

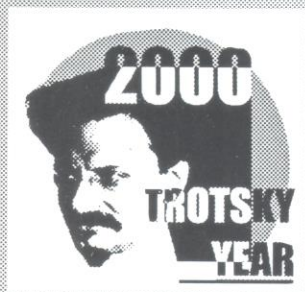
# SocialistAppeal

The Marxist voice of the labour movement

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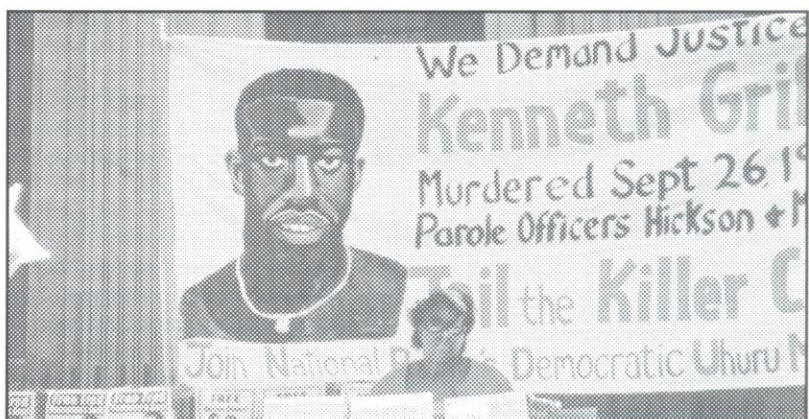
## Growing opposition: A warning to Blair

# Time to Change Course!



Capitalist curve  
of development

**USA: Police  
brutality**



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# Blair, Sleaze and the Growing Opposition

*"I am very proud of who I am and what I am."* Lord Levy 25 June.

For years the Labour Party correctly savaged the Tories for being up to their neck in sleaze and cronyism. But what did you expect? They were the party of big business, the get-rich-quick merchants, the millionaire speculators. Now, with the latest scandal over Lord Levy's £5,000 tax bill, the Blair government is being tarred with the same sleazy brush.

With the Blairites revulsion for the Labour movement, they have inevitably ended up in the pockets of the rich and infamous, over whom they have been continually fawning. While cold-shouldering the trade union movement, Blair has rubbed shoulders with the high and mighty of the British establishment.

The Levy scandal is nothing new. It follows on from the Ecclestone affair, the Mandelson affair, and the ennoblement of a layer of millionaires who were financing the Blair project. The multi-millionaire Levy had been Mr Fix-it for those who bank rolled the Blair machine. He was rewarded by Blair with a seat in the House of Lords and was made a government envoy to the Middle East. This individual was never elected by anyone.

This is where class collaboration ends up. This is where support for capitalism takes you. And of course, the Tories are rubbing their hypocritical hands at the sleaze in which the Labour leaders are embroiled.

For working people, Tony Blair's honeymoon is rapidly becoming a distant memory. European, Scottish, Welsh, London and local election results demonstrate that Labour's core vote feel that the Blair government is divorced from the problems of low wages, long hours, poverty pensions, and hospital waiting lists.

If Blair and co. continue down their current path then come the next election there is the very real danger of large numbers of Labour voters staying at home, divorcing the government and letting the Tories back in.

The only reason such an absurd and nightmarish possibility is even up for discussion is because of the actions of the Labour government.

Brown and friends condemn the elitism of Oxbridge, who turned down a perfectly qualified applicant. Yet this is the shallowest sort of rhetoric. They do nothing about the continuing elitism of private education while our schools are underfunded and under-

staffed. In relation to higher education, it was this government to its great shame who introduced tuition fees and forced the vast majority of students to mortgage their future with student loans. This is the greatest obstacle to ordinary young people continuing their education.

It was sheer opportunism to blame consultants for hospital waiting lists too.



That some wealthy doctors are ripping off the NHS is hardly a surprise, yet there is nothing done to provide a health service free to all at the point of need. The wealth of a handful of doctors pales into insignificance next to the profits of the big drug companies who squeeze their ill gotten gains out of our ill health. Yet prescription charges continue to rise. Waiting lists can only be shortened if resources are provided for more beds, more nurses and more hospitals. Instead billions are being squandered on the licence to print money that is PFI.

Jobs have replaced steel and cars as our major export. The announcement that ten percent of the workforce at Corus (formerly British Steel) are to lose their jobs and the decision by C&A to pull out of Britain are only the latest in a long list of jobs being destroyed without a peep out of the government, who are only powerless to the extent that they continue with their marriage to the market.

Blair and his cronies' failure to deliver is responsible for polls showing the Tories trailing by only three points. It is hard to imagine

that Hague and the Tories with all their racist rhetoric and nationalist filth could win an election. Yet just such a danger exists if Labour does not change course and start to act in the interests of ordinary working people.

That realisation has prompted a spurt of opposition even at the tops of the movement. 60 MPs including four ex-ministers, notably Peter Kilfoyle and arch right winger Frank Field included, have sponsored a conference on Democratic Socialism called by Tribune and the Campaign Group.

Annual trade union conferences have spoken out against Blairism demanding a higher minimum wage, an end to privatisation, restoration of the link between pensions and earnings, and the renationalisation of the railways. This pressure from below is even forcing the tops of the unions into opposition to Blair. July's National Policy Forum will see the first concerted effort by the union leaderships to open a debate on the floor of Labour's Annual conference, and oppose the Blairite line.

Throughout the country in the wards and GCs, in the union branches and conferences, in their Executives and even the Parliamentary Party, opposition to Blairism is gathering pace. All their rule changes are powerless to prevent opposition growing inside the Party. The Blair project to destroy the Party has had to be put on hold. We must finish it off and reclaim Labour for working people.

The opposition must be organised and armed with an alternative programme based on the needs and aspirations of the working class.

Rather than tinkering with capitalism, the ranks of the Labour movement should be organised around a clear socialist programme. Only by taking over the major monopolies, banks and insurance companies can the economy be planned in the interests of the majority and not the sleaze-ridden parasites. This would eliminate unemployment, allow a massive expansion of education, social services, housing, and so on. The working week could be substantially cut and wages increased. This would allow time for working people to run industry and society. Such a society would open up a new vista for working people and their families, and be a beacon to workers everywhere. ☆



# Horror of Britain's Immigration Controls

The horrific deaths of 58 Chinese migrants found in Dover, revealed to the world the monstrous effects of Britain's immigration regime. By making it virtually impossible for refugees and migrants to enter this country legally, many thousands every year seek to come here illegally. Jack Straw was quick to place the blame on Chinese smuggling gangs called the Snake Head. Thinking people can see through this.

by *Heiko Khoo*, Chinese for Labour (personal capacity)

The immigration laws of Britain and Europe are blatantly racist; for example there are an estimated 40,000 Australians overstaying their visas in Britain, compare this with 455 Chinese asylum seekers who applied this April for asylum! Do we hear the Home Secretary calling for the rooting out of illegal Australian migrants? Not a word of it! All 18 million Australians are allowed to come here without visas, as are South African and certain Commonwealth nationals. However, we see very few black South Africans in Britain, they are too poor to become economic migrants.

The Kosovan Refugees who arrived during the bombing of Yugoslavia were told by the Home Secretary on June 25th that they will be refused asylum and deported. This one year after the British helped drop 30,000 bombs and missiles on their homes, destroying much of the economic and social infrastructure. Journalists from across the political spectrum have exposed that Kosovo is now under the control of Mafia gangs. So much for Jack Straw's determination to help refugees escape from the clutches of criminal gangs!

Two months ago Tony Blair attended the founding meeting of Chinese for Labour. Tony Blair supported this organisation being set up, not in order to promote the rights of Chinese workers in Britain and China, but as a means of access to the funds of the wealthy Chinese business community. Many of these businessmen make their wealth on the backs of the sweated labour of thousands of Chinese workers, (legal and illegal) who work in appalling conditions in Soho and other parts of Britain. The illegal Chinese migrant workers often live 8 to a room, work 12 to 14 hours a day, 7 days a week. This in order to raise some money to send home to their families in China...they have no rights.

In China, millions of workers produce everything from toys to computers. British companies reap huge super profits from the working classes of China, paying them in a year what a British worker gets in two weeks. When a few thousand Chinese workers a year, seek to escape from poverty at home, they

have no legal means of entry to Britain. Of course they will resort to illegal means, the results of which we see in Dover. It is outrageous that some so-called leaders of the Chinese community, instead of defending the human and labour rights of these workers, called on the police to arrest and deport them.

The National Union of Refugee Organisations has rightly called for an immediate amnesty for all illegal immigrants inside this country. This call must be supported in every Labour Party and Trade Union Branch. These migrant workers are tied into Britain's black economy, only if their status is legalised can they escape the control of their criminal employers.

The Kent police are blackmailing the families and friends of the Dover dead. They have informed them that if they come forward to identify the bodies of the dead, they must give names and addresses of those who helped them reach Dover. This is an absolute outrage, which every decent human being must condemn! Trade unionists and Labour party members must send a barrage of protest, at this disgusting blackmail of workers families at such a tragic time.

Globalisation is creating a global wave of mass migration, but of 30 million refugees and displaced people, only 0.05% of the total come to the UK, and only 3% come to Europe. Most languish in squalor in poverty-stricken countries, for example 2 million Afghan refugees eke out an existence in Pakistan. The government has tried every means to seal up the borders in order to avoid their obligations under the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees. The Convention compels signatory states to accept refugees, regardless of whether they have entered the country illegally. Now Jack Straw wants to amend the Convention itself, and have asylum-seekers apply in their own or another 'safe haven' country. Imagine asking the Iranian government for a passport so you can go to Britain to claim asylum!

The government has imposed stringent fines on carriers who bring people to Britain without legal documentation. Airlines, fearing huge fines, demand their workers check documents of travellers to Britain at the airport of embarkation. For British Airways alone this regime costs £20 million a year. The International Transport Workers Federation has called on their members to refuse to act as immigration officers for the British government; this resolution must be acted upon.

Migration and asylum issues are not going away. The leaders of international capitalism everywhere demand the free movement of capital; it is time for the international trade union and labour movement, and progressive people everywhere to demand the free movement of labour! ☆

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# A sea change is about to take place in the AEEU

This year's AEEU Industrial Conferences were marked by a dramatic increase in opposition to official policy. Quite a number of resolutions opposed to the policies of the right wing leadership of the union were passed and will be on the agenda of next year's Policy Conference.

In between Policy Conferences, held every two years, the AEEU holds Industrial Conferences where delegates (all shop stewards) gather from specific industries to discuss the problems of their particular sector and more general union policies.

by Des Heemskerck, AEEU delegate (personal capacity)

In the Steel Industry conference, a resolution calling for no more sell-offs and the re-nationalisation of the railways was passed overwhelmingly, in spite of the fact that this is not official AEEU policy. This will now go to next year's Policy Conference and will be an item on the agenda. In the Motor Components conference a resolution was passed calling for the abolition of student fees.

Possibly the most significant of the industrial conferences was that of the Motor Vehicles. Several resolutions were passed against the recommendation of the executive. The most significant of these was resolution number 11, presented by EC Region 7. It was moved by Mike Longley, convenor of the Vauxhall plant at Luton. The resolution amends Rule 9, Clause 14, by adding a new sentence: "Full Minutes of EC (Executive Committee) and GPC (General Purposes Committee) meetings will be produced and made available to members." This is a basic democratic demand and yet the recommendation from the EC was to vote against. Instead it was passed almost

unanimously and will be sent to next year's Conference.

The mood of the delegates at the Motor Vehicles conference was one of opposition to the leadership where an alternative was clearly posed. However, although the Motor Industry is clearly where the main opposition is based a feeling that something is changing in the AEEU was there in most of the other conferences.

## Resolutions missing

In the conference of the Chemical Industry something similar happened. Brian Gallagher, who is actually a member of the lay Executive Committee, wasn't on the list of delegates, although he had been elected. After protest he was put back on the list, but somehow his resolutions had gone missing. In particular, the conference organisers had "lost" his resolution on rule changes. The change he was proposing was that branch positions such as secretary and treasurer, should be elected. This would not exclude union officials from holding these positions but it would mean that

they could not be imposed on a branch as is common practice at the moment. Again, the chair recommended opposition, but the delegates voted in favour. This will also go to Policy Conference next year.

What was striking at the conferences was the extremely tight stewarding. Many left delegates had the distinct feeling that the stewards and officials were carefully observing how delegates voted and trying to put pressure on them to vote according to Executive recommendations. In the MoD conference, one young delegate, from Royal Ordnance in Durham, had a resolution on the agenda simply calling

for the defence of jobs in Britain. He was strongly advised to remit the resolution, but he refused. Surely it cannot be against union policy to call for the defence of jobs? It was made clear to him that the reason for opposition to the resolution was because he is part of the opposition inside the AEEU gathered around the journal "the Gazette". Anything being presented by any delegate who supports the Gazette would be opposed! When it came to the vote 28 voted for the resolution and 29 against. That was in itself quite an amazing result, considering that only two years ago there were no "Gazette" supporters in that conference, and also the immense pressure that a lot of the delegates would have felt coming from the union officials.

Amalgamation with the MSF was also discussed. Now it seems the process may be delayed, or may even not take place. But this has not stopped the leadership from using the planned merger as an excuse to delay the re-election of the lay Executive Committee. The excuse is that the new executive of the combined AEEU-MSF would be elected on a 50-50 basis. The present AEEU Executive is made up of 48 members. Ken Jackson, general secretary of the AEEU, explained they would have to halve this figure. This is clearly a manoeuvre to reduce the presence of the left.

## A chance for the ranks

However, there is a chance for the ranks of the union to express their views, and that is in the election of the general secretary. Derek Simpson of the "Gazette" is standing next year. He supports the rule changes passed in the Motor Vehicles and Chemicals conferences. He also calls for the re-introduction of the principle of elected regional officials and regional secretaries. His victory in the election for AEEU general secretary would mark a major turning point in the history of the union. It would clearly indicate that a sea change is about to take place over the next few years in the British trade union movement.

After Ken Jackson's report at the end of the day, on 13th June, one delegate from Scotland stood up and made some quite bitter criticisms of Tony Blair and the Labour Government. He received a massive applause from practically all the delegates present. This revealed the real mood, to the annoyance of Ken Jackson on the platform! ☆





# UNISON leadership attacks on left

UNISON's 7th Annual National Delegate Conference started with a presidential address which included an attack on the union's left groupings. Anne Picking said that no group would be allowed to turn the conference into "a battle ground in the class war. Unfortunately what she meant was that she and the NEC had no intention of allowing UNISON to become a tool for workers caught up in the day to day reality of class struggle.

## Not criticism but abuse

Speaker after speaker from the National Executive Council used their remarks from the rostrum as an opportunity to direct vitriol and hostility at the most dedicated and hard working union members, repeatedly referring to left UNISON activists as "dupes" and "political simpletons". One should expect constructive criticism, and even polemics, in

the debates of the labour and trades union movement, but this was merely abuse. It stood in the place of real debate and was designed to forestall it. The standard tactic of some NEC members was to misrepresent the arguments of others and in some cases to simply lie about what motions said. The NEC's stance during the disciplinary debate was a monument to dishonesty. In the event, the NEC had little difficulty in pushing through most of its agenda. A slight leftward move on the part of the leadership appeared to satisfy the immediate demands of most delegates and, once again, the left was revealed as disorganised.

## Some compensation

Even so, the NEC did not get it all its own way. In the contradictory nature of processes, despite several resolutions on re-nationalisation being defeated, Composite C,

which called for "re-nationalisation of the public utilities with compensation only on the basis of proven need" was passed on a card vote.

## Left unity

The biggest fringe meeting was organised around the issue of left unity, but, despite statements from the main speakers about the need to unite, remained firmly at the agitational level. Well over 500 people came to the meeting looking for a way forward and went away with no real evidence of progress. It is time for the left in UNISON to organise itself into a united, campaigning body that can win the arguments for democracy and socialism in the union. ☆

by Ron Graves, UNISON delegate  
(personal capacity)

## RMT Conference 2000

**M**ilitancy is growing across the transport unions in relation to working hours which are directly related to safety. Following ASLEF's decision at its conference a few weeks ago to fight for a four day week, the RMT Annual General Meeting in Great Yarmouth Town Hall voted to step up the fight for a 35-hour week, including a campaign of industrial action. Workers are forced to work longer and longer hours to make ends meet, that's why shorter working hours must be introduced without strings and without loss of pay, delegates argued.

Some seafarers at the conference pointed out that they work, on average, more than 80 hours a week. Bob Crow, the union's Assistant General Secretary, won loud applause for insisting that the right to take strike action should be maintained until every member of the union was on a maximum of 35 hours.

Signalling and crossing workers have already balloted for strike action, demanding a written commitment on the introduction of a 35 hour week, and a pay increase to bring members pay into line with drivers. The ballot result was announced on June 26. 54 percent

voted for action in a 75 percent turnout.

Railtrack infrastructure workers have improved productivity by 32 percent since privatisation, yet they have been offered a paltry 5 percent rise, and vague talk of shorter working hours some time in the future.

