology protection system" which makes the seeds from this year's crop sterile. Critics call Monsanto's seed sterilising technology "terminator" and "suicide seeds". Wherever suicide seed technology is adopted, farmers will have to go back to Monsanto year after year to buy new rations of genetically modified seeds.

"By peddling suicide seeds, the biotechnology multinationals will lock the world's poorest farmers into a new form of genetic serfdom", says Emma Must of the World Development Movement. "Currently 80 percent of crops in developing countries are grown using farm-saved seed. Being unable to save seeds from sterile crops could mean the difference between surviving and going under", she says. "More precisely", says Canadian journalist Gwynne Dyer, "it would speed the consolidation of small farms into the hands of those with the money to engage in industrialised agribusiness - which generally means higher profits but less employment and lower yields.

According to the *London Independent*, the only major players still supporting GM foods in England are Monsanto Corporation and the Blair government. Just a few months ago, British Prime Minister Tony Blair had told members of parliament that opposition to GM foods would be "a flash in the pan". Now popular support for the Blair government itself has

dwindled as opposition to GM foods has swelled. In his last election, Mr. Blair was supported financially by Monsanto, the leading proponent of genetically modified crops.

Monsanto has admitted that no one knows - or can know - what will happen when genetically modified organisms are put directly into the human food chain and are released into the natural environment, as is the case with genetically modified crops. Robert Shapiro, the chief executive officer of Monsanto, said October 28, 1998, "We don't seek controversy, but obviously it has been thrust on us. It is a direct consequence of a role we have chosen. And it is a role which we can blame only ourselves for... we realise that with any new and powerful technology with unknown, and to some degree unknowable - by definition - effects, then there necessarily will be an appropriate level at least, and maybe even more than that, of public debate and public interest."

Much genetic engineering is linked to producing crops resistant to specific brands of herbicide e.g. Monsanto's Roundup, which has been implicated in claims of raised hormone levels in people. We can ask ourselves why are such risks being taken? They are being taken in the name of short term profits and market domination. Only when this is ended can scientific advance generally benefit the mass of people. ☆

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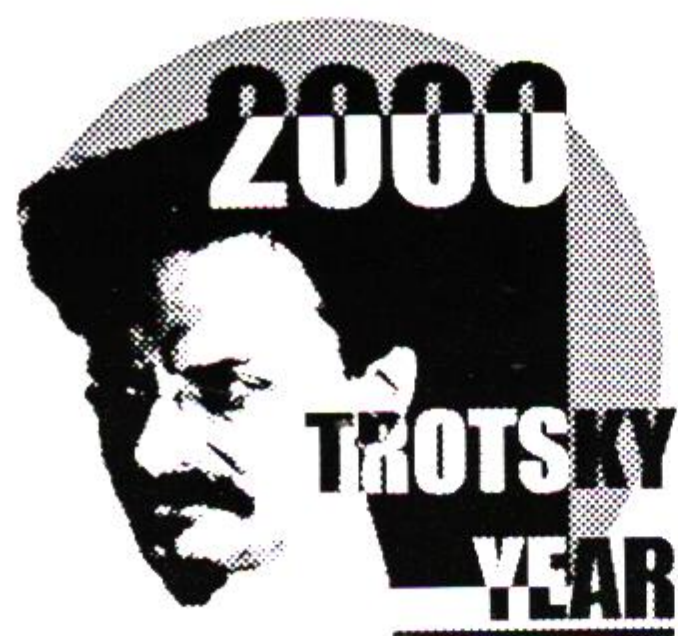
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# The Moscow 'Shoot the mad'

The ideas of Trotsky - which represent the continuation of Marxist thought since Lenin's death - are without question the most slandered set of ideas in history.

Together with Marx and Lenin, Trotsky has been subjected to a continual onslaught from capitalist commentators and academics, including the Russian 'democrats' of the

Volkogonov type, for his alleged totalitarianism and subversive ideas. In reality, it is the revolutionary message of Marxism which poses a threat to their system - and they must attempt to discredit these ideas at every opportunity.

by Rob Sewell

**A**dded to this orchestrated bourgeois campaign of vilification has been the vitriolic attacks of the Stalinists on Trotsky. Before his death, Lenin formed a bloc with Trotsky to remove Stalin from office. Unfortunately, a series of strokes removed Lenin from political life until his death in 1924. From then on Trotsky led the struggle against Stalin and the emerging bureaucracy within the USSR. With the failure of revolution abroad, Stalin used his support within the apparatus to isolate and expel Trotsky from the Soviet Union.

Once Stalin had defeated Trotsky's Left Opposition, he turned on all his opponents, including his allies on the Right. The victory of the apparatus was to culminate in the infamous Moscow Trials of 1936-38 where the 'Old Bolsheviks', including Trotsky, who led the October Revolution, were accused of counter-revolutionary activity, sabotage, murder, and collaboration with fascism.

Most of the accused were subsequently broken by the secret police, the NKVD, forced to give false confessions about themselves and others, and then shot. By 1940, out of the members of Lenin's Central Committee of 1917, only Stalin remained. Trotsky himself was assassinated by a Stalinist agent in August 1940.

In the course of these Show Trials, Stalin attempted to mobilise world opinion against the accused. An international campaign was organised through the Communist Parties and their press to discredit and slander Trotsky and the other leaders of the Revolution. Trotsky was officially accused of being connected with the German Intelligence Service since 1921, and with British intelligence since 1926!

In the Indictment of the trial of the Old Bolsheviks Pyatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, Muralov and others, it states: 'The investigation has established that LD Trotsky entered into negotiations with

one of the leaders of the German National Socialist Party with a view to waging a joint struggle against the Soviet Union...

The principles of this agreement, as Trotsky related, were finally elaborated and adopted during Trotsky's meeting with Hitler's deputy, Hess...'

(*Imprecor* p. 128, no 6, February 1937)

**W**hile the Moscow Frame up Trials unfolded, very few were to openly question their authenticity.

While the charges appeared fantastic, the confessions seemed so clear and emphatic. In the West, the Trotskyists fought bravely to mobilise opposition to the Stalinist machine. In 1937, an impartial Commission of Enquiry was established, made up of liberal-democratic people, under Prof. John Dewey to examine the charges made against Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov - the two principal defendants of the Moscow Trials. After a thorough investigation the Commission returned a verdict of not guilty and declared that the trials were a frame-up.

## Twentieth Congress

It was only in 1956, at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, did Khrushchev finally reveal that the Trials were in fact frame-ups. This was done to place the blame for the crimes of Stalinism on Stalin himself. It was all down to him! The fact that Khrushchev and the others directly participated in the frame-ups while Stalin was alive was not mentioned. Neither Trotsky nor his son were rehabilitated. Despite the so-called de-Stalinisation, research into the Great Terror was taboo right up until the end of the 1980s.

With the collapse of Stalinism, and the opening up of the archives of the CPSU, new evidence has emerged about the Moscow Trials. One of the latest books to appear which analyses the new archive material from a Marxist perspective is

'1937: Stalin's Year of Terror' by the Russian historian Vadim Z. Rogovin. This excellent book provides a graphic picture of the horrific preparation of the Trials.

The Great Purge and Terror were launched by Stalin not because he was insane. On the contrary, it was a conscious, well-prepared course of action to safeguard the rule of the bureaucracy. Stalin arrived at the decision to destroy the 'Old Bolsheviks' not later than the summer of 1934, and then began to prepare his operation - beginning with the murder of Kirov in December of that year.

The situation by 1934 was giving rise to alarm amongst the Stalinist bureaucracy. There was profound discontent throughout the country after the debacle of forced collectivisation. Opposition moods were widespread. Stalin feared that the Old Bolsheviks - although forced to repeatedly capitulate to Stalin - would become a focal point for opposition. Some had in fact made contact with Trotsky in exile.

**S**talin used the assassination of Kirov to launch his plans. Originally the perpetrators of the murder were declared to be a group of 13 'Zinovievists', shot in December 1934. The former oppositionists Zinoviev and Kamenev - who had earlier broken with Trotsky and capitulated - were then convicted in January 1935 with 'objectively' inflaming terrorist moods amongst their supporters. But this was only the beginning.

## Terrorism

Stalin now realised his mistake in exiling Trotsky in 1928, which allowed him to freely criticise the Stalinist regime from abroad. Trotsky was the most important focal point of opposition to Stalin. He was a revolutionary leader who would not be broken. From then on Stalin prepared his assassination. Consequently, Stalin set



# Trials: dogs!

about the frame-up of Trotsky and his supporters on charges of terrorism.

This job was given to the NKVD under Yagoda and then Yezhov, both Stalinist hangmen. They had to 'prove' the existence of an underground terrorist Zinoviev organisation which collaborated with a secret Trotskyist network. In early 1935 a directive was given to the NKVD which demanded the 'total liquidation of the entire Trotsky-Zinoviev underground'. Arrests took place of suspected oppositionists and former-oppositionists. Then followed the interrogations and first 'confessions' - receiving terrorist orders from Trotsky.

After a year and a half in prison, Zinoviev and Kamenev were brought to Moscow for their interrogation. They had been repeatedly broken - morally crushed - by this time. As was Stalin's method, he had managed to sow mutual discord between the two men. Zinoviev wrote Stalin grovelling letters from his cell: 'My soul burns with one desire: to prove to you that I am no longer an enemy. There is no demand which I would not fulfil in order to prove this...' (Rogovin, p. 5)

Kamenev bore himself with particular courage. He told his interrogator: 'You are now observing Thermidor in a pure form. The French Revolution taught us a good lesson, but we weren't able to put it to use. We don't know how to protect our revolution from Thermidor. That is our greatest mistake, and history will condemn us for it.'

Yezhov was ordered to prepare them for a public trial, and that they should slander themselves and Trotsky - for the sake of the revolution! Threats were made against their families, a number of whom were held by the NKVD. They were incarcerated and subjected to humiliating procedures. Zinoviev was the first to break, who then persuaded Kamenev to follow suit in return for their lives and those of their families and supporters. They were then brought before Stalin and Voroshilov. Zinoviev pleaded with them: 'You want to depict members of Lenin's Politburo and Lenin's personal friends to be unprincipled bandits, and present the party as a snake's nest of intrigue, treachery and murderers.' To this Stalin replied that the



Stalin, the executioner, alone remains of Lenin's Central Committee 1917. From the *American Socialist Appeal* 1938.

Trial was not aimed at them, but against Trotsky, 'the sworn enemy of the Party.'

