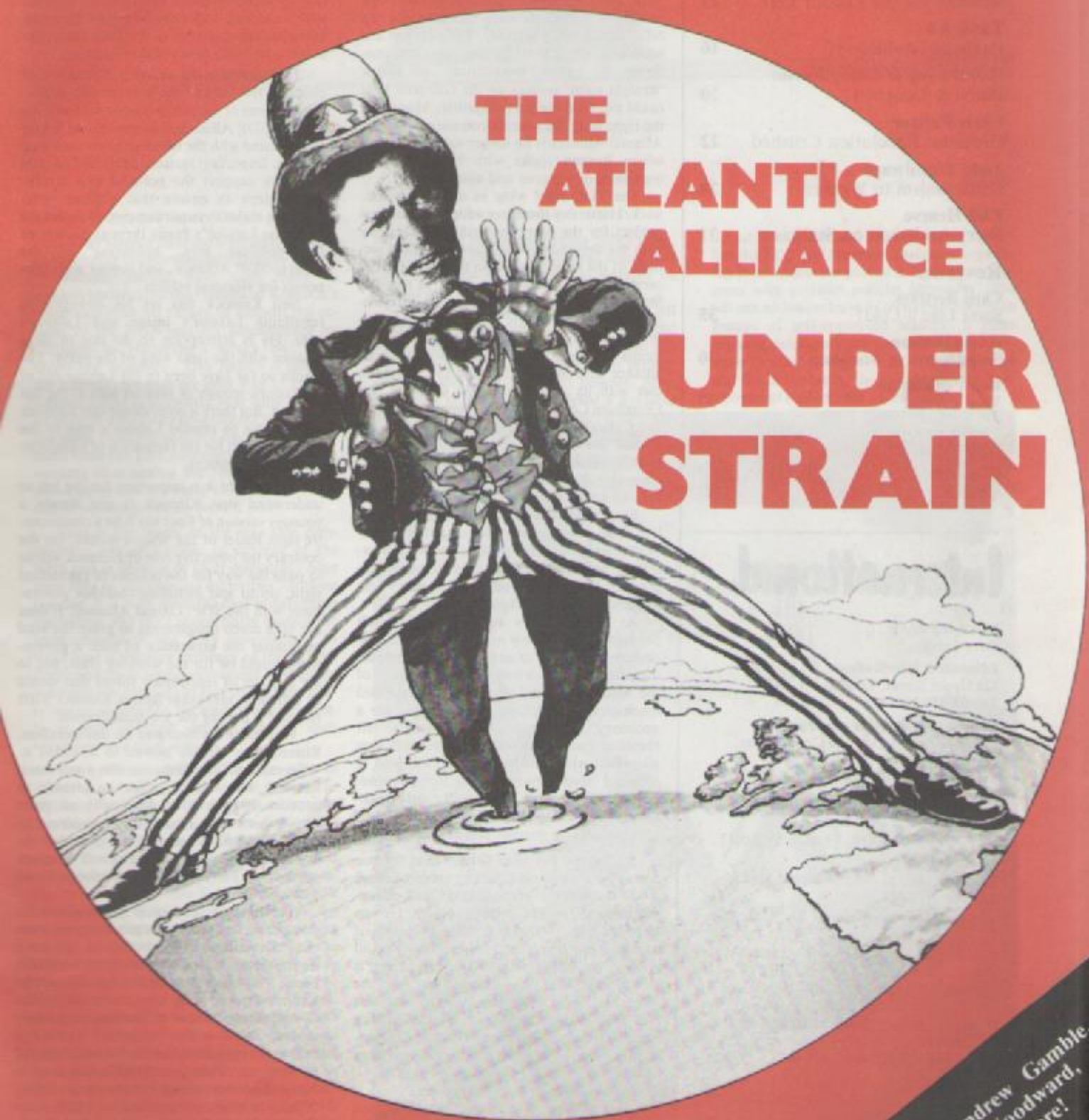


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International



THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE UNDER STRAIN

INSIDE
Ken Livingstone, Andrew Gamble,
Tariq Ali, Jude Woodward,
John Ross and more!

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Editorial

TALKING LEFT — ACTING RIGHT

Reviewing Kinnock's first fifty days in *A Week in Politics*, jovial right winger Austen Mitchell put it this way: 'I like Neil Kinnock. He talks left, and acts right. And that's just what's needed.' We couldn't have put it better, Austen. The basic sympathies of the party rank and file remain Bennite (witness the results of the conference elections for the NEC constituency section). The political and economic crisis that fuelled Bennism continues to gather momentum, so classic 'straight right' politics of the Gaitskell kind could not hold the party together. Moreover, the right wing old guard's commitment to the Atlantic Alliance is no longer valid in a world where Reagan stalks with hobnail boots, trampling on enemies and allies alike.

The TUC right wing in opting for Kinnock/Hattersley therefore adopted a political project for the party leadership in harmony with the demands of the more farsighted sections of the ruling class than the Foot/Healey caretakerism. The project seeks to recentre the party on Europe and above all on European capital. Old-style Atlanticism, in which Britain held onto its dwindling imperial conquests by means of its military and financial alliance with Washington and the Pentagon met with its comeuppance in Grenada and Greenham Common. The difference in fate of Jim Callaghan — howled down at conference — and Denis Healey shows just how important it will be for aspiring right wingers to learn this lesson and incorporate a realistic dose of anti-Americanism into their rhetoric.

But this shift is in no sense a move to the left. True, it has involved acceptance of many of the right wing's former anathemas. For example, Neil Kinnock's talk of mass campaigning must have stuck in the gullet of many who rejoiced at Peter Tatchell's fate.

As to the *policy content* of this 'left phraseology' it is only necessary to study the objective situation to understand that preparing a fullscale attack on policy, a deepening of the witch hunt, and above all an extended ideological preparation for coalition, are a necessary counterpart to Kinnock's left rhetoric. Indeed, anyone who believes that alignment with European *capital* will lead to leftward developments in the labour movement need only look at the evolution of Mitterrand and Soares and the effects of their governments on popular consciousness.

Mitterrand has gone further than anyone would have dreamed possible: arming France to the teeth, rushing troops into Chad, clamping down a vicious austerity policy. He has presided over the most extreme outbreak of mass racism in recent French history. And there is a simple reason: European capital is being crushed by the economic war with the USA. It follows that every move to centralise the EEC has the purpose of intensifying austerity and exploitation, regaining the advantage against US capital by compensatory superexploitation of European workers.

What is true for France, whose economy is far the weakest in Europe, is doubly and trebly true for Britain. Economic survival for a capitalist Britain — whether on a Lon-

don/Washington axis or a London/Paris/Bonn axis — demands the most draconian attacks on living standards, a vicious strong state, and maximum use of Britain's military and nuclear bargaining counters to ensure a protective umbrella stays over precious overseas investments. Finally, such measures, under conditions of the continuing decline and crisis of the Tory Party, demand a *radically* new political formula.

This explains the growing discussion of electoral reform and the backing that important sections of the ruling class now give to the Liberal/SDP Alliance. Labour can no longer be entrusted with the office of government on its own. Important sections of the ruling class therefore support the political and institutional steps to ensure that Labour never regains a majority in parliament: these include attacking Labour's funds through reform of the political levy, bolstering of the Liberal/SDP Alliance, and toying with proposals for electoral reform.

Neil Kinnock has set his objective as rebuilding Labour's image and Labour's vote. He is attempting to do this in close alliance with the right wing of the party. The results so far have been to lift Labour out of the historic trough of support seen at the last election. But there is no evidence that Kinnock will be able to rebuild Labour's vote to the level sufficient for the formation of a majority Labour government.

In this light it is important for the left to understand that Kinnock is not simply a younger version of Foot nor is he a classic centre right leader of the Wilson mould. On the contrary the objective role of Kinnock will be to pave the way for the policies of the radical right, up to and including coalition government with the SDP/Liberal Alliance. It does not take much imagination to grasp the kind of disaster the experience of such a government would be for the working class, not to see the type of reactionary forces that would be behind its inevitable failure. Kinnock's left rhetoric is part of the job qualification.

Whereas Foot hesitated on unilateralism, Kinnock has already moved to abandon it. Whereas Foot set limits on the witch hunt, Kinnock has made it clear he intends to broaden it to include potentially all those whose views on parliamentary democracy he disagrees with. Whereas Foot defended the notion of Labour as a 'broad church' Kinnock argues for a party excluding both the SDP and the 'hard' left.

The Kinnock leadership will combine the surgical methods of the witch hunt, with the clinical methods of ideological poison to isolate the most consistent socialists within the party. The latter is to be the function of the Labour Coordinating Committee led by the ex-student politicians of the inappropriately named Clause 4. Their objective is to win a base in the constituencies for Kinnock's brand of 'realism'. They got off to a fine start in November with the call for the party to drop 'Clause 4' from its constitution. It is more likely than not that they will be handed control of *New Socialist* to facilitate this opera-



Neither better, nor fairer

tion. They already have multiple links with the campaigning coalitionists of *Marxism Today*.

Nothing should have done more to awaken socialists to the realities of Kinnock's leadership than his failure to support the actions of the NGA and his acquiescence by omission in Hattersley's attack on 'trade union law breakers'. This failure is suicidal for Labour, because the only way to rebuild Labour's vote to anywhere near what is needed to form a majority government is to deliver the most crushing possible riposte to the attacks from the Tory government. Unity of the working class against the Tories has to come above unity with the party's right wing. There can be no compromises on this point.

That is the lesson of the way that campaigning against Cruise, in defence of the NHS and in defence of local democracy have been able to win popular majorities for these policies. It is even more the case in defending the unions and the Labour Party against the legal assaults of the Tory government. At stake here is the very existence of the Labour Party and trade union movement as they are presently constituted. In fact the Labour Party was established by the trade unions precisely as part of their defence against such legislative and legal attacks.

For Labour and the TUC right wing to stand by and allow the Tories to destroy the rights of the NGA on the grounds of 'respect for the law' will be the greatest disaster the labour movement has suffered for many years. The left wing of the labour movement must grasp the full breadth and significance of this threat. Namely that Kinnock is incapable of rebuilding Labour and at best is the prisoner of a right wing, intent on destroying all obstacles on its path to agreement with the Liberal/SDP Alliance. Chief amongst those obstacles is the left itself, however friendly or conciliatory it is to the dream ticket. Everything that has happened since the 1983 Labour Party conference brings home one clear message: the left must organise to defend the Labour Party and its radical policies. The left must organise to ensure that unions like the NGA and women like those at Greenham do not fight alone. It must organise to defend the rights of socialists within the party and

must organise to defend existing policy gains, and to extend them in those areas where they have been proven bankrupt — notably on Ireland and the economy.

A whole phase of the growth of the left wing of the labour movement came to an end with the general election. The left did not win a left leadership, nor was it able to prevent sabotage and fudging of left policies. Most important of all Labour suffered a stunning

defeat. The right and former left renegades like the LCC and *Marxism Today* are organising to abandon the goal of a Labour government with socialist policies altogether. The left can no longer leave its own organisation to groups of self-appointed leaders. It must organise democratically and in a way to maximise its chief strength — its base in the rank and file of the party, the unions and the mass movement against this government.

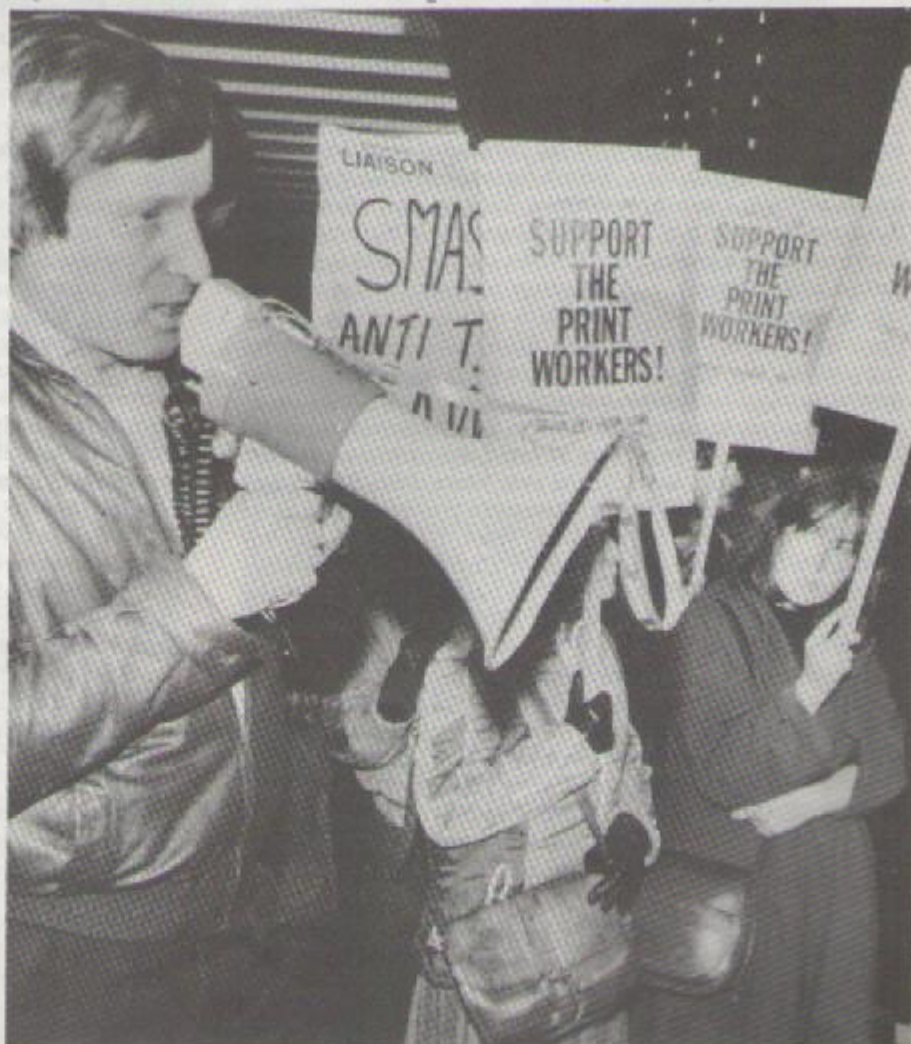


Photo: GM COOKSON

International Features

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

ANDREW GAMBLE

Anti-Americanism is on the order of the day since the invasion of Grenada. Even Denis Healey has joined in.

Andrew Gamble assesses 200 years of the 'special relationship' between Britain and the USA since the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783.

'These two great organisations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. For my own part, looking out upon the future, I do not view the process with any misgivings. I could not stop it if I wished: no-one can stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days.'

Winston Churchill, August 1940.

The Peace of Paris

Two hundred years ago on 3 September 1783 the Peace of Paris was signed, bringing to an end the war between the American colonies and Britain. Aided by the intervention of France and Spain the rebel colonists had won a complete victory. An independent United States free from the despotism of Crown and Parliament was born and British imperial expansion appeared to have received a decisive check.

But although this defeat in the New World was a severe reverse and a great humiliation for the landed oligarchy which controlled the British state, British fortunes were soon repaired by the victories against Napoleonic France, and still more by the dramatic growth of its industrial power. British expansion was resumed on a grander and broader scale. By 1883 the loss of Britain's 'first empire' had been overshadowed by the acquisition of a second, the empire on which the sun never sets, and by the quite novel position which the British state had come to occupy within the capitalist world economy as a result of the development of large-scale industry.

1783 comes towards the close of the mercantilist era of British policy at the beginning of rapid industrialisation. One hundred years later, in 1883, the year Marx died, Britain had reached the peak of its power; American power was still in its infancy. The previous hundred years had seen an unprecedented leap forward in world productive forces, a widening and deepening of the world division of labour and the beginnings of a profound social and economic revolution whose consequences are still reverberating around the globe. The capitalist world economy which had been developing ever since the sixteenth century was now established as the dominant material force throughout the world. It had begun to incorporate every nation, every territory, every community, and every resource into the ceaseless drive to accumulate capital.

By 1983 the relative positions of Britain and America had been transformed. Britain's second empire was already a memory apart from a clutch of islands and dependencies spread across the globe. Britain no longer ranked as a major world power and the relative decline of its economy had further undermined its remaining pretensions to great power status. Britain had become heavily dependent on the United States and subordinate to its former colony on all important questions. The United States had replaced Britain as the leading military

force, the economic powerhouse, and the financial centre of the world economy.

Throughout these last two hundred years, the era of world capitalism, the relationship between Britain and America has been central to an understanding of the dynamics of the world economy and the system of imperialism. One of the key conditions for accumulation of capital on an expanding scale is the existence of one state powerful enough and willing enough to assume responsibility for maintaining the system in existence. In a world where no global sovereign power exists some alternative arrangements must be found for policing the world economy, for ensuring a stable medium of exchange, as well as maintaining orderly flows of capital, goods, and labour.

These 'state' functions for the capitalist world economy were performed mostly by Britain up to 1914, and have been performed mostly by the United States since 1945. What is so striking about the relations between the two countries during the last two hundred years is that apart from brief and inconclusive hostilities at the end of the Napoleonic wars and occasional moments of tension such as the Venezuela crisis of 1895/6, they have never clashed militarily or seemed likely to do so. The eclipse of British power by its former colony has been accomplished without an armed struggle.

The readiness of Britain's rulers to relinquish their position of dominance in favour of the United States is a fundamental and little explored aspect of twentieth century politics. Some have detected an 'Anglo-Saxon' conspiracy and stress the bonds of culture, kinship and language. But bonds of sentiment have been cheerfully cast aside when the central interests of either nation have been at stake. What has to be explained is why the dominant groups within both ruling classes came to recognise a common interest in maintaining a close political relationship. It is a complex story and only an outline of some of the key factors can be provided here.

The American Revolution

The revolt of the American colonists against British rule was at one level a simple dispute over the authority of the British Crown to levy taxes on its colonists. According to eighteenth century mercantilist notions the colonies were so many overseas landed estates and were expected to augment the national wealth of the metropolitan country. Trade and shipping with them were rigidly controlled and the colonists were expected to contribute in taxes to the costs of maintaining the policies of overseas expansion. The national debt had increased enormously as a result of the major wars with France between 1740 and 1763, and British citizens in England were taxed much more heavily than those in the colonies.

Like so many revolutions therefore the immediate cause of the American revolution was fiscal. The ultimate power of any state depends on its ability to raise taxes. In a bourgeois society if the citizens challenge the authority of the state to collect taxes they strike at its very existence. In rejecting this authority of the British Parliament to tax them, however, the American colonists went much further, asserting universal doctrines of the rights of man, in order to justify their rejection of British sovereignty. What began as a petty dispute over taxes broadened into a general attack on the legitimacy of a government that was not directly answerable to its citizens. The revolt of the American colonists became one of the major bourgeois revolutions of the modern era, producing some of the classic statements of liberal ideology.

The radicalism of the American Revolution is not at all welcome to many modern American historians. Many of them find it irksome that the American Revolution should so often be linked to the French revolution, because the latter is so strongly associated with the Terror and with radical social and political upheaval. But the upheaval in the American colonies

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American colonists throw overboard taxed tea in the famous Boston Tea Party

was also intense — there were more emigres in proportion to the population than in France, more property was confiscated, and the emigre elements did not return. American society, with the major exception of the slave-owning landed property of the Southern states, was purged of those elements that might have put a break on the development of the economic and social relationships necessary for capital accumulation.

Even before the Revolution the United States had a purer kind of individualist bourgeois civil society than any of the European countries where pre-capitalist ideological social and economic influences and institutions were still so strong.

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the authority of the state to collect taxes they
strike at its very existence

This is what those politicians in England like Edmund Burke who oppose British policy towards the American colonies could never understand. Burke argued that the way to preserve the link between Britain and the colonies in America was the British and the colonies in America was the way for the British parliament to abandon its rights to tax, while maintaining the all important right to shipping, trade, and external policy. This solution was similar to the one that had been pursued in Britain's other major problem colony — Ireland. But the essential difference, as some of the American revolutionaries were quick to point out, was that Ireland was a conquered country, British rule was maintained there by force, and the relative autonomy given to Ireland to manage its own affairs was not given to the Irish but to the tiny class of Anglo-Irish landowners.

What Burke and the English Whigs could not recognise was

the unrepresentativeness of the English Parliament. British political institutions have often received lavish praise but this was particularly strong in the eighteenth century. One writer even described the British constitution at that time as 'without doubt the most perfect form of human government that ever was devised by human wisdom.' The tiny size of the electorate (only 250,000), and the corruption and anomalies of the system (5723 persons chose half the members of the House of Commons) were brushed aside. The degree of real liberty to all classes and the degree of protection to the interests of the landowners were recommendation enough. One of the chief reasons the British sought to coerce the American colonists was precisely because they perceived it as a democratic movement. As General Gage noted during the agitation over the Stamp Act: 'It is to be feared that the spirit of democracy is strong among them.'