Hours are directly related to safety, yet despite the appalling tragedy at Ladbroke Grove and other disasters, Railtrack continue to put profit before the safety of their workforce and the public. The continued failure of Railtrack and the train operating companies to reach an agreement over the introduction of the ATP system which stops trains passing signals at danger cannot be allowed to drag on until another disaster claims yet more lives. Conference voted to set a deadline of August for a timetable to be agreed for ATP's introduction. If management fail to meet this deadline they will be in dispute with the union. This gives them two months to get their plans in order or face industrial action.

The failure to fit ATP was clearly responsible for the tragedy at Ladbroke Grove which claimed 31 lives. The alternative Train Protection Warning system

is clearly inadequate. Alex Gordon of Bristol Rail argued that "we must say unambiguously that there is no alternative to ATP and we cannot be satisfied with anything less." Greg Tucker from Waterloo condemned TPWS as "a cheap and nasty system."

Union General Secretary Jimmy Knapp opposed the motion calling for the threat of industrial action on this issue. He claimed that two months was an unrealistic deadline for a national dispute. ASLEF have threatened industrial action if ATP is not fitted by 2004, he pointed out, and called for the RMT to start talks with ASLEF for a joint campaign. Nevertheless the motion was passed by 30 to 13.

We think a joint campaign with ASLEF is a good idea. This should begin immediately. The RMT's earlier deadline should in no way prohibit joint campaigning and even joint action. Two months is long enough for management to come up with a serious proposal. They have delayed too long already. They must act now, and if they won't do so of their own free will then we will have to force them. ☆



## Class divide



### Privatisation Menace

The Latin American-wide survey by Latino-barometro, suggests that the downturn in the economies of the continent is turning people away from elected governments and privatisation. The exception is Chavez in Venezuela, whose popularity has soared from 35% in 1998 to 55% this year. Privatisation which has gathered pace in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Chile and Argentina, has become deeply unpopular. Despite the growing number of respondents, 57% in 1998 against 43% this year, disagree with the argument that privatisation has benefited the country. This represents growing opposition to capitalist policies and is preparing a massive shift to the left in Latin America in the coming period. Free market capitalism?

### Free market capitalism?

The advocates of capitalism are always going on about the wonders of free market competition, but the truth is that 500 multinational monopolies control most of the world economy. Now a group of law firms is planning to challenge some of them in court for price fixing conspiracies. Last year the Swiss pharmaceutical giant Hoffman-LaRoche pleaded guilty to criminal charges of leading a ring of companies secretly increasing the price of vitamins E and C worldwide. ☆

# Ford: Balloting for action

On June 22 hundreds of Ford workers lobbied the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee at Bayswater in London, where talks were taking place over the future of the Dagenham plant. Angry workers, from all over the country, demanded union action to save car production at the plant. "Stick to the agreement!" they shouted. "The workers united will never be defeated!" was their greeting to union leaders, eager to reach a deal.

by our industrial correspondent

However, after a short time, union leaders emerged from the talks saying that management was totally inflexible. Ford bosses were adamant that their decision to close car production at Dagenham was final. "Effectively we have told the unions the decision has not been changed and will not be changed", said the company.

Ford said its plans were part of a restructuring to drive it "back to profitability and strong, sustainable growth." It failed to mention that world-wide record earnings of \$7.2 billion were notched up in 1999. Now they want to add to this by reducing operating costs by \$1 billion per year. This whole plan is about boosting profits at the expense of the workforce. Nothing more, nothing less.

Ford wants to end car assembly at Dagenham by early 2002. This will mean the loss of 1,400 jobs as well as 1,350 jobs when the company brings in single-shift working later this summer.

Tony Woodley, the TGWU negotiator, said that the future of other Ford plants in south-east England is at stake, jeopardising 40,000 jobs in the company and at suppliers. But Ford doesn't care a jot. All they are interested in is improving their balance sheets.

As we explained last month, there are rumours circulating that once Ford bosses get their redundancies in the Body Plant and the PTA, they will retool the line and start recruiting new contract labour, over which they will be able to impose any conditions they want. Why is the 'Business Park', planned for the outsourcing of jobs not cancelled but put on hold? It is clear that you can't trust Ford bosses as far as you can throw them. They have already torn up the two existing agreements. What are their promises worth?

This decision by Ford has put the

company on a collision course with its Dagenham workforce. The gauntlet has been thrown down. There is now no alternative but to fight. Under pressure from the workforce to act, the union leaders have now announced plans to ballot 4,500 workers in the body and assembly plant after the summer shutdown later this month.

"We have an agreement with Ford from 1997, guaranteeing long-term car production in Dagenham", said Woodley.

"Ford has broken this agreement and if it does not reverse its decision, then conflict is unavoidable. As of today, we are in dispute with Ford."

But if that is the case why limit the ballot to a section of the workers? Workers in the engine plant at Dagenham have been told not to take part. The same goes for the rest of the Ford plants nationally. It is time the union leaders had confidence in their membership. When the chips are down, we can win a united struggle.

Given this situation, a strike ballot should not simply be restricted to workers in Dagenham, but should take place throughout the whole Ford combine. An injury to one is an injury to all! United industrial action in defence of jobs - involving all plants - will have an immediate impact on production throughout Europe. It is a sure and quick road to victory. A campaign to explain all the issues should be held in all areas immediately. The strike plan should be placed in the hands of a combine of all Ford stewards. This should involve direct links with European shop stewards to cement the international solidarity of all Ford workers, and prevent the attempts by management to sow division and play one set of workers against another. United we stand. Divided we fall. A unified struggle involving all plants will quickly bring Ford to its knees, and force them to withdraw their closure plans. ☆

### How do we stop the closure?

Thursday 6th July 7.30 pm  
Church Hall, Dagenham  
Parish Church  
Exeter Road  
(next to Village Green)

#### Speakers:

Tony Benn MP  
Paul Foot, Journalist  
Billy Bragg, Singer



# CWU: No to privatisation!

The CWU Conference last month expressed opposition to privatisation by threatening to disaffiliate from the Labour Party if the postal industry is privatised, reiterating last year's policy to ballot for industrial action if privatisation is proposed. This was a protest at the Tory policy of New Labour and a warning that the loyalty of CWU members cannot be taken for granted at the next election, as the vote not to increase the political levy by 2p also showed. The CWU is the only union not to increase the levy.

by Tom Rollings

There was also a motion of no confidence in John Keggie, General Secretary of the Postal section, over his handling of the controversial Way Forward agreement. Delegates who spoke were evenly split 9:9 for and against him.

Unfortunately, the debate was soured by the disgraceful personal attacks that John Keggie had suffered over recent months, which certainly haven't helped postal workers defend their pay and conditions. The vote was defeated, after being recounted twice, by 8971 to 8518.

Conference also passed important propositions on the need for closer links with unions in Europe to react to the Liberalisation of

European Postal markets and on equal opportunities to tackle racial and sexual and gender prejudice in the industry and the union.

Many delegates raised concerns about the loss of female representation on the NEC, which could discourage female members from working inside the union if they feel their efforts are not valued.

Other propositions on health and safety were passed, highlighting the problems of working in call centres, including bleeding from the ears and lapses in concentration, which endanger members driving home from work.

Any improved relationship within the union between the sections was cut across by divisions over the Way Forward agreement. The only alternative to such divisions within the union is to be united behind a leadership that does not accept cuts in pay and conditions, or the introduction of grade and business sections which weaken our bargaining position and make privatisation easier. ☆



## Pakistan: Struggle continues in Bhawani Sugar Mills, Badeen.

Bhawani sugar mills is situated in Badeen (Sindh). It is one of the oldest sugar mills in Pakistan. Last year in September our comrades won the referendum and their union was elected as CBA (collective bargaining agents).

One of our leading comrades, Azhar Khawaja was elected as secretary general of CBA union. Management of the mill refused to accept the charter of demands, presented by the union. Then the union started the agitation against management. Management started threatening the activists and leaders of the trade union. They issued show cause notice and later dismissed some workers' leaders. Comrade Azhar Khawaja faced the hardships with great courage.

On 5th Feb. 2000, the management finally refused to pay wages, bonuses and other dues. The union decided to take over the mill. The workers occupied the mill. The District Administration intervened in the situation and ordered the mill management to pay the wages, attendance allowance, over time and bonuses. They also ordered the opening of a medical store and a fair price

shop. But mill management lingered on doing nothing and hesitated to fulfill the demands. The other two-pocket unions were fully supporting the management. On 15th Feb. 2000, the union again occupied the mill. Management closed the mill. After the occupation, the workers set up a Soviet and distributed the responsibilities among themselves.

Workers started the production of sugar despite all the difficulties and problems. The army and police failed to vacate the mill from workers occupation. Families of the workers protested in the city. There was great unrest in the city. The sugar brokers offered a 3 million rupees bribe to comrade Azhar Khawaja but he refused to betray the workers and turned down the offer. The management tried its best to get 5000 sugar bags (100 kgs each) out of the factory premises but workers resisted bravely, maintained the occupation and made these attempts futile.

Management, police, army and other government agencies failed badly to retrieve the situation. Workers sold the sugar and got their 10 million rupees as bonuses. The union also gave advance loans and food

from the fair price shop. Now the mill has been closed. The owners of the mill want to sell it and its residential colony.

The struggle is still going on. Now the union and the workers have three demands:

- 1 The sugar mill should be run at once.
- 2 The residential colony of the workers should not be sold.
- 3 Workers are still ready to run the mill and the mill should be nationalized and handed over to democratic control and management by the workers.
- 4 Guaranteed jobs, medical facilities, free education for workers' children, transport and housing facilities.

The union of Bhawani Sugar Mills has appealed to the workers of the whole sugar industry to join in this struggle. They have also appealed to the workers throughout Pakistan and internationally for solidarity and support in this fight for their rights.

Report from the Pakistan Trade Union Defence Campaign

**Khalid Bhatti,**  
Organiser, PTUDC,  
105 Mangal Mansion, II floor,  
Royal Park, Lakshmi Chowk,  
Lahore, Pakistan



# N. Ireland's fragile "peace"

The IRA constantly repeated that its aims were a united Ireland, the withdrawal of British troops and the abolition of the Unionist veto.

Now they accept that the British Army will not be withdrawn, the Unionist veto will not be abolished and the border will remain. For what then did so many die? What concessions have been gained? A power sharing executive and an assembly, it seems.

by Phil Mitchinson



**A**fter numerous false starts the assembly is now up and running. Martin McGuinness has swapped his earlier lofty ideals for a ministerial portfolio.

The concessions made by Britain and Unionism do not amount to much when weighed against the declared aims of the IRA or the terrible price paid by the people of Northern Ireland. What have the IRA given in return? They haven't handed over any weapons, to have done so would have meant humiliation and probably a new split in the IRA. They propose instead to allow independent observers to see 'one or two' of their arms dumps.

There is, however, no secret deal to bring about a united Ireland. Paisley plays on the fears of the Protestants of a sell-out for his own ends. In the face of the IRA's refusal to decommission, his hardline stand has seen his support rise in the polls compared to that of Trimble. That the future of the Assembly and the peace process is still on very shaky ground was shown by the recent challenge to Trimble's leadership. The unionists are deeply divided, and the whole project could yet crumble.

## Belligerent reaction

If the deal holds however, and the power-sharing Assembly continues, Paisley would be side-lined. Hence his belligerent reaction. Trimble had been something of a fire-brand Orange Order man in the past. Now he is prepared to sit with Sinn Fein in the assembly demonstrating the extent to which the IRA has capitulated. Blair meanwhile has all along maintained the unhealthy tradition of bi-partisanship, that is the Labour leadership adopting the same policy as the Tories. After years of Tory government attacking workers on every front, it should have been easy for Blair to introduce socialist measures that could have helped

build workers' unity in-Ireland. Instead Blair is keen to be seen as just as tough as the Tories on every front, and therefore he continues not only with Tory economic policies, but a Tory policy in Northern Ireland too.

## Secret negotiations

Labour's long standing commitment was for a united Ireland on the basis of consensus. Such a peaceful 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. The consensus required is that between Protestant and Catholic workers and that can be conquered through the struggle for better social conditions, the struggle of the labour movement, and an independent party of labour, for socialist change. In the words of James Connolly, "Only the Irish working class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland."

The history of Ireland is dominated by the united struggles of ordinary working people. Unfortunately many of those struggles are hidden beneath the fog created by the actions of the paramilitaries. The other great lesson of Irish history has been the betrayal of the Irish bourgeoisie. Time and again they have been willing to compromise with British imperialism provided their own privileged position was maintained. This has been true since the time of the United Irishmen and Wolfe Tone who once wrote, "Our freedom must be had at all hazards. If the men of property will not help us they must fall; we will free ourselves by the aid of that large and respectable class of the community - the men of no property."

Now they have abandoned their claim to a 32-county Ireland altogether. In reality, the Southern bourgeois have no interest in a united Ireland. Quite apart from the social

and political dangers, there are the economic problems. It costs Britain £4,000 million a year. Even on the basis of their recent boom, the Irish capitalists could not pay anything like this.

The boom in the South has been fuelled above all by the increased sweat, stress and strain of the working class. This has its limits however, and is preparing an inevitable worker backlash. Already, at the end of March 2000, three days of strike action by Dublin's busworkers paralysed the city and secured an 8% pay increase.

## Dominated by imperialism

Foreign investment has also played a major role. On the basis of the world market the South is now more firmly tied to imperialism than ever, for all its independence. US, British and European firms have invested in the South taking advantage of low wages and high unemployment. How long this boom will last is a moot question. It is currently being extended, like the rest of the world economy, on the basis of the expansion of new technology and speculation. Dell for example and Microsoft both have major investments in the South which they see as a doorway into the European market. One of the biggest stocks on the Irish exchange is Horizon Technology which builds internet capability for companies across Europe such as BT, AT&T, Cable and Wireless and Ericsson. Baltimore Technology, the rising star of the FTSE 100, is also based in Ireland. Growth in the economy has averaged 8-9% for the last few years, and unemployment has fallen to one of the lowest levels in Europe.

However this will prove to be a temporary feature subject to the vagaries of the world economy. It will not last. Any attempt to integrate the Northern economy into the South without Britain's subsidy as the advocates of the 'one island economy' argue



would result in an economic catastrophe on the basis of capitalism.

Ironically, the boom in the South has not served to undermine the fears of Protestants in the North about the poverty of the South so much as it has convinced the Southern bourgeois that they should relinquish any claim to the poverty ridden North. As James Connolly explained long ago, the Irish bourgeoisie's nationalism always comes a poor second after their bank balances!

### Sick of violence

The Catholic population in the North is sick of the violence. That is why they have greeted the ceasefire with relief. A significant section of the IRA was equally tired of a situation of total impasse. The truth is that the activists have no perspective. With a correct Marxist leadership, many of them could have played an important role, developing a genuinely revolutionary struggle in the tradition of those great workers' leaders and socialists James Connolly and Jim Larkin. That is the only way to realise the historical aspirations of the Irish people. The experience of the last 30 years has dealt a devastating blow to the false theories of petit-bourgeois nationalism and individual terrorism masquerading as "armed struggle" which has destroyed and disoriented a whole generation of youth in Northern Ireland. It is necessary to make a new start. The trade unions must call a conference to establish a non sectarian party of labour. The new generation must not fall into the hands of sectarians and bigots. Only a return to the approach of Connolly and Larkin for workers' unity not sectarianism, for socialism not nationalism, can offer Ireland a future.

All the talk of the Republican leaders about "revolutionary struggle" and even "socialism" (after the little question of the border is solved, of course) finally amounts to this. British imperialism has given the IRA virtually nothing. They dangled the carrot of parliamentary office and "participation in the democratic process." In the past, this would have meant a split in the IRA between those who wanted to abandon the armed struggle and the militarists. This is what happened in 1969. The same might happen again, if not immediately, then once the Assembly has demonstrated its inability to tackle the problems of the North. For now the population is sick and tired of the killings. The reaction in the Catholic areas shows that the bulk of the population would not support a return to the terror campaign. If the IRA were to take up the gun again now they would be met by an iron fist of repression from the British state. However in the long run such a development cannot be ruled out.

There are already serious splinter groups like Continuity IRA and the Real

IRA, who have been recruiting throughout the peace process. The Real IRA, it seems, has already bombed Hammersmith Bridge in London and are likely to strike again. According to a senior RUC officer, "They've reached the numbers the INLA used to have in 1981...when they were killing more people than the Provos." (The Observer 3/10/99) A couple of their new recruits were recently imprisoned for their part in an attempt to bomb Canary Wharf in 1998. Since the announcement of the inspection of arms dumps, one of the IRA's leading figures, a quartermaster, has gone over to the Real IRA. There are widespread reports too of significant numbers of hardliners in Belfast going over to the Real IRA. A new round of killings in the North could spark a tit-for-tat spree involving the Protestant paramilitaries, which could even drag the IRA or a new split off back into the campaign. There is also the possibility of uncontrolled groups or small split-offs from the IRA engaging in provocations. One such group was probably responsible for planting a bomb on June 20 in the grounds of Hillsborough Castle, the Queen's residence where Peter Mandelson currently lives. The bomb partially exploded before it was discovered.