Their pleas for their lives were met with Stalin's vow that all this 'goes without saying.' Stalin betrayed them, as he would betray the rest. It was in reality a betrayal of the Revolution in the interests of the ruling bureaucracy at whose head was Stalin.

Smirnov and Mrachkovsky both stubbornly refused to give confessions to the interrogators. According to the chief prosecutor, Vyshinsky, Smirnov's entire interrogation on 20 May consisted of his words: 'I deny this. I deny it once again. I deny it.' Mrachkovsky was taken before Stalin personally, but rejected his advances. He was then handed over to Slutsky, head of the NKVD's foreign department. According to him, he interrogated Mrachkovsky non-stop for almost four days. Mrachkovsky told Slutsky: 'You can tell Stalin that I hate him. He is a traitor. They took me to Molotov, who also wanted to buy me off. I spit in his face.' During the interrogation every two hours the phone rang from Stalin's secretary to ask whether he had managed to 'break' Mrachkovsky. After a lengthy interrogation he finally broke down in tears 'concluding everything was lost.' For a long time he refused to smear Trotsky with terrorist activity.

### Falsehoods

The first show Trial - the Trial of the Sixteen - sought to destroy the mythical Trotsky-Zinoviev Centre. Vyshinsky did not provide a shred of evidence against the accused - not one document, not a scrap of paper - only the confessions of the accused. The weakness of the prosecutor's case was demonstrated by the inconsistencies and falsehoods in the testimonies given at the trial. Goltsmam, for instance, testified he met Trotsky and

Sedov in Copenhagen at the Hotel Bristol.

Unbeknown to the prosecutors, the Hotel Bristol had been demolished in 1917! The Stalinist investigators had not done their homework.

At the conclusion of the Trial, Vyshinsky for the prosecution declared: 'I demand that we shoot the mad dogs - every single one of them!' Despite the pleas for mercy submitted by the Sixteen - which they were led to believe would be honoured - within a matter of hours they were taken out and shot.

Those who grovelled before the Stalinist dictatorship - throwing all kinds of slanders against their former comrades - could never satisfy Stalin. They would be eliminated after their allotted role was complete. New amalgams were being prepared. New Witch Trials would take place. As Leon Sedov explained: 'Stalin needs Trotsky's head - this is his main goal. To achieve it he will launch the most extreme and even more insidious cases.'

With the collapse of Hitler Germany in 1945 and the Nuremberg Trials, which laid bare the Nazi regime and their collaborators, not one word or document was found to prove the slightest connection between Trotsky and the Gestapo. It was not Trotsky who had an agreement with Hitler. It was Stalin who signed a Pact with Hitler in August 1939.

It is fitting to end this article by a quote from Leopold Trepper, the leader of the famous anti-Nazi spy network in Western Europe:

'But who did protest at the time? Who rose up to voice his outrage? The Trotskyites can lay claim to this honour. Following the example of their leader, who was rewarded for his obstinacy with the end of an ice-axe, they fought Stalinism to the death, and they were the only ones who did.'

'Today, the Trotskyites have a right to accuse those who once howled along with the wolves. Let them not forget, however, that they had the enormous advantage over us of having a coherent political system capable of replacing Stalinism. They had something to cling to in the midst of their profound distress at seeing the revolution betrayed. They did not 'confess', for they knew that their confession would serve neither the party nor socialism.' ☆

1937 Stalin's Year of Terror, by Vadim Z. Rogovin. £19.99, available from Wellred



# The Goldilocks world ?

"Here's a prediction. The US economy is heading for slump. By the end of this year, that reality will start to emerge behind the smoke and mirrors of stock market exuberance and big business bluster. Since 1945, all world slumps have started in the US. This time will be no exception. Europe is just beginning to pick up steam. Its budding boom will be cut off by the frost of the American recession. Japan and Asia are already freezing. Before the millennium is reached, the world will be ice." June 1998.

by Michael Roberts



This is what I said in *Socialist Appeal* over 18 months ago. Since then, apparently, events have proved me wrong. Far from being ice, the world economy appears to be picking up. The US is going from strength to strength at a real growth rate of 4%-plus and has now achieved its longest boom on record, of over 110 months. Europe is beginning to surge, with growth heading for the 3% rate. Far from descending into recession, as many of us expected 18 months ago, the UK economy has leapt forward again on the back of the US boom. It will grow by up to 3% this year and sterling is even stronger than it was back in the days of before Black Wednesday 1992, the time of its last currency collapse. Sure, Japan remains in the doldrums, but even there, there are signs of a limited recovery.

Also, the crisis of the so-called developing or emerging economies seems to be over. Asia has made a dramatic recovery from the depths of 1998. Korea is pumping along at a 10% rate, Mexico is sustaining 4% growth, Brazil is swinging back from the disaster of early 1999 and rising again. Even Russia is showing some signs of growth on the back of the oil boom. And India will be the fastest growing developing economy this year (even faster than China).

At the same time, there is little evidence of inflationary pressures, apart from the huge rise in the oil price. If you exclude energy costs, US prices are rising at just over 2% a year. In Europe, inflation (excluding oil and gas) is under 1% a year. Even the UK can boast inflation at under 2.5%. And, as for Japan, its stagnant economy has deflation (falling prices).

The capitalist commentators think they have the answer. It's the new productivity paradigm led by the high-tech and internet revolution. There will be no capitalist crisis. The 20th century was the American century, but so will the 21st. Globalisation, the internet and American military will ensure Pax Americana. The New Economy will ensure continuous low

inflation and productivity-driven growth. Wealth and better standards will spread to all the world's six billion people.

That's why the capitalist commentators remain ecstatic about their system. It's a Goldilocks economy - not too hot and not too cold - growing at a good pace without overheating. And when the world's capitalists leaders, both in business and in politics, met for their annual informal summit in the Swiss ski resort of Davos in January, they exuded confidence about the future (at least in their public pronouncements).

## Seattle

Sure, outside the conference halls and hotels, demonstrators tried to disrupt proceedings as they did at the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle last December. But inside, President Clinton told the invitation-only participants of the World Economic Forum that "globalisation", the modern mantra of capitalism, had created the foundation of sustained prosperity for the world's people. It was essential, said Clinton, to bring down trade barriers further and free up regulations so that international big business could invest and move capital around as they liked. And above all, the forces of the labour movement should not interfere. After all, had not global capitalism proved that it was the only way to achieve "prosperity".

I don't need to tell the readers of *Socialist Appeal* that Clinton's claim of world prosperity, while billions are below the basic standards of life and millions suffer from war and disease, sounds sickeningly hollow. The information technology revolution may be with us, but in 2000, still more than half the world's population have never used a telephone! But Clinton's paean of praise does tell you the mood of the capitalists.

Does all this mean that socialists are wrong about the instability of capitalism and the eventual slump in the world economy? My prediction at the top has been proved wrong. I can say that it is just of

question of timing. But timing is important. If the world boom were to continue another five or ten year without serious break, the arguments of Marxism would be looking pretty sick. But if it has less than one or two years to run, the boasts of Davos will be exposed.

So why was I wrong? If we can work out why, we can learn better what is going to happen in the future. What is it that has happened in the last two years which explains the continued boom?

The answer must start with the US economy. During 1999, American households have gone on spending like there was no tomorrow. Consumer confidence is at record highs and as a result, consumption is up by 5% or more a year. Real disposable incomes cannot keep pace. Despite low unemployment, average real wages (after taking into account inflation) are growing less fast than household spending. In other words, Americans are living beyond their means.

They are doing this because they believe that their wealth (as represented by the value of their retirement nest eggs) is rising faster. The huge rise in the US stock market in 1999 has created the paper wealth that has convinced millions of Americans to go on spending. The value of stocks and shares held by American households compared to their total income rose from 3.5 times in 1995 to 3.8 times in 1999.

## Spending

And it's not just households that are keeping the US boom going. US companies are spending at unprecedented rates on new equipment. Capital spending is rising at a 10% clip as US corporations invest more and more in high-tech equipment and above all into the internet revolution. They are doing this because they have to. Competition is intense. And corporations



are convinced they must invest in the technological revolution or die. They believe that the resultant increased productivity will keep them in business. But most of all, they are counting on the move into the internet producing a huge leap in their share prices, so increasing their wealth and buying power.

And up to now, they have been right. The internet revolution not only continues to fuel the stock market mania, it is accelerating it. Every time any company announces that is going to sell its products via an internet service (e-commerce, they call it), its share price rockets. Take Rupert Murdoch's BSKyB. Last autumn the shares were priced at £6. Murdoch had been saying up to then that the internet was bad for business not good. Then the company announced a reversal of strategy. It was going to launch internet initiatives with other companies on its TV service. The shares are now worth £20! And yet, in its latest report, the company was shown to be losing money.

At the beginning of January, the American Association of Investors announced that 75% of its members thought that the US market would go on to new heights. Then we had the largest merger deal in the history of the world, as internet company America OnLine took over the media conglomerate, Time-Warner. The merger mania in 1999 reached nearly 20% of US GDP compared with 3% in 1990. The only time it has been any near as high as this was in 1900! Of the money that flowed in to drive up share prices, over 75% went into these high-tech companies.

**B**ut in this lies the achilles heel of the US boom. These huge price rises must be justified at the end of the day by increased productivity that feeds through to increased corporate profits. And the reality is that the profits are not there to justify the US boom. Take the consumer. American households are spending more, but their incomes do not justify it. So they are relying on the booming stock market. And they are borrowing more and more. Mortgage borrowing is up 10% a year as is credit card debt. At the same time, borrowing to invest on the stock market rose by an all-time record in 1999 to reach \$204bn. This can only last as long the stock market keeps on going up and the cost of borrowing does not rise.

But already there are signs that the US stock market boom is wavering. The technology stocks have continued to rise, but the rest of US company share prices are falling back and have been for some time. The technology sector cannot hold up the rest for much longer. Increasingly,

the merger mania which is boosting technology company shares is being financed, not by cash but by paper. In the first half of last year, takeovers funded by cash reached \$220bn. In the second half of 1999, that fell to just \$60bn. So companies are buying other companies by exchanging their shares or by borrowing money. Combined with the huge expenditure on technology, US corporate debt has reached all-time levels, way above anything seen in US history.

And the much-heralded productivity boom is not delivering the profits. Many US companies continue to publish higher and higher earnings results. But this is an illusion. Under US accounting procedures, company profits include 'inventories', in other words, notional profits from gains in share prices of investment held by companies. So company profits go up, because the stock market goes up. And the stock market goes up because company profits are reported as going up! If you strip out these gains, then company profits from actual production in the US fell in the last half of 1999. Only profits from abroad kept US companies in the black. And if you take out financial institutions like the banks from the figures, then US industry, and especially, the technology sector, made losses. The manufacturing sector's profits have fallen 7% over the last two years.