The independence which the colonists already enjoyed and the remoteness from London was what made coercion on an Irish scale impractical. By the 1770s the argument had already moved on. There was no means short of coercion by which the British Parliament could have retained control over its American colonies. This was seen perfectly clearly by all the English radicals, who were fighting the despotism of Parliament in England itself. They immediately championed the American cause. Tom Paine, arriving in America just before the declaration of Independence, wrote his famous pamphlet *Common Sense*, which quickly became the most popular and influential indictment of the despotic rule of the British Crown and the British Parliament. For radicals like Paine there appeared at this time no fundamental conflict between their support for mass political participation and the expansion of market relationships. Paine's radicalism was the radicalism of the independent artisans and was directed at the power of the great landed proprietors. For Paine the greatest evils to be swept away were the hereditary privileges of the monarchy and

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Cartoon of Tom Paine by James Gillray, 1791

the aristocracy. These were the major obstacles to a society of independent, self-reliant individuals free both to exchange and to choose who should govern them. The reforms which the English radicals wished to enact in Britain were the ones they saw being triumphantly carried through in America. This was why America acquired such a hold over the radical imagination which it has never entirely lost.

Free Trade Imperialism

The American Revolution was like a beacon to the growing revolutionary movement in Europe, and helped disseminate the new universalist ideology of rights, liberty, and equality. The American Republic existed as a reproach to the dynasties of absolutist Europe and the Old Corruption of England. It was an important example and spur to the French Revolution. But it remained largely a political revolution. It secured the exceptionally free and egalitarian civil society that had developed in America, but it did not make America the pioneer of industrial capitalism. Despite the unrepresentativeness of British political institutions the crucial acceleration in the accumulation of capital took place in Britain. During a period of intense social reaction and domestic repression of the radical movement the foundations of the first major industrial capitalism were created. The loot Britain had gained from overseas wars, colonies, and trade — vast as it was — came to seem paltry in comparison to the quite unprecedented stream of wealth that flowed from the foul drain of Manchester.

The dominance of Britain in the world was established on a quite different foundation from its earlier power which had been based on British industries over all others throughout the world permitted the development of a new international division of labour and a network of economic relations which subordinated foreign nations to Britain often without direct resort to physical coercion. Free trade not protected trade became the new rallying call of the British Parliament. As one MP put it so simply in the 1846 debate on the repeal of the foreign nations would become valuable colonies to us without

reposing on us the responsibility of governing them'.

America was crucial to this policy of free trade imperialism. Economic relations between Britain and America did not cease after the colonies broke away. They grew enormously. America became a major wheel of the new world economy which industrialisation in Britain brought into existence. The flows of goods, of capital, and of labour occurred on a colossal scale. America was developed by huge infusions of British capital, initially to provide many of the raw materials for British factories as well as the food necessary to reproduce the urban working class at the lowest possible cost. America at the same time provided major markets for British manufactures and was the chief destination for British emigrants. Between 1820 and 1910 a staggering 13 million people emigrated from Britain to the United States.

American political institutions continued to attract support from liberal opinion in the UK and continued to be distrusted by conservatives. Americanising was already equated with democratising and vulgarising, so it is no surprise to find many of the Victorian critics of industrialism such as Ruskin, Carlyle, and Arnold, highly critical of the United States. They believed American democracy was undermining the principle of aristocracy and producing mediocrity and uniformity. But the freedom and openness of American politics and the extent of participation in American democracy still commanded wide respect among European liberals.

In the American civil war Britain remained neutral, opinion divided between the two sides. Radical opinion initially inclined towards the South, partly because of the strong tie of economic interest with the cotton planters, but more importantly because the issue was seen as the right of the southern states to national self-determination. When the issue became more clearly defined as anti-slavery, liberal opinion veered towards support for the North. If America had been perceived at that time as a greater threat to British interests Britain might have sought to intervene to promote an outcome that did lead to the break-up of the United States into two or more separate states — the policy it had traditionally followed in Europe.

The American Challenge

The period of free trade imperialism was ended by the rise of new imperialisms that could seriously rival Britain. Both Germany and the United States were rapidly industrialising by the 1880s and both imposed very high tariffs to protect their industries from British competition. Now the value to the United States of the political independence from Britain, which it had won a century earlier, was fully demonstrated. Britain's dominant position astride the world economy remained, buttressed by its enormous empire and by its undisputed dominance of shipping, finance, insurance and all the other services needed by the world economy. By 1914 Britain was easily the largest creditor nation in the world, and its overseas investments totalled £4000 million.

when Taylor sent his book on scientific management to a British engineering firm he received in return a copy of Horace's *Odes*

But the basis of this colossal edifice of power was rapidly undermined by the speed with which Germany and America first caught Britain up and then overtook her completely in many crucial industries like steel, as well as pioneering major new industries such as chemicals and automobiles. Britain's position began to look extremely precarious both militarily and economically and the first of the great outpourings of national introspection on decline began. German and American methods of production and selling began to be studied but were only gradually adopted. A typical British response was to label

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German and American goods as shoddy and second-rate, their sales methods as unseemly, and their work as ungentlemanly. British goods by contrast were quality goods made by craftsmen. Scientific management and the new methods for organising the labour process were derided. When Taylor sent a copy of his book on the principles of scientific management to a British engineering firm he received in return a copy of the owner's edition of Horace's *Odes*. Lack of investment by British capitalists in new manufacturing processes and methods was rarely cited as a factor in the success of Britain's new competitors. The greater power of trade unions in Britain compared to the United States however was soon being blamed for the failure of British firms to develop new products and new methods, and to keep costs down as successfully as the Americans.

Alongside the sudden eruption of the United States as a rising industrial power with a seemingly boundless potential due to its size and resources, came a major change in attitudes to the United States on both Right and Left. On the Left the focus on American democracy gave way to a focus on American capitalism. America as an example of advanced democratic institutions and republican virtues was replaced by America as the country of unbridled capitalism, where the logic of capital accumulation was most unfettered, where the tendency to concentration and centralisation of capital in giant trusts was strongest, where the gulf between rich and poor was most stark, where techniques of mass industrial production and the application of science to production were most highly developed. On the Right by contrast, which was coming to see the battle against democracy as lost, there was an increasing appreciation for the strengths of American institutions in effectively restraining the 'worst features' of democracy, the unfettered exercise of popular sovereignty. The conservative intentions of the authors of the Constitution were now much better appreciated.

Imperialist war

The First World War marked a decisive turning point in Anglo-American relations. Faced by the industrial and military challenge from both Germany and the United States, Britain was forced to choose whose claims should be contested. What had become very clear by 1900 was that Britain was quite incapable of taking on both its new rivals simultaneously and defeating them. The British government was informed by the Admiralty in 1900 that if it wanted to control the seas around the coasts of America it was essential that the neutrality of the European powers should be secured. Since the latter was so unlikely this advice implied that Britain must reach an accommodation with the United States, even if on a longer perspective the United States was a greater threat to Britain's power and position than Germany.

The logic of Britain's strategic position was laid out with considerable insight by Halford Mackinder, sometime geographer, prominent Unionist, Director of the LSE, and British Commissioner to the White forces in Odessa 1919-20. He argued that a secure island position, a sizeable population, and a fertile lowland plain, had allowed Britain to become the dominant naval power and to establish a world empire. But this power would be threatened if at any time a land-based military power arose centred on the 'Heartland' of Eurasia. Such a state would be invulnerable to sea power yet could press outwards to seize the 'islands and peninsulars' of Eurasia ('the World-Island'). Mackinder considered that Britain's permanent strategic interest was to ensure that Europe and Asia remained divided between a number of regimes and that Britain retained its monopoly of sea power.

Britain went to war with Germany in 1914 because Germany was intent not merely on expansion within Europe and the creation of a land-based empire, but also because Germany was building a battle fleet to directly contest British control of the seas. Both sides expected the war to be brief; no-one was

prepared for the total mobilisation and military stalemate that ensued. The direct beneficiary was the United States, because Britain was forced into ever closer dependence on the United States to maintain its war effort. The Americans also took full advantage of the struggle to mop up British markets in Latin America, while the forced sale of British assets and overseas investments contributed to the emergence of New York as the leading financial centre in the world economy.

America was now a major creditor nation for the first time. The late entry of America into the war clinched victory for the British and French, and confirmed the United States as the new economically dominant power in the world economy. But America was clearly unprepared politically to play a world role and displace Britain. It preferred to remain isolationist. A confused interregnum ensued during which Britain attempted and failed to reconstruct the world monetary system around sterling and gold.

After Germany's defeat and Russia's departure from the capitalist world economy there seemed every prospect of a further contest between Britain and the United States to complete America's rise to world power. Trotsky confidently predicted this in the 1920s. It never materialised. America still had to fight to obtain supreme world power, but the wars were to be against a revived Germany and an expansionist Japan. Although the potential for a major war against Britain existed it was averted by the readiness of the British to concede American claims and accept the dependence of Britain upon the United States. This was already apparent straight after the First World War. Not only had the United States emerged from the war as a major creditor nation and the world's leading industrial economy, it also refused to limit the size of its fleet. Britain was forced to surrender its traditional principle that the British fleet



Neville Chamberlain returns from Munich waving the document which bought a few months peace at the cost of a German occupation of Czechoslovakia

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should always be as large as the fleets of its two most important rivals combined.

Why should the British have conceded their world power so tamely? The answer is that the only alternative to some accommodation with the Americans was to organise a unified and protected Empire in the German manner, as Joseph Chamberlain and the Social Imperialists urged. Such an alternative would have necessitated reaching an understanding with Germany in order to counterbalance American power. It would have made an eventual armed conflict between Britain and the United States more likely. But this alternative was only tried for a time and then half-heartedly during the 1930s after the gold standard had collapsed. Against this idea of independent economic blocs there were powerful currents of opinion in Britain and the United States which argued that Britain's permanent strategic interest would continue to be served if the role was transferred to the United States. The United States would inherit the mantle of sea power and the responsibility for maintaining the political order of the capitalist world economy. Britain would have a privileged but subordinate role which would allow considerable elements of British power to be preserved.

The American Ascendancy

The gradual conversion of opinion at all levels of the military and political apparatuses of both states can be traced through the first five decades of this century. But World War Two like the earlier conflict with Germany was the catalyst for the major shift. Neville Chamberlain who during the 1930s had helped orient British policy along the lines of Social Imperialism, also worked hard to achieve an understanding with Germany, precisely to avoid the kind of major war which he knew would destroy the basis of British power. Even after war was declared Chamberlain's instinct was to limit the conflict, to husband national resources, to ride out the storm. For a time there seems to have been a real chance of a negotiated peace with Germany in 1940.

The chances of such a peace were ended by Churchill's appointment to the Premiership and the formation of a Coalition Government to conduct the war, bringing Labour into Government. Churchill's oft-quoted remark that he had not become his Majesty's first minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire was the reverse of the truth, since his policy of all-out war necessarily involved all-out dependence on the Americans. The Americans gave the British as much credit as they wanted through Lend-Lease and the British war effort was soon inconceivable without American support. With the full entry of the Americans into the war the relative power of the United States and the British Empire was vividly displayed, and by the end of the war the American ascendancy was complete. Only the Soviet Union could approach American power. The British people celebrated victory but for the British Empire the outcome of the war was a major defeat. Britain could no longer retain empire except on terms agreed with the Americans.

Churchill's grandiose picture of a partnership between equals was belied immediately the war finished by the American insistence on harsh terms for continuation of the loans Britain needed to pay for essential imports of food and raw materials. In particular the Americans wanted early convertibility of sterling and an end to the system of imperial preference. They wanted complete liberalisation of the world capitalist economy — free movement of goods and capital, no protected spheres where American capital could not penetrate. In the state of the world in 1945 only Russia and later China were in a position to refuse American terms. Britain along with the defeated capitalist powers abandoned independence in its economic and foreign policies in return for inclusion in the new American-dominated world economy and military alliances: NATO, SEATO, IMF, and GATT — these were the new agencies which expressed and institutionalised American power. Within this context the British Empire withered away and Social Imperialism disappeared as a viable option on the Right of British

politics. Even Halford Mackinder gave his blessing to the new dispensation. Britain's future role, he wrote in 1945, was to be a 'moated aerodrome' for the United States in its struggle against the new heartland power — the Soviet Union.

The American connection in the post-war period has thus been of critical importance in shaping post-war policy and post-war politics in Britain. No account of British politics is complete which does not consider it, for this is where the real and most effective consensus between the parties has lain.

the acceptance of dependence on America has been enormously assisted in the last 40 years by the attitudes of the Labour Party

The Anglo-American relationship has continued to be special, particularly in defence and sterling. Britain has borne a disproportionately high defence burden within the Atlantic Alliance, and there has been an unusually close relationship between personnel at all levels. British overseas military spending and concentration of its research effort on military projects were significant factors in the relative decline of its economy. Similarly sterling was permitted by the Americans to remain as an international currency which helped accelerate the internationalisation of the leading sectors of British capital. These were burdens which the more successful states within the American world economy did not carry. Whenever Britain stepped out of line as at Suez in 1956, the true nature of the relationship between the two powers was starkly revealed, and as time went on so the special relationship was valued much more in London than in Washington.

The Weakening of US Hegemony

The acceptance of dependence on America has been enormously assisted in the last forty years by the attitudes of the Labour Party. This might seem surprising since the earlier enthusiasm of the British Left for American democracy had given way to criticism of American capitalism. In the 1930s there was concern that America might succumb to Fascism. Yet the Labour Party in the 1940s emerged as a staunch upholder of the Atlantic Alliance. Whereas the Conservatives with their imperialist traditions continued to have grave reservations about conceding too much to the United States and were anxious to continue to assert British interests, the Labour leadership from Attlee and Bevan through Gaitskell, Wilson, Brown, Jenkins, Callaghan and Healey has been solidly committed to the Atlantic Alliance and to the American connection with all that has meant in terms of domestic priorities and alternatives.

The explanation for this change can be traced partly to reactions to Roosevelt's New Deal, partly to the Cold War. The new Deal revived faith in American political institutions. Many Labour intellectuals like Laski saw it as a bold attempt to create a middle way between capitalism and socialism. It provided a bridge between liberal American intellectuals and Labour's emerging new leadership whose thought was so heavily influenced by Keynes and Beveridge. The New Deal tradition in American politics has exerted a powerful fascination for the British Labour leadership.

The second factor has been the Cold War and the successful mobilisation of all Western democratic forces against Soviet communism. This has had lasting consequences of a foreign policy consensus stretching from the American Right to the European Social Democrats. This combination of social reform and anti-communism have long been prominent features of Atlanticist ideology and have maintained American hegemony over its allies despite the shocks administered by the Vietnam War and the Nixon presidency.

Since the end of the 1960s however American power has weakened, its capacity to supply the kind of leadership it provided between 1945 and 1965 has declined, and this has been a

International Features

factor in the major economic and political crisis that engulfed Western capitalism in the 1970s. What the two major world recessions since 1974 have demonstrated so clearly, however, is that there can no longer be any simple return of the 1930s for Western capitalism or any revival of military conflict between the major capitalist nations. The last forty years has significantly increased the interdependence of the world economy and reduced the sovereignty of any single nation state and national economy and the freedom of manoeuvre of any national bourgeoisie. That is why the only serious alternative strategies for British capitalism which have been canvassed on the Right have been the Europeanist strategy of Heath and the Atlanticist strategy of Callaghan and Thatcher. The latter has been in the ascendancy since 1976. It has meant the recreation of the military aspects of the special relationship — as shown by British readiness to install Cruise. At the same time it has meant ensuring British economic policy conforms to the preferred monetarist strategy of the international financial markets and the central control organs of the world economy like the IMF.

There have been some recent strains in the relationship particularly over American protectionist moves over steel and the gas pipeline in the Soviet Union. There was also initially some conflict over the Falklands war since siding with Britain clearly endangered the whole Central American strategy and has brought closer direct American military involvement. Nevertheless American policy over the Falklands illustrates an important point. Even a Britain much shrunken in world power and relative economic importance is still of much greater significance for American global strategy than preserving a pro-American military regime in Latin America.

By 1983 the re-election of the Thatcher government had become an important objective of the Reagan administration, especially since the Labour Party for the first time since the war was showing signs of abandoning its Atlantic commitment. With Thatcher returned to power Britain's dependent client status has been confirmed, and the ties subordinating British policy to American interests have become stronger than ever.

The invasion of Grenada in October 1983 tested the loyalty of the Thatcher government to the utmost because British views were directly overridden. Yet despite being humiliated by its ally the Thatcher government refused publicly to condemn the American invasion or to vote against it in the UN Security Council. Government ministers kept reaffirming that maintaining the Atlantic Alliance was far too important to Britain to risk weakening it by condemning what the Americans had done. Grenada punctured the Falklands myth of Britain's revived power and showed that the Iron Lady was just another tin soldier. It exposed how weak Britain had become, how uninfluential, how subservient to American policy even when it disagreed with it.

It also showed the hollowness of Thatcher's Cold War rhetoric. She more than any other European leader has stoked up the anti-Soviet ideological crusade over Afghanistan, Poland, and the Korean airliner, and has given warm support to American desires to halt the spread of 'communism' in Central America and the Middle East. But when Reagan began acting to liberate the Caribbean and to threaten Nicaragua, Syria and Iran, Thatcher suddenly discovered virtue in the cautious, pragmatic low-key policies of the British Foreign Office, that nest of appeasers and traitors, which she had always so firmly despised.

But she is tied so firmly to the American juggernaut that she can do little but be pulled along in its dust. She has no means of escape except to press for a much stronger alignment with the European Community, a course which anti-Thatcher politicians from Heath to Owen advocate so strongly. That would be a shift of major dimensions in British policy and there are no signs that Thatcher has begun even to contemplate it. The special relationship is not over yet.

ANDREW GAMBLE is a lecturer at Sheffield University and author of *Britain in Decline*.

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NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR PARIS

JOHN ROSS

The British and European left must reject any strategic orientation towards unity with European imperialism against America, argued John Ross at International's recent Facing 1984 weekend event. He proposes instead a revolutionary socialist content for the slogan of Democratic Socialism.

If we want to understand what is going on in British politics, we must place immediate events within two fundamental processes: the first is the historic decline of the Conservative Party as the dominant party of the British state — a process I discuss in some detail in my book *Thatcher and Friends* (Pluto Press, 1983). The second is the increasing differentiation between Western Europe and the United States.

I don't mean to suggest that everything that happens in Britain is reducible to these two processes nor at all to downplay other elements of the world situation: indeed the continuing development of colonial revolution and the rising tension between the US and the Soviet Union are quite fundamental. What I am suggesting, however, is that these two elements I have outlined will be the decisive organising factors for the structure of British politics that socialists in Britain will have to operate in relation to for the next five, ten, even fifteen years. This, of course, also says something about the timescales involved. The last thing that I think we should expect is some very sudden, very sharp, fundamental confrontation between the bourgeoisie and working class of Britain. What we are faced with is a prolonged social and political crisis in which questions of long term strategy will be decisive.

The Decline of American Power

What links together recent events in Lebanon, Grenada, Sri Lanka, the Phillipines and the rise of the peace movement is the historic decline and counter-offensive of the United States — the great crisis of the US economy.

The world has never been made up of equally important states. In the nineteenth century it was dominated by the British Empire. Since 1918 the decisive element in international capitalist politics has been the rise to dominance of American imperialism, and since the 1960s its decline. The great reserves of the American economy allowed it to restabilise European capitalism after the First World War in 1923 and again with the Marshall Plan and the setting up of NATO after World War Two. The restabilisation of Europe was not carried out through terror against the working class — indeed that played a role quite subordinate role — it was carried out on the basis that American capitalism was economically strong enough to subsidise European capitalism on a huge scale. This was the basis of the huge popularity of American presidents in Europe from Woodrow Wilson through to Kennedy. When Kennedy went to Berlin and said: 'Ich bin ein Berliner' there was a tremendous response; when he was assassinated, millions of people felt it as a great personal tragedy.

Even in Latin America when the USA created its wave of Latin American dictatorships after the Cuban revolution it did not do so by terror alone. Terror is in general an inefficient instrument of long-term political rule. The US shored up political stability by enormous foreign loans and subsidies. These are today being withdrawn from Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, the Phillipines, etc. And this is what is creating the mounting

chaos and crisis in these countries. The United States is attempting to substitute for this by increased military intervention as we see today in the Middle East and Grenada and will see even more dramatically in events yet to come. And this, of course, only exacerbates the problems because it provokes massive resistance.