Given the mood in the Catholic areas, it is likely that those who engage in terrorist acts to break the ceasefire would be isolated. The most likely outcome, therefore, is that the ceasefire will hold, and for a period of a few years, an uneasy peace will prevail, although, given the amount of combustible material, this cannot be taken for granted.

### Bitter rivalries

The Protestants are equally war-weary, but are suspicious of a sell-out by London. The Protestant paramilitaries have staged a number of incidents, murdering Catholics and planting bombs, including one on a Dublin train. There is bitter rivalry between the UFF and the UVF, either or both could be dragged back into violence in the future. The annual arguments over the Marches is one of many sources of potential confrontation. The UVF and the UFF are now fighting a turf war in the run-up to the marching season, with the UFF threatening to abandon their ceasefire if there are any more cases of intimidation against Protestants in Belfast. According to the Housing Executive there have been 21 cases of intimidation reported in the last four weeks, but these



were against Catholics not Protestants. Nevertheless, the masked paramilitaries of the UFF made their announcement in the Shankill Road, "From 12 o'clock tonight, 20th June 2000, the UFF reserves the right to shoot any person seen to be attacking Protestant homes. This will be in direct contradiction to our ceasefire, which we have steadfastly adhered to despite intense provocation, but enough is enough. We cannot stand idly by and watch while Protestants are intimidated out of their homes."

The Unionists are far from happy with the IRA's refusal to disarm, Paisley's DUP is disrupting the assembly as a result. The Republicans meanwhile are not happy with Blair and Mandelson's unwillingness to implement the meagre concessions of the Patten report on the RUC and the display of flags. Even on these issues the assembly could yet break down. More likely it will keep going for a while, before crashing on some rock or another.

Although a return to violence seems unlikely at present, as time goes on and the power sharing executive achieves nothing, unless a united movement of the working class intervenes, such a descent is inevitable in the future.

We say that with no relish, of course. Only to emphasise the urgency of the workers movement taking to the forefront of the stage. This opportunity must be grasped. The destinies of the Irish, British and European working class are inextricably linked. In the struggle against our common enemy, multinational capitalism, Irish workers Catholic and Protestant alike will play a key role. In the words of Connolly,

"Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war-lord". ☆



# What future for higher education?

The recent case of a student from a comprehensive school being refused a place at Oxford has illustrated the class bias of the higher education system in Britain. Oxford University has been condemned by the Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown but the government's introduction of tuition fees, on top of the abolition of maintenance grants will deter many more from entering higher education.

There has been a significant increase in the number of students in the UK entering higher education since the 1960s. Now that this expansion has taken place, under both Tory and Labour Governments, we should assess what has happened. Is education still a privilege not a right? What quality of life is there for students? Are they being sold short? Is our education system still as class biased in spite of the expansion?

by Barbara Humphries

**B**ritain had one of the most elite education systems in the world. Before 1945 only 3% of the population in the UK attended higher education, this had risen to 7.2% by 1962/3. This was in stark contrast to the USA, Japan and especially Sweden, for example, where the percentage was heading towards 80%. Governments worried about the impact of the poor level of education on industry and the economic competitiveness of this country, and in 1963 the Robbins Report recommended an expansion both in the old universities and the polytechnics which would be financed largely by government. The 1964-70 Labour Government financed this whilst Anthony Crosland was Minister for Education. However by the 1970s still only 12.7% of 18-21 year olds were in full time education. Many of these were on vocational courses at the polytechnics, financed by local authorities, and aimed at a local catchment area. The divide between universities and polytechnics in higher education was known as the binary system. Selection in education now took place at 18, not 11 at the secondary school level, as the 11-plus had been abolished. Eric Robinson, the founder of the polytechnics himself admitted that "The British image of the polytechnic remains that of an educational soup kitchen for the poor". The new universities of the 1960s, Sussex, for example, were modelled on Oxbridge. They catered for a mainly privileged few, who overwhelmingly came from middle class backgrounds. They were based on a liberal concept of education, which was that education should be for life, and that it should not just be a training for a career.

## Commercialisation

In the early 1980s universities suffered heavily with financial cuts under the Tories, many having to look to alternatives to state funding

to survive. Given that big business was not prepared to stump up, as some Tories might have envisaged, this source of income had to come from the students themselves. UK students having fees paid by local authorities and living on parentally assisted grants would not come up with this money so many universities looked abroad. The Thatcher government in 1982 had cut all subsidies to overseas students (except for those coming to study in Britain from the European union) and thus universities, facing a 5-10% cut in funding were forced to charge these students the full economic cost of their education. Fees for overseas students rocketed, students protested, occupied buildings and the numbers signing on for education in the UK fell. However as universities took to looking for alternative funding, they touted abroad for students who could afford to pay the full cost of their education in Britain. This would inevitably change the whole face of many educational institutions. Students were recruited on a commercial basis paying fees as high as £13,000 for a postgraduate degree.

The growth of private colleges also accentuated the race for recruitment of new students into higher education. Britain had a long tradition of receiving students from abroad; many famous names from around the world, had obtained degrees at Oxford, Cambridge or London. For British imperialism it had been part of a strategy of winning hearts and minds.

The changes which have taken place since the 1980s have made higher education institutions big business, from the prestigious, to the small and not so prestigious. Even top institutions have not been able to afford to refrain from offering courses which are not the full academic monty in order to earn fees. Between 1970-1995 the number of overseas students studying in Britain has



doubled and the number of postgraduates has increased 3 fold. Postgraduate courses attract high fees and are often vocational. Competition is international, in the English speaking world, American universities which have better funding through endowments, take the lion's share. (68%). The UK currently only attracts 17% of the international market. The Prime Minister has called for this to rise to 25% by 2005 and has launched a 5 million pound marketing scheme. He has even called for institutions to reduce fees to attract the students! Naturally this has not gone down very well with the institutions concerned. Over 14% of students obtaining degrees in the UK are from overseas, but in some of the more prestigious institutions, Oxford, Cambridge and London, it is over 50%. Overseas students are big business, bringing in £600,000,000 per annum. But they are vulnerable as a source. For example the economic crisis in East Asia in 1997 sent shock waves through British educational institutions, as the fear arose that high fee paying students from countries such as Malaysia might dry up.

## A mass education system?

In the mid 1980s the Tory government looked at the failings of the education system as being responsible for the failings of the British economy and announced targets for a massive expansion of higher education. One third of all 18-21 year olds were to be in higher education by the end of the decade. This time though, unlike in the 1960s, finance was not to be provided by the government. The expansion would be financed by students' own pockets and by productivity gains in the higher education sector. The funding from non-state sources had reached one third across the whole of higher education, from 10% in the 1960s. The bulk of this expansion would fall largely, but not exclu-



sively on the former polytechnics, renamed in 1992 "new universities". The binary system would disappear as Britain copied its rivals in the creation of a mass higher education system. Funding for the "new universities" was taken out of local authority control. Between 1985-1991 student numbers in the polytechnics had doubled. The present government target is for 35% of 18-21 year olds to be in higher education by 2002.

Productivity gains are illustrated in figures given by the AUT and NATFHE, the two main trades unions in higher education. Between 1987-1993 there was an overall increase in the number of students by 50%. The increase in the number of academic and support staff however was only 10%. The main productivity gains were in the new universities. Staff student ratios over this time were halved. The amount of government expenditure per student declined dramatically, by 3% per year during this time, that is an overall cut of 40% between 1979-1995. Even in the old universities there has been a trend towards vocationalism and away from the liberal concept of education. "Economics" for instance is being overshadowed by "business studies", "English literature" by "media studies". Students having to finance their own education it is assumed will be more concerned with their future salary than with improving their quality of life and understanding of the world.

Students were increasingly paying for themselves. Loans were introduced in 1988. Grants were frozen in 1990, students lost the right to housing benefit and unemployment pay during vacations. However the last assault on state support for higher education was delivered, not by the Tories but by New Labour. Where the Tories never dared to tread, the Labour Government abolished student maintenance grants and introduced fees, amounting to 25% of the cost of the course for all but the poorest students. Students are now in the most part paying for a substantial part of their education and through loans for their maintenance.

The National Union of Students has published a survey of the full consequences of this.

They estimate that 50% of students are working to pay for their education, on average 20 hours per week.

#### Cheap labour

Many are employed at low wages, doing anti-social shifts and are unaware of their rights at work. Much of their work is casualised. In the most recorded case a student was killed at Shoreham Harbour, due to poor health and safety conditions. Ironically one large employer of student labour is higher education itself. Students are a pool of cheap labour to overcome shortfalls in the budget and work the anti-social shifts. Many students will work evenings so that they can attend lectures during the day. As a result 60% of students interviewed by the NUS

said that their studies had been affected adversely. 38% had missed lectures. 21% had failed to submit course work. Faced with the prospects of leaving full time education with around £8,000 in debts, *The Guardian* reported last year that 14,000 full and part-time places in Higher Education were unfilled. Are students going to take up the extra 100,000 places the government wants? Already universities such as Sussex have reported a decline of 18% in the number of mature students. Employment prospects for graduates have not always been rosy. A survey in 1994 showed that 40% of graduates from higher education in Britain were underemployed. Many jobs which require degrees, (including in higher education itself) do not pay highly enough to allow students to easily pay off accumulated debts.

#### Does class still decide?

In spite of targets for increasing student numbers, higher education still remains the preserve of the middle class. In 1992 the AUT published figures showing classes 1 and 2 (professionals and managerial) supplied 66.7% of the graduates in old universities, and 55.2% of those in the new universities. The increase in student numbers although reflecting an increase in women students, some on part time courses had, not shown much change in the number from manual working class backgrounds. Institutions which had higher percentages of working class students have the highest drop out rates. At Cambridge University 48% of students come from fee paying schools, 8% from working class backgrounds and only 1% fail to get a degree. On the other hand, at the University of East London 40% of students come from working class homes and only 6% from private schools but it has the highest drop out rate in the country. 36% of students will quit without a qualification. These figures were released last year by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, which was monitoring the efficiency of higher education. The National Union of Students has put this drop out rate mainly down to financial difficulties faced by many students. This has produced widespread scepticism about government targets for higher education.

The productivity targets for higher education a the stark background for the industrial relations turmoil which exists in higher education. High profile campaigns conducted by the trades unions, AUT, NATFHE, UNISON have outlined the growing trends of declining pay, increased and intolerable workloads and casualisation amongst university staff. In the introduction to its current pay campaign the AUT claims that real pay for academics has risen by just 1.1% since 1981, the average earnings for non-manual employees has risen 41% in that time. Universities have made full use of short

term contracts to the extent that academe is now more casualised than the catering trade.

If academic staff have faced a relative decline in pay, the academic support staff-secretaries, library assistants, porters and catering staff, continue to face wages which are not much above the poverty line. Working in higher education has become more stressful as student numbers have increased.

#### Future for higher education

Changes have been introduced in higher education in Britain over a 20 year period. The end is not in sight, as the present New Labour government wants more expansion on the same lines as in the past. Further shortfalls in funding are predicted for the universities.

The majority of students will face courses, increasingly described as vocational, which do not even lead to a job. Higher education, like further education for 16-18 year olds will be seen as a means of keeping the unemployment statistics down. It is ironic that under a mass education system students from working class backgrounds could be even worse off than under the old elite system of the past. In the past, a small percentage could benefit from a university education. In the future, this is very much in question. It is scandalous that Labour ministers who benefitted from maintenance grants and a free education now want to take that opportunity away from future generations. Tragically the right wing, "populist" argument against student grants, that they were a subsidy to the middle class paid by working class tax payers, could have the effect of driving all working class students out of higher education. The future is not good.

#### A socialist alternative

Socialists are committed to the abolition of fees in higher education and to the re-introduction of maintenance grants. We are committed to the universal right to education at all levels and we believe that education should be for life, not just training for a job. Education should be run as a public service, not a commercial operation. ☆



HOW TO GET PERFORMANCE-RELATED PAY.



# The founding of the British Communist Party

This month marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of the British Communist Party. As a result we are publishing the following article on the early years of the Communist Party

by Steve Reynolds.

The Communist Party (CPGB) was formed in Britain in July 1920. It represented a step of enormous significance in bringing together the best proletarian fighters, inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution, in a single, unified Marxist organisation.

The vast majority of its original 4,000 membership was derived from the fusion of small propaganda groups and societies: the British Socialist Party, sections of the Socialist Labour Party, the Communist Unity Group and the Workers Socialist Federation. These militant workers, steeled in the war years and inspired by revolution, were determined to establish a Bolshevik Party in Britain that would lead to a victorious conquest of power by the working class.

However, their hatred for the betrayals of reformism led many in an ultra-left direction, not fully appreciating or understanding the tactics of Bolshevism. For many, the issues facing them were black and white. This was to surface over the party leadership's view of the Labour Party.

In 1920, the 'Labour Party' question was discussed in the Communist International. Lenin and Trotsky argued for the British CP to affiliate to the Labour Party and to fight for their ideas within its ranks. After a heated debate, this position was agreed by a narrow majority. In complying with this decision, the leaders of the British CP however, who still resisted the position, framed a request for affiliation to the Labour Party in a very provocative fashion - inviting rejection. When rejection came, the CP issued a statement "it's their funeral".

Despite this "infantilism", the ranks of the Party were, for the greater part, the most self-sacrificing and courageous of people. They were the raw material of Bolshevism, who, under the guidance of Lenin and Trotsky, could play a decisive role in the British revolution.

The Comintern intervened patiently to

correct this ultra-leftism, urging the young Party to face the traditional organisations of the working class. Over time they established a growing influence within the trade unions and the Labour Party.

Nevertheless, many members brought along with them the empirical approach and method of the old propagandist societies that had merged to form the CPGB. Far from being a "combat party", the CP began as a loose, flabby body with a federal structure, large branches and a debating society character.

## "Organisational Structure"

At the Third Congress of the Communist International (July 1921), a resolution was adopted which attempted to lay down the basic line of Bolshevik organisation. This thesis on "Organisational Structure" (58 paragraphs long) tried to bring uniformity to the different sections of the International. It opened with the words: "There is no absolute form of organisation which is correct for all CPs or all time," and drew the lesson: "our basic organisational task is to create an organisation and educate the CP under the guidance of its experienced bodies to be the effective leadership of the revolutionary proletarian movement."

It drew the lessons from the Russian experience, that a loose-knit, amateurish organisation of the Menshevik variety would be of no use in leading a revolution. Only a Bolshevik party, based on democratic centralism - the fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy - could achieve this task.

Lenin later said of the resolution that it was "excellent" but "too Russian". It was necessary to "digest" the experience, politically and organisationally of Russian Bolshevism, but not in a mechanical fashion. "The foreign comrades must learn to understand what we have written about the organisational structure of the CPs... this must be their first task. That resolution must be carried out. It cannot be carried out overnight." Under the advice of the Communist International, the British CP in 1922 undertook a reorganisation of its methods and structures to transform itself into a "party of a new type".

In early 1922, the Party Executive appointed a commission of three - Palme Dutt, Pollitt and Inkpin - to examine the party structure at all levels and recommend alterations that would bring it into line with

the Third Congress. Its final report was issued in September and contained the blunt assessment: "On every side the workers have been disgusted and disillusioned with the treachery of the old official leaders and have turned eagerly for new guidance. Yet in these two years, with all these opportunities and with the tireless activities and energy of individual workers, the party has made no real progress either numerically or in terms of influence."

The report catalogued the deficiencies at all levels, but especially in the local branches. These were seen as the vital "cells" of the combat organisation that had to be completely restructured and put on a well organised footing.

The report went on to critically describe the completely routinist approach to the work of the branch: "The process is generally marked by a sense of tedium, which keeps away half the members, and gives the remainder a feeling of duty done in having attended the branch." This stale branch life completely failed to raise the political level of the membership or effectively organise the work that was needed. Such an "atmosphere" was completely counter-productive. The report concluded: "This instrument will never achieve a revolution." The branches were therefore reorganised into effective "working groups" whose tasks were fixed to produce results, and only to produce results. Recruitment was seen as the top priority with education and the integration of new recruits as a necessary counterpart. "Every activity is tested by its results. Results mean the demonstrable increase of the Party's influence in the working class, whether by increase of membership, increase of readers of the paper, winning of sympathisers and contacts"

## Party building

Every member was to be given a role, however small which would directly contribute to the work of the party. "This is the vital secret of the Theses - that there is no rank and file member in the CP; every member has his specially allocated work and responsibility. Every member has some special qualification which can be used in some sphere of the Party's work."

The question of party building was given top priority in this period. At the formation of the CP in 1920 a rough estimate of the party's membership was around



4,000, but a large layer remained "paper members". By the 1922 Commission a more accurate census was carried out which placed membership at 2,000. It was nevertheless a solid, proletarian, core. The need to now rapidly increase the membership became the burning task. "The principle task," stated the report, "of every individual Party member is the task of personal recruiting." However, it stressed that Party building did not consist of searching for ready-made Bolsheviks, but raw class conscious workers looking for revolutionary ideas who could be trained within the party in the ideas of Marxism and developed into cadres.