#### Inflation

And inflation is on the rise if you include oil prices. That's forced the Federal Reserve Bank to start to push up interest rates this year. So the cost of borrowing to spend in the shops, to buy new equipment and to buy other companies is rising. Corporate debt rose 11% last year, more than double the pace of output and now net interest payments are starting to eat into profits.

So we are heading for the end of the Goldilocks economy. From not being too hot and not too cold, the US economy, by the end of this year, could be too hot and too cold. Inflation could be reaching 3% a year as the productivity boom slows. At the same time, with profits disappearing and the cost of borrowing to finance the boom accelerating, investment by companies and spending by households will slow. If the stock market turns nasty at the same time, then boom could swing into slump very quickly - just as in 1929.

Of course, many capitalist commentators reject this scenario. They expect the US economy to slow down gently in a "soft landing" without any deflationary bust. That's because the productivity boom in the US economy is here to stay. As Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan says; "It may no longer be the case that an

acceleration of demand presages an overheated and unstable economy if demand growth is caused by a growth in the overall trend of productivity".

**T**his is the illusion of capitalists at the height of a boom. It was the same in 1900 when capitalism was in a boom that had begun in 1895 after a whole epoch of instability with the Great Depression of the 1880s. But Mr Greenspan is in for a rude awakening, just as capitalism was at the beginning of the last century. There is no escaping the inherently unstable nature of the "free market".

The information technology revolution is for real. But there have been many similar technical advances in human history, and in modern capitalism. And capitalism always wildly overreaches itself in speculating on the gains from new technology. Over investment is now evident. Corporate debt to finance this investment is completely out of control. A tip down in the stock market will turn a virtuous circle of share price rises, climbing consumer spending and fast growth into a vicious circle of consumer and corporate spending slump, increased costs and falling output very soon.

And, in direct contradiction to the benefits of globalisation and breaking down of national economic barriers, a slump in the US will spread quickly to the rest of the world. Then all the things that have driven globalisation will turn into their opposites. Since the beginning of the 1960s, prices of internationally-traded goods have fallen in real terms while world trade as a share of world economy has doubled. That expansion is similar to that achieved in the early part of the last century. But by the 1960s, world trade had slumped back to previous levels.

#### Depression

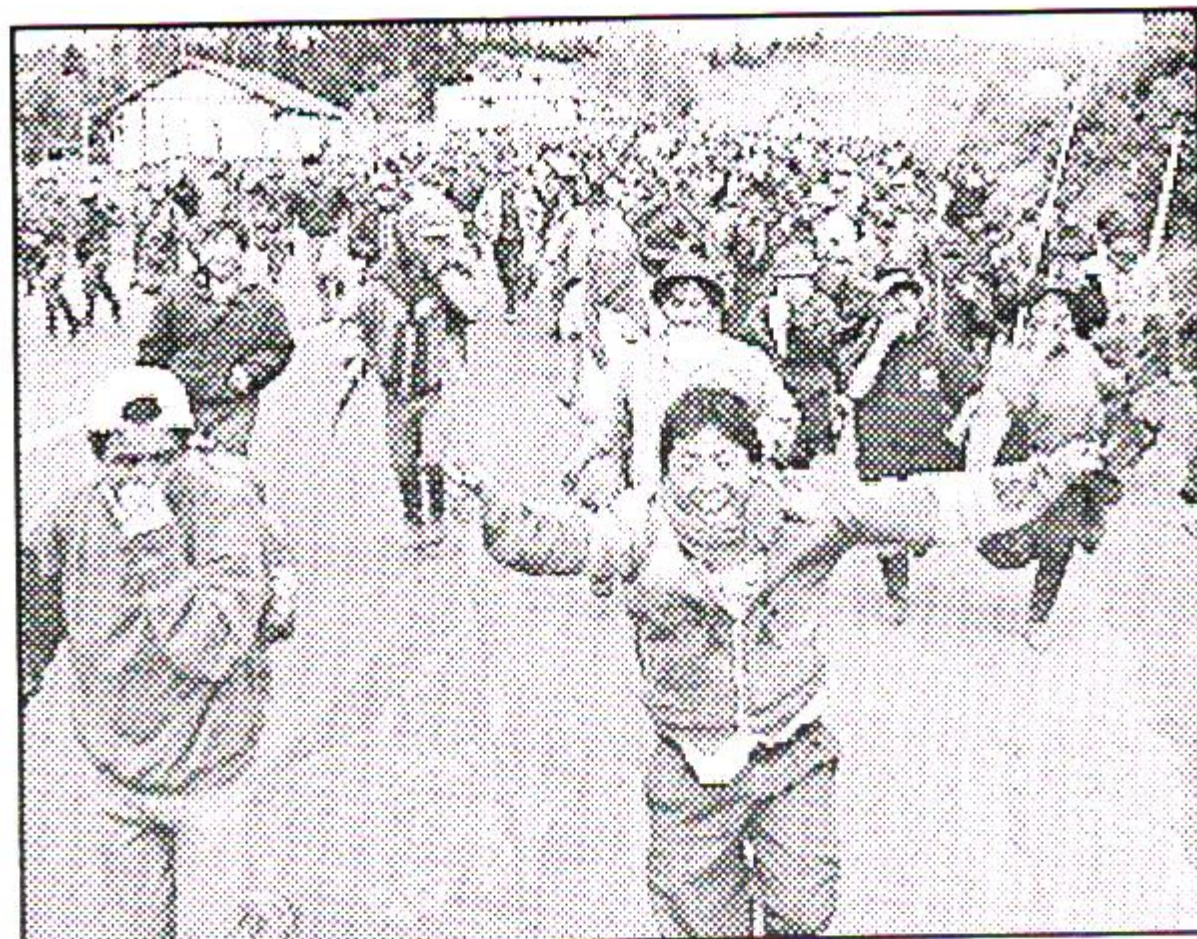
The technology boom may boost productivity but it forces prices down and squeezes profit margins. And the last great technological boom under capitalism in the 1930s was accompanied by the worst capitalist depression ever seen.

And this time globalisation and deregulation have taken off all the controls over international capital. There is not even the regulating power of the gold standard of the 1920s, which at least helped keep currencies stable for a while. This time a world recession will see huge collapses in currencies, Mexico and Asian style, in those advanced capitalist economies with the biggest deficits and debts with the rest of the world. A sterling slump and a dollar disaster - that's the message of the future. The crash is coming in financial markets. That will lead to end of Goldilocks. ☆



# Uprising in Ecuador:

## Marking the beginning of the 21st century



"At those crucial moments when the old order becomes no longer endurable for the masses, they break over the barriers excluding them from the political arena, sweep aside their traditional representatives, and create by their own interference the initial groundwork for a new regime"  
Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution

After a week of mass mobilisation, demonstrations, strikes and clashes, on Friday 21st of January tens of thousands of Indians, peasants, workers and students in Ecuador took over one by one the buildings of the Parliament, the Supreme Court and the National Palace and established an alternative government.

by Jorge Martin

Faced with these events the world's mass media, which had remained silent for the whole week, started to scream that a military coup had overthrown the government of president Jamil Mahuad. It is therefore necessary to clarify first of all that what has happened in Ecuador in the last week is a revolution, the main feature of which is, as explained by Trotsky, "the direct interference of the masses in historic events."

In order to understand the magnificent mass movement in Ecuador in the last few days we must go back to the beginning of the 90s when a whole series of governments, both of the right and of the "left", started to apply faithfully the structural adjustment plans dictated by the IMF. The results are now clear for all to see: two thirds of the population under the poverty line, hyperinflation and mass unemployment.

In 1995 Ecuador waged a short war against Peru with the main aim of diverting the masses attention from their social problems into a wave of nationalist fervour. But this lasted for a very short period of time and a few months after there were mass workers' protests against the economic policies of the government. The generalised discontent of workers and peasants expressed itself in 1996 with a massive vote for Abdalá Bucaram who won the presidency on the basis of demagogic promises. In a few months he had broken all his promises and adopted the same adjustment plans dictated by the IMF, including massive price hikes for all basic products. Overnight, electricity went up by 500%, gas by 340%, telephone charges by 700% amongst others. This was the spark which ignited the accumulated malaise. The trade unions called a

national strike on February 5th and 6th, 1997, which then became an indefinite strike. Bucaram tried to hold on to power using repression, declaring a state of emergency and taking the troops onto the streets, but this did not stop the protests. He then tried to withdraw the whole package of economic measures, but this did not work either, and finally Bucaram "the mad" had to flee from the country.

The Ecuadorian bourgeoisie, gripped by panic by the magnitude of the movement and their inability to stop it by repression, quickly patched up a compromise and appointed Fabián Alarcón as an interim president. Already at that time the trade union organisations warned that the aim of the strike had not been only to force the resignation of the president but the rejection of his economic policies.

### Dollarisation of economy

The new Alarcón government followed exactly the same policies as Bucaram's and so did Jamil Mahuad after he was elected in 1998. A poor and highly indebted country like Ecuador has very little room for manoeuvre as far as economic policies are concerned. As long as the logic of capitalism is accepted there is only one possible way out: to unload the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of workers and peasants. They have resisted every single one of the attacks on their living standards launched by the government and on a number of occasions defeated them. In March last year a 48 hour general strike forced the government to withdraw its adjustment plan and the same was the case in August.

The year 2000 started in Ecuador with 62% of the population below the poverty line, 70% of the workforce either unem-

ployed or underemployed, a fall of the economy by 7.2% and an inflation rate of 70%. Faced with this situation the Mahuad government decided to decree the dollarisation of the economy at a rate of 25,000 sucres per dollar.

In response to these measures, the National Confederation of Indian Nationalities (CONAIE) and the Coordination of Social Movements (CMS) set up the National People's Parliament and announced a national indefinite uprising from January 15th, and the taking of Quito by thousands of Indian peasants coming from all over the country.

The character of this movement revealed a qualitative change. The struggle was no longer just to change president or to force new elections. Now the open aim of the struggle was a "national insurrection", the establishment of people's parliaments at national, regional and local level as the sole bodies of power, and the abolition of the three branches of state power (executive, judiciary, and legislative).

The challenge to the bourgeois state and the setting up of organs of workers' and peasants' power represented a very significant step forward in the consciousness of the masses in Ecuador, as a direct consequence of the previous years' struggles.