All this has had a dramatic adverse effect on the popularity of America in the world. Just think what would be the reaction among the mass of the British population if Ronald Reagan was assassinated; there certainly would not be the air of tragedy that followed Kennedy's assassination, to put it mildly. It is also symptomatic that Geoffrey Howe recently attacked Denis Healey in the House of Commons for 'pandering to anti-American sentiment'. This charge of Howe's is exactly correct. It is not that Healey has stirred up or created anti-Americanism: indeed he has spent most of his political life supporting the United States. No, he is making concessions to a growing mass anti-American sentiment which is predetermined, which does not require revolutionary socialists (let alone the Labour leadership) to create it.

It is the declining power and economic reserves of the USA which lie behind the cracks that are beginning to rend the Atlantic Alliance. As I said, that alliance was based on massive subsidies crossing the Atlantic from West to East. Today the situation is rather different. I recently heard it well summed up on the radio by a Swiss banker who was explaining why the American economy was growing rapidly at present while the West European economy remains stagnant. He described how huge capital flows from Europe to America were financing the US budget deficit and its economic expansion. His comment was: 'If I was American I would be very pleased with this situation but it is absolutely hopeless for us'.

it is the declining power and economic reserves of the USA which lie behind the cracks beginning to rend the Atlantic Alliance

The Atlantic Alliance has not today got the economic reserves to create stability for European capitalism for a third time. The question is what will be put in place of the old type of 'Atlantic Alliance': this strategic question is going to become more and more important. And there are two answers. The first is put forward in Andre Gunder Frank's *The European Challenge*, in the pages of *Marxism Today*, and by Denis Healey. It is very simple. The European working class should ally with European imperialism against the United States. This is becoming a more theorised and general argument.

And we already have a clear example of what it means. For what is a strategic alliance with European imperialism against the US? It is to participate in the rearmament and austerity programmes of the European imperialist powers. It is, in a word, to pursue the policies of the Mitterrand government in France: the rapid build-up of the French military establishment and of French nuclear weapons combined with extreme austerity policies. We already see the Socialist Party opposing American intervention in Grenada at the same time as supporting French military intervention in Chad and general rearmament.

The consequences of this programme elsewhere in Europe would be exactly the same as they have been for the Mitterrand government: a rapid collapse in the popularity of the working class parties and the rise of right wing forces. What you see in the recent French union elections is very significant; for the first time the Socialist Party and Communist Party trade unions are in a minority to right wing unions.

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Photo: JOHN HARRIS

The Pro-EEC Alliance

In British politics the interests of European capital are most clearly espoused by the SDP/Liberal Alliance — or the Pro-EEC Party as I would call it. The historic basis of the great supremacy of the Tory Party in British politics was British isolationism, British banking capitalism, British foreign investment, the British Empire, and, to use the phrase of Lord Salisbury, its 'splendid isolation'. It was also based on extreme backwardness; even from the viewpoint of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois rights Britain is not one of the most democratic of the advanced capitalist countries but one of the most backward. And big sections of the country resent the fact that there is no serious system of local government and an absurdly secretive and undemocratic centralised state structure exists that is being centralised still further by Thatcher.

The Tory Party's orientation has committed British imperialism to a whole series of policies which are absurd from the viewpoint of the rational organisation of European capital. There is no European interest in defending three million penguins in the Malvinas. It is absurd nonsense. There is no point for European capital in spending money on the Trident missile system which is a first-strike weapon against the Soviet Union. European imperialism does not want a war with the Soviet Union in the present circumstances or relation of forces. Whether or not Caspar Weinberger believes the United States could win such a war, one thing is certain: Europe will not.

There are real contradictions today between the most decrepit, backward national elements of the British bourgeoisie and more modernising, dynamic and pro-European, pro-EEC elements of British capital — the ICIs of this world. And these are exactly the forces which are today building up the SDP/Liberal Alliance. The Liberal Party rebuilt itself from a tiny rump with 2 per cent of the vote in 1951 to a serious force in British politics, by building first on the healthy reaction of large sections of the population against the undemocratic backward archaic features of British society — this was the basis of its libertarian wing. The second stage of its project, in alliance with the SDP, is to build on the conscious move by dynamic sections of British capital to organise itself more rationally and integrate itself with European capital.

The Second Choice

The British and European Left have two strategic options. I have discussed the first, to unite with European imperialism. The implication of this in Britain, of course, is an orientation to coalition with the SDP/Liberal Alliance. The other alternative is to fight consistently not just against American imperialism but also against European imperialism: to be in the forefront of campaigns against Cruise missiles and NATO of course, but

Eyes left for the Tories

also against the rearmament and austerity programmes of European capitalism. If you want to summarise the choice in two slogans, the strategic choices that face the British Left are the Popular Front or Democratic Socialism.

What I mean by Democratic Socialism, and why I emphasise the democratic part of this, is that the working class must be in the forefront of a great cleansing operation of the British body politic. Take the question of 'Municipal Socialism' as it is sometimes disparagingly called — the initiatives of Sheffield City Council and the Greater London Council (GLC) for example. I am very much in favour of them, despite their limitations. We must ask why Thatcher wants to abolish these councils. The answer is because the Tory Party is no longer strong enough to displace someone like Ken Livingstone in London by simple 'democratic' means. I am not suggesting that Ken Livingstone will *always* win — simply that in the 1930s the Tory Party was authentically massive and popular and could be relied upon to win an election against someone like Livingstone in an area like the present GLC.

the other alternative is to fight consistently
not just against American imperialism but
also against European imperialism

Today the Tory Party is too weak for this and is forced to restrict and undermine even further bourgeois democracy. And this goes against the quite correct feeling of the masses that London is a somewhat nicer place to live under Livingstone than it was under previous regimes of local government. My emphasis on democracy is not as a prefigurative blueprint of socialism but because — among other things — the working class must place itself at the head today of the fight against all that is archaic and useless in British politics. That means taking seriously the Police Bill, the question of devolution in Scotland, the oppression of women, the struggle against the racist elements in our society. And out of the struggle on democratic issues coupled with the economic struggle and international struggles you have some of the elements of a perspective of democratic socialism. *Without* a perspective of a politics that is not only socialist but also profoundly democratic there will be no socialism in any advanced capitalist country.

The Popular Front

The alternative strategy of the Popular Front — of a Labour/SDP/Liberal coalition — would lead to disaster. Its

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Photo: JOHN HARRIS

The pro-EEC Party's dynamic duo

immediate consequence would be to hold back and even destroy the labour movement. It gives the totally wrong answer to the basic question of British politics today. The crisis of British society is going to have to be paid for by somebody. Who is going to pay for the mess left by the Thatcher government? That determines all questions of socialist advance.

The first candidate to pay for rebuilding British society is that put forward by Roy Hattersley and other supporters of incomes policy. The better-off sections of the working class, the skilled engineering workers in Birmingham and the South East should give more money to the poor unemployed of the North East. I tell you what will be the mass response of the skilled workers in Birmingham or anywhere else to that. It will be the one they gave in the 1979 election after Labour's incomes policy: 'Go to Hell'. And they will vote Conservative again. A coalition of the Labour Party and the SDP/Liberal Alliance of

the kind proposed by Eric Hobsbawm, with the policies needed for it, would be a catastrophe for the labour movement that would make the Thatcher government appear a mild experience. It would prepare the way — just as the 1975-9 Labour experience prepared the way for Thatcher — for something much worse even than the present Tory administration.

the only *practical* answer to the question, 'who will pay for the crisis?' is that the money will come from the bourgeoisie

The only *practical* answer to the question 'who will pay for the crisis?' is that the money is going to come from the bourgeoisie, that actually taking over and expropriating capital is the only way to create the economic growth that is needed. This is the only way that you can unite the working class and the only way you can construct broader alliances. You can not have a great big alliance of the bourgeoisie and the working class and the oppressed — someone has to pay. You can have an alliance of the working class and the oppressed against the bourgeoisie or you can have an alliance with the bourgeoisie against the skilled workers or the unskilled workers — or in David Owen's version, against some much bigger section of the working class. Either you advance against capital or you split the working class and oppressed. There is no other choice.

The big decline of the Conservative Party and the big shake-up of European politics give the working class movement the possibility in Britain and Europe to put itself at the head of real progressive and popular struggles. In my opinion Kinnock strikes a real note on this score and this is why his talk of democratic socialist advance has a real resonance.

The so-called 'banana skin factor' in British politics, the string of misfortunes which have started to affect the Thatcher government are not simply a matter of bad luck. They reflect the fact that the party no longer has the massive reserves of popularity to fall back upon that it once had. And it is possible for the working class to turn this to its advantage if it maintains and strengthens an independent course. Coalitionism and subordination to the interests of European capitalism on the other hand can only end in catastrophe.

JOHN ROSS is the author of Pluto Press' recent addition to the Arguments for Socialism series, *Thatcher and Friends*, and a regular contributor to *Socialist Action*.

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STRATEGY FOR LABOUR LEFT

KEN LIVINGSTONE

What are the tasks for the Labour Left?
That was the theme of a three-way discussion at the recent *International Facing 1984* event between the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Socialist Action and Ken Livingstone. We reprint below Ken's speech.

Let me start by saying that I think that it is wrong to say that the problems of the labour movement are because of simple tactical errors made over the last two or three years, about who did or who did not agree or disagree with somebody else on the Left.

They are the result of longterm historic, political and economic forces and I don't think they have a great deal to do with whether the Labour Co-ordinating Committee (LCC) or the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) could agree with *Socialist Organiser* at any one particular point. I have no doubt that all groupings on the Left make these errors and I can recall several of mine which fortunately have faded into the distance and hopefully people won't recall. We grant ourselves too much influence amongst the British working class to think that it is our errors which have led us to this particular position. I detect, and I speak at meetings all over the country and I largely speak not to organised groupings on the Left but to the rank and file party members and to the general public, that there is a real fundamental demoralisation. Not just on the soft Left — the sort of view that Labour may never win again — but large numbers on the hard Left have, I think, got in their hearts a degree of doubt about whether we can ever see a breakthrough in the present conditions.

I think that misreads the real economic position in this country and the real balance of forces between Labour and Capital. I can understand the reasons for that demoralisation. People have spent 4 years or more working to achieve constitutional changes and are rewarded with the election of Kinnock and Hattersley which wasn't what they had in mind when they started out down that road.

There is also the very important ideological onslaught from people like Hobsbawm who put forward an argument which has come up again and again over the last century. I should imagine we could find half a dozen Hobsbawms in the 1930s arguing then that Labour was never going to win again in the 1931 and 1935 elections and that we should look for a broader array of forces including progressive Tories, radical priests and so on. It is a very recurrent theme and in many instances that theme has been followed by a major breakthrough in the working class as it was in 1945.

When you look at the present political situation what you see is that capitalism in Britain and internationally is more vulnerable than it has been in decades. The Tories have been re-elected with the smallest proportion of their vote for some fifty years. Because we are in the Labour Party, we spend all our times looking at how bloody awful were Labour's election results. We mustn't forget how massive has been the erosion of the vote of the Tories over the last fifty or sixty years from the point when they were a supreme political force in Britain. The Tories are aware of that weakness and Capital is aware of that weakness. That is why the SDP has been created. Capital foresees that in the very short term it may no longer be able to elect Tory governments to defend its interests and seek to create an alternative to the Tories which is safe and can be controlled. It sees that it will no longer be able to control the Labour Party.



Ken Livingstone

If we look outside of our national boundaries we have been, for the last 18 months, hovering at the brink of a major international disaster for finance capital. One country after another has gone to the brink of default. One bank after another has been vulnerable to total collapse. And if at any time in the next 18 months or so one group of politicians puts a foot wrong or one bank miscalculates, there could be a wave of collapses of the international banking system which would make 1929 look like a tea party. The reality is that international capitalism is at its most vulnerable point for a generation of more. That is reinforced within Britain. It may be that will all the patching up international capital can survive this series of major refinancing of loans and there won't be a major international collapse. But there is no way that British capital can look forward to its own particular position being secure.

British capital has gone through a period of a hundred years or so when it has used the profits of imperialism to buy off sections of the working class in this country and that option is now foreclosed to it. Tremendous profits from imperialism are no longer there and that is why there has been such a series of trenchant attacks on the trade unions and labour movement in this country, and why so much is put into destroying the possibility of a Labour government. The British ruling class knows and Capital knows that it goes into a period of intense vulnerability, and it cannot be certain of the outcome of the next two or three years.

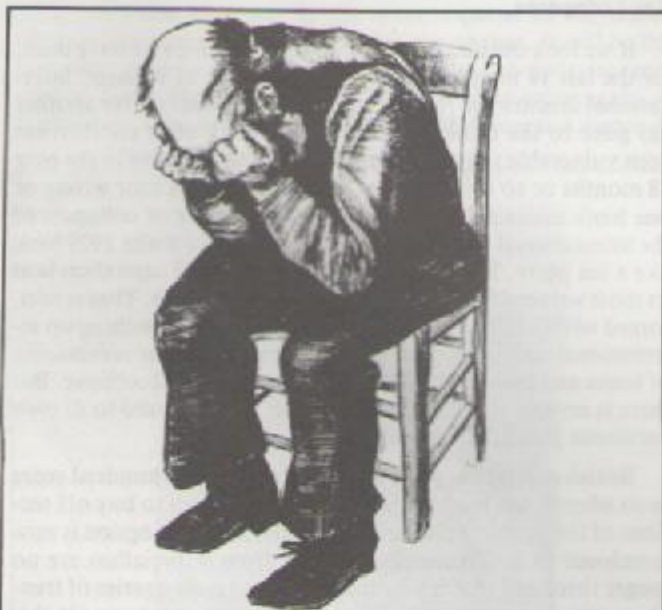
It may be that all that happens is a further economic decline and unemployment and inflation go up and there is a further contraction in economic activity. That is the optimistic scenario as opposed to one of total economic collapse. In that sort of situation then there is a potential for industrial disorder on the scale of 1926 and civil unrest that would make the riots of 1981 look like merely a curtain raiser for what would follow in some of the most deprived areas of Britain today. That is why the

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SDP has been created, that is why there are attacks on Labour councils and why there are further constraints on the rights of trade unions.

So what does our strategy have to be? In the first place we have to say that Labour can win — socialist can actually win in the period ahead. The mere fact that you have just had an election where you reached a low point doesn't mean that this is irreversible. We can break out of that situation. But we have to do it on the basis of policies. And here is another place where I fundamentally disagree with the line we have just heard from the CLPD speaker; I do not believe that the problem we now face is that our leaders in Parliament are out of touch with opinion in the Labour Party. For us to break through we have to tackle the question of the control of Capital. We have been round the route twice in the last 20 years of electing Labour governments with wonderful shopping lists. They have got in. But because they were not prepared or willing or even aware of the need to tackle the control of Capital, to use that wealth to fund our programme of reconstruction and expansion, they were forced back into policies of tax increases which fractured the unity of the working class and turned one section against the other.

I don't believe that amongst the rank and file of the Labour Party there is an understanding of the need for us to take control of the banks and precisely how that will work. And I don't believe that if you had a vote among the rank and file of the party it would be dramatically different from amongst the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). It's not just a question of changing the structures to make the MPs accountable. You have got to win the intellectual battle that commits the Labour Party to taking control of Capital and using the existing wealth in this society in the interests of the broader labour movement. Until we have done that we are locked into an endlessly repeating pattern of electing Labour governments, perhaps with support from the Liberals or the SDP if we are lucky and



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with a narrow majority if we are even luckier and then going down the route of demoralising the people who put us in office.

So I think we have actually still got to win the argument on which we would base the transforming of society because whenever we discuss nationalisation of the banks for instance we usually lose the vote in Labour Party conferences. We have workers in the banks arguing most strongly for the banks to remain in the hands of private capital. That is a thing we cannot overlook. We are not in a position where we have just got to change the constitution. We have still got to win the basic arguments for socialism within the party. That is why a beefing up of the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES) just isn't going to work. I actually believe that we wouldn't see the weaknesses of the AES until a Labour government tried it. But I didn't believe we would see it to be so bankrupt in the election campaign — it's hardly the best forum for having an exchange of ideas about the control of the economy. We will see I think that the present leadership and most of the forces on the left of the party will now look for a slight beefing up of the AES and see that as the way forward for building support.

we mustn't forget how massive has been the erosion of the vote of the Tories over the last 50 or 60 years

We have also got to stop talking in terms of workers' control merely as a slogan. The party and the Left in the party haven't worked out what we mean by that. I think that we have a potential to do that in terms of workplace branches. Left activists in the Labour Party have now got to put as much effort into the construction of workplace branches as we put into that appalling structure of wards, General Management Committees (GMCs) and Local Government Committees. Up to now we have allowed the electoral system to determine the labour movement in Britain.

We aren't in a position where we can tap into the thoughts and views of workers at the point of production, distribution and exchange. We expect them to come and sit in someone's front room and discuss workers' control rather than bring together the workers in each particular area of employment and have them debate it. There is a real paucity of views about what we really mean by workers' control in the Labour Party. Talking about workers' control so easily degenerates into talking about cooperatives because that is the best you can get — it's certainly what the Greater London Council (GLC) is doing. I recognise the weakness of that and workers' participation because you eventually end up supporting someone like Harold Lever saying we will give workers shares in the company. We have got to win that particular argument in the party.

I also think, and it is an area which the CLPD have rightly identified, that there is one major link that is missing and that is the question of accountability. We have made progress in many instances by getting mandatory reselection and MPs are paying more attention, but at the moment there is no way by which MPs control the party leadership. We are not in a position with the parliamentary party like the local Labour group where the leadership of the group comes back to group and presents policies which are either rejected or accepted. The Parliamentary leadership sits down in a vacuum from the PLP. Labour members of parliament go along to the PLP meeting once a week and they are told what votes are coming up, they have a great debate, they sometimes attack each other and then go away again. No one actually sits down and discusses what the Labour leadership is doing. There is now way by which the MPs we are trying to make accountable can make the leadership of the party accountable to them. You wouldn't tolerate that for 10 minutes on the GLC or Lambeth or Hackney Council, because you know exactly what would happen — you would have an alliance between a few leading party members and key

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civil servants and the party would be excluded.

We have to argue over the coming period for the accountability of the leadership and a shadow cabinet to the PLP. Otherwise we are going to find that we have selected a wonderful leftwing MP, he or she has got into the PLP and they come back every week and say I have fought for this or that, but if they aren't going to be able to impose their will on the cabinet they are going to fail. Now I think that is important because if you look at the Heffer vote there is an interesting position. For the first time in the history of the Labour Party the Left got a better vote out of the PLP than they got from the CLPs. Eric Heffer got 4 per cent of the PLP and 2 per cent of the CLPs. In a sense that reflects the changes that are starting to work their way through the PLP and this is an area to which we will have to pay much more attention.

If we have a total economic collapse there will be a form of coalition required to deal with it. The Tories don't need any more votes in parliament but they will need the figureheads to give credibility to some sort of national government. So we mustn't lose sight over the next few years of the possibility of coalition politics really advancing very rapidly and the co-option of a few leading Labour front benchers and Steel and Owen into some coalition created to deal with an international crisis. If we don't have the collapse but rather the continuing decline of the economy, then the very real danger is that the leadership of the party, simply because of their ability to communicate and to fudge on many key issues, could be as effective an opposition leadership as there was under Wilson in 1963 and 1964. The memory of the last Labour government can recede and people become politically active who weren't politically active at a previous stage. And they can become so desperate to win and achieve change that they start to let drop some of the major struggles we should be making. There is a very real chance that we will live through that 1963/64 period again where everything hinges on the leader's ability to push the vote up in the polls. We suspend the debates that we need to have internally and find that there is a possibility that we might win, but God help us with what might follow afterwards.

we have to argue over the coming period for the accountability of the leadership and a shadow cabinet to the PLP

That's why we need our economic policies clearly laid out and our ability to control that leadership when it is in power. Which brings us to the question of how are we going to respond to the new leadership. Now I don't want to think that the Left is going to spend the next year debating the minutiae of the Peter Hain letter on left unity. I can see people pick up the Hain letter and glow with a kind of inner sectarianism. So much of it is vague and general, and it's very hard to know what there is to disagree within it, but people are saying 'we know what is really behind it.' Now I think there is a danger once again of us being involved in major internal debates among groupings on the left, when what we desperately need is to turn outwards and build support for the sort of economic policies that I was talking about.

That is one of my major criticisms of so much of left activity over the last couple of years. I honestly don't believe that it was worth all the effort in that great struggle to decide whether CLPD should register. I think largely a lot of that effort was wasted. We should have been putting that effort into the struggle to build support outside the movement and particularly in the industrial sector. At the end of the day it really didn't matter a sod whether the CLPD registered or not. The struggle became the thing itself. A similar struggle was to get Kinnock and Lester off the NEC.