"Recruiting for the party is a constant accompaniment of all Party work, and not a separate desperate attempt to discover full blown Communists outside the party." It was recognised as an inevitable result of the membership's day to day work in the unions, Labour Party, amongst the youth, and in the factories.

The recommendations of the Commission - endorsed by the Battersea Congress in October 1922 - took some time to implement in practice. Nevertheless, many organisational defects were corrected and the party placed on a footing more suited to its revolutionary needs. A special organising committee was appointed to carry through the re-organisation of the party and overcome the "discussion circle" mentality in certain areas. Over the following 12 months dramatic changes took place in the localities, districts and at the centre itself. Party membership was registered, new Districts constituted, and new Departments organised. The EC reported to the Sixth Congress (1924) that: "More than eighteen month's experience has fully justified the transformation of the party."

By the end of 1923 membership stood around 3,000. A recruitment drive was carried out between September 1923 and February 1924 where 400 new members were made. At this time a recruitment Department was established at Party headquarters, and by May membership had risen to 3,900. From now on internal party work was to require "great patience, tact and energy."

It was in June 1924, that Trotsky wrote: "For Britain the epoch of the formation of the CP is only now really opening." A year later he was to write a brilliant book entitled "Where is Britain Going?" as a guide to the



*The first Central Committee of the CPGP and staff outside the 16 King Street, London, headquarters of the Party*

Party.

In January 1925 the EC adopted the statement "Towards A Mass Party" and by the Seventh Congress (May 1925) membership had risen to 5,000. For the first time, real organised planned recruitment was taking place. In September 1925, a special recruitment week was launched - a "Red Week" - where 750 new members were made. This concept was drawn from the experience of the Russian revolution where the workers gave up their spare time to work for the young Soviet State on "Red Saturdays" or "Red Sundays". It was later taken up by the Communist International to characterise special events or efforts.

#### **Bolshevise the ranks**

At this time much discussion took place on the "mass party" and the need to Bolshevise the ranks, i.e. to raise the collective consciousness of the membership on the theoretical and organisational tasks needed in carrying through the revolution.

Turn-over, however, still remained a problem for the party, as insufficient attention was paid to the training of the new recruits. "The membership of the CP are disciplined soldiers, but they are also conscious soldiers." Or at least that was the aim. Measures were therefore taken to correct the problems. At the end of 1924, five party members were to go to the "Lenin School" in Moscow for extensive theoretical training for 18 months. Soon after the CP set up its own training school to take 20 members for a full-time 6 months course. In Manchester, 100 were undergoing training in 9 training groups. A "Manual of Party

Training" was published together with training charts and 2,500 were sold over a short period. By the end of 1925, 800 party members were enrolled in 82 classes, 25 of them in South Wales.

It was at this time that Trotsky outlined to the British CP the vital role even a small Marxist organisation could play when fused with the mass movement. Referring to the Australian Party he explained: "The Communist Party in Australia has a membership of less than a thousand. But it is able to direct 400,000 workers in the Commonwealth." The CP was to play a similar function using the National Minority Movement as a lever in the British trade unions.

The explosive growth of the Party however came with the General Strike and the miners lockout of 1926. With the exception of a small bureau retained at Party headquarters, all the staff at the party centre were sent into the coalfields. Twenty-nine speakers were mobilised and 220,000 copies of four leaflets were issued in a concentrated fortnight's campaign. Mass meetings were held in the coalfields and on 14 July the EC reported 3,000 new members since the strike started.

Albert Inkpin, the General Secretary, reported in August: "In the whole Durham coalfield recruits [were] rolling in at a rate which creates an acute problem for the party."

But these were the type of problems that the CP wanted - products of success. In Tyneside, membership stood at 1,900 with a long waiting-list whilst new branches were formed! By mid-September the national membership reached 10,730 with only 245 branches. "The problem of assimilating, instructing and thoroughly organising these new members is being given serious attention" commented the EC report to the Eighth Congress (October 1926).

The editor of the Communist Review explained: "The great influx of new members into the ranks of the Party as a result of the General Strike and the mining lock-out is creating many serious organisational problems."

An article by E. H. Brown in the Review explained: "We have within our ranks, however, a number of comrades who show very little enthusiasm at the recruiting figures... [They make] oft-repeated phrases: 'Our





Rajani Palme Dutt

given special place on the agenda of a well-organised aggregate meeting to the reception of new members. The chairman rises and introduces the new comrades and pays them the compliment of having had the necessary intelligence and determination to overcome all the prejudices which are manufactured against the party; outlines to them what the party expects from them and gives them a hearty welcome to our ranks. Then before the meeting concludes the local organiser or secretary takes special care to see that all questions in regard to group work, dues, etc... are explained. Such a procedure without deteriorating into a 'formal' practice, is necessary in all locals."

**Ninth Congress**

However, at the Ninth Congress in October 1927, the membership had declined to 7,400 which was attributed to the loss of members in the mining areas. However, the attitude and approach of the local leadership proved crucial in the consolidation difficulties that the party faced. The role of the "subjective factor" was key even between different coalfields. Whereas in the Tyneside area membership fell from 1,900 to less than 750, in the South Wales district there occurred a substantial increase from 1,500 to 2,300 members. Of course there was a harsh price to pay at this time for being a Communist: victimisation, police intimidation, eviction, unemployment and poverty. Nevertheless these applied equally as much in South Wales as on Tyneside. "The main reason for the striking contrast between South Wales and Tyneside" notes the historian MacFarlane,

"was probably the inspiring local leadership given by the Party in South Wales, not merely in the General Strike, but in the whole period after 1920-21"

The reorganisation of the Party had great beneficial effects. The "party of a new type" was taking form with roots extending throughout the labour movement. In the trade unions, the CP-inspired National Minority Movement had attracted the support of organisations comprising 1,250,000 workers. Despite expulsions, a large fraction of 1,500 remained within the Labour Party at the head of the National Left-Wing Movement. The scene was set for a huge growth in influence and membership. However, with the development of Stalinist reaction within the Soviet Union, the young British organisation was soon to submit to the new bureaucratic "orthodoxy". Part and parcel of the consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia led inevitably to the Stalinisation of the Communist International itself. From young revolutionary parties, the Communist Parties were transformed - through purges and political gangsterism - into pliant tools of the Moscow bureaucracy. The degeneration of the CPGB and its slavish following of every zig-zag of the Kremlin sounded the death-knell of that organisation, which finally dissolved after the collapse of Stalinism.

The task of Marxists today is to learn the lessons of the past, reject the distortions of Stalinism, and assimilate the best traditions of the early pioneering years of the CP in Britain and internationally. ☆

hardest job is not to make new members, but to keep those we have already."

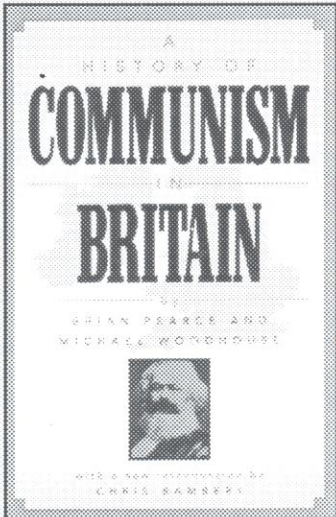
He went on to explain that "The greatest possible mistake we could make at the present time is to treat these recruits as potential deserters... we [must] place the maximum trust in them right from the date of joining."

He then dealt critically with the approach and method adopted in recruitment. As opposed to the argument of the so-called "poor calibre" of new members he stated: "We must realise also that not all backsliding from party membership is due to the individual." That is the easy explanation. What we must recognise are the "many faults inside the party, which militate against the growth of membership. In some instances complete indifference is displayed by the local party to the important task of carrying through the enrolment in a businesslike manner. Here is an example of a criminal character and one which should not be tolerated inside the party. In a letter a new member states:

"Six of us, all new members attended at ..... when the local organiser was supposed to meet us and give us instructions as to the groups we were to be attached to. It was our first meeting after we had been accepted. No-one turned up to receive us and after waiting nearly an hour, one by one we drifted out."

"Instead of this kind of treatment the new comrades should have been honoured with attention driven to the other point of extremity.

"The introduction of new members to the party is of the utmost importance - first impressions are always the most potent. Contrast the above instance with the one employed by some locals which have



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# Shape of things to come?

It is quite possible, given all the attention by the media to the loss of Premiership highlights by the BBC's Match Of The Day, to have not noticed the critical changes which have taken place as a result of the new Football TV contracts. In fact it is reasonable to conclude that all the wringing of hands over MOTD was nothing more than an elaborate smoke-screen on the part of those concerned.

by Steve Jones

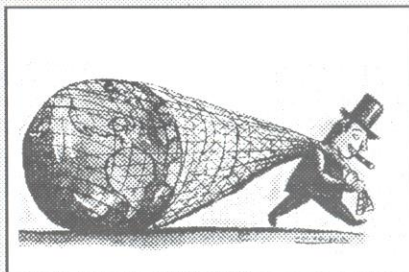
If you look at what the deal actually provides for BSkyB and NTL, add to that the expected disruption caused by Thursday UEFA cup ties, then you find yourself looking at a situation where the norm will now be for a sizable number of Premiership games each week to not be played on a Saturday. Increasingly television, in cahoots it must be said with the football authorities, is reworking the structures and traditions of football for its own benefits. We should never forget that television companies do not budget the sort of figures which they have been spending on television rights just for the love of the game. They are doing this for two very clear reasons. Firstly, to gain an edge in the global media conflicts which are taking place between the various multinationals who now dominate the industry, with merger and consolidation now the order of the day in the fight for multiple platform revenues encompassing not only TV but mobile phones and the Internet. Secondly, it not only means they can show football at times of their choosing, by and large, but that they can also show it via Pay Per View. Football continues to generate massive viewing figures, even on Channel 5.

There are tremendous potential profits to be made out of Pay Per View, not only in relation to football but also other sporting events, films and so on. Once firmly established, it could spread everywhere. However, the problem up to now has been getting the great viewing public to take it seriously enough to fork out in sufficient numbers to make it viable. The technology of digital television increased the potential available market, now all that they wanted was something to get the punters to bite. With this football deal they have got it. In this context even the ONdigital deal for the Nationwide League makes sense. No wonder analysts have been commenting on the relative lowness of the payout to the Premier clubs compared to what they could have got away with. Soon these massive multinational companies, who have already spent millions buying into football clubs so that they can control every aspect of the product, will start trying to rake the cash in at our expense. No wonder a senior TV executive was quoted recently, at a seminar on the direction of TV, as saying "he who has football has the future."

So what will football do with all the cash (£1.6bn per Premiership club) it will receive? Pocket it, of course. Although the amounts of money generated by the main football clubs has risen sharply over the last ten years, none of it has been passed onto the paying fans. Quite the reverse in fact. Ticket prices have risen year on year, usually by more than the rate of inflation. To this must be added all the other ways they have been working on to get cash off the fans: megastores, videos and, of course, the ever changing shirts. If the millions who support football are not to continue to become more

and more divorced from the clubs they support then something will have to be done. That something should be the nationalisation of the clubs so that they can be run by and for the community as a whole, not just the rich few. Opposition to the blatant profiteering within football has never been higher - its time the fans voices were heard. ☆

## Capital Idea



### The Paddington Crash Inquiry

The Paddington Inquiry opened last month with stories of utter incompetence by Railtrack and the train operating companies. It is a catalogue against the scandal of privatisation. Robin Kellow, whose daughter died in the crash, knew where to place the blame: "It all comes down to Railtrack. They set the track and we know that there was a loose section of track prior to signal 109" He called for Railtrack's board to face prosecution. "They haven't done their job. They took all the profits."

Scandalously, the crown prosecution service refused to bring charges of corporate manslaughter against individual companies.

### Call Centres Drive You Crazy

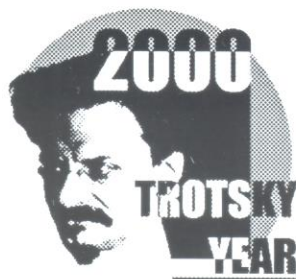
Six per cent of workers at call centres suffer from "serious psychiatric problems" - double the rate for the general working population - according to a report by CBE, a training consulting company.

The monotonous nature of the work coupled with employees' lack of control over their work produced severe levels of stress among call centre workers.

"You cannot turn human beings into machines, making their function little more than a production line of repetitive operations and still expect them to perform all the human and interpersonal skills required in customer service roles," said Jim Bennett of CBE. ☆







# The capitalist cu

**H**ow ideas arise and become a decisive force in history is an obvious question for those fighting for a new society. Clearly what causes great social movements is rooted within society. Marx long ago explained that the key to the development of society is the development of the productive forces - industry, science and technique.

The inability of a social system to develop the productive forces would inevitably give rise to a crisis of the system. However, this does not mean, as the critics of Marxism have asserted, that everything is reduced simply to economics. That is absurd. Other phenomena have to be taken into account: religion, politics, law, morality, etc. The relationship between economics and politics is not a simple mechanical relationship, but a dialectical one. According to Engels: "the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I ever asserted.... The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure... also exercise their influence upon the course of historical struggles, and in many cases predominate in determining their form."

The impasse of the productive forces is the fundamental explanation for the profound political and social crisis of capitalism between the two World Wars. Likewise, the impasse of Stalinism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, due to the bureaucratic strangle-hold over the nationalised planned economy, led to its

collapse and the move towards capitalist restoration.

The upswing of world capitalism after 1947 opened up a new period for the capitalist system of society. The reasons for this upswing have been explained elsewhere (See Ted Grant: "Will there be a Slump?"), but the primary factor was the growth of world trade and the expansion of new markets. By 1974, the simultaneous world slump that took place was an indication of the new impasse that capitalism had entered. It was a turning point that had profound economic and political consequences. It began, in the words of Trotsky, a new descending curve of capitalist development. This period was characterised by the return of mass unemployment and a new rhythm in the economic boom and slump cycle. The slumps were much deeper and the booms were of a weak and shallow character. This, in its turn, resulted in profound political instability during most of the 1970s and early 1980s.

So why was the period of the 1970s - with its revolutionary upheavals - so different from the bulk of the 1980s, where capitalism, after the collapse of Stalinism, appeared to experience a new lease of life? The 1980's boom was artificially prolonged by US arms expenditure and the fall in world commodity prices. The 'pump-priming' after the crash of October 1987 also served to stimulate and prolong the boom which lasted until 1990. This boom created illusions in capitalism, strengthened those governments that were in power, and created the material basis for a dramatic shift to the right in the mass organisations. As Lenin said "politics is concentrated economics".

The new recession of 1990-92, gave way to a weak boom which threatened to run out of steam, but has been carried along by the boom in the USA. However, this recovery has had deep political repercussions with the lack of any "feel good" factor and a profound dissatisfaction with existing governments.

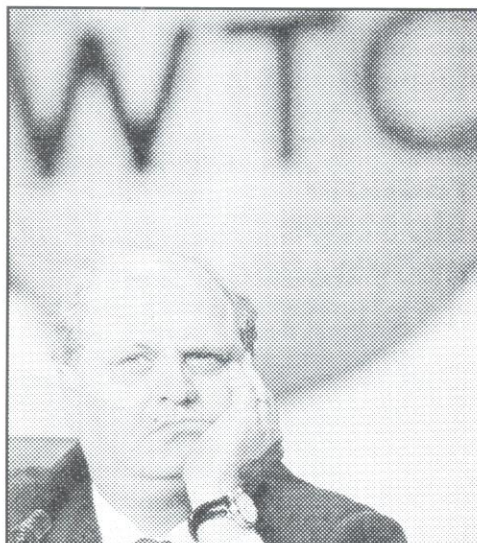
The boom of the 1990s has given rise to illusions (once again) that capitalism had overcome its problems and is experiencing a new lease of life. According to bourgeois economists, capitalism will avoid a further slump, experience a "soft landing" and see the re-establishment of sustained economic growth. Some have

put forward the idea of a new epoch of growth for capitalism based upon new technology and globalisation. Such a view is completely false. The crisis in S. E. Asia, which spread to Russia and Latin America, has not been resolved. A collapse of the US economy, together with a collapse on Wall Street, will usher in a new downswing for world capitalism, with colossal consequences for the stability of the capitalist system.

Marxism attempts to understand the underlying processes in society, politics and economics. This enables us to understand the general outline of future events. A new qualitative period of crisis has opened up for world capitalism. The expansion of world trade, although sharply down on the figures of the 1950s, no longer has the same effect on the system. It reflects the impasse of capitalism. However, the severity of the crisis is only just beginning to dawn on people. Consciousness always tends to lag behind the objective situation. At a certain point it catches up with an almighty bang. We are in a period of sharp and sudden changes in the objective situation which will inevitably be reflected in all classes in society. As Trotsky explained, it is not the boom or the slump that changes mass consciousness, but the movement between boom and slump and vice versa. This rapid change in economic conditions characterises the current unstable period of capitalist development.