The uprising started on January 15th with the declaration of the state of emergency by the government and mass arrests of trade union and student leaders. It is important to make clear that the movement was started by the Indian organisations but had the support and the participation of the working class. The workers at the national oil company, Petroecuador, declared an all-out indefi-



nite strike to support the Indian movement and against the government's economic and social policies. The United Workers Front and the Ecuador Confederation of Free Trade Unions also joined the insurrection. In the words of Saltos Garza, spokesperson for the Social Movements Coordination, "this is not an Indian uprising, it is an uprising of the peoples of Ecuador, of the social movements and of the citizens who are being hit by inflation". (*El Telegrafo*, 16/1/00).



### National uprising

The insurrection acquired a truly national character and mass demonstrations took place all over the country. The common feature was the taking over of government buildings and the setting up of local and provincial popular parliaments. In Cuenca for instance an impressive demonstration of 50,000 people clashed with the police and the army and took over the government building.

In Guayaquil, the country's economic capital, thousands of workers, peasants and students demonstrated every day from Monday in support of the insurrection. The demonstration got the support of sections of the petty bourgeoisie (mainly small shop owners) which joined the movement all over the country.

In Loja, in the South, there were daily demonstrations and clashes with the police. The army occupied the university campus and arrested 150 students.

Despite the impressive police and army deployment to prevent the entry of the Indians into the capital Quito, by Wednesday there were more than 20,000 of them in its streets. CONAIE leader, Antonio Vargas "said that the Indians and their urban supporters will not kneel down in front of the thieves and corrupt people who have the economic and political power. He appealed for the formation of a united front, as only the people can save the people. He appealed to the police and the army to aim their guns at those who are looting the country and not at the Indians or the people, who are their brothers." (*Pulsar*, 19/1/00)

In Chimborazo province "some 50,000 Indian peasants blocked all the roads of the province. The army talks about a red tide because of the colour of the ponchos traditional of the Indians in this region." At the same time the provincial people's parliament in the Amazonian region announced the taking over of the oil wells by workers and Indians.

On Thursday the army occupied the oil refinery of Esmeraldas, one of the biggest industrial complexes of Ecuador, but failed to get the workers back to work.

Tens of thousands of Indians, workers, students, small shopkeepers participated in the demonstrations in Quito. For days they surrounded the institutions of state power with the aim of taking them over. The government organised the defence of these buildings with the army and protected them with barbed wire. But there is no force able to stop a whole people when it has decided that enough is enough and finally on Friday 21st they took over the parliament. This is how *Pulsar* describes it: "The Indian and peasant movements of Ecuador, together with the organised urban sectors and with complete support of the middle layers and soldiers of the three branches of the armed forces have set up an alternative power in this country. This took place when the big mass of Indians and peasants in Quito broke the siege of the Parliament building and took it over. At the beginning there was resistance by the soldiers but suddenly hundreds of soldiers arrived in armoured cars, coming from the Military Academy and supported the occupation." A group of 70 young colonels led by Lucio Gutierrez declared that they were joining the insurrection.

### Role of the army

When analysing the fact that a section of the army joined the insurrection we must take into account a number of factors. On the one hand it is clear that an important section of the soldiers, NCOs and even some officers identify themselves with the struggle of workers and peasants who after all, as Antonio Vargas said, are "their brothers." Fraternalisation of soldiers and NCOs with the revolutionary workers and peasants is a feature of every revolution, be it Russia in 1917 or Spain in 1936.

On the other hand it is also possible

that sections of the Army officers feel honestly disgusted by the economic policies of the Quito government which favour just a handful of bankers and which at the end of the day amount to the "selling out of the country to imperialism at throw-away prices". This section of "patriotic" officers who want to clean out the country from corruption and foreign intervention have an example to follow in the Chavez movement in Venezuela which has precisely these same features. It is significant that it is the first time in years that we see the entry of sections of the army into the political arena at the side of the most oppressed layers of

society.

After the taking over of the national congress a National Salvation Civilian-Military Junta was set up. The composition of this junta and its first statements clearly reflected the shortcomings of the movement. The Junta was made up of CONAIE leader Antonio Vargas, former Supreme Court President Carlos Solórzano and Colonel Gutierrez.

In his first statement, Lucio Gutierrez appealed to: "former presidents of Ecuador, honest politicians, the Church, the media, honest businessmen and bankers, workers, the unemployed and the women to support a change in the country." (*Pulsar* 21/1/00). In the same guise Carlos Solórzano stated that: "We want to invite good willing businessmen and honest bankers to participate in this government." (*Pulsar* 21/1/00)

### Confusion of leadership

Here we can see clearly how the main weakness of the movement is precisely its leadership. After the workers and peasants have taken power, their own leaders are already thinking about how to hand it back to bankers and capitalists (although only "honest" ones for now). The confusion of the leaders of the movement led them to rely on elements of the old state apparatus in order to create a new one. The power was already in their hands but they did not realise it. Thus, the movement which was very radical in its character and organisational forms was very weak and confused in its political programme.

On Friday evening, the "communards" (as they were called by the press) with the support of sections of the military finally took over the Supreme Court and the National palace, from where Mahuad had already fled.

Then, the supreme commander of the armed forces, General Carlos Mendoza, seeing power slipping from his hands



decided to join the insurrection (after it was already victorious and only to be able to betray it from within), and replaced Colonel Gutierrez in the Salvation Junta.

This closed the first chapter of this revolutionary movement. The masses had proven once again that when they start to move there is no power on earth which can stop them. This time their goal was clear: the overthrowing not only of a government but of the whole of the state apparatus and its replacement by another one based on the peoples' parliaments. In just five days the peasant and worker masses of Ecuador using their traditional methods of struggle, the general strike, the insurrection, the mass mobilisation, and winning over a section of the army to their side succeeded in taking power.

The problem is, as in so many other revolutions, the lack of a genuinely revolutionary leadership able to carry through the movement to the end. Thus, as in Russia in February, in Germany 1918 and Spain 1936, the masses took power and their leaders handed it back to the bourgeoisie.

On Saturday Ecuador woke up to the news that General Mendoza, supposedly a member of the Salvation Junta, had handed back power to Mahuad's vice-president Gustavo Noboa. His first statement affirmed that he: "will continue mostly with the economic policies of the deposed Mahuad" and that "dollarisation, the banking system rescue plan and the modernisation started by the deposed Jamil Mahuad will continue unopposed". It is now clear that General Mendoza has acted as a pawn of those sections of the bourgeoisie who feared that Mahuad's attempt to cling to power could have ended with the complete overthrow of their regime. The decision to hand over power

to the vice-president was taken by General Mendoza after visiting the US embassy. Jamil Mahuad who saw the power of the class he represents miraculously saved, publicly declared his support for the new president Noboa.

At the time of writing, the news is still confused. The group of colonels who joined the insurrection feel betrayed and Colonel Gutierrez has been arrested. It seems that in the early hours of Saturday the masses discussed the possibility of retaking the Government Palace.

#### Who had the power?

In the end, the leadership of the movement, which had based all its strategy on the support of a section of the army, feeling betrayed by the generals, abandoned the field of battle. The truth is that General Mendoza did not betray the movement, from the very beginning he only put himself at its front in order to behead it. On Saturday morning the situation was not yet lost. If the leaders had based themselves on the formation of soldiers' committees and the extension of the peoples' parliaments to all levels and the purging from those of all bourgeois elements, they could still have retained power. As the events of Friday 21st showed, power was not in the hands of its official representatives (parliamentarians, judges and president) but on the streets of Quito and all over the country; in the hands of the peoples' parliaments and the national parliament of the people.

But the leaders of the popular and peasant movement were disoriented by the appearances of power and when General Mendoza, at the head of the Salvation Junta decreed its dissolution and appointed president Noboa, they did not know how to respond and accepted it.

They did not realise that General Mendoza had very little real power to back him as most of the army was on the side of the communards. If they had made an appeal to the assembled masses of workers and peasants to take over the National Palace again and to the soldiers to aim their guns against the generals and to join the movement the situation would have been entirely different.

The latest news seems to indicate that the Indian peasants have left the capital and disbanded the peoples' parliament. Whatever the immediate outcome of this uprising, it is clear that the masses of workers and peasants have learnt a lot, about the role of the state, the role of the army commanders, their own strength, etc. The Ecuadorian bourgeoisie is completely unable to solve one of the urgent economic problems of the country and therefore this is not the end of the process, just another important chapter.

Ecuador is not an isolated case in Latin America. Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Brazil, the whole of the continent has witnessed mass mobilisations, general strikes and peasant insurrections once and again in the last few years. All the conditions are there for a victorious revolution. As soon as this takes place in one country it will spread like wildfire throughout the continent.

The most urgent need for the workers in the cities and the countryside in Ecuador and the rest of the continent is to forge a revolutionary leadership firmly based on the principle of class independence and a genuine socialist programme, the only one which can offer a way forward for the masses of the continent.

January 23rd, 2000

## 1,000 Mexican students jailed Urgent Solidarity Appeal

In the early hours of Sunday, February 6th, thousands of federal police officers broke up the meeting of the General Strike Committee (CGH) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and arrested more than 600 of its members.

The students at UNAM, about 275,000, had been on strike for nine months, their main demand was the continuation of free access to university and their opposition to the introduction of tuition fees of about \$140.

The week before police had already arrested another 250 students at the Preparatoria 3 and 80 more at a separate conflict in a Rural Teachers School in Hidalgo.

On Wednesday February 9th, 500,000 people marched all over Mexico to demand the release of the students and to protest against repression. As a result, some of the nearly 1,000 students arrested have now been released (some on bail), but around 280 remain in jail. The conditions of the imprisoned students are very harsh. Many have been beaten up and the government is using common criminals to beat up jailed students.

We have received an appeal for solidarity messages and financial support to cover legal costs from the Students Committee to Defend State Education (CEDEP). Messages of protest can be sent to:

**Gobierno de Mexico:**  
S.E. Dr. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon, Presidente de la Republica,  
Palacio Nacional, C.P. 06065, Mexico, D.F., Mexico  
Fax (+ 52 5) 515 57 29 o/or 516 57 62  
segob@rtn.net.mx

with copies to the newspaper La Jornada  
jornada@condor.dgsca.unam.mx

and to Comite Estudiantil en Defensa de la Educacion Publica  
militante@iname.com

Donations in cheques made payable to International Solidarity Club can be sent to:

**PO Box 2626, London N1 7SQ**  
(please write on the back "for Mexican Students Legal Defence Fund")



# Indian workers strike back

'There is sullen resentment among the masses against their condition, often erupting in violent forms in several parts of the country... Many a social upheaval can be traced to the neglect of the lowest tier of society, whose discontent moves towards the path of violence... We have one of the world's largest reservoirs of technical personnel, but also the world's largest number of illiterates; the world's largest middle class, but also the largest number of people below the poverty line, and the largest number of children suffering from malnutrition.'