I was one of those who fortunately can now say that I wasn't involved in the initial choice of candidates the Left was going to back. But I had great difficulty in considering whether

it was worth putting in a major amount of effort to get Joan Lester off the NEC and get Margaret Beckett on, because I could remember Joan Lester resigning in protest at the cuts of the last Labour government and Margaret Beckett taking her place and carrying on with them. That is the sort of internal struggle which is a waste of our time and effort. And it really will be a waste of time and effort if we get into a major struggle about the meaning of the Hain letter. We can meet Hain and argue about these sorts of policies but I don't believe we can construct an umbrella group on the left. I don't really think that it is possible — it would be wonderful if we could do it, but there are too many differences of views and opinions for us to cope with that at the present time.

I want to say before anyone gets up and condemns me that simply because I haven't mentioned all the other issues that I don't think they are important — Ireland, unilateralism, women's rights and so on. I do think that the party should turn out and support every group of workers in struggle — that goes without saying. What I am trying to focus attention on is that key economic policy which I don't believe that the Labour Party generally does accept and which we have to win support for. As we go through the next 18 months, as the NEC decides whether to extend the witch hunt and go beyond Tariq Ali; as the issue of Ireland continues to reoccur because we will be determined to make sure the issue of Ireland does continue to reoccur; as the issue of the defence of Labour councils comes up with all the consequences of legality and surcharge that flow from that, we will see in the year or two ahead how the leadership of the party responds.

I do suggest the most important thing in terms of the orientation of the left to the new leadership is to let the new leadership reveal where it stands rather than us spend a lot of time arguing about what we *think* they might do on the basis of their track record. I doubt if my perception of what they might do is any different from most other people's on the left. But we would misjudge the mood of a lot of ordinary people in the party who are so committed to the idea of unity if we are seen to be raking over the coals of old rows and internal disputes: we would be seen to be splitters and wreckers. It is better that we go out, build support around issues, industrial disputes, the need to commit the party to the control of Capital, and *then* we will discuss in the party how the leadership responds as each of these issues comes along.

I have always said that no one has been able to damage me in a long term way by their attacks on me. At the end of the day if I am damaged politically it's because of the things I have done. Possibly the same will apply to Kinnock and to Hattersley. I think it would be wrong, and it would alienate a lot of potential support in the party, if we go over what Kinnock and Hattersley have or have not voted for in the past. They have to be judged in the future by how they respond to the conditions that are being forced upon us.

I conclude by reminding you of what I said at the start. I believe that Thatcher's perspective of the present economic crisis is not too dissimilar from those of us on the hard Left, and I am still delighted to think of myself as on the hard Left even if not everybody else does! We could be in a position where if the world economy goes through the sort of rigours that I think are a strong possibility, we could see the potential for a major advance for the working class. Even if that doesn't happen and we have a continuing decline there is still the chance of a major breakthrough. I think we have to reject decisively Hobsbawm and all his works and argue with those people that the working class have got the potential to take power in this country. All that we have argued over and about for the last twenty years still remains firmly on the agenda. What we have to do is to give the working class the confidence to see that it can be done. That hinges on our ability to persuade them of the need to take control of Capital and use it in the interests of the working class in this country.

KEN LIVINGSTONE is the Labour leader of the GLC.

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SMOULDERING PAKISTAN

TARIQ ALI

Mass anti-government demonstrations have rocked Pakistan in recent weeks and months. Tariq Ali argues that the days of President Zia are numbered.

What can one write about a dictatorship that can no longer differentiate human beings from animals? Over the last eight weeks the army in Pakistan has machine-gunned a few hundred dogs to death in the province of Sind. Some unkind souls (unkind, that is, to dogs) had painted Zia on them, thus provoking their extermination. A few weeks prior to this event, some vigilant policemen in the town of Umarkot had espied an unaccompanied and burden-free herd of donkeys walking calmly down the main street. The donkeys were arrested and charged under the Vagrancy Act. No lawyers could be found to free these asses. It was only when their braying, defecating and urinating harmonised itself into a simultaneous burst of noise and motion that an enterprising Umarkot magistrate made a unilateral intervention. He ordered their immediate release. The triumphant quadrupeds became the envy of the entire country. I assure the doubting reader that this episode is a fact and was reported in the Pakistani press, though without intended irony. You see even a donkey can not breach Section 144 in Zia's Pakistan.

I am more convinced than ever that we are now approaching endgame in Pakistan

I am more convinced than ever that we are now approaching endgame in Pakistan. The thirty-five year old war waged relentlessly by the Pakistani state and its uniformed guardians against many an embattled nationality is slowly and painfully drawing to a close. The only thing in dispute is the time-scale. Some of the generals are succumbing to astrology, but we prefer to base our judgement on a scientific analysis of the country's politics and institutions. The rebellion in Sind, which has claimed almost 200 lives and thousands of wounded, marks the *beginning of the end* of Zia's dictatorship. Even indiscriminate terror has its limit as a political weapon.

Military dictators fall when the pressure of mass discontent, expressed in street demonstrations and/or armed clashes, reaches such a stage that it threatens the very foundations of the state. Then fissures appear on every level of the ruling oligarchy and split the officer corps of the army. The officers prefer to ascribe their misfortune to the blindness, corruption, errors, bungles, lunacy of one man: The Dictator. How can they do otherwise? To give an alternative explanation means to accept that they too are doomed. So they try and come up with all sorts of unsystematic and inconsistent arguments, which end up by delivering a scapegoat to their tormentors in the streets.

There are, of course, recent instances in history where the old rulers have not acted in time and the insurgent masses have overthrown the *ancien regime* together with the dictator in question. Cuba and Nicaragua are the prime exemplars of this type of social upheaval. Pakistan has, till now, followed a different pattern. Both previous military dictators were removed from office by a decision of the military High Command. Field-Marshal Ayub Khan was driven from power after an unprecedented popular upsurge that lasted for five months and embraced virtually every town in the country. Ayub did not

leave the country, nor was he arrested. He handed over power to General Yahya Khan. This corpulent incompetent was best-known for his addiction to a particular brand of whisky, but he did organise the country's first ever general election in 1970.

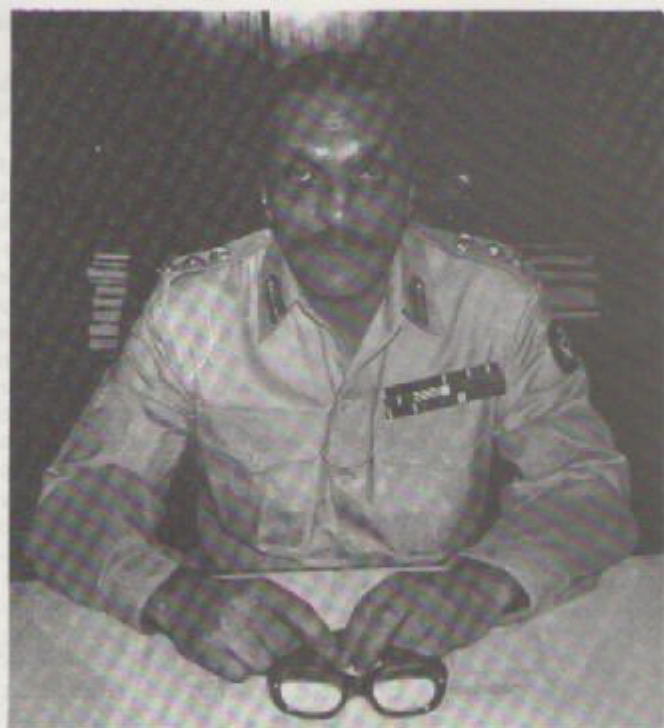
His ignominious downfall came about because he refused to accept the popular verdict and unleashed a civil war against a majority of the population. After the debacle in Bangladesh he was confronted by a revolt of senior officers. An armoured division was seething with discontent. Its officers threatened to surround Yahya's headquarters in Rawalpindi unless he was dismissed. A stormy meeting of the High Command almost came to blows. Yahya was soon after placed under a comfortable house arrest, where he received visitors and a crate of whisky every week. I have a feeling that Zia's exile will not be as comfortable.

It is now a commonplace for commentators to suggest that if the current revolt against the military dictatorship remains confined to Sind, then Zia will survive the test. It should be added that the same commentators were, only a few months previously, refusing to accept that the calm in Pakistan was only a surface phenomenon and that a festering set of grievances were gradually building up a head of steam in certain areas. The movement in Sind was both predictable and predicted (see p146-150 in my book *Can Pakistan Survive?*). The reasons are obvious. Atallah Mengal, the former Chief Minister of Baluchistan, was extremely apt when he reminded a demonstration outside the Pakistan Embassy in London some weeks ago that: 'They are careful in their choice of victims. Why else do you think that they only hang Baluch and Sindhi activists?' Since the execution of Bhutto, Sind has been an occupied province. Six of the army's 20 divisions were stationed there, including the Sind Regiment, which is composed almost exclusively on non-Sindhis.

It is in these circumstances hardly surprising that Zia's martial law was perceived in the Sind province as more than a denial of democratic rights. It was viewed as a blatant violation of Sindhi national rights. When young Punjabi captains acquired the habit of slapping a Sindhi if he didn't tug his forelock on seeing them; when these same officers treated Sindhi women as objects of pleasure and the rape statistics registered a dramatic increase; when young students were shot at and, on occasion, killed; when Sindhi poets and peasant leaders were flogged in public; when three Sindhi nationalists were executed in a market square in the interior of the province, then why are they surprised that Sind has exploded? The leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islami (the wing that still supports the regime) are reviving the bitter and dormant memories of Bangladesh by accusing the Sindhis of 'secessionism'. The government of Pakistan is distributing press handouts which claim that the entire revolt has been masterminded by infiltrators from India. Ironically enough no one is frightened by either of these code-words any longer. Furthermore it is now a well-established fact that General Zia is a consummate liar and the government-controlled media is regarded with near-universal hostility and contempt.

The events in Sind are not yet sufficiently generalised to bring down the regime. Their importance lies in the fact that they have punctured the mythologies of the regime's apologists at home and abroad. Only a few months ago, General Zia told the people (after a brief visit to Sind) that: 'The people of Sind want martial law for another six years'. The uprising that has shaken the interior of the province is the most effective reply to this calumny. There can be little doubt that the military High Command and the fabric of intelligence networks that run the country were taken by surprise at the intensity of the response. In Dadu and Badin, Sindhi policemen joined the demonstrators and opened fire on the security forces. The army had to be moved in to deal with the situation. This then is a three way struggle

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President Zia

against military dictatorship, clerical tyranny and national oppression. Sind has exposed the fruit to be rotten, but it needs a few more storms before it will fall to the ground.

These are yet early days, but they are crucial ones. In the first place they have shaken the regime. Sind has fired a powerful shot across Zia's bows and even though the struggle has been contained its effects will slowly begin to percolate to the frontier, Baluchistan and even the Punjab. There is another important outcome. Many of the politicians who were beginning to move towards a reconciliation with the regime have been stopped dead in their tracks. Their very opportunism has now caused them to pause, look around and stop their clandestine talks with the army. Is it possible, they whisper to each other that the end of martial law is in sight? And if it is then there is no point in risking their reputations by appearing to be men of moderation. Yes, there can be little doubt, that whenever the masses come out in the streets the effect is almost magical. The Sind upheaval shook the army, amazed the Movement for Restoration of Democracy and sent alarm bells ringing in the State Department in Washington and the Foreign Office in London.

Why has the situation undergone a rapid transformation now? Why was there surface passivity for six years? Why no movement when Bhutto was hanged? Why is the Punjab so still? What is the mood in the frontier? In our opinion there were three basic reasons for the placidity of the last six years. Bhutto's death was not a single event. It was accompanied by a brutalisation of Pakistan's political culture: public floggings, public hangings, public humiliation of women and the judicial assassination of the first and last elected Prime Minister. Add to this the fact that the People's Party had no organised base and it is not difficult to understand why people were not prepared to give up their lives. They were anguished, though passive, spectators at a series of events which they did not believe they could influence. It is not easily understood that a mass can get just as exhausted as an individual. This collective tiredness was due to the fact that they had struggled semi-continuously since 1968. They had witnessed the break-up of Pakistan. Their hopes in Bhutto had been cruelly disappointed. Some of them had temporarily deserted the populist fox and joined the right-wing opposition dreaming of democracy and social justice. Their efforts had seemed to result in Zia's *coup* of July 1977. How can we blame them for staying at home for a few years? In analogous circumstances individuals have suf-

fered nervous breakdowns, been confined to asylums and even committed suicide. What is truly amazing is not that they stayed quiet for so long, but that they recovered relatively soon.

Zia was naturally aided by this silence on the part of the people. He mistook it for acquiescence. A fatal mistake to which most dictators are prone. There were two additional factors which increased his complacency. The old politicians participated in local elections and accepted nominations to local councils. The regime utilised lavish handouts of patronage to win their support for the last few years. The money was, of course, made available for local development plans, but large chunks of it went into the bank accounts of village notables. On the international level the Zia regime had the unstinting support of President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher. The British Prime Minister was the first Western leader to visit Pakistan after the execution of Bhutto and give the dictator a kiss of approval. This support was stepped up after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The Western media sought to transform a sordid military hangman into a plucky defender of the 'frontiers of the free world'.

At a recent 'unattributable' briefing for British and foreign journalists, the Foreign Office in London stuck to its support for the Zia regime. The unnamed spokesman told Fleet Street's South Asia writers that: (a) Sind was serious and that the FO had been taken by surprise; (b) the revolt could not bring down Zia, but the West was worried; (c) the main reason for supporting Zia was that he had sided with the West on Afghanistan. Free elections would lead to a PPP victory and the Bhutto women were far too soft on the Russians; (d) the US Representative on the Security Council had made the key distinction between 'authoritarian' regimes and 'totalitarian despotisms'. Zia fell in the former category. In the words of the spokesman: 'He may be a son of a bitch, but he's *our* son of a bitch'; (e) the British press was giving too much prominence to the business in Sind. They should remember that Pakistan was a crucial ally; and (f) even if Zia falls the only possible replacement can be another general.

Readers will recall that General Zia is a regular delegate to the conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement. His smile enraptured many an Indian journalist during the recent moot in Delhi. The same general is now butchering men, women and children in the Sindh province. It is a constant wonder that dictators, after a while, begin to radiate a certain fascination for liberal journalists. I don't think that the latter are taken in by clever public relations. There is something deeper, but one must resist the temptation to digress on this occasion. Too much is at stake.

The most interesting, albeit shameless, assertion by the British Foreign Office spokesman is the reference to Zia's replacement by another general. The West is definitely not interested in any immediate prospect of democratic rule in Pakistan. The reason is obvious. They could not guarantee a puppet regime and even the smallest element of regional autonomy would entail that the naval bases being constructed in Baluchistan by the United States would be unceremoniously dismantled. Ataulah Mengal and Khair Baksh Marri, the Baluch leaders exiled in London and Kabul respectively, are in no doubt that what is taking place in their unhappy province is a gross violation of national sovereignty. Mengal told me that the Gwadar coast has become a centre of espionage and military activity. The Mehdi-Ye-Koh area is now surrounded by an iron wall of security, which was penetrated on one occasion by a Baluch nationalist. He reported that American personnel were in command of the operation and a mini-harbour had been constructed. The Baluch leaders have demanded that an independent commission of enquiry should be established by the Non-Aligned Movement to ascertain what is going on in Baluchistan. If its findings confirm the allegations made by Mengal and Marri, then Pakistan should be immediately expelled from the Non-Aligned Movement and its nakedness exposed to the world.



Tariq Ali

Some American commentators have noted that the Pentagon has often viewed the Baluch coast as an ideal operations centre for the Rapid Deployment Force, which is increasingly beginning to replace the post-Vietnam concept of building local relays of power. The fall of the Shah has helped to revive the most revanchist elements in the US military establishment. The bases in Pakistan and the corresponding support for Zia is one of the tragic results. It is this as much as Afghanistan which leads London and Washington to bolster the Pakistani dictatorship.

Zia's personal predilections make him a fairly crucial figure for Washington. The Chief Martial Law Administrator is staunchly pro-American. This is not an unimportant fact when considering Afghanistan. It is no secret that the Russians are extremely anxious to withdraw all their troops from Afghanistan. They have indicated that they would be prepared to accept a National Government, which included the Peoples Democratic Popular Assembly (PDPA) as merely one link in the chain. In return they would guarantee Afghanistan's neutrality and would want cast-iron assurances of a similar character from Peking, Islamabad and Washington. They would also insist on all the bases and arms routes in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) being closed down and sealed off. These proposals split the Army High Command in Islamabad. A majority of the corps commanders were in favour of concluding the settlement and the Geneva talks almost resulted in signatures on a Treaty. Then the Reagan administration stepped in and sabotaged the negotiations.

Contrary to its demagoguery, Washington does not desire a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. They are quite happy for Russian soldiers to be killed and, more importantly, appreciate the ideological importance of the Soviet presence in Kabul. It gives them the green light for intervening in their 'own backyard' in Central America. Some of the Pakistani generals were prepared to defy their paymasters on this issue, but Zia's decisive intervention clinched the matter in favour of the Americans. The consequences of this decision have yet to be

felt inside Pakistan. No one should be surprised if Baluchistan begins to warm up again.

If, despite all this, the Sindhi people continue to fight back and the revolt spreads to even a few cities of the Punjab, then Zia and his immediate coterie of supporters (General Fazle Haq, General Arif and General Mujib) would be forced out of power. The problem for the West is that their replacement model, General Iqbal, currently Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is known neither for his intelligence nor for a Machiavellian cunning. Few believe that he could provide a stable transition to anything. Much will depend, as we have already argued, on the character of the revolt and the scale of the mass mobilisations over the next 12-18 months. If the Sindhi pattern is repeated with local variations, then no replacement dictator will be acceptable and any attempt to impose one could lead to a renewed civil war. The angry chants that are emanating from the ravaged heart of Sind are very revealing in this regard. They are sounding the tocsin for the last time. The message to their own leaders in the province and, by implication, to those who support their struggles elsewhere in the country, could be summarised in the following fashion.

Zia 'may be a son of a bitch, but he's *our* son of a bitch,' said the Foreign Office spokesperson

Any compromise with these uniformed murderers is impermissible, they keep telling us. The enemy is not this or that general. It is the Pakistan Army as an institution. How can one disagree with them? Their consciousness has been formed in the field of life and practical experiences. They could not have had better teachers and now they are teaching their politicians. They have nothing but contempt for this army and they are correct. This is a mercenary force *par excellence*. It has won its only victories in battles against its own population; it sells its officers and men for a few petro-dollars to police imperialism's boundaries in the Arab world; its generals grow rich on heroin; a hierarchy of corruption extends throughout the officer corps from top to bottom.

This is the cancer that has to be rooted out if Pakistan is to survive as a voluntary federation of four nationalities. Of these four, Sind alone constitutes a unity. The Baluch, Punjabis and Pathans are all divided by lines drawn by the civil servants of the departing British Empire. The choice is stark, but simple. If the army survives, then Pakistan will die a slow and painful death. If the army can be defeated and dismantled, then Pakistan could survive as a genuinely non-aligned and non-militaristic state, at peace with its own people and their neighbours. How could this come about? The Pakistan Army sees itself, and not without justification, as the only reliable custodian of the confessional state. It is, in fact, the only pillar on which Pakistan rests and that is where the problem lies. The army will not voluntarily surrender its position in Pakistani society. It would rather rule over the Islamic Republic of Punjab than surrender its birthright. Many of the retired Punjabi military officers who were given free land in Sind are now beginning to pack their bags. The Sindhi national movement is advising its followers not to buy these lands cheap since they belong to Sind in the first place. This small episode is very symbolic of the dilemmas that confront Pakistan.

I have a horrible suspicion that the army will fight back, no doubt flying the flag of Islam, rather than surrender any of its privileges. The army of today is not the same as Ayub's army of 1958. The officers are not scions of the rural gentry, bonded to each other by ties of kinship and class solidarity. A sizeable proportion of officers is now recruited from the urban petty-bourgeoisie. A layer of these have always regarded Zia as 'too soft'. These fundamentalists want a bloodbath to wipe out all internal enemies. Their chosen models are the Saudi Royals

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(which many officers have observed at close quarters during periods when they were leased to that country) or the medieval obscenities of Khomeini's wild theocracy. Many of them spice their rhetoric by invoking the early history of the Muslim Khalifas and attempting to utilise those norms in the contemporary world.