We are republishing Leon Trotsky's article 'The Curve of Capitalist Development', written in April 1923, as a contribution to the understanding of the period we are going through, with its dialectical relationship between economic developments and politics. With the ideological offensive by the advocates of the New Economic Paradigm, who believe capitalism is experiencing a new period of upswing, it is important to understand the alternative scientific view based upon not only the boom and slump cycle of capitalism, but the curve of development through which the system is passing. Rather than a new upswing, capitalism is heading for a new slump

*Editor* and a downward curve of development similar to the interwar period. Trotsky's article allows us to understand the Marxist method in dealing with this





# Curve of development

## phenomenon.

In his introduction to Marx's "Class Struggles in France", Engels wrote:

"In judging the events and series of events of day-to-day history, it will never be possible for anyone to go right back to the final economic causes. Even today, when the specialised technical press provides such rich materials, in England itself it still remains impossible to follow day by day the movement of industry and trade in the world market and the changes which take place in the methods of production, in such a way as to be able to draw the general conclusion, at any point of time, from these very complicated and ever changing factors: Of these factors, the most important, into the bargain, generally operate a long time in secret before they suddenly and violently make themselves felt on the surface. A clear survey of the economic history of a given period is never contemporaneous; it can only be gained subsequently, after collecting and sifting of the material has taken place. Statistics are a necessary help here, and they always lag behind. For this reason, it is only too often necessary, in the current history of the time, to treat the most decisive factor as constant, to treat the economic situation existing at the beginning of the period concerned as given and unalterable for the whole period, or else to take notice of such changes in this situation as themselves arise out of events clearly before us, and as, therefore, can likewise be clearly seen. Hence, the materialist method has here often to limit itself to tracing political conflicts back to the struggles between the interests of the social classes and fractions of classes encountered as the result of economic development, and to show the particular parties as the more or less adequate political expression of these same classes and fractions of classes.

"It is self-evident that this unavoidable neglect of contemporaneous changes in the economic situation, of the very basis of all the proceedings subject to examination, must be a source of error."

These ideas which Engels formulated shortly before his death were not further developed by anyone after him. To my recollection they are rarely even quoted - much more rarely than they should be. Still more, their meaning seems to have escaped many Marxists. The explanation for this fact is once again to be found in the causes indicated by Engels, which mitigate against any kind of finished economic inter-

pretation of current history.

It is a very difficult task, impossible to solve in its full scope, to determine those subterranean impulses which economics transmits to the politics of today; and yet the explanation of political phenomena cannot be postponed, because the struggle cannot wait. From this flows the necessity of resorting in daily political activity to explanations which are so general that through long usage they become transformed into truisms.

As long as politics keeps flowing in the same forms, within the same banks, and at about the same speed, i.e. as long as the accumulation of economic quantity has not passed into a change of political quality, this type of clarifying abstraction ("the interests of the bourgeoisie", "imperialism", "fascism") still more or less serves its task: not to interpret a political fact in all its concreteness, but to reduce it to a familiar social type, which is, of course, intrinsically of inestimable importance.

But when a serious change occurs in the situation, all the more so a sharp turn, such general explanations reveal their complete inadequacy, and become wholly transformed into empty truisms. In such cases it is invariably necessary to probe analytically much more deeply in order to determine the qualitative aspect, and if possible also to measure quantitatively the impulses of economics upon politics. These "impulses" represent the dialectical form of the "tasks" that originate in the dynamic foundation and are submitted for solution in the sphere of the superstructure.

Oscillations of the economic conjuncture

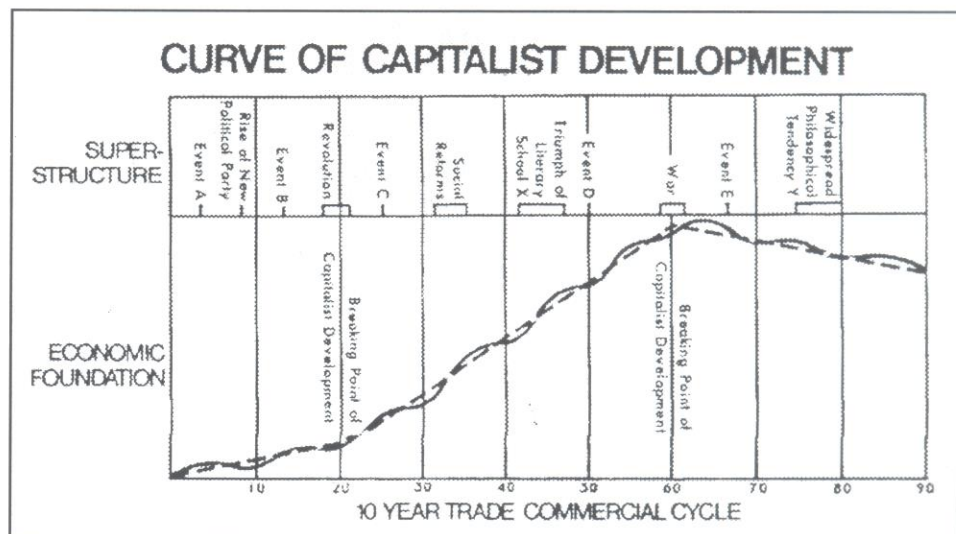
(boom-depression-crisis) already signify in and of themselves periodic impulses that give rise now to quantitative, now to qualitative changes, and to new formations in the field of politics. The revenues of possessing classes, the state budget, wages, unemployment, proportions of foreign trade, etc., are intimately bound up with the economic conjuncture, and in their turn exert the most direct influence on politics. This alone is enough to make one understand how important and fruitful it is to follow step by step the history of political parties, state institutions, etc., in relation to the cycles of capitalist development.

By this we do not at all mean to say that these cycles explain everything: this is excluded, if only for the reason that cycles themselves are not fundamental but derivative economic phenomena. They unfold on the basis of the development of productive forces through the medium of market relations. But cycles explain a great deal, forming as they do through automatic pulsation an indispensable dialectical spring in the mechanism of capitalist society. The breaking point of the trade-industrial conjuncture bring us into a greater proximity with the critical knots in the web of the development of political tendencies, legislation, and all forms of ideology.

## Cycles

But capitalism is not characterised solely by the periodic recurrence of cycles otherwise what would occur would be a complex repetition and not dynamic development.

Trade-industrial cycles are of different character in different periods. The chief differ-

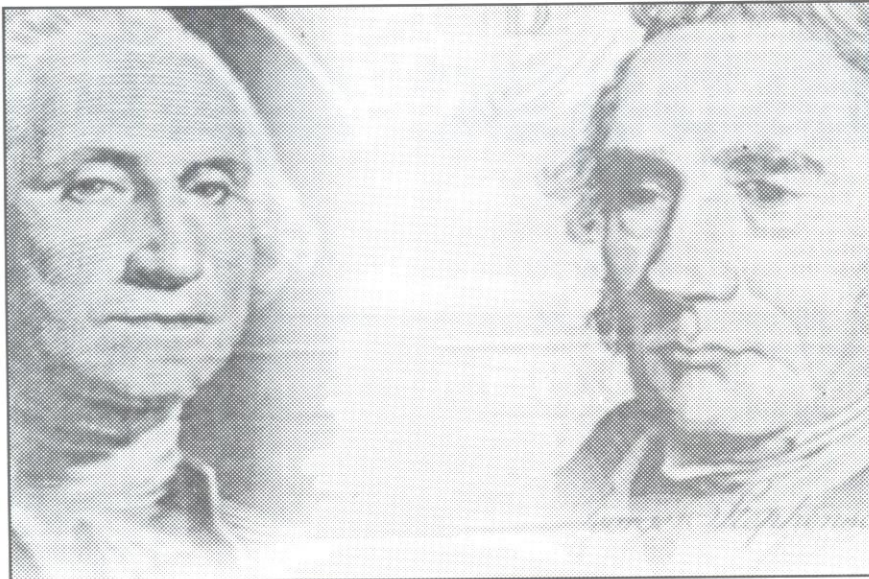




ence between them is determined by quantitative interrelations between the crisis and the boom period within each given cycle. If the boom restores with a surplus the destruction or constriction during the preceding crisis, then capitalist development moves upward. If the crisis, which signals destruction, or at all events contraction of productive forces, surpasses in its intensity the corresponding boom, then we get as a result a decline in economy. Finally, if the crisis and boom approximate each others force, then we get a temporary and stagnating equilibrium in economy. This is the schema in the rough.

We observe in history that homogeneous cycles are grouped in a series. Entire epochs of capitalist development exist when a number of cycles is characterised by sharply delineated booms and weak, short-lived crises. As a result we have a sharply rising movement of the basic curve of capitalist development. There are epochs of stagnation when this curve, while passing through partial cyclical oscillations, remains on approximately the same level for decades. And finally, during certain historical periods the basic curve, while passing as always through cyclical oscillations, dips downward as a whole, signalling the decline of productive forces.

It is already possible to postulate a priori that epochs of energetic capitalist development must possess features - in politics, in law, in philosophy, in poetry - sharply different from those in the epochs of stagnation or economic decline. Still more, a transition from one epoch of this kind to a different one must naturally produce the greatest convulsions in the relationships between classes and between states. At the Third World Congress of the Comintern we had to stress this point - in the struggle against the purely mechanistic conception of capitalist disintegration now in progress. If periodic replacements of "normal" booms by "normal" crises find their reflection in all spheres of social life, then a transition from an entire boom epoch to one of decline, or vice versa, engenders the greatest historical disturbances; and it is not hard to show that in many cases revolutions and wars straddle the borderline between two different epochs of economic development, i.e., the junction of two different segments of the capitalist curve. To analyse all of modern history from this standpoint is truly one of the most gratifying tasks of dialectical materialism.



Following the Third World Congress of the Comintern, Professor Kondratiev approached this problem - as usual, painstakingly evading the formulation of the question adopted by the congress itself - and attempted to set up alongside of the "minor cycle", covering a period of ten years, the concept of a "major cycle", embracing approximately fifty years.

#### Construction

According to this symmetrically stylised construction, a major economic cycle consists of some five minor cycles, and furthermore, half of them have the character of boom, and the other half that of crisis, with all the necessary transitional stages. The statistical determinations of major cycles compiled by Kondratiev should be subjected to careful and not over-credulous verification in respect both to individual countries and to the world market as a whole. It is already possible to refute in advance Professor Kondratiev's attempt to invest epochs labelled by him as major cycles with the same "rigidly lawful rhythm" that is observable in minor cycles; it is an obviously false generalisation from a formal analogy.

The periodic recurrence of minor cycles is conditioned by the internal dynamics of capitalist forces and manifests itself always and everywhere once the market comes into existence. As regards the large segments of the capitalist curve of development (fifty years) which Professor Kondratiev incautiously proposes to designate also as cycles, their character and duration are determined not by the internal interplay of capitalist forces but by those external conditions through whose channel capitalist development flows. The acquisition by capitalism of new countries and continents, the discovery of new natural resources, and, in the wake of these, such major facts of "superstructural" order as wars and revolutions, determine the charac-

ter and the replacement of ascending, stagnating or declining epochs of capitalist development.

Along what path then should investigation proceed? To establish the curve of capitalist development in its non-periodic (basic) and periodic (secondary) phases and to breaking points in respect to individual countries of interest to us and in respect to the entire world market - that is the first part of the task. Once we have the fixed curve (the method of fixing it is, of course, a special question in itself and by no means a sim-

ple one, but it pertains to the field of economic-statistical technique), we can break it down into periods, depending upon the angle of rise and decline in reference to an axis on a graph. In this way we obtain a pictorial scheme of economic development, i.e., the characterisation of the "very basis of all the proceedings subject to examination" (Engels).

Depending upon the concreteness and detail of our investigation, we may require a number of such schema: one relating to agriculture, another to heavy industry, and so on. With this schema as our starting point, we must next synchronise it with political events (in the widest sense of the term) and we can then look not only for correspondence - or to put it more cautiously, interrelationship between definitely delineated epochs of social life and the sharply expressed segments of the curve of capitalist development - but also for those direct subterranean impulses which unleash events.

Along this road it is naturally not at all difficult to fall into the most vulgar schematization and, above all, to ignore the tenacious internal conditioning and succession of ideological processes - to become oblivious of the fact that economics is decisive only in the last analysis. There has been no lack of caricature conclusions drawn from the Marxist method! But to renounce on this account the above indicated formulation of the question ("it smells of economism") is to demonstrate complete inability to understand the essence of Marxism, which looks for the causes of changes in social superstructure in the changes of the economic foundations and not anywhere else.

#### Economism

At the risk of incurring the theoretical ire of opponents of "economism" (and partly with the intention of provoking their indignation) we present here a schematic chart which depicts arbitrarily a curve of capitalist devel-



opment for a period of ninety years along the above mentioned lines. The general direction of the basic curve is determined by the character of the partial conjunctural curves of which it is composed. In our schema three periods are sharply demarcated: twenty years of very gradual capitalist development (segment A-B); forty years of energetic upswing (segment B-C); and thirty years of protracted crisis and decline (segment C-D).

If we introduce into this diagram the most important historical events for the corresponding period, then the pictorial juxtaposition of major political events with the variations of the curve is alone sufficient to provide the idea of the invaluable starting points for historical materialist investigations. The parallelism of political events and economic changes is of course very relative. As a general rule, the "superstructure" registers and reflects new formations in the economic sphere only after considerable delay. But this law must be laid bare through a concrete investigation of those complex interrelationships of which we here present a pictorial hint.

In the last report to the Third World Congress, we illustrated our idea with certain historical examples drawn from the epoch of the revolution of 1848, the epoch of the first Russian revolution (1905), and the period through which we are now passing (1920-1). We refer the reader to these examples. They do not supply anything finished, but they do characterise adequately enough the extraordinary importance of the

approach advanced by us, above all for understanding the most critical leaps in history: wars and revolutions. If in this letter we utilise a purely arbitrary pictorial scheme, without attempting to take any actual period in history as a basis, we do so for the simple reason that any attempt of this sort would resemble far too much an incautious anticipation of those results flowing from a complex and painstaking investigation which has yet to be made.

At the present time, it is of course still impossible to foresee to any precise degree just what sections of the field of history will be illuminated and just how much light will be cast by a materialist investigation which would proceed from a more concrete study of the capitalist curve and the interrelationship between the latter and all the aspects of social life. Conquests that may be attained on this road can be determined only as the result of such an investigation itself, which must be more systematic, more orderly than those historical materialist excursions hitherto undertaken.

In any case, such an approach to modern history promises to enrich the theory of historical materialism with conquests far more precious than the extremely dubious speculative juggling with the concepts and terms of the materialist method that has, under the pens of some of our Marxists, transplanted the methods of formalism into the domain of the materialist dialectic, and has led to reducing the task to rendering definitions and classifications more precise and to splitting empty abstractions into four

equally empty parts; it has, in short, adulterated Marxism by means of the indecently elegant mannerisms of Kantian epigones.

#### Instrument

It is a silly thing indeed endlessly to sharpen and resharpen an instrument to chip away Marxist steel, when the task is to apply the instrument in working over the raw material!

In our opinion this theme could provide the subject matter for the most fruitful work of our Marxist seminars on historical materialism. Independent investigations undertaken in this sphere would undoubtedly shed new light or at least throw more light on isolated historical events and entire epochs. Finally, the very habit of thinking in terms of the foregoing categories would greatly facilitate political orientation in the present epoch, which is an epoch that reveals more openly than ever before the connection between capitalist economics, which has attained the peak of saturation, and capitalist politics, which has become completely unbridled.

I promised long ago to develop this theme for "Vestnik Sotsialisticheskoi Akademii". Up to now I have been prevented by circumstances from keeping this promise. I am not sure that I shall be able to fulfil it in the near future. For this reason I confine myself in the meantime to this letter.

April 21 1923

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# Horn of plenty for Hungary?

Hungary put in a GDP growth of 6.8% in the first quarter of the year 2000 and expects a rate of growth of 5-5.5% by the end of the year. These are impressive figures, which any visitor seeing signs of a building boom, lots of new cars on the streets and a

well-dressed, well-fed population would quickly confirm. Is the advent of capitalism bringing the horn of plenty to Hungary or is the picture somewhat less straight forward?

by Juliana Grant, Budapest

First of all it is interesting to note that the lion's share of the 6.8% figure comes from industry, both manufacturing and assembling. Industry grew by 20.7% in the first quarter. The traditionally strong agricultural sector, however, is struggling. Both meat production and cereals are declining and the number employed in agriculture has dropped below 300,000 for the first time since records began. Prices paid to producers are at an all time low and farmers are now out blocking the main roads protesting about the withdrawal of subsidies, the embezzlement of monies earmarked for them by the Ministry and the slow progress towards cheap loans they were promised.

The dissolution of large scale agriculture in the last 10 years is showing its effects. The drain of people to the towns is accelerated by the loss of traditional markets, indebtedness, bankruptcy and the final closure of the few collectivised farms left.

All the 'gung ho' ministers, including the Prime Minister, should remind themselves that when food goes beyond a certain price or starts becoming scarce, Hungarians start thinking of revolutions. The odd history lesson here might be helpful.