Sarah Glynn, from Calcutta



Thus the President of India celebrated the 50th anniversary of the country's constitution in his Republic Day address this week. He was not, of course, advocating revolution, but warning the economic liberalisers to slow down and consider the problems of economic inequality. In this he was both following the line of one of the main liberal camps (the other would proceed with economic reforms as quickly as possible) and playing to his own Dalit (former untouchable) community, whose support got him his prestigious, though not politically powerful, position as head of state.

The upheaval of which the president spoke is evident on all sides. This month alone, 99,000 dock-workers have crippled the country's major ports for 5 days, as they struck for better pay including rent allowances and 5 (rather than 10) yearly pay reviews. Most of Uttar Pradesh's 87,000 electricity workers have caused chaos throughout the state as they struck for 11 days against the breaking up of the state electricity board as a first step towards privatisation. And the state of Rajasthan has been unable to run its administration and services since mid December as some 200,000 state employees are on strike against the non-payment of promised bonuses and allowances by the heavily indebted state government. And as the central government steams ahead with its policies of liberalisation and market reform and the new Department of Disinvestment gets down to business, the unions promise more disruptions for the future.

These strikes are all reactions to the hardening economic crackdown, but they have other features in common too. First, their impressive scale, which has been matched by the severity of the government response. The military were brought in to try and break the dock strike and prevent the stoppage of essential supplies. In

Uttar Pradesh, over 5,000 power workers were sacked and over 6,000 arrested, and in Rajasthan a new law allows those who refuse to work on the administration of the forthcoming local elections to be punished with a fine and/or a year's imprisonment. These responses are fully in tune with an antagonistic bourgeois press, which reflects the lack of sympathy of a middle class tired of bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption, and wooed by the promise of a liberal American-style dream. Thus 'India Today' speaks of 'a serious attempt to prevent accountability and efficiency' by 'entrenched and vested interests' (*India Today* 31/1/00 p22 and 23), and *The Statesman* believes the government 'requires strong policies against union blackmail' and that 'if unions still refuse to give way and resist inevitable shrinkages in the workforce, government should not shirk from harsh measures, such a dismissal of strike organisers and tough policing to prevent harassment of those willing to return to work.' (Editorials 29th Jan and 24th Jan)

And so we watch the familiar pattern of a failed leadership, as union bosses, wary of endangering their own comfortable position, allow the workers to let off steam while they compromise them at the negotiating table. The result is not only the failure of the immediate campaign, but a demoralisation of the rank and file. Genuine Marxists find workers disillusioned with strikes and describing their union as little more than a means to promote the leaders in their personal political ambitions. Like in the proverbial story of the boy calling wolf, the strike weapon has been so over used that here in Calcutta a sure way to disperse a crowd is to turn on a loud speaker and raise a red flag.

And the established Left not only 'fiddles while Rome burns', loosing itself in

internal squabbles and debating the degree to which fundamental socialist principles can be abandoned in the search for the new pragmatism, but it even joins in in the burning. Last Sunday, cadres from the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM) raised a local market to the ground. The reason? A local CPIM committee secretary had been shot dead in the market while he bought his fish. And the motive for the murder? The papers do not hesitate to state that the murdered man ran an extortion racket in the market, just as the lumpen supporters of other parties do elsewhere. In fact, these so called cadres treat their parties as gangs through which they can gain kudos and power. There is no need to go into the claims and counter claims made by the CPIM and their right wing populist rivals in Calcutta, the Tranamul Congress, but every day this week has brought more news of tit for tat killings and extortion. And instead of speaking out against this violence and the debasement of the party, the CPIM organised a bandh to protest against the original murder - which paralysed the whole of South Calcutta on Monday - and the state committee secretary commented at a public meeting that 'tit for tat was the only remedy for political violence.' (*The Statesman* 28th Jan)

The bankruptcy of today's leaders, both in the political parties and in the unions, is clear for all to see, but equally clear to those who look, including the President of India, is the growing tide of discontentment among the grass roots. It is here that we should look for a rekindling of socialist ideas, and here that we should work to help fan those flames to a new strength; here that we can try to play a part in directing the 'violent resentment' and 'social upheaval' along the path towards real workers power and democratic socialism. ☆



# Austria: "Resistance! Resistance!"

"Widerstand!  
Widerstand!" -  
"Resistance! Resistance!" - that was the main slogan of the protest wave which has been shaking Austria for more than three weeks. When it became clear that the conservative Peoples Party (ÖVP) was to form a coalition with the extreme right-wing Freedom Party of Jörg Haider (see previous articles: [www.marxist.com](http://www.marxist.com)), this sharp political turn sparked a spontaneous movement never seen before in Austria.



Every day thousands of people met in front of the headquarters of the ÖVP or in front of the office of the prime minister. On the day of the swearin of the new government there were three different demonstrations of several thousand people each. One of them occupied the Ministry of Social Affairs. Political ferment was on the streets. All over the city (and not only in Vienna), on the internet, on the radio, everywhere people started to discuss politics. The movement affected not only students and youth but people of all ages and social origin. Everywhere you can see people wearing stickers to show their protest against the new government. This was obviously the beginning of the most important social movement in Austria since 1968.

So why are people protesting? The main reason for the demonstrations is to say no to a coalition with the FPÖ. People are disgusted by the racist policies and the attempts of Haider and his party to play down the crimes of the Nazi regime. The movement is very much confused and there is a clear lack of a political perspective. Most of the people participating in the demonstrations are politically active for the first time in their lives. The movement is still mainly on the level of a moral protest against racism, against intolerance, against all the conservative ideologies the FPÖ stands for. It wants to show the European Union that there is also another Austria which is "different", that not all

Austrians are evil.

Most of the people who are against this government have no clear idea of its character and why it was possible for the FPÖ to enter the coalition. They blame Schüssel, the leader of the ÖVP, arguing that for personal reasons he wanted to become the new prime minister. We do not want to underestimate the role of personalities in social processes but it is a fact that the last elections represented a shift to the right in Austria. The ruling class gained confidence and were ready to kick the SPÖ out and to risk forming an openly bourgeois coalition in order to launch a severe attack on the living and working conditions of the working class. The programme of the new government is more or less the same as the failed agreement between the SP and ÖVP. As we already explained after the elections, whatever government was to be formed it was clear that it would have a programme of austerity to satisfy the needs of the Austrian bourgeoisie.

## Organisers

What we have seen up until now is mainly an "uprising of civil society", as one of the leading organizers of these demos said. Especially among the youth we can see a willingness to fight against the right-wing government. The big demonstration on the 19th of February in Vienna was the first peak of the movement. Even the police gave the figure of 150,000 people participating. The organisers (the Democratic Offensive and SOS Mitmensch, both a

medley of prominent artists, ex-politicians etc.) said 250-300,000! And they were probably right.

However, the most important development is the increasing participation of the trade unions in these protests. At the beginning of the protest wave the trade unions took part in the demonstrations with a sizeable number of activists. The trade union bureaucracy did not support the daily demonstrations but concentrated all their energy in mobilising for the big demonstration in

Vienna on February 19th. And indeed the unions were the backbone of the demonstration with tens of thousands of shop stewards and workers from all over the country. They even held their own rally in front of the parliament. The trains coming from the regions were full of trade union activists. The participation of the unions is focusing the protests against the government on the issue of the struggle against the planned cuts in the welfare state (pensions, health service, unemployment system, cuts in the public service, privatisations...) This is extremely important and could mean a qualitative step forward for the movement.

The union leaders obviously wanted to show the government that they are prepared to fight. In the last weeks lots of union leaders (especially in the railway workers unions) have been making fighting speeches and even threatened the government with strike action - something which was an absolute taboo in the times of "social partnership". Now of course they hope that the government will return to the old ways of negotiating with the unions. Until now, the government has made it clear that there is no alternative to all these severe cuts. Social partnership is definitely over in the form that we have known it for decades. For example, on the question of the reform of the pension system the government has called in some "experts" to plan the details. The unions will have the right to comment on the results, but not to take part in this round



table. At the moment the unions are waiting for the new budget which will be presented to the public within the next month. Then they will decide what to do. The mood among the union activists is in favour of strikes. On the big demonstration in Vienna we talked to many shop stewards who are prepared to fight but they are still waiting for the union leaders to take the first step. Regional shop stewards conferences have already taken place, but just to inform the rank and file rather than to plan the coming struggles.

An important initiative was the school students strike in Vienna, brought forward by the SAP, a school students organisation. In the end a platform of several left-wing students organisations (including the social democratic AKS and the school student wing of one of the trade unions) was formed to organise the strike. Despite the fact that the ministry of education and most of the headmasters were against this strike and organised a campaign of intimidation in many schools, 10.000 students came to the demo. There was a big interest in political

material and the mood was much better than in the student demos of recent years.

This was a further indication of the growing interest in politics and the willingness to get active among a whole layer of the youth. This school students strike was the first anti-government protest carried through, not by individuals coming together for a demonstration, but as a specific group in society putting forward concrete demands and opposing the plans of cuts and racist policies of the government in schools. This is a big step forward for the movement. Up until now there has been no opportunity for the movement to become more organised, to give itself a structure, and to discuss a programme and perspectives. People just came to the demos.

Of course public discussions were organised by several groups but we still have an extremely spontaneous movement characterised by the anger and disgust felt by lots of people. They are prepared to fight but the form of the protest is certainly proof of the fact that people feel impotent. This shows in a very good way



Haider and Schussel sign their coalition pact

the limits of so-called "civil society". The protests have created a radicalisation, where people are prepared to walk for hours (distances of 15-20 kilometres were normal at the daily demonstrations!) But apart from "Widerstand!" the movement did not find slogans or a real political alternative. This could change with the start of

the new term at university. During February universities were closed due to the holidays. The Socialist Party and Communist Party students have already started to plan a mass meeting at the university of Vienna for the second week of March. If this is successful, the universities could become the new

centre of the resistance against the new government. The mood among students is definitely promising.

We are still at the beginning of the movement. This movement which started



as a wave of protests against racism will not limit itself to that. When it becomes clear that this government wants to enforce its plans of cuts then the movement could really reach a higher stage.