The sad fact is that it is not a total bluff. Many of these men actually believe their own mythologies. The Koran is studied closely for military insights. Thus Brigadier K S Malik has written a book called *'The Quranic Concept of War'*, which was published in Lahore in 1979. This was not a case of an eccentric uniformed theocrat sounding off on his own. The book contains a foreword by Zia-ul-Haq and a preface by one-time constitutional lawyer, now turned megalomaniacal fundamentalist maverick, K A Brohi. The key notion for Malik is *terror*. The sentence, 'I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels', which undoubtedly occurs in the holy book of Islam is now elevated into a modern principle of strategic warfare. Bearing in mind that the main enemies of the army have been the Bengalis, Baluch and now the Sindhis, the following passage from Malik's banal volume makes chilling reading: 'Terror struck into the hearts of the enemies is not only a means, it is an end in itself. Once a condition of terror into the opponent's heart is obtained, hardly anything is left to be achieved. It is the point where the means and the end meet and merge. Terror is not a means of imposing decision upon the enemy; it is the decision we wish to impose upon him.'

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The savagery and barbarism entailed in an application of Brigadier Malik's blend of Islam and warfare offers us many revealing insights. This is how many officers are being taught to think. Malik's book is a standard textbook at military academies. The Koran, of course, speaks of 'infidels'. This does not pose any real problems for Pakistan's generals. The Bengalis were described as 'infidels' prior to the rape of that province. The Baluchis were described as 'wild infidels' as a prelude to the five year civil war that brought death and destruction to so many homes in Baluchistan. I'm sure that soon we will start hearing talk of Sindhis not being proper Muslims and too much under the unfluence of mysticism and Sufis. It will be heavily ironic as Sind is one of the first areas of Muslim settlement in the sub-continent, but historical facts never pose any real problems to those intent on barbarism. The point I am stressing is that the transition from Zia to a yet unpredictable future looks like being a painful business. Baluch and Sindhi leaders now either talk openly of independence or of a confederation. Neither is prepared to tolerate the existence of the present army. They want a popular militia, which is both broadly-based and does not eat up a bulk of the wealth that the people produce. The final confrontation can only be delayed, not avoided.

The most stable feature of Pakistan since 1947 has been its inherent instability. What is left of the old state resembles a diseased guava, pock-marked all over, with a few craters where birds of prey (in this case the people of Pakistan) have detached a few chunks. The fact that it is diseased prevents the fruit from becoming rotten-ripe and falling of its own accord. It will, if anything, continue to dry and wither till a last stone finally brings it down. It is what will be put in its place that is now agitating the minds of the more insightful civil servants and politicians of that benighted republic.

TARIQ ALI is author of the Penguin book *Can Pakistan Survive?* and was recently expelled for his ideas from the Labour Party.

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BLOOD & LAUGHTER

Blood and Laughter; Caricatures from the 1905 Revolution, by David King and Cathy Porter. Jonathan Cape, 1983 pbk £6.95.

The 1905 revolution in Russia produced a powerful outburst of satirical journals. Despite the censorship which existed these journals multiplied during 1905-1907 and Tsarist censors were unable to control the flood of radical journalism, poetry, caricature and art. New journals sprang up daily — Hell-Post Vampire, Bombs, Woodgoblin — their titles expressed the newly found courage to defy the censor. Many writers and illustrators were jailed only to carry on their activities from jail. During this period about 380 journals were registered with the official censor, many did not. Those that did register pushed to the boundaries what was permissible by the use of allusion, allegory, and aesopian language. Illustrators were often able to express the terror and oppression of Tsarism even more vividly by the use of red ink and death imagery; skulls, skeletons and vampires proliferated.

As the political hopes of 1905 were crushed and repression and exile dealt out to revolutionaries and radicals, the journals also declined. But the experience of those months was not lost. Many of the artists lived through and supported the 1917 revolution.

The story of this period is told and illustrated in a new book by David King and Cathy Porter. The text is excellent, the quality of the reproductions is good and the book is well worth buying and reading. This is the first time that extracts and illustrations from these journals have been published in the West and their impact today is still powerful. Some of the illustrations convey a sense of overwhelming sadness and oppression and some tend, as the text points out, to be passive in recording suffering. But others use wit and vitriol to attack the targets of Tsarism and reaction and prefigure in vitality, though not in form, the revolutionary developments in art some ten years later.

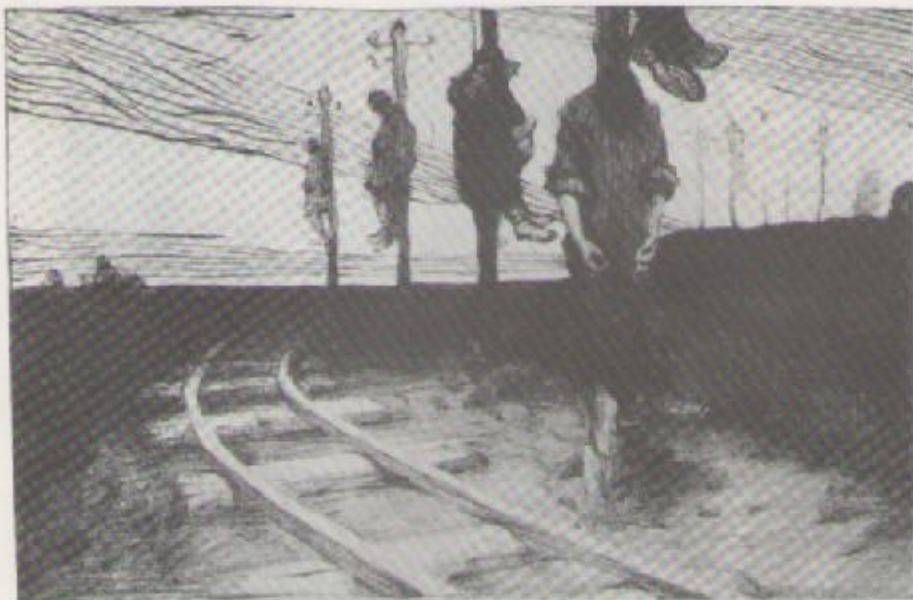


Invasion by Boris Kustodiev. 'Zhupel' no.2.1905

A giant skeleton covered in blood strides over the streets in Moscow and the brutal suppression of the Moscow uprising.



'Leshii' no.1.1906.



Nightmare by Pyotr Dobrynin. 'Leshii' no.1.1906.

Pyotr Dobrynin came from a peasant background and his trips to his home furnished him with subject matter for his illustrations. This depicts the aftermath of a Cossack attack and massacre.



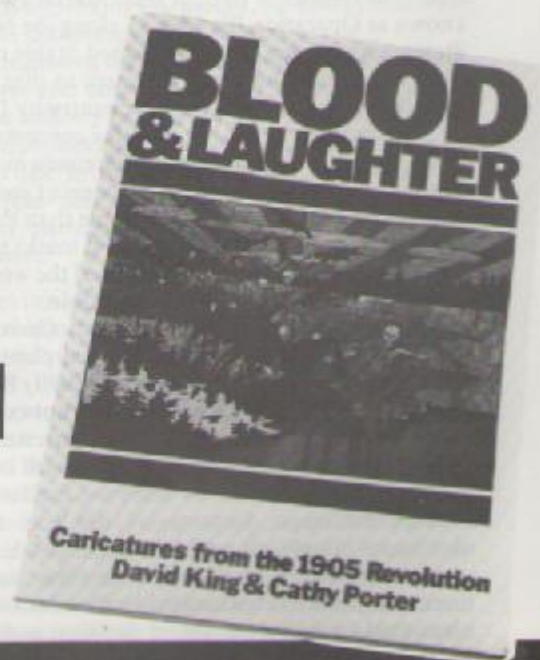
Back cover of 'Za Zhizn' by Semyon Prokhorov.

The caption reads 'In this world there is a Tsar. He is without pity. HUNGER is his name.' Much of the imagery of the satirical journals was fantastic and grotesque. Skulls and blood were favourite themes. Strange monsters and vampires symbolised the oppression of Tsarist Russia.



The Most High Manifesto, to which document His Highness Major-General Trepov put his hand. 'Machine Gun' no.1.1905

This powerful and stark image was how Machine Gun greeted the Tsar's Manifesto of 17th October 1905. Issued in response to the wave of strikes and the formation of soviets, the Manifesto promised 'four freedoms' which in reality meant nothing. The red smudged hand print speaks evocatively of the bloodshed and terror of those days. Trotsky said of that period: 'A veil of smoke was drawn across the sun. Fires devoured entire streets and their inhabitants. This was the old orders for its humiliation.'



Caricatures from the 1905 Revolution David King & Cathy Porter

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GRENADA: REVOLUTION CRUSHED

CHRIS PALMER

The American invasion of Grenada heralds a decisive step to overcoming the 'Vietnam syndrome' — the political inability of the United States to intervene to halt revolutionary developments throughout the world. Chris Palmer argues that the rightward shift within US politics makes such interventions again on the cards, and examines the events leading up to the invasion.

The Grenadian invasion is a component of US intervention in the Middle East and in the region of Central America and the Caribbean. Starting under the Jimmy Carter administration but escalating sharply under Reagan, the United States has stepped up the arms race to pressurise the Soviet Union both economically and militarily. Also, through the creation of the Rapid Deployment Force and aid to reactionary governments and counter-revolutionary forces, war has been waged on the colonial revolution. In the Caribbean, 'aid' programmes like the Caribbean Basin Initiative — worth US \$350million — have been used to 'buy' governments and to stave off internal unrest. In this light it is worth noting that several of the states involved in the US invasion have suffered internal turmoil in recent years. Dominica has seen several attempted coups and the rounding up of suspected opponents of Prime Minister Eugenia Charles. Jamaica experienced a bloody election campaign in 1980 which saw hundreds killed in gunfighting. At the time of Independence in 1979 a Black Power uprising shook St. Vincent. In 1982 John Compton defeated a government in St Lucia that had tried to improve relations with Cuba. Even the apparently peaceful island of Barbados shows signs of unrest as unemployment increases.

The events in Grenada have been used to bolster the US's strategic aim of overthrowing the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. This threat is now very real with up to 6000 US troops in Honduras until at least March 1984 for manoeuvres known as Operation Big Pine 11 along the Nicaraguan border. Statements coming from the United States make clear the aim of having an alternative government to that of the Sandinistas established in some part of the country by December.

Also part of the backdrop to the context of the invasion are the gains made by revolutionary Grenada in the past 4½ years. The invasion has destroyed the process of socialist revolution, a process far more radical for example than that which occurred in Jamaica under Michael Manley. It marks the destruction of a new state which served the interests of the workers and peasants of Grenada rather than the bourgeoisie.

Like other Caribbean islands, Grenada was initially developed through the slave trade and plantation system from which the colonial power profited, initially France but later Britain. The ending of the slave trade did not qualitatively alter the way in which such islands were inserted into the world economy. Grenada was, and still is, reliant on three main crops — nutmeg, cocoa and bananas — for its export trade and foreign exchange. Because of the way the economy has developed nearly all manufactured goods, much food and petroleum have to be imported. In other words, Grenada has been completely subordinated to the needs of imperialism and the world capitalist market.

The government of Sir Eric Gairy, which was in power at the time of the 13 March 1979 revolution, initially came to power in the 1950s on a wave of working class struggles and pro-working class rhetoric but was unable to tackle the power of a comprador bourgeoisie, based on the ownership of hotels and tourism, and the agricultural oligarchy which owned the plantations.

The New Jewel Revolution was the first serious attempt to tackle these problems on the basis of an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist programme. Although stating their socialist intentions, the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) which the New Jewel Movement (NJM) formed, correctly did not move immediately towards collective ownership of agriculture and the tourist industry. It realised that at the beginning of the process such moves were essentially irrelevant to independence from imperialism and the pressing issues of economic development. Thus the PRG proposed to develop a mixed economy in which, according to finance minister Bernard Coard, the state sector was to be dominant. Collective ownership itself would not have altered the distortions of an economy, 97 per cent of whose exports were bananas, nutmeg and cocoa. Nor could it have altered a situation where prices for Grenadian produce were falling on the world market while prices for imports were rising. Cocoa prices for example fell by 65 per cent between 1981 and 1983. In general, between 1979-1980 prices for Grenada's exports fell by 22 per cent, while the cost of imports rose from US \$43million to US \$50m.

'Grenada has been one of the few countries in the Western Hemisphere that continued to experience per capita growth during 1981' — World Bank

In agriculture, the most important sector of the Grenadian economy, the PRG attempted to make the most productive and rational use of available resources. Although only about 12 per cent of the land — 27 of the 67 large estates — were state-owned, laws were established which made possible the nationalisation of idle or underused land. Twenty three agricultural cooperatives were also established, since cooperatives were envisaged as the third sector of the mixed economy. Credit facilities were made available to small farmers through the newly created and state-owned Grenada Development Bank. Limited attempts at diversification were made by developing an agro-industrial plant to process local produce.

In tourism, the major development was, of course, the new airport at Point Salines, due to open in March 1984 to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the revolution. A limited number of tourist facilities — three hotels and four restaurants — were also taken into state ownership. The financing of the airport project is, in fact, a typical example of the PRG's strategy for economic development — acquiring international finance to develop productive resources. The US would not supply aid, but it was forthcoming from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (despite American opposition), the European Economic Community (EEC), Canada, the Soviet Union, Algeria, Syria and Libya. The Cubans contributed personnel and equipment rather than money. This reliance on international funding, without which the economy could not have developed, was a further factor militating against collective ownership. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie would clearly have precipitated the cutting off of crucial funds. Such a project would only really have been viable through some sort of socialist federation of Eastern Caribbean islands or assimilation into COMECON, neither of which was a feasible option at

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introduced along with an adult literacy programme. Free medical and dental care was provided; no one lived more than 3 miles from a doctor, for example. Transport and roads were developed. This was possible because economic growth enabled public spending to rise from US \$8million in 1978 under Gairy to US \$101million in 1982. Furthermore wage rises kept ahead of the rise in the cost of living, increasing by 10 per cent in 1982 while the cost of living rose by only 7 per cent.

The bourgeoisie was not allowed a totally free hand. Key imports, particularly rice, sugar and cement were controlled by the state-run Marketing and National Importing Board (MNIB). In one sense these benefits were simply passed on to the people by a benevolent government. But in another they were the product of a deep-going transformation of the relationship between the workers and the state. Thus the PRG encouraged the growth of trade unions independent of the state so that the level of unionisation rose from around 40 per cent under Gairy to about 85 per cent. Other mass organisations were established; the people's militia, through which sections of the population were armed and received military training, the National Youth Organisation, the National Women's Organisation, zonal councils and parish councils.

Through these bodies, the Grenadian people were able to confront their leaders and members of the government. They were able to debate, complain, suggest and argue for change. The most elaborate example was the budget whose four step process lasted for about three months. The Ministry of Finance studied expenditure requests from other departments, and in consultation with them drew up a draft budget. Then a delegates' meeting, drawn from the mass organisations, discussed the proposals before they were taken on to discussions in the smaller units of the mass organisations: the trade unions, the zonal and parish councils. Then there was a further mass meeting to which anyone who felt they had anything to contribute was invited. This was followed by a 3 day session with managers and representatives of state enterprises. The budget was then returned to the PRG cabinet for final approval. In this way the whole population was able to play a part.

But one of the tragedies of the revolution is that these bodies, and this process, never became more than consultative, never more than a means of mobilising the population. They were never legislative, never real workers' councils through which the people could make decisions for themselves. Certainly the leaders took notice of what was said to them, certainly they acted on these discussions, but ultimately the decisions rested with the government rather than the people. Nevertheless, these new structures did represent the most democratic system in the English-speaking Caribbean, far more democratic than any bourgeois democracy.

But from the beginning there were pressures on this revolutionary process over and above the desperate need to develop the economy. The military pressures included operations like Amber and the Amberines and Ocean Venture '83 which planned and rehearsed the invasion of Grenada. The economic pressures came from the IMF putting the squeeze on less developed countries, particularly those like Grenada which had offended imperialism.

These pressures raised sharply within the NJM the question of the future development of the revolution, particularly the role and position of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop within the leadership of the revolution, and the attitude towards the new constitution, involving an elective component, which Bishop and his supporters were proposing. The question of the economic power of the bourgeoisie may have been a consideration but in no sense does it seem to have been the main focus of the disputes. Indeed, all the evidence suggests no divergence in actual political line within the NJM leadership. This has been confirmed by Kendrick Radix, one of the founders of the party; by the Cubans, who characterised the disputes as personal and subjective rather than political; by Merle Hodge, who attended



Photo: Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution

Maurice Bishop — undisputed leader of the Revolution the time.

Thus a socialist economy became a future, rather than an immediate aim, although this had the inevitable drawback of allowing the bourgeoisie to maintain much of its economic power in a situation where its political power had been smashed. This strategy did in fact produce the required economic development. The economy grew in each year of the revolution culminating in a rate of 5.5 per cent, making an accumulated growth in the years of the revolution of 15 per cent. These figures impressed even the World Bank: 'Grenada has been one of the very few countries in the Western Hemisphere that continued to experience per capita growth during 1981', *1982 Economic Memorandum on Grenada*. They stand in stark contrast to the backward growth under Gairy and the stagnation and recession gripping other islands as well as the major developed capitalist countries. Importantly, these developments were led by the public sector which experienced a 34 per cent growth in 1982/83.

This economic development was not used to provide the bourgeoisie with fat profits. Rather, it was used to improve the lives of working people on the island. As a result, unemployment was reduced from 49 per cent under Gairy to 14.2 per cent in the 1982 unemployment census. A free education system was

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US Marines stream into Grenada's capital, St George's

the 13 October NJM meeting which placed Bishop under house arrest; and by Trevor Monroe of the Jamaica Workers' Party, who was a close associate of Coard.

The split that took place was at the level of leadership. It was never taken to the membership of the NJM as a whole, which in any case numbered no more than 300 people. Nor were these differences made known to the population as a whole. Nuances of opinion may never be known now since many of the participants are dead, but the general outline of the debate is clear. Supporters of Bernard Coard, who were originally part of a grouping called the Organisation for Revolution, Education and Liberation which fused with the NJM in the mid-1970s, favoured a move towards joint leadership to restrict the individual power which Bishop was felt to wield. Despite accusations, there is no evidence to suggest that the Coard wing favoured an immediate attack on the bourgeoisie. For about a year, Bishop refused to agree on the issue of joint leadership but shortly before a trip to Eastern Europe in late September he conceded the position. On his return following a brief visit to Cuba, during which he did not discuss these problems with Castro, he changed his mind. Rumours were started, from within the Bishop camp, suggesting that Coard planned to kill Bishop.

no doctrine, no principle, no internal split
can justify such atrocious acts as the physical
elimination of Bishop

At this stage it appears that the Coard wing had secured a majority on the NJM Central Committee and a meeting on 13 October placed Bishop under house arrest and asked the army to investigate the rumours. The majority on the Central Committee seems to have been completely out of step with the feelings of the country as whole to whom Bishop was still the hero and leader. This was proved by the size of the demonstration — up to 8,000 people — which marched to free Bishop from house arrest. The military moved in on the crowd, some of whom were killed and others injured, particularly as they attempted to escape over a 50 foot high wall outside Fort Rupert to which the crowd had taken Bishop. Bishop and the other leaders with him were later executed, although the precise circumstances are still shrouded in mystery.

Realising that these events had qualitatively increased the crisis, the PRA, led by General Hudson Austin, seized power in an attempt to stave off further problems. A 16-person Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) was formed and a 96 hour curfew imposed. Attempts were made to assure Western countries that their nationals were safe, promising to allow planes in to evacuate anyone who wanted to leave. All statements promised political continuity with Bishop's policies, including maintenance of the mixed economy.

Suggestions have been made of CIA involvement in the internal disputes. As yet, there is no firm evidence to support such accusations. But one thing is certain, if they *had* been involved they could not have been more successful in creating the confusion and demoralisation amongst the Grenadian people that paved the way for the invasion. To the best of their knowledge Bishop had been the undisputed leader of the revolution and they mistrusted those whom they held responsible for his death.

It is plain that the absence of real democratic structures was a contributory factor in this political crisis. Real democracy would not of course have prevented differences of opinion coming to the surface, but they would have provided the best possible conditions for their peaceful resolution. Keeping these issues from the population as a whole merely exacerbated the problems.

Whatever the political issues under dispute, whether or not Bishop was in a minority on the leadership, there can be no ex-

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cuse for the use of the army or for the murder of Bishop and his supporters. Such actions are in no way compatible with socialist democracy. In this sense the statement of the Cuban Communist Party was absolutely correct: 'No doctrine, no principle, no position calling itself revolutionary, and no internal split can justify such atrocious acts as the physical elimination of Bishop and the prominent group of honest and dignified leaders who died...' The same statement carries a prophetic warning: 'Now imperialism will use this tragedy and the grave errors committed by the Grenadian revolutionaries to wipe out the revolutionary process in Grenada and subject her once again to imperialist and neo-colonialist domination'.