Looking at industry, detailed figures are not yet available as to which sectors are the chief contributors to the 20.7% growth in the first quarter, but it is without doubt fuelled by foreign firms making and assembling goods in Hungary and immediately exporting them. While the boom in Western

Europe keeps going, Hungary is producing amazing growth figures. Jurgen D. Hoffmann, Managing Director of Audi Hungary, quoted in 'Nepszabadsag' on 2nd June 2000, praised the conditions in Hungary which made Audi invest 1.6 billion Deutschmarks so far and are contributing to a further investment of 650 millions on a new engine plant and a Research and Development Centre.

He quotes good logistics (his plant is near the Austrian border), a skilled labour force, a flexible production structure and low wages as well as good economic indicators and stability as his main reasons for the increase in investment.

The world revolution in IT has also affected Hungary and all IT firms (mainly software) have experienced growths of 20-25%. The OECD, however, has recently warned that there are dangers of overheating in the economy due to a too fast rate of growth, a faster than expected rate of growth in the balance of payments deficit and a slowing down of the decrease in inflation.

The captains of Hungarian industry as well as the bourgeois politicians all play this down using some of the most cynical arguments I have ever seen. One argument is, of course, quite true. The real fuel of all this growth is Western demand for goods produced by foreign firms that will leave very little effect on the Hungarian economy, apart from providing employment, as the goods get exported straight away. Extreme short sightedness is prevalent amongst these gentlemen who seem to think that the boom will go on forever.

Investment is still growing, although the rate is slowing down. If you look at the first quarters of the last 3 years, growth was

12.1% in 1998, 6.4% in 1999 and 7% this year. This should be a warning sign for anyone with eyes to see.

Akar Laszlo, Managing Director of GKI, an economics research firm, quoted in 'Nepszabadsag', 2nd June 2000, feels that all exports and tourism receipts more than adequately finance imports at the moment and that domestic Hungarian consumption is unlikely to fuel inflation as wages are kept low.

One could add that this cynical comment is made even more true by pensions also growing very slowly and the increase of the minimum monthly wage to 40,000 forints (100 GBP) being delayed.

This last point highlights the plight of those living in the real economy in Hungary who are either un or underemployed, for whom the figure of 6.8% growth is only a number bandied about by people who drive Mercedeses and live on a different social and economic planet from them.

At a recent workers' festival, the MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party) and the MSZOSZ (Hungarian TUC) announced a plan for closer co-operation to highlight the plight of workers in the country. As the Socialists form the main opposition in Parliament, the MSZOSZ hopes to benefit from this closer co-operation. At a joint press conference a study was presented

which established that "Both blue and white collar workers now find themselves in a previously never heard of position of vulnerability in the work place.

"In order to obtain or keep their employment, many workers accept degrading and very detrimental contracts."

According to the report approximately 40% of all employees in today's Hungary fall outside employment legislation.

Between 1990 and 1993, 1,665,000 jobs and those who held them "disappeared".

These people ultimately fell into 3 groups:

1- Those who tried to make it on their own and became self-employed.





2- Those numbering at least 300,000 who were retired early.

3- And the bulk of this number, who were from the countryside and became victims of the "restructuring" of agriculture.

According to this report, the expected social explosion has not happened partially because of families living on previous savings, but mostly because of the explosion of the black market. The latter prevails in all spheres, encroaching even on regular employment where an ever increasing proportion of wages is "cash in hand" so that the employer avoids tax and insurance payments. Personally, I would also add a fourth group, those who descended into crime and have got by it ever since. Crime figures have experienced an explosion in the last 10 years, and it is believed that the true figure exceeds the recorded one 10 fold.

MSZOSZ and several of its constituent unions are putting wage claims on the table at the moment, claiming - quite rightly - that if the economy is growing at 6.8%, workers should see some of that too. Presently the average growth of incomes lags badly behind profits at 1.2% per annum. Teachers and other public service workers are talking to the Government at the moment, while industrial wages are also very low. The glorious fighting traditions of the Hungarian Trade Unions of the past have been lost during 40 years of Stalinism and the new workforce of the 21st century capitalist Hungary is still learning.

The growing and blatantly obvious inequalities grate badly on ordinary people. Schools are being closed, teachers made unemployed, the Health Service is subjected to cash limits, working hours are extended and holidays shortened. The long term prospects for the nouveau riche nascent Hungarian bourgeoisie is not as rosy as they think. Their economy is so dependent on the boom in the West that they might get a few surprises when it ends. As the saying goes: "When the US sneezes, Europe catches cold, but Eastern Europe will likely get pneumonia!" The top, thin veneer of prosperity even today is underlaid by poverty, worsening working conditions and growing frustration. With the end of the boom in the West, the reality of what it is to be a third or fourth rate client state of Germany and the US will dawn on Hungary's new masters.

It is then up to workers, the youth, town and country folk alike to reclaim their economy and their country for themselves and run it for need not profit. The last 10 years may have re-established capitalism in Hungary and other parts of Eastern Europe. However, its gravediggers are still here and their latent power is stronger than ever. ☆

## Nigerian General Strike Victory

**A week-long general strike from 7th to 13th June took place in Nigeria. It was in protest at the 50% increase in the price of fuel announced by the government of President Obasanjo. The strike was successful in forcing the government to drastically reduce the announced increases.**

**The strike was most effective in Lagos, Benin City, Ibadan, Akure, Abeokuta, Abuja and Ilorin. The success of the general strike reveals to all the enormous strength and potential of the Nigerian working class.**

**After the strike we received an eye-witness account of the student protests organised in the town of Ilorin in support of the striking workers.**

### Eye-witness account of events during the general strike in Nigeria:

"A group of students played a major role in the June 9 protests in Ilorin. They practically initiated the public protest in support of the strike. The students' protest developed into mass protest; the local NLC (Nigerian Labour Congress) and other poor strata of the society joined the movement.

On June 8 we contacted the local students' union on the need to organize some form of action. However, the university students were on holiday, so we had to go to the college of education students who had been waiting for somebody to move them out. On June 9, we went to their campus, which is near the university, and the protest started immediately after addressing them.

Their number grew larger by the time they got out of the campus. This attracted the Ilorin based NANS president who intervened to hold back the movement. He prevented the students from going to the house of the governor of the State, who is one of his financiers.

However, this could not hold back the movement.

The students were later joined by the local NLC. They marched to the State TV station. In the process of the march, Arthur was arrested by an armed detachment of the police. The police tricked him to stay behind the mass of the protesters and the people he was leading were mainly school students in their hundreds. The police opened fire on them and he was isolated.

Things got bloody when the mass of the students moved on the police to rescue him. The police shot three people. They were seriously injured and are in hospital now.

When the mass of the protesters, led by Martin, got the information that Arthur had been arrested there was massive anger and they moved to free him. They laid a trap for the police detachment. They set up lots of barricades in the ambush. The police were isolated in the middle. When the police detachment realized that they were under attack because of Arthur, they threw him out of their jeep, in order to escape. However, they shot three students in the process.

Arthur said that the policemen panicked and were confused. A conflict broke out among them. Some of them were of the opinion that there was no need for them to have attacked the protest march as it was peaceful.

The policemen that were with Martin and co during the protest march were also against the actions of their colleagues. They openly supported the student's action. After he was thrown out of the jeep, Arthur went back to join the march." ☆





# Crisis in Israel After Withdrawal from Lebanon



Lebanese villagers returning home

After 22 years of the military occupation of South Lebanon, Israel's withdrawal marks an important change in the situation. The election of Ehud Barak of the Israeli Labour Party to the position of Prime Minister was welcomed by the West as they see in this the possibility of speeding up the peace process.

Even before the Second World War, the Zionist dream of creating an Israeli state on Palestinian territory was totally reactionary. The creation of this state was only possible on the basis of a war and the expulsion of 800,000 Palestinians from their land. Trotsky had predicted that the creation of such a state would mean the Jews having to live in an "infernal trap", a state of almost permanent warfare with their Arab neighbours.

by Fred Weston

**T**he history of the state of Israel is in fact one of a series of wars. Far from being a "safe haven", the "promised land" from the very beginning has been a besieged fortress, surrounded by hostile states.

The strategic importance of this region lies in the fact that three quarters of the world's oil reserves are concentrated there. First British then US imperialism have always based their strategy for the domination of the Middle East on the division of the Arab people into a number of autocratic and reactionary monarchies such as those in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Arab Emirates. And they have used Israel and Turkey to police the region. US subsidies to Israel to the tune of \$5 billion a year have transformed it into a major economic and military power in the region.

## The occupation of Lebanon

Israeli military strategy has always been based on occupying buffer zones on its borders in order to defend its basic interests. In

1967 Israel's victory in the six-day war led to the occupation of the Sinai peninsula, the Gaza strip, the Golan Heights and the West Bank, where a total of 1,400,000 Arabs lived.

These territories were colonised with settlers recruited among the most fanatical orthodox Jews who were armed and supported by the Israeli state. Their number has now risen to more than 300,000. They have gradually displaced the local people, thus leading to the building up of enormous, and potentially explosive, resentment on the part of the Arab masses.

When the civil war broke out Syria and Israel invaded the Lebanon in 1978. Israel established its own protectorate in southern Lebanon, resting on a puppet army, the South Lebanese Army (SLA), which it used to crush any rebellion on the part of the Lebanese population.

Again in 1982 Israel launched a large scale invasion of the Lebanon with the aim of uprooting Arafat's PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation). In the hunt for

PLO supporters genocide of the Palestinian people was perpetrated. Between 16th and 18th September 1982 Christian militias, allied to Israel, massacred over 2,000 Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila.

The PLO apparatus collapsed and Arafat, together with 4,000 of his militants, had to flee to other countries. But at the same time the government and the ruling class of Israel found themselves, for the first time, facing mass opposition to the war inside Israel itself. This movement involved hundreds of thousands of Israeli workers and youth.

In 1985 the Israeli army was forced to withdraw, moving back to its former position in southern Lebanon. However, the Israeli debacle seriously affected the morale and discipline of the SLA and many cases of desertion and insubordination were reported. In these conditions it became almost impossible to contain the growing influence of the Hezbollah, an Iranian influenced Shiite Islamic movement. Thus a long, drawn out guerrilla movement developed. Israel's initial response was to increase the brutality of its reprisals, especially in July 1993 and April 1996 when it launched air raids on both military and civilian targets, thus killing hundreds of Lebanese. The SLA made an infamous name for itself by rounding up civilians and carrying out torture and murder in concentration camps such as the hated Al-Khiam prison.

## A planned withdrawal or a debacle?

Sources close to the US government concluded that the withdrawal of Israeli troops would be a positive development, from their point of view, that would improve the situation in the Middle East. They saw it as a move aimed at gaining a strong position in Israel's peace negotiations with Syria.

Barak had already announced the withdrawal during the election campaign that was to bring him to power less than one year ago. The reasons he gave for the announced withdrawal basically come down to an admission that 50 years of Israeli foreign policy have been a failure and that a new relationship must be built up if security is to be guaranteed.

In twenty-two years of military occupation over 1,000 Israeli soldiers have been killed, but this has in no way served to stop the growing influence of the Hezbollah among the Arab population. Barak has had to admit that, "When we moved in there



were no Hezbollah. They were created by the occupation" (II Manifesto, 24.5.2000). Neither has security been guaranteed for the Israeli settlements near the Lebanese border. During these years the Hezbollah have managed to launch more than 4,000 missiles on Kiryat Shmona alone, a town in northern Israel.

The Israeli ruling class, together with western imperialism, had drawn the conclusion that their interests would be better served by withdrawal from southern Lebanon and reaching an agreement with its Syrian neighbour.

### Barak abandons the SLA

The Israeli government had announced that the withdrawal of troops would take place at the beginning of July. So why did events suddenly develop so fast?

As always, the imperialists are not very generous with their own lackeys, when these are no longer of any use to them. In spite of 22 years of "honourable" service, at the same time as announcing the planned withdrawal Barak also declared that Israel would not give asylum to the SLA militiamen. Thus, in just a few hours, faced with the massive pressure of thousands of Arabs returning to their villages and to the homes they had been forced to abandon twenty years earlier, the SLA simply collapsed, abandoned even by its founder, general Lahad, who has fled to Paris. Hundreds of its soldiers refused to fire on the returning refugees and surrendered either to the Hezbollah or to the Lebanese army. Thousands deserted and fled with their families towards Israel. There was chaos and generalised demoralisation among the SLA soldiers.

The collapse of the SLA and the uprising of the Hezbollah transformed what was supposed to be an ordered retreat, with the "handing over of the keys" to the Lebanese army, into a chaotic rout. The prisons were abandoned, with the prisoners still in their cells. Even the Israeli military bases were left intact and now they will be used against Israeli air attacks, as one Israeli military expert commented bitterly.

The Hezbollah now dominate southern Lebanon. However, the Syrian army has a say in what it can and cannot do. Israeli reprisal air attacks could increase in the near future if the Hezbollah do fire on Israeli territory. This would include Syrian targets, who would get the blame for future Hezbollah raids. The Syrian regime is trying to achieve an agreement with Israel and doesn't want any trouble on the southern border of Lebanon.

### The impact on Israel

The rout of Israel's puppets in southern Lebanon and the withdrawal of its troops has unleashed an offensive of the extreme right wing parties in Israel against the Barak

government. The Barak government could thus be brought down. However, if this should lead to the Likud and the extreme right wing parties returning to government this will only serve to further aggravate the situation.

It would also lead to renewed social conflict along the same lines as what happened in the Spring of 1999, when the accumulated anger of the working class culminated in a series of strikes against the Netanyahu government and in a general strike of the public sector in April which involved 400,000 workers. The economic situation in Israel is placing a lot of pressure on the working class. Under this pressure, and with growing levels of inflation, the Histadut (the main Israeli Trade Union federation) has been forced to refuse the government's offer of a 3.1% increase in wages and has demanded increases of 14%. It was even forced to call a general strike, only to call it off later.

Three quarters of Israel's foreign trade is with the European Union and the USA. Therefore a crisis in the west means a crisis in Israel. On top of this, western aid is on offer only if the government of Israel applies IMF policies. That means cuts in welfare spending on such things as health and education. Already back in 1998 200,000 students in Israeli universities took part in a strike to stop the increase in university fees. They received massive support, with up to 91% of the population declaring they sympathised with the students' demands.

IMF policies have also meant widespread privatisation of Israel's large publicly owned industrial sector, involving job losses. In 1996 GDP growth in Israel was 4.5%. This had already declined to 1.5% in 1999. Unemployment has reached the level of 10%. This is a new phenomenon for Israeli workers, who were used to practically full employment for decades.

What is taking place is a huge differentiation between rich and poor. Zionism has always been based on the idea of "one-nation", but as in all capitalist countries there is no common interest between workers and bosses, and Israel is no exception. In 1999, 1.3 million Israelis, out of the total of 6 million, lived below the poverty line.

Strikes have already taken place and sooner or later the workers of Israel will have to take up the class struggle to defend their own interests against those of the Israeli ruling class.

The situation is much worse, however, when we look at the conditions of the Palestinian masses in the occupied territories and in the Palestinian Authority. In some areas one third of the work force is unemployed and of those that do have work less than a third have regular well paid jobs.

The Israeli bourgeoisie desperately

needs to find new outlets for its products if it is to achieve the levels of growth required to avert a major movement, both among the workers in Israel and the Palestinian masses on its borders. This, together with pressure particularly from US imperialism, explains the attempts to keep the so-called "peace process" alive.

But on the basis of the crisis in the economy they will not be able to solve the basic underlying problems of the Palestinian masses. The unemployed will not get jobs. The housing problem will not be solved. Neither will the problem of water distribution. The Palestinians aspire to their own state where they can live in decent conditions. This will never be achieved so long as the capitalists dominate in Israel and the surrounding Arab regimes remain in the hands of reactionary cliques.

The crisis in Israel is a signal for millions of Arab youth and workers who are tired of being oppressed. In the occupied territories and in the Palestinian Authority the situation has become explosive, and the conditions for a new Intifada have developed. Thousands of Palestinians have come out onto the streets and have clashed with Israeli troops, like in 1987. The exchange of gunfire between Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers underlines the extreme tension which has developed.

### Israel and Palestinian workers

Nationalism must be broken down on all sides and in its place workers' internationalism should be posed as the only alternative. If the problems are posed in a class manner then an identity of interests can be developed among workers in Israel and Palestinian workers. The task of linking up the growing struggles of workers and youth in Israel against the effects of the crisis of Israeli capitalism to that of the struggle of the Arab workers has to be a priority for all conscious revolutionaries. This is not an easy task. But the crisis of capitalism in Israel will create the preconditions for achieving this. However, what is essential is the building of a workers' party among the Palestinian masses, based on the genuine ideas of Marxism. Such a party would be able to make an appeal to the Jewish workers and thus build workers' unity. It would be able to explain the need for common struggle of all workers in the Middle East, for the overthrow of the capitalists in Israel and for the overthrow of the reactionary Arab regimes, for the building of a Socialist Federation in the region, where all peoples would be guaranteed jobs, housing, health care, and a decent standard of living.