The role of the unions will be of enormous importance in this process. For the last 3-4 weeks Austrian politics was made

in the streets. Parliament and the negotiations of the "social partners" were pushed to the background. However, on the level of traditional politics an important development took place. The Socialist Party has a new chairman. Viktor Klima and his party manager Rudas resigned when it was clear that the Socialist Party was being forced to leave the government after 30 years. This represented a big defeat for the Austrian followers of the "Third Way".

At the beginning it seemed that Karl Schögl, the former minister of the interior, was going to be the successor to Klima. He was the symbol of the racist immigration laws passed under the SP-dominated government and he was also the representative of those in the party who wanted a cooperation between the SP and the FP. It seemed that he would get a majority within the party but then a wave of protest in the rank and file and especially among the trade unions changed the whole situation. Schögl withdrew from the contest and Alfred Gusenbauer was elected as the new chairman. He was the chairman of the Socialist Youth in the 80s when he was influenced by Austro-marxist and Stalinist ideas. But his politics have changed a lot since he became a good friend of Schögl. In any case he is seen as the representative of that wing of the party which wants to return to the "old social-democratic values".

In the election campaign he described himself as "Red Fred". In his first interviews he gave the impression of someone who wants to put into practice a more political way to lead the party. The SP now openly expresses its support for the anti-government protests. The rank and file seems to be happy with the new leadership. Gusenbauer is far from being the "Marxist" that the bourgeois press wants to present. However, the rank and file of the SP regard this change in the party leadership as a shift to the left and a return to the "good old days" of the SP. The developments within the SP will depend very much on the course of the ongoing movement.

One thing is clear, the formation of the new government marks an end to decades of "social partnership", and these massive protests mark the beginning of a new era in Austrian politics, an era in which class struggle will be back on the agenda. ☆

By Gernot Trausmuth, Der Funke  
([www.marxist.com/funke](http://www.marxist.com/funke))



# N. Ireland: Back to square one

The streets of Belfast are newly decorated with graffiti warning "Not a bullet, not an ounce." Nailed to a wooden fence in front of a group of smart semi-detached houses on the Blaney Road in Crossmaglen, South Armagh is a new mural depicting three masked paramilitaries over the words "We still haven't gone away you know." Their Armalites point to the pub 150 metres away where two Grenadier guards were shot in 1993. The painting occupies the position taken up by the sniper who shot them.

by Phil Mitchinson

Paddy Short, uncle of Labour MP Clare Short, who runs a pub in Crossmaglen is quoted in The Express (9/2/2000) as saying, "People are concerned about the IRA giving up their weapons. They don't want to be left naked."

The IRA has refused to decommission its weapons. The devolved assembly, the centrepiece of Blair's plans, is suspended.

Any rational person would welcome a peaceful solution to the problems of Ireland. Such a solution is possible, but not as a result of secret negotiations between sectarian parties and British imperialism. The national and social problems of Ireland cannot be solved within the confines of capitalism.

British imperialism, responsible in the first place for the criminal carving up of Ireland, and therefore directly responsible for the death and destruction wreaked ever since, is now powerless against the sectarian monster it created.

The border imposed on society by both profit and national division can only be removed by the working class. Ireland's national emancipation has become a task of the socialist transformation of society, and the completion of that task falls to the working class.

The latest attempt at a compromise between the IRA and the unionists has failed. The Unionists could not accept the IRA's refusal to disarm. According to Ken Maginnis, Ulster Unionist security spokesman "we cannot allow to remain in existence any paramilitary group which has illegal guns." Of course the Loyalist terrorists have been responsible for just as many atrocities themselves. The Unionists don't have to rely on paramilitaries however, when they are backed up by British

troops and the RUC.

For the IRA to have handed over their weapons would have spelt disaster for them. Republican leader Brian Keenan described the idea as an "unacceptable act of surrender." If they decommission then the leaders responsible stand every chance of being dead men.

Trimble and the Unionists introduced artificial deadlines at the end of January and mid February when the agreement talked about May as the deadline for decommissioning. They want a devolved assembly which they are confident will be dominated by Unionists. At the same time they are quite happy to tolerate direct rule. They are desperate to cling on to their privileged position. Ulster Unionism remains a bastion of bigotry and reaction. They were forced to make a number of concessions, but they will not be pushed into any move towards uniting with the south. Instead they have now forced Blair to suspend the assembly. Sinn Fein and the IRA on the other hand cannot offer any more without disintegrating.

## British government

The IRA puts the blame for the breakdown on the British government and the Unionists. Mitchell McLaughlin Sinn Fein party chairman announced "The British government are making a very, very serious mistake under the blackmail of a threat to withdraw by the unionists."

The result is back to square one. In reality the establishment of the devolved body represented a capitulation by the IRA. It wasn't even a gesture towards Irish unity. It amounts to an acceptance of British rule and partition.

The Protestants meanwhile will never accept any real step towards uniting with the south on the basis of the current system. It is still widely felt that the south remains a priest dominated state. Ireland has changed a great deal since the time when contraception was illegal, thanks largely to the modernisation that comes with industrialisation. The south is no longer poorer than the north. This partly explains the willingness of the southern state to relinquish its claim on the north, they don't want to foot the bill for northern



poverty and unemployment.

Past experience of discrimination against the catholic minority in the north provides ample propaganda for the orange bigots to frighten the protestant population with the spectre of minority status in a catholic united Ireland. Even if the border could be removed under capitalism that would not solve unemployment, poverty or any of the problems facing the Irish working class.

So British imperialism is stuck with the north, whether they like it or not. The irony is that Britain would now like to withdraw. They would like to be shot of the £2 billion a year subsidy. Their problem is that the result would be a bloodbath, the catholics of West Belfast and Derry would face a massacre and the violence would not be confined to Ireland. Sectarianism, fostered by British imperialism as part of its divide and rule tactic, has become an uncontrollable monster.

Far from solving one of the problems of Ireland the IRA's campaign has served to tear a greater divide in the population and prop up the orange bigotry of the Loyalist leaders. Their ceasefire was a tacit admission of the futility of their so-called armed struggle. Initially the IRA believed they could win in 12-18 months. Yet after 30 years of bombings and assassinations they are now further away than ever from their stated goal.

## Workers' unity

Sinn Fein meanwhile has developed into a serious political force drawing support away from the timid SDLP, and partially filling the vacuum left by the absence of a genuine workers party, in the poisoned atmosphere of the sectarian politics of Northern Ireland. However, they will never be able to reconcile the Protestant population to the idea of a united Ireland on a capitalist basis. If they based themselves on the working class instead, uniting Protestant and Catholic workers in a struggle for social and national emancipa-



tion, then the unity of Ireland could be achieved as part of the socialist transformation of society. The potential for such workers unity is demonstrated by the trade unions. They remain the only force organised on a non-sectarian basis. The unions must provide the foundation for a political expression for that united working class - a party of labour. Campaigning for a socialist solution to unemployment, low pay and bad housing, such a party could win the overwhelming support of workers from both communities and could guarantee the rights of the Protestants in a socialist united Ireland linked to the workers in England, Scotland and Wales.

### Republicanism

Some will argue that this is utopian. This is always the argument of those who lack confidence in the ability of the working class to change society. Surely what is utopian is to believe that after centuries of raping and pillaging Ireland, capitalism can offer any new way forward. British imperialism created the mess and they remain responsible for the mess today. They can play no part in any solution. Nor can the sectarian parties of Unionist reaction or nationalist republicanism. To achieve a peaceful and lasting solution the workers of all communities can trust only in their own strength and their own united class organisations.

Only the Marxists have consistently argued for such a class solution to Ireland. Various sectarian grouplets and certain lefts in the Labour Party have wasted years instead running around cheerleading the IRA as "freedom fighters."

Even another 30 years of IRA "armed struggle" would not take them a single step nearer to victory. Individual acts of terrorism could never defeat the armed might of the British, the RUC and the Protestant paramilitaries.

From the outset it was obvious to the Ulster Unionists that it was difficult if not impossible for the IRA to disarm because of the inevitable division in their ranks.

Tragically at least a section of the IRA genuinely believe they are struggling for the cause of a united Ireland. For them the end justifies the means. The problem is that their chosen means is leading them ever further away from their desired end. One of the great tragedies of this campaign has been the waste and ruin of a generation of young fighters, poisoned by middle class nationalist ideas, whose courage and willingness to struggle, had it been channelled in a socialist direction, could have brought a real solution much closer.

The IRA's campaign of individual terrorism has sought to substitute itself for the role of the proletariat. They denied the class question and turned instead to so-

called urban guerillaism. In an industrialised society guerillaism has no place. It is not a method of the working class.

30 years on with 3000 dead what exactly has this campaign achieved? A couple of ministerial portfolios for an assembly that has been suspended. Adams and McGuinness wanted to transform Sinn Fein into a "normal" political party, participating in ministries etc. Instead even the meagre scraps handed to them have been taken back.

Now they talk about taking the British government to the European court for the "illegal" closure of the assembly. They used to talk about the illegal occupation of their country. "There is no legal or other basis, except expediency, for suspension." Adams announced. This amounts to a kind of constitutional cretinism, from precisely those people who claim not to accept the constitution.

Despite all talk to the contrary, the Protestants will remain the majority in the north for the foreseeable future. Any new talks between sectarian parties and paramilitary organisations cannot lead to a united Ireland.

### Cul-de-sac

In other words the IRA have driven themselves into a cul-de-sac. Whatever they do now will be wrong. If they take to the gun again they will be condemned by the big majority of the Catholic population, provoke the Protestant paramilitaries and invite a massive wave of repression - in the circumstances this might even gain the tacit support of the British population. The whole of history demonstrates that this is always the consequence of individual terrorism, it can only serve to create greater division and strengthen the hand of the state.

The only real way out would be through the industrial and political struggle of the working class uniting protestant and catholic workers in the struggle for socialism.

Any big movement of the workers in the South or in Britain would have repercussions in Ulster. Inside the labour movement we must push for the unions present in Northern Ireland to establish a Labour Party and break the stranglehold of sectarianism.

All the problems facing Irish workers are interconnected. None of them social or political can be solved by the market. Only an Ireland united by the struggle for socialism alongside their British and European brothers and sisters can begin to tackle all these questions. None can be solved in isolation.

The last two and a half years have been a temporary respite for the people of Ireland. What happens next? A return to "armed struggle" would mean a campaign

of vicious repression from the British state. The jails may be empty today but they can soon be filled again - even a return to the monstrous policy of internment would be possible on this basis.

Yet if they continue down the path of further talks there will be more splits and a return to violence would still loom. In spite of this or that concession on cross border bodies there will be no talk of a united Ireland. A million armed Protestants is a guarantee against that.