Early in the morning of 25 October the warning became reality. In an airborne assault, the first of its type since Vietnam, the United States landed nearly 2000 Marines and Army Rangers. These forces were backed up by C-130 troop carriers, helicopter gunships and a dozen warships, including the aircraft carriers Independence and Guam. Aboard were at least 70 combat planes including the sophisticated F-15 fighter-bombers which were later to attack the capital, St Georges. In addition, 300 back-up troops were supplied by the neighbouring islands of Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, St Vincent, St Lucia and Dominica. St Kitts-Nevis also supported the invasion but does not seem to have supplied forces.

The American population was not informed of the invasion until it was four hours underway when Reagan, accompanied by the Prime Minister of Dominica, Eugenia Charles, held a press conference. A three-fold justification for the invasion was offered. First, the lives of the 650 United States medical students at the St George's University School of Medicine were supposedly at stake. Secondly, a series of Eastern Caribbean countries had requested assistance. Finally, the United States had a responsibility to 'forestall further chaos' and to assist in the 'restoration of law and order and of governmental institutions to the island'. While they were talking in Washington, Radio 1580 was broadcasting from Grenada on behalf of the American forces, calling on Grenadians to resist the PRA and to 'cooperate with friendly troops in the restoration of democracy'.

despite the presence of Caribbean forces,
regional acclaim for the invasion has been far
from complete

Even the most cursory review of the facts is sufficient to counter Reagan's arguments. Two days before the invasion, Dr Geoffrey Bourne, Vice-Chancellor of the Medical School had informed the White House that only 10 per cent of the students wished to leave, and then only temporarily. The Chancellor, Charles Modica, himself denounced the invasion and held Reagan personally responsible for any casualties. A day later, after the US State Department had called him for a meeting, he withdrew his statement. The RMC also allowed diplomatic representatives to visit the US nationals and ensured that they were under no threat.

The participation of Caribbean troops provides Reagan with only the flimsiest cover. They were not even brought onto the island until the US Marines had secured key positions. Their presence is plainly just for show and they have been used simply to guard prisoners at Point Salines. They provide an illusion of legitimacy and multilateral support which is the stock in trade of American intervention. In Korea for example 15 countries backed up US forces, while in Vietnam forces from South Korea, Thailand and the Phillipines were involved.

Because of the Eastern Caribbean involvement, attempts were made to justify the invasion under the treaty of the seven-member Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which deals with defence and security. The treaty, signed on St Kitts-Nevis in 1981 by the respective heads of government in-

cluding Maurice Bishop, makes it clear that a strict rule of unanimity has to be applied. Far from justifying the invasion, the treaty is clearly breached by it. But Barbados and Jamaica, involved in the invasion, are not signatories to the treaty, although Barbados is signatory to a regional defence pact, known as the Memorandum of Understanding, formulated in 1982 on Dominica. This, however, has not been ratified by many of the signatory countries. Further, a meeting of the Caribbean Economic Community (CARECOM) decided against intervention and for a fact finding mission to assess the real situation in Grenada. The wishes of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize and the Bahamas were plainly disregarded by those who wished to aid the United States.

Similarly the invasion violates the United Nations Charter, as well as contradicting the official position of governments like those of Jamaica, Barbados and Antigua in favour of the Contadora proposals for ending the Central American crisis. When the crunch came they fell in behind imperialism. The post-war boom has incorporated these economies into that of the United States closely tying the Eastern Caribbean dollar to that of the United States. Now they turn increasingly to America for imports, exports and tourism and therefore side with its regional policies. Nor have any of the governments involved been able to produce the slightest evidence other than the usual wild accusations of Cuban plans, of a Grenadian threat to their security.

The law and order Reagan talks about is no more than the requirements of imperialism and neo-colonialism, into whose far from tender care the island is now to be returned. The threat which Grenada posed through the process of what Maurice Bishop called 'disengagement from imperialism', has been ended. Suggestions of chaos exaggerate the situation in Grenada after the killing of Bishop and before the invasion. The curfew had been lifted, businesses were back in operation and workers had returned to their jobs. A civilian government was promised within fourteen days along with a renewed commitment to an elective component in the constitution. The hypocrisy of America is stunning when one considers the support they are giving at this very moment to the murderous and anti-democratic regime in El Salvador and to the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries.

The assault itself did not go according to plan and was far from the 24-hour walkover which America seems to have expected. Starting at 5.40 am the first attacks came on the two airports — Pearls towards the North and Point Salines, still under construction to the South. At the same time there were air attacks on the main army barracks at Fort Frederick and on the capital St Georges.

Because the Cuban workers were housed around the Point Salines airport site, they were immediately in the forefront of the fighting. They were woken to attacks by six helicopter gunships and, each having been issued with a rifle and 700 rounds of ammunition, they began their heroic defence. For the next three days fighting continued around St Georges as invading forces tried to fight their way through fierce resistance from both Cubans and the PRA. Meanwhile, more US troops were parachuted in to the North and East of the capital which was under constant bombardment. Particularly fierce fighting took place around the medical school at Richmond Hill.

When US forces finally reached the capital, Thursday and Friday saw hand to hand fighting, with the PRA blocking off streets with armoured cars. Meanwhile fighting continued on the road from Pearls to St Georges. By Saturday there were 6,000 invading troops on the island — three times the size of the PRA. As Fort Frederick and the capital were taken, fighters moved into the hills towards the centre of the island and also towards the Southern coast.

The US attacks were indiscriminate — the attack on the mental hospital, close to a children's and an old people's home, is just the best publicised example. Reliable reports, by eyewitnesses such as Lisbeth du Block who worked in the teacher education programme, suggest over 1000 Grenadian

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deaths. She also noted the flattening of Radio Free Grenada by helicopter gunships hours after it had been captured. Tourist cottages were repeatedly machine gunned and whole areas destroyed by bombing raids.

On the third and fourth days, leaflets were dropped on Caligny near Point Salines where the last remaining Cubans were resisting. The leaflets urged residents to leave the area and were followed by hours of bombardment from helicopter gunships. Besides this, US forces have failed to cooperate with the Red Cross. Not only has this made it impossible to assess accurately the number of casualties including those of Americans, but obstacles were placed in the way of evacuating the Cuban wounded and dead. In effect the US turned the dead and wounded Cubans into hostages for an end to hostilities when, on 31 October, a US representative informed Cuba that their personnel could only be evacuated when fighting stopped. Then, on 1 November, US troops surrounded the Cuban Embassy and refused to allow anyone in or out.

Despite the presence of Caribbean forces, regional acclaim for the invasion has been far from complete. For example, George Chambers, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, condemned the invasion complaining that his CARICOM partners had failed to notify him of their intentions. On 26 October, he told an emergency session of parliament that his first knowledge on the invasion came from the US ambassador. More than 24 hours after the invasion no Caribbean country had told him of their intentions.

In Guyana, the principle concern of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham was the presence of US troops, declaring his preference for a Caribbean fact-finding mission before any action. He vowed not to recognise an interim government and was prepared to grant asylum to any Grenadians who needed it. A whole series of important political parties and trade unions in the region joined the condemnation: the Progressive People's Party and the Working People's Alliance in Guyana; Michael



Marines harassing NJM supporters

Manley's People's National Party and the Workers' Party in Jamaica; the Oil Field Workers Trade Union in Trinidad and Tobago for example. The Dominican Republic, itself victim of a US invasion twice this century, also strongly condemned the invasion and violent street demonstrations denounced the US.

In Latin America, Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, Peru and Colombia, along with Argentina, were heavily critical, while only the reactionary governments of El Salvador and Guatemala, wellknown for their brutal US-backed regimes, welcomed the invasion. The strongest condemnation, along with that of Cuba, came from Nicaragua — with good reason since the Sandinista government there is clearly next on Reagan's hit list. Commander Daniel Ortega told a 30,000 strong demonstration in capital Managua that it was 'a demonstration of imperialist arrogance' and a forerunner of 'greater aggression against Nicaragua'.

Elsewhere the invasion has drawn almost total criticism, culminating in the vote at the United Nations where the majority condemning the invasion was greater than that which condemned the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan. In Canada, for example, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau said: 'What would happen if the US has now given itself the authority to invade any country where a democratic system did not exist?', while his Foreign Minister stated that the invasion, 'threatens to contribute to the mounting danger of war'.

Meanwhile the Thatcher government in Britain, although not initially supporting the invasion, could not be forced into direct condemnation. Importantly, however, Thatcher did indicate that she would also be opposed to an invasion of Nicaragua. Much Labour Party opposition, especially from Denis Healey, centred on the supposed insult to Britain and to the Commonwealth rather than on defence of the Grenadian revolution and the right of its people to self determination. Some MPs, most notably Jeremy Corbyn, did, however, criticise and condemn the invasion in the context of defence of the NJM and the whole revolutionary process.

On the island, a rounding up of NJM supporters is taking place. Bernard Coard was arrested after threats were made to blow up his house. He has since been reportedly mistreated. Hudson Austin, Chief of the RMC and PRA, has also been arrested. There is a clear danger that these two in particular will be given a show trial, charged with Bishop's murder. But it is also Bishop's supporters who are being detained, most notably Kendrick Radix who used to be the Minister of Justice. Up to 14 November, 623 members of the PRA had been detained, 233 being still in custody. Some 639 members of the militia had been detained, of whom 56 were still in custody. In addition 15 of the 16 members of the RMC were detained.

To cope with these prisoners the US forces have set up a prison compound where the detainees are held in wooden boxes. Of these, Kendrick Radix said: 'You have to stoop right down to get into the cell. The opening is only 2½ feet high. The roof is a piece of badly fitting plastic sheet. The rain came in during the night and I was drenched'.

One of the most sinister aspects of US control of the island is the way in which these prisoners came into custody. Immediately on entering St Georges, the US forces released imprisoned members of Gairy's dreaded gang of hired, criminal thugs, the Mongoose Gang. These people have staffed the road blocks with US forces identifying known socialists and those most clearly identified with the revolution. This is how Radix came to be arrested, for example, and is confirmed by US army spokesperson Captain George White who stated that Radix was 'picked up on the basis that he has been cited by the populace as an instigator, spreading bad will among the people'.

What the United States will attempt to do at all costs is to discredit the NJM, in the process cynically manipulating the enormous popularity of the late Maurice Bishop. In this sense figures like Kendrick Radix represent a problem for America since Bishop and his supporters were legitimised by the United States and branded as the victims of 'leftist thugs'. The

possibility therefore arises of assassinations in order to get rid of those who legitimately claim to be following in the Bishop tradition. As many as possible will be implicated in Bishop's death. The last thing the US wants or is prepared to allow is for the NJM to reconstitute and reorganise itself in the proposed elections, since it is clear that candidates claiming continuity with Bishop and with no part in his killing would receive mass support. Thus, a campaign in defence of the NJM and its imprisoned leaders from whichever faction is clearly crucial in defending Grenadian self-determination. The NJM must be allowed complete freedom to function as a legal political party.

In the absence of the successful reconstitution of the NJM, what lies in store for Grenada is not of course the promised 'democracy'. We see already that it means the savage repression of those sections of the population who supported the revolution and who still have the courage to be clearly associated with it. The people of El Salvador understand what US-style democracy means — brutal dictatorship, just as the people of Nicaragua experienced under Somoza before the Sandinista revolution. Already the Governor, Sir Paul Scoon, has banned public meetings and introduced press censorship as part of the process of preventing the NJM continuing its function as the political leadership of the Grenadian people.

Soon a major US embassy will be situated on the island. US economic aid will follow, supposedly to develop the island but in reality to make it imperialism's loyal and obedient servant, and to ensure that it no longer looks to Cuba and Eastern Europe for aid. After that follows a US military base probably, and ironically, using the same airport that the US claimed was being built as a Cuban/Soviet military base. Engineers working for Plessey on the airport site already confirm this project.

By the time this article appears a puppet government, pulled together by Scoon, himself a Gairy appointee, will be in power on the island. This interim government is supposedly non-political, as if a government set up following imperialist invasion can be anything other than political. It is a pro-imperialist government to carry out the necessary dirty work, to preside over the crushing of the NJM, to carry out political trials and to manipulate elections to ensure the return of a government sympathetic to imperialism.

The nine-person advisory council, as this interim government becomes, has avoided open provocation by not bringing

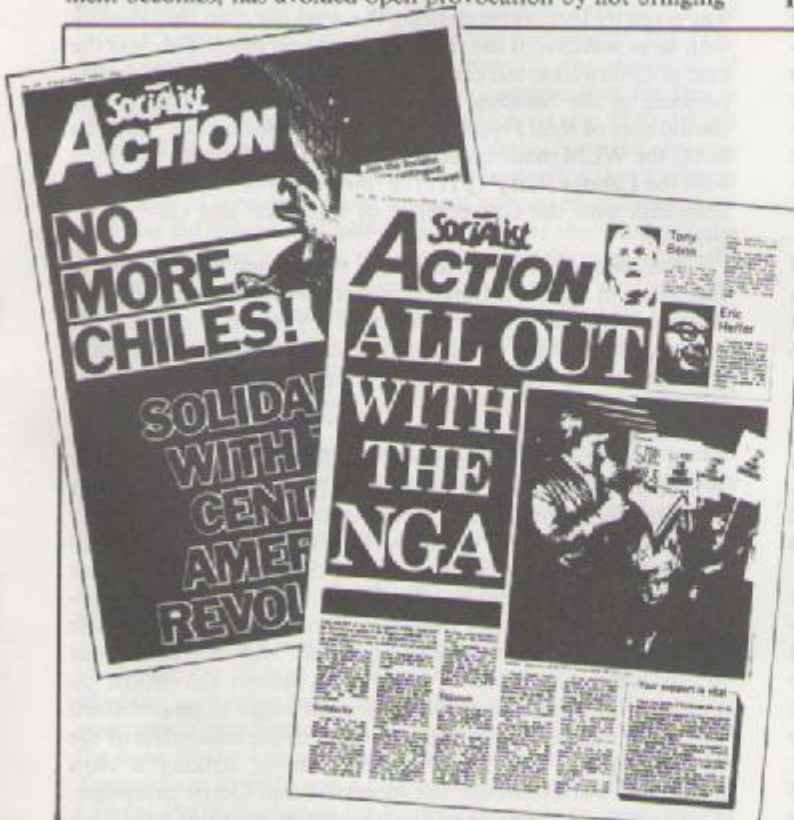
in those too closely associated with Gairy or the Grenadian Democratic Movement. Nevertheless, members of the Advisory Council, such as Dr Devere Pitt, who is to be responsible for construction, housing and science, are generally considered on the island to be supporters of Gairy. Meanwhile, the invasion force remains on the island and no commitment has been given for its eventual removal. Even the fraudulent democracy proposed may not materialise. Scoon has already suggested elections may not actually be held in the near future.

One proposal for removing US forces is for a Caribbean peace-keeping force to assist in the return to what is called 'normality'. Such a solution ignores the real issue of self-determination and concedes the right of imperialism to intervene. This is true even in the version of the plan proposed by the Britain-Grenada Friendship Society which calls for a force of non-aligned Commonwealth countries — like India and Zimbabwe.

Despite opposition to the invasion, Britain has agreed to offer British troops for such a force. Thatcher's refusal to support the invasion can therefore be seen as an imperialist diversion of labour. Britain, its hands unbloodied by the actual invasion, can now play its own special part in returning Grenada to imperialist domination. The apparent split within imperialism over the invasion itself in no way means a similar split over what should happen to the island. It is therefore as important to oppose the consequences of the invasion as it is to oppose the invasion itself.

It must be remembered that what is at stake here is not simply Grenada, because the invasion is not an isolated imperialist aberration, it is part of a coherent project. The US wants next to move against Nicaragua and to crush the FMLN/FDR in El Salvador. If it is allowed an easy ride in the next stages of imposing its will on the Grenadian people, it will be all the easier for it to carry out the next stages of its bloody counter-revolution. The defence of Nicaragua, the defence of Cuba, the defence of the El Salvadorean revolution are all tied up with opposition to imperialist intervention in Grenada.

CHRIS PALMER is secretary of the West Midlands El Salvador Solidarity Campaign and an active member of the Labour Party.



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SECTARIANISM TO WOMEN

JUDE WOODWARD

The British Left's record on feminism leaves much to be desired. Jude Woodward reviews another sectarian and economic attack on the women's movement in the Revolutionary Communist Party's book, *Real Freedom*.

Real Freedom is presented as a reply to the book *Sweet Freedom* by Bea Campbell and Anna Coote. This book has gained a substantial audience in sections of the women's movement, and as a pretty concerted attack on Marxism's record on women it certainly needs a reply. But for the authors of *Real Freedom* an attack on Campbell and Coote is in reality a convenient vehicle for a far more fundamental argument, '...feminism has a record of fighting women's oppression little better than Labourism' (p101), and 'the radical rhetoric of sections of the women's movement often obscures the fact that the very logic of feminism leads to a hostile attitude towards working class politics' (p105).

This hostile assessment of the women's movement as a whole is not unique to the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). Its fundamental conclusions are shared by both the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the *Militant*. And of course these organisations stand in a fine old tradition. The Social Democratic Federation, Britain's first 'Marxist' party used virtually the same words to denounce the suffragettes! The argument goes that all feminism is bourgeois feminism, and women are a 'backward' section of the class who need special efforts to be won to socialism. This is generally coupled with a completely economic approach to political activity, expressed most clearly by the *Militant*. The women's movement is 'divisive' and the task is to unite the working class around the bread and butter issues of wages, hours and conditions.

So how does *Real Freedom* justify its dismissal of the women's liberation movement? To summarise the book's argument: by 1970 the women's movement had already become so obsessed with personal politics that it was a dead letter and was no longer even fighting for its own demands. This point is proved by the dissipation of the movement in the mid-70s. Even the activism of the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) is dismissed as representing an inevitable compromise with reformism. Today the movement is 'one large quango', accommodated into the state through jobs in women's refuges. This is coupled with the total identification of the women's movement with reformism through the Labour Party. The women's movement is dead! Long live the RCP's 'new movement' — the women's right to work campaign.

The problem for *Real Freedom*, and many others on the left who make similar judgements, is that the analysis of the women's movement is completely divorced from any discussion of the overall developments in the class struggle and in politics. For example, while it is true that the women's movement did break apart in some confusion in the mid-70s, the roots of this cannot be found simply in the heads of active feminists.

The important turning point for the women's movement was the election of the Wilson Labour government in 1974 — not mentioned in this book. The defeat of the Benn-led left challenge on the EEC question, and the sell-out of the Jones/Scanlon trade union left through the social contract left the working class as a whole without any alternative leadership to that provided by the rightward moving Labour government. Opposition to Labour was essentially left to the tiny forces of the revolutionary left. With no radical alternative coming from

within the ranks of the labour movement itself, it is not surprising that the radical feminist wing — which in general *consciously* turned its back on the labour movement — grew in strength in the women's movement.

A small socialist wing of the movement continued to seek alliances with other forces opposing the Labour government, organising in particular around the National Abortion Campaign, the Grunwick strike, and later the Anti-Nazi League (ANL). But the unity of the movement was destroyed at the 1976 Women's Liberation conference, by the intervention of the so-called 'revolutionary feminist' wing of the movement. Opposing all campaigns and strategies that involved men in any way, their very radical phrasemongering concealed an absence of strategy for building the movement. The most extreme exponents of these views eventually broke the democracy of the movement when in the final session they seized the microphone and insisted on the agenda of their preference. This was the last national women's liberation movement (WLM) conference.

A movement of women, as with movements of oppressed nationalities, is bound to embrace the viewpoints of different classes. What is fundamentally at stake is which wins leadership of the movement. And if the working class fails to win that role in the movement the reasons for this have to be sought in the working class movement, rather than in the subjective ideas of the leaders of the women's movement. In the mid-70s it was not surprising that the revolutionary feminists won such sway in the movement; the labour movement was offering no response to the Labour government on this or any other question.

the argument goes that all feminism is bourgeois feminism, and women are a 'backward' section of the class who need special efforts to be won to socialism

That this was not an inherent condition of the women's movement is demonstrated by the fact that when a decisive lead was given by forces representing the working class they rapidly won large sections of the movement around them. This was the case at Grunwicks, but can be seen most clearly through the experience of the National Abortion Campaign. Of course, for the authors of *Real Freedom*, NAC was a sell-out too: 'through NAC the WLM made its peace first with Parliament, and then with the Labour Party' (p113) or 'the period of NAC's activism coincides with the convergence of feminism and reformism' (p114).

The question of reformism and the women's movement in fact arises in a quite different context. What NAC actually did represent was a consistent attempt by some forces in the women's movement to maintain an orientation to an alliance with the labour movement in fighting for a rather significant question of women's rights — despite the problems under the Labour government.