As long as capitalism continues to dominate the region, then any peace agreement will only be temporary. Conflicts will break out again and again. In the end it is a question of either class struggle for socialism or wars, ethnic conflict and barbarism. ☆



# USA Today:

## Police brutality and the electric chair

The last defiant words of Gary Graham, who was executed by lethal injection in Texas, was to accuse his captors of "the systematic state murder of black people". This murder not only takes place on death row but in the cities of America.

James Quarks, a market trader in Baltimore, Maryland, was cut-

**N**ot realising that the knife was still in his hand, the police order him to drop it. As he does so, the cops open fire and shoot him dead. Like the Rodney King case in Los Angeles, this murder was caught on video and the police, who tried to cover it up, were caught red handed.

This is no isolated event. Police brutality is an everyday occurrence in the United States. Trigger-happy cops have murdered countless individuals, overwhelmingly non-whites. In the Bronx, N.Y., Amadou Diallo, another street vendor, was murdered by police in cold blood. Four cops - members of the deadly Street Crime Unit - fired 41 shots at unarmed Diallo, pumping him with 19 bullets. The police officers were later acquitted, giving a clear signal that there is a state-sanctioned "open season" for police to kill unarmed blacks.

There were similar incidents in Riverside, California, Charlotte, N.C., and on the New Jersey Turnpike. In Philadelphia, four more African Americans have been killed by police this year. For instance, in January, Erin Forbes was shot in the heart by Lower Merion police as he returned home from his night

job. He was surrounded by at least five fully-armed officers, yet the police story was that he threatened them with a stick.

There is a national epidemic of police violence. It has escalated with the CIA-linked, influx of drugs into many areas in an attempt to poison the youth. Many of the victims of police brutality have committed no crimes, but are attacked because they are Black, Latino, poor or young. Millions are victims of racial harassment and discrimination. African Americans continue to feel the full weight of racist US capitalism upon their backs.

### Racist force

The rage that rises up in all black Americans and all racial minorities against their conditions is met with the repression of the racist police force and the legal system. Increasingly, in African American and Latino communities, people fear the police more than the criminals. This is directly due to the repressive actions of the police themselves, who are getting away with murder - literally.

But they do not act on their own. They are part of the apparatus of oppression used to maintain the political and economic domination of big business and their hangers on. The police act in a brutal fashion

because they have been given the green light from the higher-ups in the police department to commit all manner of murder and mayhem in the name of the "war on crime."

ting open a box, when a group of police officers, guns drawn, responding to a call, came racing up in their squad cars. The young African American man looked up from his work to see what was happening.

by Rob Sewell

The policies of the capitalist parties, the Republicans and Democrats, have created the atmosphere in which these activities take place. In their dog-eat-dog society, where the gap between rich and poor is constantly growing, repression is an integral factor. With the passage of the Omnibus Crime Bill, Clinton and Congress, on down to the governors, mayors and the precinct captains have given local police licence for violent and reckless behaviour.

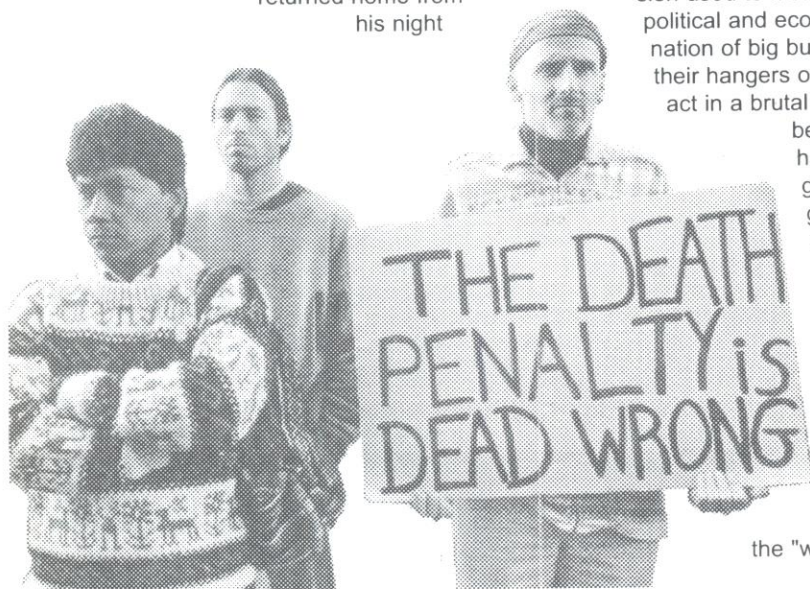
The state is attempting the "pacify" the growing anger of the unemployed, the exploited, the down-trodden and the oppressed by use of the frame-up and the bullet. They are bringing down the hammer of repression in the ghettos.

State violence is reaching new heights in the United States. There are two million in prison - the highest incarceration rate in the world. While the USA has only 5% of the world's population, it has 25% of the world's prisoners. This year around 100 convicted Americans will be poisoned, hanged, gassed, electrocuted or shot. Such a figure will surpass anything since 1951 and is incredibly approaching the level of the 1870s.

African Americans and Latinos are facing the brunt of this new wave of repression. Despite their minority status, Blacks and Latinos account for 56% of death-row inmates and 42% of executions. Without doubt a sizeable proportion have been framed by police in their on going effort to break the resistance within the African American and Latino communities.

This is nothing new! The revolt of Blacks in the 1960s was met with outright repression. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, George Jackson and the Black Panther leaders were murdered, and the movement suppressed. The struggle was pushing them in a socialist and class direction which threatened to link up their cause with the workers' movement. Alarmed by this development, it seems irrefutable that sections of the ruling class were behind these murders.

Later, in the mid 1970s, the radical





black group, MOVE, was targeted for repression by the Philadelphia police department under the city's mayor Frank Rizzo. A series of arrests, raids and beatings quickly escalated in 1978 to a shoot-out during a military assault on MOVE headquarters by hundreds of riot police. Nine MOVE members were found guilty of third degree murder, conspiracy, and multiple counts of attempted murder and aggravated assault. Each defendant was given a sentence of 30 to 100 years. Others were framed and imprisoned on other charges.

One of the few media people to accurately report on MOVE was the black Philadelphia journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal. This brought him into conflict with the authorities and his employers. He was targeted by police, and in December 1981, he was involved in an incident which led to Mumia being badly wounded and a police officer dead. He was arrested on a murder rap and badly beaten in custody.

At his trial evidence was ignored, testimonies were changed, and evidence tampered with. The jury, from which over ten blacks were excluded and only two remained, returned a verdict of guilty and a sentence of death. Mumia has been on death row ever since.

#### Police assault

In May 1985, in order to eliminate the organisation, police mounted a full scale assault on the MOVE headquarters. Eventually, a bomb was dropped on the building, which was to destroy the headquarters and 60 surrounding buildings. Those who tried to escape were met with police gunfire, in which six adults and five children were killed in cold blood. The only adult survivor, Ramona Africa (interviewed opposite), was found guilty of riot and conspiracy and was jailed for 7 years.

The answer of the American ruling class to the discontent within society has always been increased repression, building more jails, increased use of the death-penalty, acts of racist violence, and the elimination of democratic rights. The murderous practices of the police are not confined to minorities. Violence is being used against workers on strike, against peaceful protesters, against immigrants and against innocent people of all races and nationalities that stand up for their rights. Events in Seattle and Washington - as well as their bloody adventures overseas - show the real face of American capitalism.

Only with the elimination of the causes of violence - the conditions in which people are forced to live under the rule of the giant corporations - can this nightmare be ended once and for all. While fighting against the injustices of capitalism, the police brutality, racism, at the end of the day, only through the socialist transformation of society can these evils be eliminated once and for all. ☆

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with Ramona Africa,

the sole adult survivor of the May 1985 bombing  
of the MOVE headquarters by police.

#### Q: What led to the bombing of the MOVE headquarters in Philadelphia?

"In 1978, nine MOVE people were accused of shooting one cop with one bullet after a police raid on our home. The truth is in their frenzy the police ended up killing one of their own officers. All nine ended up being given 100-year sentences. Then the authorities decided to shut us up, stop our protests, stop us exposing them. That led to the May 13th attack.

#### Q: How did the government justify the action?

The government said that the police came out to our home on May 13th as neighbours had complained about us. When did this government start caring about Black people complaining about their neighbours? When did the FBI start getting involved in neighbourhood disputes? They wanted to stop MOVE. To quote Wilson Goode, the black man who was mayor of Philadelphia at the time, he said 'We want a permanent end to MOVE'. That is what the May 13th bombing was about.

#### Q: And how did you view it?

They wanted to silence MOVE. And this is nothing new in this country. From day one, anybody that stood up against injustice, against exploitation and oppression, this government has tried to stop them, whether it be through money, banging them up, which didn't work with us, giving them a job, a position, but that didn't work with MOVE either. Then the government had to start with the brutality and intimidation. They came to our home with a powerful military explosive.

It was not a matter of bad judgement when the bomb they dropped ignited a fire. And the fire department as well as other city departments decided that they were going to let the fire burn. They were going to do nothing despite innocent men, woman and children being in that building.

#### Q: What happened on May 13th?

When we learned that our house was on fire we were in the basement. We started to try and get ourselves out of that building. We were immediately met with a barrage of police gunfire, deliberately aimed at us to prevent anybody from escaping the blazing inferno. That was no accident.

#### Q: You were the only adult survivor?

Yes. As a result of this situation, I was the only person to see the inside of

the jail, to go to trial, to be convicted of anything. Not one single official; not one person was held accountable for the murder of my family. Not one of them was ever charged with anything.

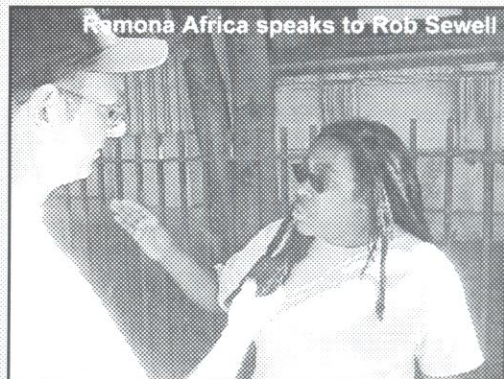
#### Q: What happened after that?

I took a law suit out against various people over this incident. It took eleven years before the law suit finally went to trial. By the time it went to trial there were only three defendants: the police commissioner, the fire commissioner and the city of Philadelphia. A white suburban jury saw all the evidence, and the testimony and they were compelled to find these people guilty. They did, they found them liable, guilty. The judge didn't like that verdict. So after the verdict he came back and decided to throw it out of the window and grant immunity to the police and fire commissioners after the verdict.

#### Q: You were sent to prison?

I did seven years in prison. I had maybe thirty charges against me. Some were dismissed; others I was acquitted of and I was convicted of riot and conspiracy. I was sentenced 16 months to 7 years. I had a 4.5 million dollar bail. Murders don't get that kind of bail. After 16 months I was interviewed for yearly release. They said they were willing to release me, on condition that I sever all my ties with MOVE; disassociate from them; have no contact with any MOVE member. Then you are out of here. I wouldn't do it! They approached my other brothers and sisters to do the same. Carlos over there did 12 years in prison. My sister Sue did 12 years. My sister Consuewella also over there lost two babies in the bombing. She did 16 years in jail. None of us would accept that stipulation. So we spent every last day of our sentences in jail. That is quote, unquote, justice in America. ☆

Ramona Africa speaks to Rob Sewell





# ★ Youth for Socialism

## Tunisia: mass protests against the regime

Mass protests by university and school students shook the Tunisian regime last April. Some sections of workers, protesting against privatisation, also joined in. We have received the following interview with a Tunisian student activist.

"The student strikes began last year, the main issue being the student appeal for the reform of CAPES (a new reform in the education system). Although this was the main issue at stake, we did want to address some other serious problems, such as the fact that there was an increase in the price of meal tickets by 100% from 100 millimes to 200 millimes. Some of the students cannot afford to pay this. We are also suffering from the rise in registration fees, which were set at 30 dinars."

"At another level, students are also experiencing difficulties in their day-to-day life at university. There is a special police force that was created exclusively to deal with students inside the faculties, with their own police precincts inside the university compound. During the student strikes, many students were arrested. One of the students was detained just because he had produced a poem criticising the government policies (the Tunisian President's name was mentioned in the poem). At a certain stage during the strikes, the students decided to sit in and refused to leave the university (Manouba University, in Tunis). While doing this in a most peaceful way, the police then began to charge us. One student suffered critical injuries to his eyes as a consequence of the police attack.

"As a consequence of the student protest movement, the Tunisian authorities stated that they would remove the police agents from inside the universities. However, they went back on their word not long after.

"We are also witnessing many upheavals in the secondary schools over the reform in the education system. Schools were damaged during the protests, and, as a consequence, the government felt the need to declare that the so-called reform was nothing more than rumours. However, the reform of the education system had been announced on national TV by the Tunisian Minister of Education only weeks before.

"Another issue that we also want to address is the fact that Tunisian universities

are very overcrowded. We also have problems with transport, especially with the extreme overcrowding of buses.

"Another very important question is privatisation. Since 1990 almost every single industry in the country has been privatised, sometimes with quite disastrous consequences. For instance, the olive oil industry, which used to be one of the most respected and profitable industries in Tunisia, has now lost most of its importance. The quality of the products produced started to gradually decline, and as an immediate consequence, we started to lose the markets where we had always exported our olive oil (especially the Middle East market).

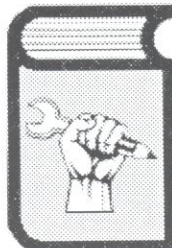
"Curiously, even the most "timid" reference to any privatisation matters on the part of the students during our strikes immediately led to prosecution by the Tunisian authorities.

"Freedom of expression does not exist in

our country, starting from the Internet, in which access to many many sites is blocked to ordinary Tunisians (sites like the ones from Amnesty International, Reporters sans frontieres, and sites of international lawyers), and the written press, which is under strict government control. Even foreign publications, such as the French newspaper *Le Monde* and others are strictly examined, and whenever its contents do not agree with the government "criteria", they are quickly banned from public sale.

"As a final note, it is interesting to note that while the Tunisian people are suffering enormous economic and social difficulties, in 1998 the Tunisian authorities started to build a new headquarters for the governmental ruling party (RCD). The modest cost of this enterprise? 19 million dinars."

Sidi-Bou-Said, 22 April 2000



## Youth for International Socialism

Youth for International Socialism (YFIS) was established in the United States - the citadel of world capitalism - just over a year ago to offer a real socialist alternative to young people. Over that short period of time YFIS has become the world's fastest growing socialist youth organisation. Its membership has spread to numerous countries, including Britain, Ireland, Canada, Philippines and elsewhere.

In Britain, YFIS has been launched to win youth to the ideas of socialism, and to prepare the ground to build a mass socialist youth movement. We appeal to young people to join with us in this struggle. We have nothing to lose, and a world to win.

### Why Youth for international Socialism?

- Are you sick of war, inequality, racism, unemployment, sexism, homophobia, ignorance, hunger and oppression?
- Are you sick of the corporate dominated media?
- Are you sick of the hypocrisy, injustice, and cruelty of the capitalist system?
- Are you sick of the steady decline in real wages, education and health spending?
- Are you sick of the way the environment is being destroyed in the name of profit?
- Are you sick of feeling like there is nothing you can do to change all of this?
- Well you're not alone! There is something you can do! You can make a difference! Get involved in the struggle for a socialist world with Youth for International Socialism

Join  
yfis-uk@newyouth.com



# Yes, it can be done!

## "Bread and Roses" (USA 2000, dir: Ken Loach)

Most film premieres take place in plush cinemas with guests arriving in stretch limousines complete with cameras flashing and crowds cheering. The Los Angeles premiere screening of "Bread and Roses", the new film from left wing filmmaker Ken Loach was somewhat different. Timed to coincide with Justice for Janitors day on June 15th, the screening was held in the afternoon so that the invited audience of 250 janitors (cleaners) could attend before going to work. This they duly did, arriving dressed in work uniforms complete with brooms and buckets.

Ken Loach has consistently concentrated on producing films with a radical content. Best known nowadays for his film about the Spanish Civil War, "Land and Freedom", this is his first US film.

The story revolves around the fate of a fictitious group of janitors as they become more and more involved in a struggle for union recognition and better conditions, showing how the bosses are firmly opposed to giving their workers decent conditions. Although set in America, there is much in this film that will look very familiar to British eyes, not least the ruthless exploitation of immigrant workers as a cheap and dispos-

able source of labour. At the LA screening workers shouted with anger at the point where the boss fires some of the workers for organising the union. Later, as the film shows how by organising and fighting for their rights they can win better conditions, the jeers turned to cheers.