### British Rule

Already there are serious splinter groups like Continuity IRA and the Real IRA. Continuity IRA in a recent statement announced that "We intend to continue to progress our war effort regardless of how British rule in the six occupied counties is remodelled."

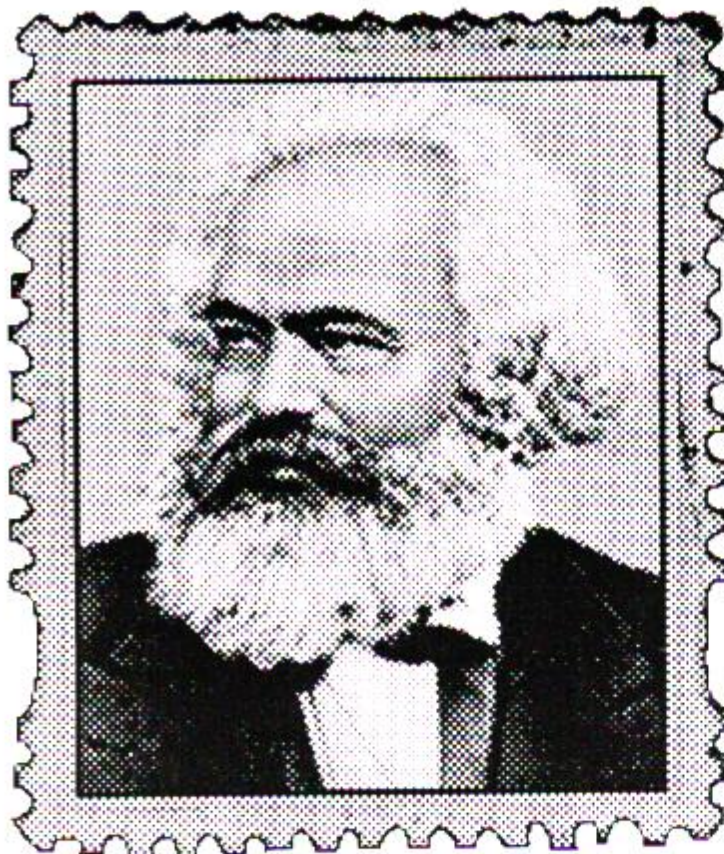
The Protestant paramilitaries are heavily armed too, and they will inevitably retaliate against any attacks by these splinters. A new round of tit-for-tat killings could even draw the Provisional IRA back into violence at a certain stage.

This is the perspective positively encouraged by specialists like Jonathon Stevenson of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Writing in the *Financial Times* (9/2/00) Stevenson argues "the Provisional IRA, as currently constituted is plainly not about to forfeit by the end of the week the guns or explosives that the Unionists demand. In fact, collectively they are unlikely to agree to do so ever. What is needed to break the impasse, therefore, is a split within the IRA."

How would this help? "Sinn Fein would stay in the new devolved government despite a likely revival of terrorist activity, as one dissident republican terrorist group or another gained strength" Stevenson continues, "any fortified splinter group would have less popular support than the Provisionals did.....With only a smaller retrograde IRA rump remaining out in the political cold, security could be maintained by vigorous policing." Not just back to square one but a worse scenario, a wave of "vigorous policing." All capitalist paths lead to a new nightmare for the people of Ireland.

Under modern conditions there can be no solution to the national problem under capitalism. Today only the working class plays the progressive role in society required to solve these problems. United by the need to struggle over social and political questions, the working class alone can provide the only realistic lasting peace in a Socialist United Ireland linked by a free and voluntary federation to a Socialist Britain and a Socialist United States of Europe. ☆





# MAIL

## CORRESPONDENCE

Socialist Appeal, PO Box 2626,  
London N1 7SQ.  
e-mail: [socappeal@easynet.co.uk](mailto:socappeal@easynet.co.uk)

### THREAT TO REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY BAKERLOO RMT: Draft resolution to TU conferences.

This branch is concerned at the threat to the link between the trade unions and the Labour Party posed by the 'consultation' document - 21st Century Party - launched at the Party's 1999 Annual Conference.

Under the pretence of continuing to modernise the Party the document aims to end trade union involvement at the constituency level. What this means was spelt out by David Evans, the Party's Assistant General Secretary, in an official party publication, *Labour Organiser*.

Evans proposes that "representative democracy should..be abolished in the Party".... "The [constituency] General Committee should be abolished as soon as practically possible". This would end direct representation of unions affiliated to CLPs.

To help ensure the 'consultation' process yields the intended result the 21st Century Party document includes a questionnaire heavily loaded in favour of the desired answers. For example Question 14 enquires whether the respondent would like "more social events" rather than "more branch meetings."

This branch therefore calls on our leadership & our union's delegation to the Labour Party conference to uphold, & where appropriate, improve the existing structures of representative democracy within CLPs.



Dear Comrades,

Currently there is a consultation taking place in the Labour Party around a document entitled 21st Century Party. Although the (false) flagging-up of Enfield Southgate gives a clue to what the purpose of this document is, in itself it seems quite an innocuous little document. However, for what the true purpose of this consultation is comrades need only look at the thoughts of those behind it. David Evans (who has recently been appointed Assistant General Secretary of the Party) provided the 'inspiration' for this consultation in an article entitled "The New Labour Party: A vision for Organisational Modernisation" written in 1998. Evans argues that GCs should be abolished as soon as practically possible and that "representative democracy should as far as possible be abolished in the party." Evans goes on to argue that the reason for this is that "all members are equal so there is no need for General Committees." His preferred plan revolves around one all-member AGM electing a tiny Executive which can then run the Party how it wishes for the next year without being answerable to any democratically elected body. It seems all members are equal, but some are considerably more equal than others. Why is this necessary? Evans is quite explicit: "it will empower modernising forces within the Party and marginalize 'old Labour'." And

this is why it is so important to defend the existing structures which are under threat in this 'consultation' - if this goes through it will be yet another step forward in the Blairite 'project' to split the Labour Party from its working-class base.

Rank-&-file activists throughout the country are organising against these proposals. Bakerloo RMT have prepared a model resolution for unions and have combined forces with the Campaign For Labour Party Democracy (in a welcome and necessary attempt to link the opposition in the unions with that in the Labour Party) which has prepared a resolution defending the union link at a local level for CLPs (which is under threat from these 'reforms' - contact the address below for a copy) and a model response for the consultation. People who wish to stop the Labour Party being destroyed from the right on its 100th anniversary should contact CLPD c/o 10 Park Drive, London, NW11 7SH so that they can obtain and distribute the model response to the questions at the back of the document and get their branches and GCs to send in submissions based on it as well as getting members to send in individual responses.

**Matthew Willgress - NPF delegate  
for eastern Region CLPs Youth  
(Personal capacity)**



Dear Comrades,

The decline of industry in the Potteries (as reported in Issue 65) continues apace. Michelin, one of the biggest employers in the area, has announced 570 redundancies and the steelworks will close in June.

After lobbying by local MPs and councillors, the Trade and Industry secretary Stephen Byers is to send in a team of experts to review the dramatic industrial decline of North Staffordshire. For example, in the pottery industry the number of jobs has declined from 30,000 in 1980 to just 17,000 today. In coal mining there were 40,000 jobs in the 1950s, now there are none. The steelworks employed 10,000 in the 1960s, soon there will be none there either.

North Staffordshire has received a large amount of aid from

the European Union, but the decline has continued. There have been jobs created in the area in recent years but these have almost exclusively been low paid (often part time) ones in the service sector, such as retail and call centres.

Local people are not all that hopeful as to the outcome of the review. The mood was summed up by the leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council who, whilst welcoming the new initiative said, "We will have to wait and see exactly what help they are offering."

The recent boom has gone largely unnoticed in the Potteries. However much is offered by Byers, until the government puts the interests of the working class before big business, the Potteries will not see any real recovery or any real jobs with real wages.

**Mike Lievens (Stoke)**



# Spring offensive needed!

The chase is on! The chase for what you may ask? Answer: the cash to keep Socialist Appeal up and running, fighting for socialism. The response of the London Labour Party members and affiliated trade unionists to the efforts of Blair to parachute his favoured candidate for London mayor in, shows the potential which exists. The task now is to start fighting, start organising. If you are angry about the stitch up result which got Dobson through then helping Socialist Appeal fight back is one very good way to do something about it.

Our Xmas appeal raised a magnificent total of £3169.35. We would like to thank all our readers and supporters for their generous support. Please keep up the good work!

We have now set ourselves a target of £3,000 to be raised by the end of March in order to take our work forward. We feel that this can be achieved! We have received a lot of different amounts since our last edition,

too many to thank everyone individually but special thanks to: Mark Scrimshaw (£50), Kevin Osborne (£5), Simon O'Rorke (£100), Simon Boxley (£5), Steve Wood (£10), Pauline Watts (£10), Tiago Marques (£15), Jean Webb (£20), Ann Tanner (£100), Brian O'Rourke (£6), K. Lowrie (£30), Carlisle readers (£11), W. Yorkshire readers (£10), plus over £95 additional profit from the London youth school, R.McFarlane (£30), 2 donations of £50 each from 2 West London readers (with a promise of a regular donation each month thereafter!) and many others. Thanks also to our Merseyside comrades for raising over £40 at a meeting on the Livingstone Affair in Birkenhead addressed by Rob Sewell. Keep it up and we will easily meet our target. Donations, made payable to Socialist Appeal, can be sent to us at PO Box 2626 London N1 7SQ.