In the crisis of leadership of the labour movement under Wilson and Callaghan the activities of NAC made an important contribution to beginning to resolve this problem — not just for women but for the whole working class. NAC's successful labour movement conference, held in 1978 marked a new stage in taking vital political questions into the trade union movement. The attendance of delegates from industrial unions like the miners (NUM), marked an important step in breaking out of the rotten traditions of the British labour movement on women's liberation. And the forces that began to be mobilised by this kind of activity rapidly moved into the leadership of the struggle against the Thatcher government, striking a blow against the Tories through the successful anti-Corrie campaign. This section of the women's movement at least not only took



Photo: MAGGIE MURRAY

12 December 1982: peace women surround Greenham base forward the struggles of women, but gave some leadership to the rest of the working class as well.

Real Freedom doesn't give all this much attention — it would spoil the argument. In the same way, right now, the RCP's paper, *The Next Step*, denounces the mobilisations of women around Greenham. They are all 'vicar's wives' and 'social workers', whose main function is to sell-out the working class in its fight for nuclear disarmament: 'Despite the reactionary politics of the Greenham protesters — pro-law and order, pro-Britain and pro-family — many on the British left have interpreted the rise of feminism in CND as a shift towards militancy...By allowing middle class feminists to police its protests, CND has ensured that its token actions are kept well within acceptable bounds' (Feb 1983). The fact that national CND and the labour movement had planned *no* mass actions against the missiles in 1983 until the Greenham women took the lead, is, of course, irrelevant.

But the problems of *Real Freedom's* approach come home to roost when it examines the record of the TUC. While the book makes much of the failures of the TUC and its rotten misleadership, when it comes to the crunch, rather than a stinging exposure of the TUC, we have a stinging exposure of the women's movement! From 1975 the 'rot had begun', the TUC had ceased making even small gestures in the direction of women's rights. And *Real Freedom's* explanation for this is that it was the *women's movement* which let the TUC off the hook: 'The women's movement turned away from any strategy of making demands of the trade union leadership that it take up key issues of women's rights, towards notions of autonomy, individual fulfilment and self-help: it thus let the TUC off the hook. Feminists brought their preoccupations with counselling, self-help health collectives, battered women's refuges and self-defence classes into a space willingly provided for them inside the official machine by the union leaders' (p73).

It's true that the pressure did come off the TUC in the mid-70s, but this was mainly due to the retreats from the industrial militancy of the early 1970s. This industrial militancy had brought down the Tories, bringing Labour into office; women workers were offered the Equal Pay Act (EPA) and the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA). But then it became clear that more than industrial militancy was going to be needed to deal with Labour, and the crisis of perspective in the labour movement led to an industrial downturn, including among women workers.

In the unions a tiny minority began to regroup and organise to change the policies of the labour movement, led by forces like NAC and other campaigns. Towards the end of the Labour government this began to combine with reform movements at the base of the Labour Party itself. What emerged after the Tory victory in 1979 was a combination of struggle inside the Labour Party to change the leadership, and the beginning of

more organised reform movements in the unions. The basis for this was laid under Labour, and sections of the women's movement played a not insignificant role. In particular NAC again was able to link up with a developing left wing in the Women's TUC which fought to increase its influence on the TUC itself, scoring some successes. This culminated in forcing the TUC to call the march against the Corrie Bill in 1979. It is interesting that *Real Freedom* does not even mention the 1979 Corrie march in its assessment of the TUC!

In its assessment of the women's movement in the 1970s, *Real Freedom* falls into the typical trap that besets sectarians. Every movement is either good or bad, black or white, with no shades in between. Unable to understand the contradictory nature of the women's movement, as it's not all good, it must be all bad.

For *Real Freedom* the involvement of active feminists in the Labour Party is the last straw! 'The convergence of feminism with the state and the Labour Party shows that the WLM has no independent political existence. Individuals can go on discussing how the personal is political inside women's refuges or in Labour Party wards. This only goes to show that *feminism* cannot even fight on the issues it has staked out for itself' (p117).

It is true that the Labour Party has not got an exactly shining record on women. So why are many feminists active in the Labour Party? Is it a sell-out?

Feminists aren't the only people to have been joining the Labour Party over the last few years. They are alongside an increasing number of working class militants, a growing number of black people, gay activists, CND militants and others. It would be crazy to imagine that these people are joining the Labour Party because they identify with its record.

Since the fall of the Labour government a left wing has emerged in the Labour Party. This became most clearly focussed at the national level around the time of Benn's challenge for the deputy leadership. While this left wing has innumerable weaknesses, the most political militants have seen this development as a way out of the impasse imposed by the last Labour government. Industrial struggle brought down Labour, but the end result was Thatcher! The appearance of a Labour Left provides an alternative — a fight to change the Labour Party.

There are two possible responses to this. The RCP's is to say that this is a hopeless waste of time and very dangerous. The other response is to get into the fight, and take it as far as possible. It's the latter choice that explains the movement of significant numbers of feminists into the Labour Party. The identification of these feminists with the left has been made clear by recent Labour Party Women's conferences. Last year it was the only significant section of the British labour movement to oppose the Falklands War and to call for the return of the fleet. And it led the way to unilateralism and CND. Alongside this,

Polemie

the growth of the Labour Party women's organisation helps lay the basis for building the women's movement with deeper roots among working class women.

Of course the movement of women into the Labour Party remains contradictory. At present the Labour Left has not come forward with a coherent strategy for women. This crucial weakness allows space for others, further to the right, who are waiting to fill the gap.

This is the real danger represented by *Sweet Freedom*, which the RCP can't grasp. The main elements of the strategy proposed by Bea Campbell and Anna Coote — abolish the married person's tax allowances and redistribute the money as higher child benefit — provides a basis for uniting the aspirations of women not with left reformism, but with the Labour Right and even the Social Democratic Party. SDP spokespersons Polly Toynbee and Sue Slipman have put forward similar policies.

Without any clear alternative these policies have gained weight among Labour women. They are even widely considered to be 'left' policies. In the context of the current debate around coalitionism — led by sections of the Communist Party, of which Bea Campbell was until recently a member — it is clear what function these policies can play. They provide a basis for uniting women behind the project of a Labour Right/SDP coalition government. This would be the end of the Labour women's organisation as a left force inside the Labour Party. But *Real Freedom* doesn't even see this challenge, let alone take it up, as it gives the current debates inside the Labour Party no significance.

for *Real Freedom* the involvement of active feminists in the Labour Party is the last straw!

Of course *Real Freedom* loudly proclaims the need for socialism, and its so-called 'women's right to work campaign' includes at least a fair proportion of the actions that women should expect a socialist government to take — from full employment to the socialisation of domestic labour. But the here-and-now struggles of women are essentially not socialist enough for the pure RCP. The only struggles they dare get mixed up in are the occasional strike.

But there is a serious debate that socialists must confront in the here-and-now, and that is the debate taking place in the Labour Party on women. And if we are not careful we will lose it by default. There are two issues of absolute centrality to the female section of the workforce. First and foremost is the question of low pay, and alongside it the job segregation that underpins it. This year the labour movement as a whole finally accepted the principle of a national minimum wage, which would constitute a tremendous advance for women workers. But as usual in the Labour Party the real debate is about how it would be financed. Roy Hattersley has already indicated that in his view it would have to come through increased taxation of the higher paid. This is exactly the same answer as given by Bea Campbell and Anna Coote in *Sweet Freedom*, when they ask other workers to be 'altruistic' towards women. There are two clear problems with this answer; first, unless this higher taxation is going to massively cut into the majority of workers' standard of living it wouldn't be enough to pay for a minimum wage; secondly, if you are looking for a way to divide the working class and convince it that a better deal for one section means a worse deal for another, you couldn't choose a better way to do it.

The whole Labour Left, with women in the forefront, has to take up this question of the minimum wage, and argue that it should be paid for by the power of the banks, insurance companies and multinational companies.

On job segregation we have to begin to seriously raise the

argument for positive action — the setting of goals and quotas to bring women into all jobs. The experience of some Labour councils in implementing such programmes can be used as the basis for beginning the real argument for legislation to make this mandatory on all employers. *Real Freedom* like the *Militant*, rejects positive action out of hand. It calls it divisive, a policy 'which asks the working class to pay for an improvement in women's position'. It would be interesting to see how *Real Freedom* would explain to the million-plus women who are the sole wage earners in their families that a better paid job for them means a setback to the working class!

All such arguments really do is let the labour bureaucracy off the hook. Bea Campbell does too, when she argues that while positive action is a good thing, women should rely on the goodwill of the bosses to implement it. At the same time, without considering the issue of legislation, she argues it would inevitably be a side-issue in collective bargaining, reliant on a 'degree of altruism that has no part in the tradition of British trade unionism'.

Women in the Labour Party should take up the arguments around the national minimum wage and on positive action, putting forward a series of demands that begin to go to the roots of the problems confronting women. But, of course, *Real Freedom's* fundamental argument is against all partial demands and reforms. This is 'reformism' and counter to Marxism. The fight for laws in particular is abhorred, 'parliamentarist', and in the 'acceptable' arena of lobbying and talking to MPs.

So how, as Marxists, do we see this? Well, Marx and Engels' view was clear, they showed it in practice. They built the successful 8-hour-day campaign at the end of the 19th century — clearly not a 'socialist' demand, as it was won without the overthrow of capitalism! And they fought against those tendencies in the workers' movement of the time which argued that the fight shouldn't be for a law, but against individual employers. But they didn't go lobbying for it, they built some of the most massive demonstrations Britain has ever seen. Perhaps the RCP's next book will explain how Marx and Engels were also reformists!

The fight for reforms and partial demands is a fundamental element in Marxist strategy. They don't solve people's problems, but in two important respects they are a step on the road. First, as each subsidiary aspect of women's oppression gets cleared out of the way it becomes plainer to the great mass of women what the roots of their problems really are. Secondly, each successful fight for reform represents both a real improvement in the status and situation of women, and builds their confidence and ability to struggle for more.

The authors of *Real Freedom* declare the necessity of socialism, but then make no contribution on how to achieve it. Like every other sectarian current on the British left, they prefer to maintain their unsullied revolutionary purity, of a type only found in ivory towers, rather than dirty themselves in the actual struggles working people are engaged in now.

The new rise in combativity of women, the immensely positive role played by the women at Greenham and the Labour Party women's organisation, is a challenge to the left. Can we prove that socialism has something to offer these and all women? Yes, by being responsive to the needs and demands of the movement as they are thrown up. This doesn't mean adopting wholesale every notion that wins the label feminist. But the feminism of the vast numbers of working class women who look up from their kitchen sinks or sweatshop sewing machines and say: 'What about us!' — that's our feminism. And we have to prove it, by helping it develop into a powerful wave to sweep away centuries of oppression. *Real Freedom's* starting point is not where they agree with the sentiment and these struggles, but where they disagree. Its only contribution is to help convince women that Marxists have nothing to say.

JUDE WOODWARD is an active member of the Labour Party and the Greenham peace movement.

PERRY ANDERSON ON STALINISM

PHIL HEARSE

In an article in *New Left Review* No 139 Perry Anderson set out to update Trotsky's theory of Stalinism, arguing that in crucial respects it has proved to be dated. Phil Hearse takes issues with his conclusions.

While Perry Anderson starts from a position warmly sympathetic to Trotsky's attempt to theorise the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the social nature of the USSR, he nevertheless comes to conclusions radically different from Trotsky's in relation to Stalinism's *international* role. They are also conclusions radically different from those of the Fourth International and the overwhelming majority of organisations claiming to stand in the Trotskyist tradition.

We should be clear at the outset that Anderson's method and spirit are exactly in accord with Trotsky's own. There is no point in defending the indefensible, just because the 'Old Man' said it. 'The most dangerous thing in politics is to fall captive to one's own formula that yesterday was appropriate, but is bereft of all content today'.¹ Marxism is the method of successive approximations, and besides, Trotsky did not live to see the last 40-odd years of Stalinist development, much of which would surely have taken him by surprise.

The essence of Perry Anderson's position can be summed up as follows: hostile both to capitalism and to proletarian liberty, the Stalinist bureaucracy has, despite itself, often played a progressive role. While Trotsky's theory of Stalinism in the Soviet Union was in essence correct, and in any case has not in its fundamentals been surpassed: '...he erred in qualifying the external role of the Soviet bureaucracy as simply and unilaterally 'counter-revolutionary' — whereas in fact it was to prove profoundly *contradictory* in its actions and effects abroad, just as much as it was at home. Secondly, he was mistaken in thinking that Stalinism represented merely an exceptional or "aberrant" refraction of the general laws of transition from capitalism to socialism, that would be confined to Russia itself. The structures of bureaucratic power and mobilisation pioneered under Stalin proved to be more *general* and *dynamic* a phenomenon on the international plane than Trotsky ever imagined...Stalinism, in other words, proved to be not just an apparatus, but a *movement* — one capable not only of keeping power in a backward environment dominated by scarcity (USSR); but of actually winning power in environments that were more backward and destitute (China, Vietnam) — of expropriating the bourgeoisie and starting the slow work of socialist construction, even against the will of Stalin himself...Stalinism as a broad phenomenon...did not merely represent a *degeneration* from a prior state of relative class grace: it could also be a spontaneous *generation* produced by revolutionary class forces in very backward societies, without any tradition of either bourgeois or proletarian democracy.'

The first thing to note is that Perry Anderson provides neither a precise *definition* of Stalinism, nor does he outline *in what sense* Trotsky considered the role of Stalinism to be internationally counter-revolutionary. Both are crucial to any attempt at disproving Trotsky's theory. Trotsky considered the essence of Stalinism to be the subordination of the interests of the world working class (international revolution) to the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. His accusation against Stalinism internationally was not that its every action was



Picture: DAVID KING COLLECTION

Joseph Stalin

counter-revolutionary, but that it had gone over to the 'bourgeois order'; that the central role of the Stalinised Comintern was to defend the position of the bureaucracy, which relied for its position on the lack of advance, the incompleteness, of the world revolutionary process: in other words, that the Stalinist bureaucracy and the parties which it controlled, had made an accommodation with the continued domination of the world economy and world politics by imperialism, and was acting as a profound barrier to the overthrow of the world imperialist system. In making a balance sheet of Stalinism you have to judge this question: has Stalinism overall acted as a barrier to the overthrow of imperialism? By attempting to give a 'yes/no' answer, Perry Anderson credits Stalinism with achievements of a quite extraordinarily revolutionary character, as we shall see.

the central error which Anderson makes is to transfer the role of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR onto a world scale

The central error which Perry Anderson makes in his critique of Trotsky is to transfer the role of the Stalinist bureaucracy inside the Soviet Union onto a world scale. Quite rightly, he says that inside the Soviet Union the bureaucracy is hostile to private capitalist property and also to proletarian liberty. He then argues that '(Trotsky's) error was, ironically, only to have thought that this contradiction could be confined to the USSR itself; whereas Socialism in One Country proved to be a contradiction in terms'.

Anderson's argument here is quite wrong. Internationally, the Soviet bureaucracy has shown itself time and time again prepared to reconcile itself to the continued existence of private capitalist property, if not to proletarian liberty. Trotsky's

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Picture: DAVID KING COLLECTION

Leon Trotsky

whole argument was precisely that, in order to maintain its own rule, the bureaucracy could not tolerate any attempt to restore capitalism in the USSR, but that internationally it would reconcile itself to the continued existence of imperialism. It would do so because the spread of revolution internationally threatened not just imperialism, but also its own rule. The Stalinist bureaucracy was a product of the confinement of the revolution to a relatively backward country, and the continued pressure of imperialism. Revolutionary upsurges threatened to destabilise the grip of the bureaucracy on its own working class. That the Stalinist bureaucracy did indeed collaborate with imperialism to strangle revolution in Trotsky's lifetime is hardly a matter of dispute.

Let us imagine for one moment that the Soviet Union was genuinely 'hostile to capitalist property and proletarian liberty' on an international scale. It would mean that the Stalinist bureaucracy was engaged in a world-wide fight to establish bureaucratic workers' states. Any *modus vivendi* with world capitalism would be totally excluded. The Soviet bureaucracy

would fight to bring the Communist Parties to power everywhere (while simultaneously crushing independent working class action). Undeniably a world-wide orientation of this kind would be progressive. It would engender struggles which the Stalinist parties would be quite unable to control. New bureaucratic states thus established would surely prove impossible to dominate from Moscow and would rapidly undermine the stability of the Moscow bureaucracy.

This scenario is of course very far from being the case. But it highlights why to defend its own rule and its own interests the bureaucracy *has to* reconcile itself to the continued existence of 'individual, private capital', of world imperialism.

What, then, is Anderson's evidence against the argument that Stalinism has played a fundamentally counter-revolutionary international role? It is, first, the post-war social overturns in Eastern Europe; second, the role of the Soviet Union in defeating fascism and in the post-war decolonisation of the 'third world'; and, third, the revolutions carried out (in China, Vietnam, etc.) by parties which had their origins in the Stalinised Comintern. Each of these arguments is tendentious and one-sided.

Anderson's lack of a definition of Stalinism shows in his unproblematic inclusion of the Chinese and Vietnamese parties in the ambit of the Stalinist 'movement'. To do so is to say, in effect, that Stalinism is the totality of parties and movements which came out of the Comintern. This is hardly satisfactory. Doubtless, all the parties mentioned by Anderson were marked by Stalinist methods and conceptions. But they all, to a greater or lesser extent, *broke* with Moscow, generally over the crucial question of whether or not to take power. In other words, they *refused* to subordinate the interests of their own working class to that of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The origins of the division between parties which cravenly accepted the dictates of the Kremlin and those which refused lie in the uneven process of the Stalinisation of the Comintern. For geographical and social reasons it proved much easier to bring to heel the French and Italian parties, for example, than the Chinese. The alternative to defining Stalinism as subordination to the diplomatic interests of the Kremlin, and through that to the international bourgeois order, is to define Stalinism as a totality of movements which have common theoretical approaches, policies and internal structures. But this is hardly adequate to define the 'laws of motion' of such parties. If it is a common 'approach' which constitutes Stalinism, then why do some parties take power against the direct orders of Stalin and others subordinate themselves to their own bourgeoisie? This is a mystery, unless Stalinism is defined as subordination to the diplomatic interests of the bureaucracy of a workers' state.

It might be objected that there is today more than one bureaucratic workers' state and that, by derivation, Stalinism could be defined as subordination to the interest of for example the Chinese bureaucracy. This seems to me a reasonable argument, but one which does not affect the substance of the matter. In any case, Anderson himself throughout his article conflates 'Stalinism' with the ruling bureaucracy in the USSR. Why then are parties which broke from that bureaucracy in a decisive way part of the Stalinist movement?

In discussing the post-war social overturns in Eastern Europe, Perry Anderson confuses the question of the military-bureaucratic interests of the Soviet bureaucracy with its alleged 'hostility to private capitalism' internationally. The creation of the buffer states was carried out not because Stalin was innately hostile to capitalism in Eastern Europe, but for the military defence of the USSR. There is some evidence, but again this is not decisive, that Moscow first of all conceived of the buffer states as being subordinate to the USSR, but not necessarily workers' states. In the event, the bureaucracy proved incompatible with local capitalism. But there is nothing in the creation of the 'People's Democracies' which demonstrates any world revolutionary role for Stalinism.

The division of Europe was agreed with US and British im-



Soviet leader Molotov with Nazi leaders at time of Stalin/Hitler pact

Picture: DAVID KING COLLECTION

perialism at Yalta. The East European transition went hand in hand with the Stalinist betrayal of the revolution in Greece and the potentially pre-revolutionary situations in Italy and France. Stalin respected his agreement with Roosevelt and Churchill. Fernando Claudin² and many other authors have documented in detail the line of the Stalinist parties in Western Europe for the restoration of bourgeois democracy after the Second World War.

Trotsky, in his writings on the Soviet-German invasion of Poland foresaw that in certain situations the Soviet bureaucracy might be forced to invade and even occupy neighbouring states for reasons of self-defence. He predicted that in such situations bureaucratic rule would prove to be incompatible with the continued existence of capitalism: a 'military-bureaucratic' transition would ensue.

Stalin and Stalinism bear a heavy responsibility for the *victory* of Nazism and for the very fact of the World War

The creation of the buffer states was part and parcel of a deal with imperialism which helped to create the new (imperialist) world order after the war. Only if it could be shown that it was part of a *tendency* towards expansion and the creation of new bureaucratic states could it be termed part of a 'revolutionary' side of Stalinism.

Anderson's argument about the role of the Soviet Union in the defeat of Nazism is perplexing. He himself admits that the defeat of Hitler was no part of Stalin's strategy until the Soviet Union was invaded. The bureaucratic-terrorist methods with which Stalin waged the war put its success in jeopardy many times. In any event, how is it possible for a revolutionary Marxist to attribute the defeat of Hitler as a positive virtue of

Stalinism, without mentioning the mechanisms by which fascism came to power and the Second World War was unleashed?