Of course, this was a fight the janitors in the audience knew all about. Appropriately, the screening took place not far from the Century City complex where a strike of workers in 1990 had begun the long road of struggle which, following a further strike last April, has resulted in significant gains for the janitors. The shout at the premiere was "Si se puede" (Yes, it can be done). Some of the janitors were used as extras in the film and also assisted in the preparation of the screenplay, ensuring a high degree of realism. In 1912 in America, young female strikers from the woolmills of Lawrence, Massachusetts, carried placards saying "We Want Bread and Roses Too." Nearly 90 years later, the Service Employees International Union, who co-sponsored the screening, hopes that this "Bread and Roses" will inspire others to take action and be confident of victory. Of course, it is anyone's guess when this film will arrive in



Britain, however it may appear at some of the regional film festivals which usually occur over the summer and autumn periods, leading up to the London Film Festival, so it may be possible to catch it. If *Socialist Appeal* hears of any such screenings we will post the information on our website.

Steve Jones

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## ← Evans' view

**ROBIN HOOD**  
STEALS FROM THE RICH - GIVES TO THE POOR.

I am a poor peasant, Robin-

-yet the great Lord Levy pays less tax than I.

He claims that "tax" is for nailing tapestries up - and hides his gold on faraway islands.

Is this ethics Robin?

No. This is "sleese". Their "ethics" is Chelmsford way, so the Bishops tell us!

JEFFERSON



# “They need some bombing!”

## **Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis**

Edited by Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman  
Pluto Press. ISBN 0 7453 1631 X  
Price: £14.99, 256 Pages

Over the last year Socialist Appeal has carried a number of articles on the Balkans conflict which have challenged the official interpretation of events. This is also considered in depth by a number of the contributors to “Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis.” Although, as the title suggests, this book deals mainly with the role and actions of the media, it does start with a consideration of the conflict itself. Diana Johnstone explains how the Clinton regime sought to use Kosovo as an excuse to justify the continued existence of Nato, on its 50th anniversary, and the bill that went with it: “Corporate America was well aware of the importance of Nato as a source of long-term, guaranteed profits. US Congressmen had been heavily lobbied by a special ‘US Committee to Expand Nato’, presided over by Lockheed’s chief executive.” (page 9)

Several of the contributors comment on the way in which the Rambouillet agreement negotiations were fixed by the US so that they would collapse. As one US official quoted in this book put it: “We intentionally set the bar too high for the Serbs to comply. They need some bombing, and that is what they are going to get” (page 103).

The plan was to initiate a bombing war, with zero US casualties, which would show the world in general - and Russia in particular - who was now boss. Serbia was identified by Washington as a suitable target who could be demonised and turned into the “enemy”. In that sense, as Diana Johnstone notes, Kosovo was not a problem but a solution. The KLA was whipped up and painted in glowing terms by Nato and the world’s press, all their misdemeanours strangely forgotten. Suddenly the newspapers were full of stories about Serbian war crimes and lurid accounts of mass graves, pogroms and terrible massacres. The ground was being prepared for the selling of the concept of the so-called “humanitarian war.” Needless to say most of the figures of those killed were subsequently proven to be wild over-estimates.

The grand Nato plan was to use the KLA on the ground to engage the Serb forces, drawing them out so that the bombers could

get to them, although in no way did the USA actually support the separatist aims of the KLA and certainly did not want to see a “Greater Albania”. However, as the conflict started to drag on, it became more and more obvious that this would not work. At that point it was decided that the inflicting of “collateral damage” i.e. the striking of civilian targets was the only way forward. In other words using bombing for its main historical role, that of mass terror.

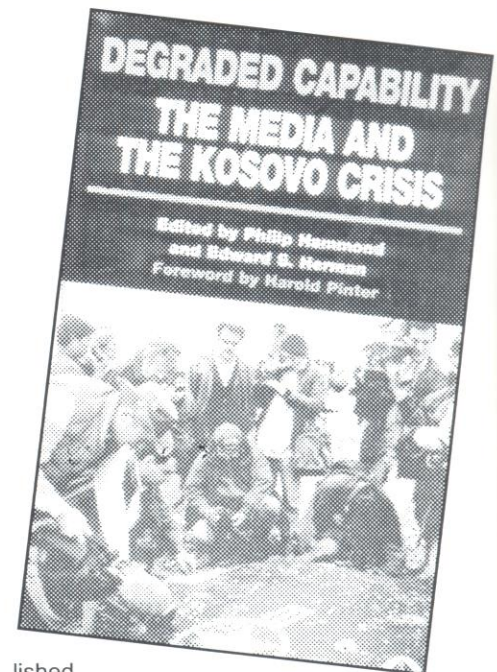
Of course with this the handling of the world’s media now became very critical. Nato understood that it was essential to avoid an adverse reaction to their efforts to bomb Serbia into the ground.

As the book’s introduction describes, it had started with the reworking of the English language. Alongside “Ethical Foreign Policy” we were treated to reports whereby “Soldiers are called ‘peace-keepers’, deliberately destroyed infrastructure and dead civilians are called ‘collateral damage’, and the occupation of part of a sovereign state by Nato troops and United Nations administrators is referred to as ‘liberation’.”

John Pilger reminds us that only a year earlier the US ambassador to the Balkans, Richard Holbrooke, had described Milosevic as “a man we can do business with, a man who recognises the realities of life in former Yugoslavia.” Now he was a “maniac.”

By and large the Western press accepted all this uncritically and added to it. Pro-Nato commentators and “experts” were allowed to dominate the reportage of the press and television and any reporters who did not stick to the line were soundly trashed by the representatives of Nato and their friends. Even some on the Left abandoned a class position in their rush to “take sides”

However this book notes that this conformity did not exist in all countries. In Greece the opposition to the bombing was massive, one poll giving a 98.6% figure against, with daily anti-war demonstrations throughout the country. Although some of the press supported Nato, many journalists - reflecting the pressure from below - were able to speak out against the conflict. Similar opposition was raised in newspapers pub-



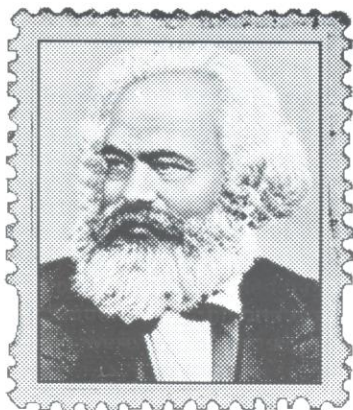
lished in Russia and India, albeit for very specific reasons.

Several times the question is asked: why was the press not only prepared to repeat the Nato lies but enthusiastically add to them to the point where it seemed they were pushing Nato not the other way round? The answer lies in the issue of ownership. The Western press may prattle on about being “free” but in reality they are nothing of the sort. They are totally dominated by wealthy multinational companies. Linked together by a thousand threads they reflect the interests of the ruling class and their representatives. As journalists like John Pilger discovered - put a view which the bosses don’t like and you will soon find the doors being shut. The power of the press cannot only be used to shape the views of the general population, it can also be used to put pressure on those at the top to toe the line.

Since the end of the bombing campaign the Western press has largely fallen quiet over the Balkans. Meanwhile, all the Kosovan refugees, welcomed here a year ago in a blaze of publicity, are quietly and quickly being forced back home. No-one wants to show the aftermath of this war in case questions are asked. “Degraded Capability” deserves to be read by all those interested in the realities of the new world order, that is to say, as this very useful book puts it, “the world as ordered by the United States.”

Steve Jones





# MAIL

## CORRESPONDENCE

Socialist Appeal, PO Box 2626,  
London N1 7SQ.  
e-mail: [appeal@socialist.net](mailto:appeal@socialist.net)



Dear Comrades,

In 1968 I was one of the national leaders of the Young communist League. I used to have many ding-dong arguments with Alan Woods and other "Trots" and did everything I could to undermine them.

I was very pleased with our efforts in producing the "Cogito" article on Leon Trotsky. "That will shut them up!" I said. Then they produced "Lenin and Trotsky. What They Really Stood For". I read and re-read it.

The careful, honest presentation of the historical facts and political arguments led me to become a wholehearted supporter of the Marxist tendency now embodied in *Socialist Appeal*.

Please send me a replacement for my worn out copy!

Yours fraternally,  
Jim Brookshaw, YCL chairman 1968.



Dear comrades,

In April, you had published the online version of 'Vietnam 1945 the derailed revolution' ([www.marxist.com/Asia/vietnam1945.html](http://www.marxist.com/Asia/vietnam1945.html)) in which many salutary lessons for today worker's struggle had been drawn out. Ironically, while being lectured about history of VCP (vietnamese communist party), students never heard about that. 'They' are, of course, incapable of rewriting the history but capable of disguising the real lessons and of painting a rosy picture of history! For students and many others, history of VCP in the 1940s-1950s is extremely vague. We never heard of any purge of Trotskyists and the exact events that occurred those days are unknown. And they praised any Ho Chi Mihn's manipulations that time. In people's eyes, HCM was a great leader without any tiny trace of taint. After I read your article, I had questioned myself why such lessons never existed in any maner in the VCP or in any history textbooks and why 'they' continue cover-

ing up this period. Thanks for your analyse of VCP from a profoundly marxism standpoint and I think the lesson that we must learn at the very beginning was untaught and may be never be.

I'm a student in Vietnam and I frequently visit your site to read analysis and study online both uptodate materials and classic, theory sections.

The online book Reason in Revolt had really great impact on me. However, in my opinion, your online books are still quite difficult to browse since readers must download each separated chapters of the books which they wish to study. It is much easier if you organise a download section (zip file of complete books) next to your current content page of every book (like your national question document-in .doc or .htm). And readers just download and unzip (unzip tools are now very popular and easy to use) the whole books for offline studying. It really make less time to access the each chapter. Though you buy-books-online section is already available, in many regions like Vietnam there is almost no way to do payments. Finally, why don't you publish books and other contents in CDs for delivering to remote contries and offer some limited free CDs.

In solidarity!

Comradely,  
TL, Vietnam



Dear Comrades:

Just wanted to alert you to the fact that some links in your site don't work. Otherwise, everything works well, and the website is a treasure chest!

Meanwhile, thanks for the great article about Putin, Rasputin and Kerensky. Alan Woods does an excellent job revealing how weak Putin really is, in spite of his nationalist pomp and predilection for dictatorship. A little man without a real plan, just enough power to torment and exploit the temporary decision for his own benefit. It's

interesting that two media moguls are in the spotlight, vying for power. It's as if the perceptions of the Russian people are the prize in a shell game between the two factions.

The media is in the spotlight in this country, too. Mr Woods articles are ever more valuable to Americans since our media is quickly being gobbled up by a few right wing monopolists, who are determined to turn our so-called free press (remember the cries of liberal bias?) into entertainment fit only for mindless sycophants.

There is one thing I'd like to mention about the US economy, which although is faltering, hasn't hit the wall as of yet. In my experience, during the interim before national elections (our four-year cycle of catharsis) the government usually pumps huge amounts of new dollars into the economy to make sure that things stay cool until after the election. If at all possible, they will keep the fissures in the economy a secret until after the election, when the American people will then pay through the nose for all these sins of excess and duplicity.

The situation's going to get worse before it gets better, so we'll have to rely more and more on the net and political analysts like yourselves, so keep doin' what you're doin'!

Thanks,

Eric S.  
US

### What do our readers think?

What is your opinion about the articles in

*Socialist Appeal* and  
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Send your comments to:  
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# Stay on Target!

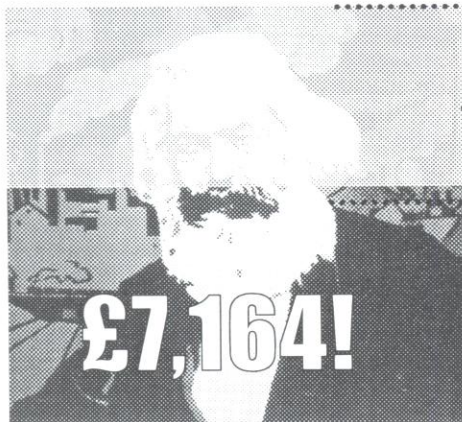
**W**ell it looks like the honeymoon period for Blair and New Labour is well and truly over. The hammering he got from the reactionary hordes of the W.I.-and that will teach him to think that he could go and appeal to that lot of Stepford Wives -will be as nothing to what is coming from the ranks of the Labour and trade union movement. The National Policy Forum meeting taking place this coming July will be dominated by opposition amendments, many of which may get passed on to the annual Labour Party conference at Brighton in the autumn. So much for the grand Millbank plan to stifle all criticism of the actions of the government. Another focal point will be the conference called by Tribune and others at the TUC HQ,

Congress House, London on Saturday July 15th., which should attract a number of activists. The mood at the various union conferences has shown what can be expected. Things are hotting up and Socialist Appeal will be there providing analysis and pointing the way forward. But in order to raise the red flag of socialism we need your help. We can only move forward if we have the necessary cash and our only source is from the pockets of working class people prepared to back Marxist ideas. We certainly need the cash judging by the size of the phonebill that has just popped through our door!

As at the middle of June we have raised £1170.26 towards our 6 month target of £6000. Added to the £5993.62 raised in the first half of the year this represents £7163.88 towards the grand £13000 target to be reached by the end of October. So we have a long way to go and much work to be done -nearly £6000 to be raised in just over 4 months. But it can be done if every

supporter does their bit. Look at what you can give yourself then look at what other readers could add to it.

Special thanks to all those delegates to this years union conferences who have either pledged or donated some of their conference expenses money. Keep it coming! This money helps ensure that union delegates are able to get their copy of Socialist Appeal at the conferences each year. Naturally we hope that as many of these activists as possible will go on not only to subscribe but also look at taking out a bulk order to sell at their workplace or union branch. Contact us on 020 7 251 1094 or in writing to PO Box 2626, London N1 7SQ if you are interested in selling Socialist Appeal. You can start with just a small order of a few copies so why not give it a go. Thanks also to Ian Illet (£10), Leicester readers (£10), G Halling (£5), West London readers (£50), Vic from IOW (£2), E Donaghy (£25) and others. Please add to this by sending what you can to the above address -it all counts. ☆



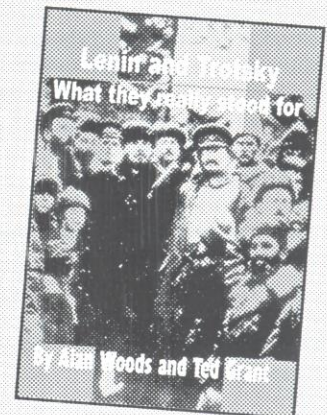
..... → £13,000

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year this represents £7163.88 towards the grand £13000 target to be reached by the end of October. So we have a long way to go and much work to be done -nearly £6000 to be raised in just over 4 months. But it can be done if every



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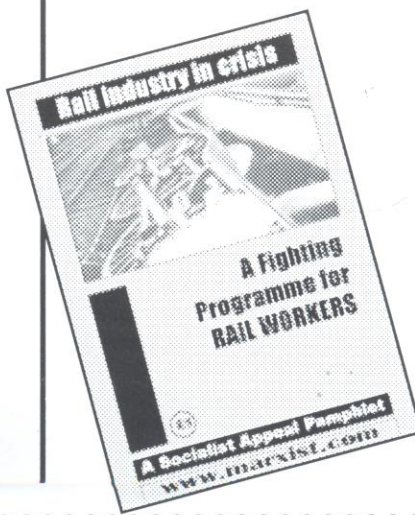
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# Socialist Appeal

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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.

☆ **Full employment!** No redundancies. The right to a job or decent benefits. For a 32 hour week without loss of pay. No compulsory overtime. For voluntary retirement at 55 with a decent full pension for all.

☆ **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.

☆ **A fully funded and fully comprehensive education system under local democratic control.** Keep big business out of our schools and colleges. Free access for all to further and higher education. Scrap tuition fees. No to student loans. For a living grant for all over 16 in education or training.

☆ **The outlawing of all forms of discrimination.** Equal pay for equal work. Invest in quality childcare facilities available to all. Scrap all racist immigration and asylum controls. Abolish the Criminal Justice Act.

☆ **The repeal of all Tory anti-union laws.** Full employment rights for all from day one. For the right to strike, the right to union representation and collective bargaining. Election of all trade union officials with the right of recall. No official to receive more than the wage of a skilled worker.

☆ **The reversal of the Tories' cuts in the health service.** Abolish private health care. For a National Health Service, free to all at the point of need, based on the nationalisation of the big drug companies that squeeze their profits out of the health of working people.



☆ **Reclaim the Labour Party!** Defeat Blairism! Fight for Party democracy and socialist policies. For workers' MPs on workers' wages.

☆ **The abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords.** Full economic powers for the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, enabling them to introduce socialist measures in the interests of working people. ☆ No to sectarianism. For a Socialist United Ireland linked by a voluntary federation to a Socialist Britain.

☆ **Break with the anarchy of the capitalist free market.** Labour to immediately take over the "commanding heights of the economy." Nationalise the big monopolies, banks and financial institutions that dominate our lives. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of need. All nationalised enterprises to be run under workers control and management and integrated through a democratic socialist plan of production.

☆ **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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*Socialist Appeal supporters are at the forefront of the fight to commit the Labour government to introduce bold socialist measures. We are campaigning on the above programme as the only solution for working people. Why not join us in this fight? For more details:*

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