Steve Jones

## Book Review

**Culture and Revolution in the Thought of Leon Trotsky** (Porcupine Press) £9.95

"Of all the great figures of Marxism, there can be no doubt that none took a deeper interest in the cultural aspects of life than Leon Trotsky." So notes the back cover introduction to this new collection of articles by and about Trotsky's thoughts on, and involvement with, the questions of art and literature. Contained here are a considerable number of writings by Trotsky which have not previously been easy to get hold of, certainly in English. It covers such areas as his earliest writings on literature, writings from 1907 to 1914 on Impressionism and art in general and finally his involvement in the 30s with the Surrealists. Together with a number of linking articles which supplement and assess the above, this book provides a good addition to the existing collections of Trotsky's writings on culture and serves to show how he looked at all aspects of everyday life. Also included are a number of interesting reviews on recent left books. ☆

# Wellred Books



**Bolshevism**  
The road to revolution  
By Alan Woods  
Published June 1999  
ISBN 1 9000 07053



**Russia**  
From revolution to counter-revolution  
By Ted Grant  
Published June 1997  
ISBN 1 9000 07029

**Reason in Revolt**

Marxist Philosophy and Modern Science  
By Alan Woods and Ted Grant. Published May 1995  
ISBN 1 9000 07 002



**Germany**

From revolution to counter-revolution  
By Rob Sewell  
Published December 1988  
ISBN 1 8709 58047





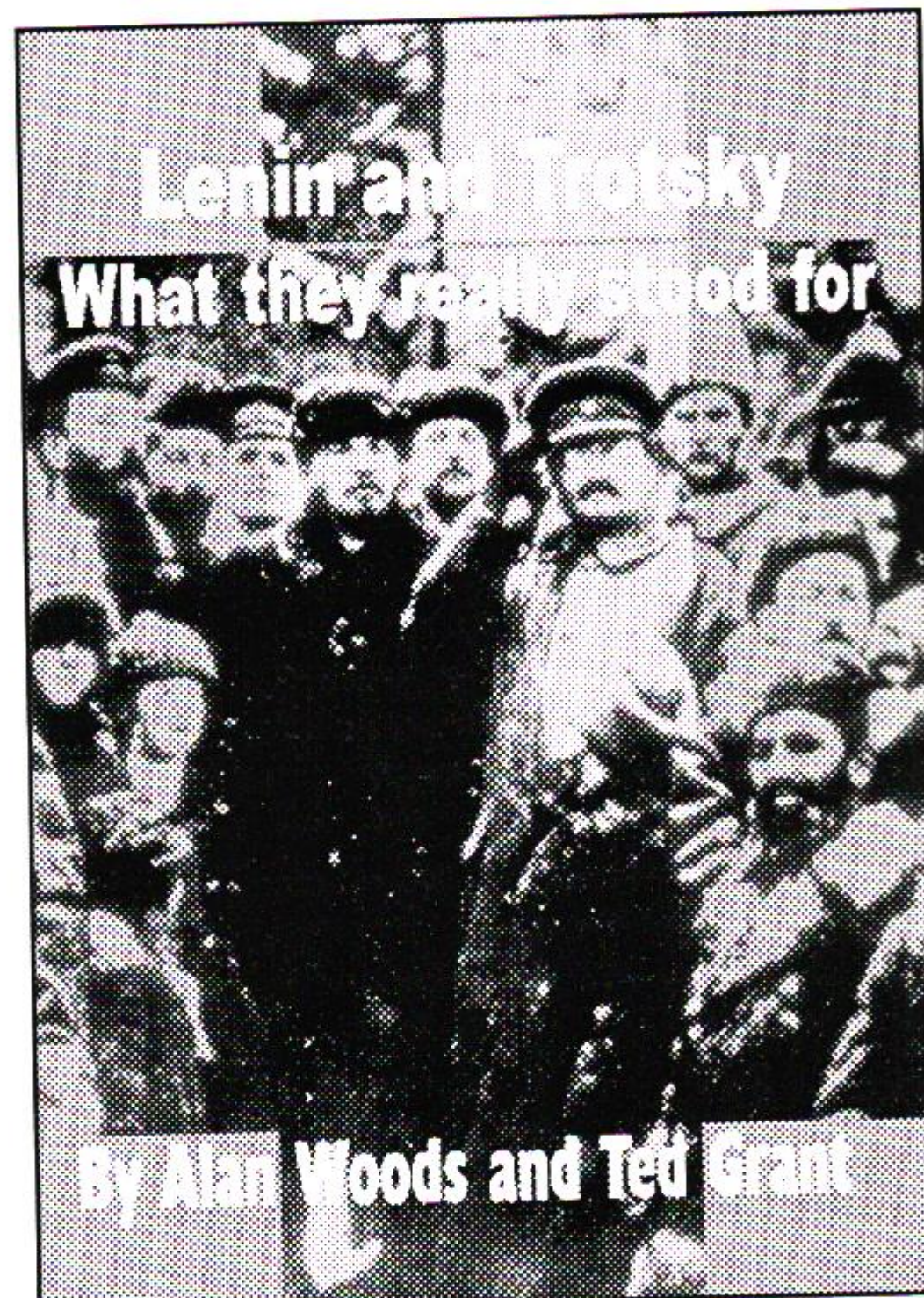
# New publication from **Wellred**

## **Lenin and Trotsky - What they really stood for**

*by Alan Woods and Ted Grant*

It is now more than thirty years since the publication of the first edition of this work. Although republished in 1972 and 1976, it has been out of print for a number of years. It was written as a reply to Monty Johnstone, who, at that time was a leading theoretician of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and who had published a reappraisal of Leon Trotsky in the Young Communist League journal *Cogito* at the end of 1968. Alan Woods and Ted Grant used the opportunity to write a detailed reply explaining the real relationship between the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky, which had been systematically falsified by the Stalinists ever since the invention of "Trotskyism" in 1924. This was no academic exercise. It was written as an appeal to the ranks of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League to rediscover the truth about Trotsky and return to the original revolutionary programme of Lenin. "It is the duty of all comrades in these organisations", stated the authors, "to prepare themselves theoretically for the great tasks which face us." The *Cogito* article appeared in October 1968 under the title of

"Trotsky - His Ideas", and was described as the first part of a trilogy. The second appeared in May 1976, entitled "Trotsky and World Revolution." The third, which was billed as "Trotskyist Policies Today", was never published. Nevertheless, Monty Johnstone's attack on Trotsky provided a valuable opportunity to engage the rank and file of the YCL and the CP in debate on fundamental questions. This was especially the case as up until then an open discussion on Trotskyism had been out of the question. A few years previously, Betty Reid had written a vitriolic article in the CP journal *Marxism Today* entitled 'Trotskyism in Britain Today', warning the rank and file against any association with Trotskyist groups: "We have to make clear that all these groupings without exception are out to destroy the party and to weaken and confuse the British Labour movement. We have to explain this, we have to warn against association. Finally we have to make clear that the party is united in its determination to achieve socialism, and will not tolerate association with these people, or failure to fight for our policy when they appear."



**Lenin and Trotsky:  
What they really stood for,  
by Alan Woods and Ted Grant**

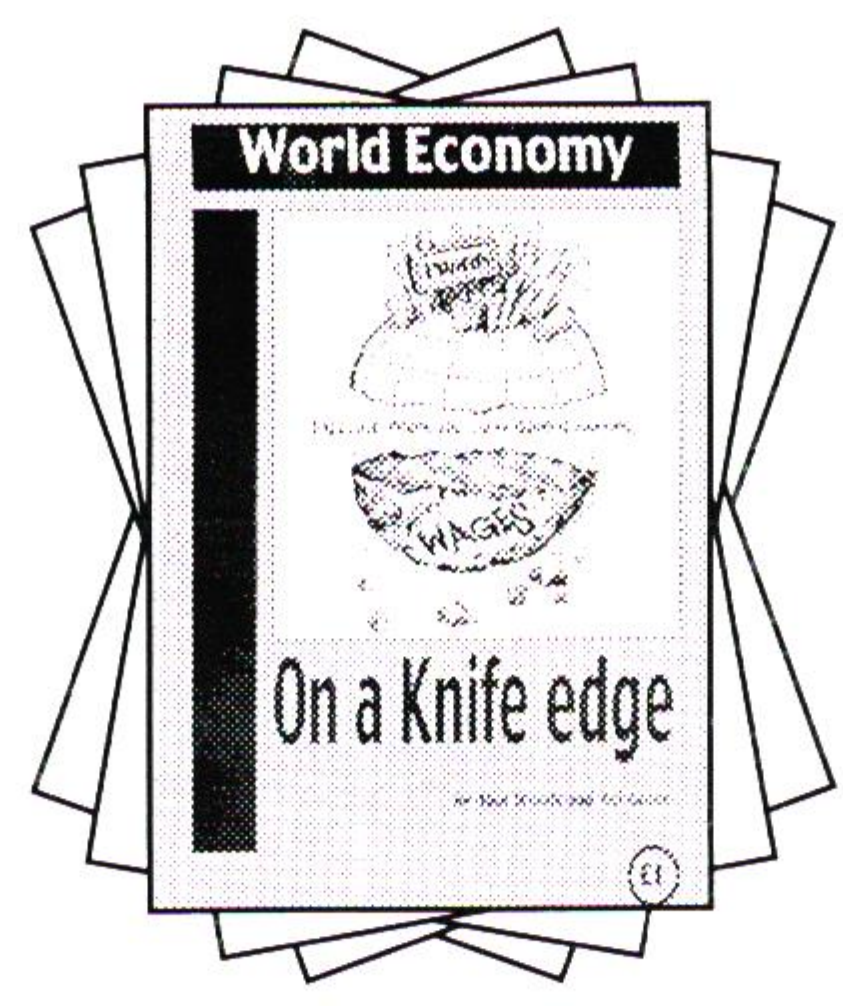
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By Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. **Price** £1.00

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**Revolution in Albania.** ref. 0258  
By Alan Woods. 16th March 1997. **Price** 70p

**Diana, The monarchy and the crisis in Britain.** ref. 0259  
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**The coming world financial crash.** ref. 0260  
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☆ **Action to protect our environment.** Only public ownership of the land, and major industries, petro-chemical enterprises, food companies, energy and transport, can form the basis of a genuine socialist approach to the environment.

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☆ **Socialist internationalism.** No to the bosses European Union. Yes to a socialist united states of Europe, as part of a world socialist federation.

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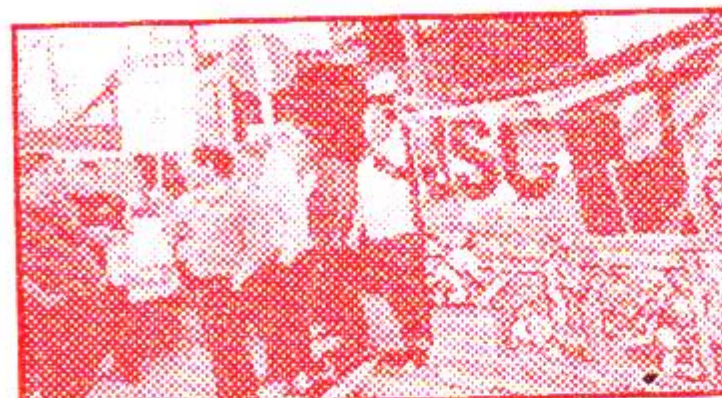
☆ **No more sell offs.** Reverse the Tories privatisation scandal. Renationalise all the privatised industries and utilities under democratic workers control and management. No compensation for the fat cats, only those in genuine need.

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