The rise of fascism and the war were the price paid by the international working class for its failure to take power between the wars: in other words, for the defeat in Germany, the destruction of the Spanish Revolution and the betrayals of the French Popular Front. In each of these sorry tales the role of Stalinism was crucial. In Germany the 'third period' insanity of the Communist Party sabotaged any chance of successful resistance to the Nazis. In Spain, the Soviet Union intervened directly to crush the revolution and subordinate it to bourgeois objectives — murdering some of the best leaders of the Spanish proletariat in the process. Stalin and Stalinism bear a heavy responsibility for the *victory* of Nazism and for the very fact of the World War. Perry Anderson turns this into a virtue!

Of course the Soviet bureaucracy, when the Hitler-Stalin pact proved worthless could not accept the destruction of its rule by fascism. In predicting defeat for the Soviet Union in the war Trotsky undoubtedly underestimated the commitment of the Soviet masses to collectivised property relations, and their ability to win out despite the bureaucratic mismanagement of the war. But the (eventually) successful defence of Soviet territory is *not* evidence for any revolutionary qualities of Stalinism.

Anderson's argument that Stalinism has constituted a 'dynamic' and 'generalised' form of transition to socialism in the third world is full of dangers. If we leave aside the argument that the Vietnamese and Chinese parties were Stalinist, Anderson's position seems to contain another logic — namely that in the semi-colonial countries bureaucratic forms of mobilisation are necessary or inevitable, both in the overthrow of imperialism and the building of socialism. What other logic is there in the terms 'generalised' and 'dynamic'?

Presumably this is because of the lower level of culture and material wealth in these countries. This would be an extraor-

Polemie

dinary logic to accept, if only because it puts in question Trotsky's account of the bureaucratisation of the Soviet Union itself, which Anderson supports. For if bureaucratic forms of mobilisation are 'general' and 'dynamic', then wasn't Stalinism a necessary evil inside the Soviet Union itself? This of course is the standard apology for Stalin's crimes — that Stalin adopted brutal but necessary methods, that workers' democracy was impractical in such a 'backward' country, and that in any case you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. Everything from the insanity of the forced collectivisation to the labour camps can be justified by such arguments.

Trotsky's case against the bureaucratic management of the Soviet economy was precisely that while there was something very 'dynamic' about collectivised property relations, the domination of the bureaucracy was a *fetter* on this dynamism and held back the development of the productive forces. This is exactly the same argument as is put forward by the world Trotskyist movement today — that bureaucratic management, bureaucratic forms of 'mobilisation' in both the East European countries and the less developed countries such as China, serve as an obstacle to maximising the potential inherent in national planning and collectivised property relations. If Perry Anderson thinks that workers' democracy is inappropriate in the less developed countries, then he is undermining the very case he makes out on the Soviet Union itself.

This whole question is vital for the future of the revolutionary movement in the semi-colonial countries — are bureaucratic forms the general mode of transition in these countries? Or are they the product of the lack of a conscious fight against bureaucratism, that is to say the absence of a revolutionary Marxist leadership? Trotsky himself regarded scarcity as the social basis for bureaucratism and thought it inevitable that bureaucratic methods and tendencies would be a constant pressure in less developed countries. That is what the analogy of the 'policeman and the queue' is all about. But he did not regard it as inevitable, or 'general', that a bureaucratic social caste would arise in colonial countries in a post-revolutionary situation. He thought that by the conscious fight of a revolutionary leadership this could be avoided.

Anderson will be hard put to show that the Soviet Union has *consistently* supported revolutions in Cuba, Vietnam or China

The example of Cuba, at least in part, shows that the growth of a privileged bureaucracy can be avoided. Obviously this is a crucial question for the future of a country like Nicaragua. Is bureaucracy inevitable? Is it the general rule? Will the coming social revolution in the Indian sub-continent create the kind of bureaucracy which exists in China? Will it be led by Stalinist parties?

And what of the role of the Soviet Union in the post-war decolonisation? Of course, the existence of the Soviet workers' state has been an immense factor in the world relationship of social forces, which has aided the colonial revolution, *despite* the betrayals and perfidy of the bureaucracy. But this is not a virtue of *Stalinism*. Moreover, the role of the Stalinist parties in the Third World has been one of the main obstacles to the achievement of socialism, and remains so today. Time and again, the 'two-stage' theory of revolution — first a democratic revolution together with your own bourgeoisie and *then* the socialist revolution — has led the Stalinist parties and their followers into a trap. Anderson talks of those parties like the Chinese which broke with Moscow. But what about those that didn't, the real Stalinist parties?

The subordination of the Middle East CPs to the Arab bourgeoisies is well known. In Iraq and Egypt the respective subordination of the CPs to Ba'athism and Nasserism led them

to destruction. In Latin America the popular frontist record of the CPs is appalling; in Chile, the CP was the *right wing* of the Popular Unity alliance. On the Indian sub-continent all the various CPs, and especially the pro-Moscow CP, subordinate themselves to the local bourgeoisie. And in Indonesia, the subordination of the PKI to the diplomatic interests of Peking, expressed in their support for Sukharno, led to the worst defeat of the world workers' movement since 1933 in Germany.

Finally, we come to the overall role of the Soviet Union in relation to successful revolutions. It is true, and no account of world politics can ignore it, that the Soviet Union has acted as a shield to defend the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions. In order to defend its own military position, the Soviet Union has been forced to extend its own sphere of operations, to seek out military, strategic and diplomatic allies. In most instances this takes the form of allying itself with local *capitalist* forces in the Third World; hence the current alliance with Syria's Assad, and even an attempted alliance with Sadat in Egypt. These alliances are at the *expense* of the local working class and even the local CPs.

In Vietnam and Cuba the Soviet Union attempted to use the opportunities for diplomatic and military advances provided by revolutions carried out by others. But Perry Anderson will be hard put to show that the Soviet Union has *consistently* supported revolutions in Cuba, Vietnam or China. In Cuba the revolution was made against the line of the local CP, which even entered the government of the tyrant Batista. In Vietnam the Soviet Union was a prime mover in the 1954 Geneva accords which deprived the Viet Minh of many of the gains of Dien Bien Phu. Stalin was *against* the seizure of power by the Chinese CP.

Far from being 'persistently anti-capitalist' outside its own borders, the Soviet bureaucracy has always acted according to its own bureaucratic interests. This applies *especially* to the colonial revolution. The latest evidence of this is the complete and utter prostrate inaction of the USSR over the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, where the bureaucracy hardly bothered to go through the normal diplomatic protests let alone render material aid to the PLO. It did however support its capitalist ally Assad.

Certainly, the colonial revolution has benefited from the existence of the workers' state in the USSR. But it has not benefited from *Stalinism*. The emergence of world Stalinism was not inevitable. It arose from something very specific, something propelled by immense social forces, but in the end something *avoidable* — the degeneration of the Bolshevik Party, the Russian Revolution and the Communist International. The price humanity pays for this process is immense, in every part of the world. It has held back the struggle for socialism over a 50-year period.

By refusing to acknowledge that the world role of Stalinism is counter-revolutionary, Anderson underestimates the practical tasks facing revolutionary Marxists in every sector of the world revolution. For neither in the advanced capitalist countries, the semi-colonial countries nor indeed in the workers' states themselves can we put our trust in parties linked to the Moscow bureaucracy. The task of building authentic revolutionary Marxist parties faces the working class everywhere. To accept that Stalinism has and does play a 'contradictory' role on a world scale all too easily leads to an abstention from the task of building parties which base themselves on the tradition of the first Communists to fight Stalinism — Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

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- 2 Claudin, *The Communist Movement*, p307-454, Penguin edition.

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SOME LIKE IT COLD?

Chris Bertram

Fred Halliday: *The Making of the Second Cold War*, Verso, 1983, £4.95.

The Making of the Second Cold War is an invaluable weapon in the hands of socialists, internationalists and fighters for peace everywhere. The richness of its sources and the wealth of information contained in it qualify it as a classic example of the 'present as history'. Unfortunately it is not possible to give unqualified approval to the analysis contained within it.

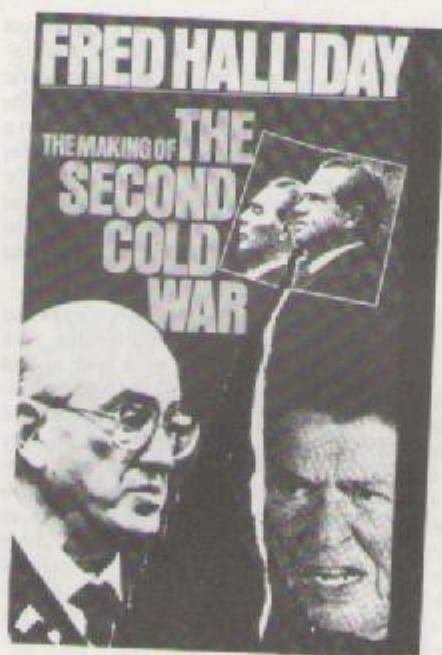
Halliday rejects 'monocausal' explanations of the origins of the new Cold War. He examines a series of putative explanations and theories of Cold War, from crude 'Russian threat' analyses to revolutionary Marxist positions, before dismissing them all as one-sided. Instead, we should seek to integrate these different viewpoints in some sort of explanatory hierarchy. This Halliday proceeds to do.

In his opinion: 'The ebb and flow of revolution and counter-revolution, of class conflict and social upheaval, has been overshadowed and shaped by the far greater risks for both sides which the availability of nuclear weapons has introduced' (p35). For him the pre-eminent level of Cold War Two is the 'Great Contest', the conflict between two vast and antagonistic social systems; a conflict mediated by the risks implicit in the possession of nuclear arsenals.

So where does this leave the class struggle? The author himself seems unsure about this. Sometimes he describes his view as being 'an extension of the class conflict theory' (p31), but this seems to be contradicted when he speaks of the class struggle as shaped and overshadowed by the 'Great Contest' and the potential for 'megadeath'. For all that the Contest may be above class struggle, it does seem that world revolution taps the Reagans and Andropovs on the shoulder from time to time. Thus 'Brezhnev's pursuit of Detente in the early 1970s was undermined by the revolutions that swept the third world from 1974 onwards' (p41).

Halliday's periodisation of the postwar period is also less than satisfactory. The First Cold War, dating from 1946-1953, is replaced by a period of 'Oscillatory Antagonism' from 1953 to 1969. Detente dates from 1969 to 1979, the year when the Second Cold War came into being. 'Oscillatory Antagonism' was a period in which attempts were made to lessen confrontation between the superpowers, although these attempts were not successful.

Now is this true? The period is, after all, the one during which Kennedy campaigned on the basis of an alleged Soviet preponderance in ICBMs. It is also the period of the Cuban Missile crisis. And today, might we not be in a renewed period of 'Oscillatory Antagonism' rather than in the midst of a new Cold War? I have no doubt that Halliday is right in his characterisation of the period we are now living through, but in no way does he prove the case. Furthermore, it is not clear whether he believes the attempts to lessen antagonism



during 'Oscillatory Antagonism' and Detente represented the temporary abandonment of a strategy to 'rollback' the social gains made where capitalism had been overthrown, or a tactical adjustment within just such a strategy.

The bulk of the book is taken up with a detailed account of the factors that have gone into the making of the new Cold War, and of the arenas in which the struggle has been fought out. It is to these parts of the book that many socialists will look for facts and arguments to defeat the Cold War. Halliday shows beyond doubt that if the USA and USSR have both contributed to the Cold War, it is the USA which has taken the initiative and holds most of the responsibility. The book catalogues the revolutions that have swept the 'Third World' in the postwar years. Disappointingly taxonomy sometimes replaces analysis.

One of the most fascinating chapters is the one which deals with the rise of the New Right

in the USA. Halliday identifies the growing importance of the 'sunbelt', the recession and the response of Middle America to the assertiveness of ethnic and sexual groups as major causes of the rise of reaction. He records the susceptibility of Congress to the Right, and the crossover between military, political and economic interests. It will be interesting to see how far the freeze movement can worry members of Congress with small majorities!

Many readers of *International* will have sharp disagreements with the chapter entitled 'The Involution of the Post-Revolutionary States'. It is not that the author is an apologist for the ruling bureaucracies of Eastern Europe and China, indeed his criticisms are sometimes as sharp as those of any Trotskyist. But the book argues that the international policy of the Soviet Union is basically progressive and that it shifted to the left during the Brezhnev years. Far from being at the end of the day, allies of imperialism, the Stalinists turn out to be its opponents. Even Halliday's criticisms of the domestic policies of the bureaucracy are tinged with a certain optimism concerning its role. He indicts the bureaucracy for its failure to democratise and explains that this is a contributory factor to Cold War Two. The 'democracies' of the West make full use of the suppression of freedoms in the East, but even the most enlightened bureaucracy would jeopardise its own existence by permitting real workers' democracy.

For all the criticisms this is still a superb book. It sits uneasily between a Thompsonite 'exterminism' and revolutionary Marxism, but makes up for this by collecting in one place the information and history we need so badly. But, for all the commitment in the book, I detected a strand of pessimism. For if the class struggle is now determined by, rather than a determinant of, the 'Great Contest' and the arms race, the liberation of the working class will be the task of...whom?

CHRIS BERTRAM is a member of the International editorial board.

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Reviews

SOCIAL WORK & SOCIALISM

Annie Hudson

Chris Jones: *State Social Work and the Working Class*, Macmillan, 1983, £4.95. Mike Simpkin: *Trapped Within Welfare*, Macmillan, 2nd edition, 1983, £4.95.

At present we can only guess the long-term effects of the Conservative's electoral victory in 1983. What is clear, however, is that the fragile veil of social democratic ideology which has been the hallmark of the post-war welfare state has been torn apart; the coercive tilt of the state is possible only in its earliest infancy. Already there have been massive reductions in the more benign aspects of the personal social services (for example, in the home-help services and in support for the mentally handicapped and their families). We have seen too an escalation of the controlling aspects of welfare (for example, in the introduction, in the Criminal Justice Act 1982, of a 'curfew' for some juvenile delinquents).

Such trends provoke consternation for socialists working in welfare agencies and pose complex questions both about the aspects of welfare we need to defend and about the kind of alternative social policies we should promote. Only a decade ago social work literature could be more or less divided into two opposing factions. First — and overwhelmingly dominant then as now — an array of consensual and paternalist perspectives on social problems which remain largely unquestioned and still underpin most social work practice. The second and opposing trend saw social work as an unequivocal weapon of class domination and control. The limitation of this approach lay partly in its small number of adherents but also in its exclusive emphasis on the negative aspects of welfare work. Socialist practitioners had to look very hard to find sustenance for any kind of more positive yet critical practice.

Faced with increasing attacks on welfare services, socialists have had to rethink many aspects of their traditional analysis and in the last few years there has been much discussion about ways in which consumers and practitioners can develop oppositional forms from within agencies themselves. The shifts reflect too, as Chris Jones points out, the entry into welfare work of large numbers of people who have a more politicised approach to the job. More recent entrants are likely to have had personal experience of 'oppositional cultures' for example, the women's movement, community action campaigns and student protest. The arrogant confidence and 'noblesse oblige' character of social work has cracked a little and the consequent casting about for new rationales has given rise to an array of literature which attempts to delineate forms of radical practice that would have been largely unheard of a decade ago.

It is on this somewhat contradictory terrain that both of these books make significant contributions. Although they cover similar ground, the issues explored are sufficiently different to make for complementary reading. The greatest strength of Jones' book lies in the attention and detail he gives to the historical antecedents of contemporary social work. In

contrast, the force of Simpkin's arguments derives in large part from his own personal experience as a social worker in a psychiatric hospital; his book is much more of an inside view than Jones' (though the latter has been a practising social worker). Simpkin provides us with some powerful ammunition for refuting right-wing and liberal arguments that radical perspectives are unrealistic and fail to take humane account of individual needs and differences.

Jones argues that the state has always had an essentially problematic relationship with social work; it needs social work both to deal with its social 'nuisances' and the economically dependent, and to offer society some kind of testimony of its concern for socially vulnerable groups. His careful analysis identifies those sections of the working class which have been labelled by welfare agencies as 'inadequate', 'feckless' or 'dependent'. Such labels deny, however, the specific material characteristics of groups who have a particularly fragile and weak relationship to the labour market. The elderly and the handicapped are defined as 'dependent' and so, in a capitalist economy devoted to profit, receive inadequate services and resources. Similarly, juvenile delinquents and so-called 'problem families' are deemed to be nuisances because of the financial costs and moral threat they pose the state.

Jones suggests that the state has drawn a 'cordon sanitaire' around social work clients and, by focussing on personal pathology rather than collective oppression, divides them off from other sections of the working class. The twin processes of marginalisation and stigmatisation have acted to blunt the outrage and anger of the working class to some of the most obvious examples of the failures of capitalism to meet human needs.

Jones provides a comprehensive examination of the role of social workers in fracturing their clients from a united working class response. Social work's pre-occupation with individual needs, problems and solutions wrests clients from the material and social contexts of their lives. Yet Jones reminds us too of the functionalist trap of denying any possibility of forms of resistance to state definitions and practices. A more active commitment to what he terms 'whistle blowing' tactics is urgently needed; this would help to tear apart the veil of illusion that the basis of client's problems are the products of individual pathology. Similarly, he suggests that social workers should demand and work for a more participatory approach to the provision of welfare services. These are but two of the key elements for a socialist welfare strategy in a period when social democracy is in retreat.

The main limitation of Jones' study lies in its rather narrow conception of class which more or less renders invisible the influence of other social categories such as race and gender. Recent research has demonstrated, for example, how probation officers are more likely to recommend custodial sentences (rather than community-based ones such as probation or community service) for black rather than white youths. Women, moreover, are more often the recipients of social work intervention in their roles as mothers and as

carers of elderly relatives. Welfare thus often becomes a powerful component of the state's strategy for the social control of black people and women. Analysis of the state's relationship with the working class clients of social work cannot afford to rest on an undifferentiated analysis of class.

Simpkin's book focusses more precisely on the constituents of social work ideology and its attempt to erect pseudo-scientific solutions to what are essentially moral and political problems. Like Jones, Simpkin unmasks the individualism and control elements of social work intervention. He too warns against an over-formalist and deterministic approach to welfare control and, whilst not looking at the possibilities for radical practice through rose-tinted spectacles, he sets out powerful arguments for practitioners to engage in resistance work directly with clients and through active trade unionism. His analysis of the 1978-9 social work strikes, which broke as the first edition of his book was published, is relevant in this context. The strike taught social workers many useful lessons, not least of which was the importance of building bridges with other sections of the labour movement and forcing them to come out of their comfortable professional retreats.

The tone of Simpkin's book is refreshingly strident; he forcibly reminds us of the inequity of 'caring' relationship when people have to more or less put themselves in the hands of the state because their personal lives have been fractured by material and social oppression. Social workers must develop a more active consciousness of the contradictions of their jobs and work co-operatively with one another as well as with clients. Only then can any of the progressive possibilities of social work be exploited.

In a time of right wing conservative entrenchment, however, the space for such possibilities is inevitably contracting. A bleak note to end on, perhaps, but the current reality nonetheless, I suspect. I'd like to be proved wrong.

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VIVA ZAPATA!

Bob Pennington

Adolfo Gilly: *The Mexican Revolution*, Verso, 1983, £6.95.

September 1910 seemed like a glorious high-noon for Mexico's President, General José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz — better known as Don Porfirio. In an orgy of extravagant splendour and ostentation, Mexico was celebrating the 100th anniversary of its declaration of independence from Spain. Don Porfirio himself was celebrating almost a third of a century's uninterrupted presidential rule. A rule which had been carried out with despicuous ruthlessness and which had served the interests of the old oligarchy whose wealth mainly came from the feudally-run haciendas.

But in reality this was no high-noon for either Don Porfirio or the landed bosses. Their days were drawing in fast and it was more like late afternoon whose ominous clouds portended the hours of a threatening darkness. By the December of that same year the power of the dictatorship was eroding as the peasants, intellectuals and sections of a new growing bourgeoisie started to demand their share of the wealth and power which had been reserved for Díaz and the oligarchy. In the north west Pascual Orozco was becoming the first of the revolution's guerilla leaders. Soon that area was to become the domain of Francisco 'Pancho' Villa, the bandit turned revolutionary. In the South in the state of Morelos, the intransigent peasant revolutionary Emiliano Zapata and his army were taking armed action to expropriate the land of the big landowners. The opposition to Díaz drew in those members of the bourgeoisie who were turning from agriculture to industry, it attracted the new petty bourgeoisie and pulled towards itself the small but growing Mexican working class.

Its leader, Francisco Madero, was a man who abhorred revolution and wished for nothing more than an accommodation between the various factions of the ruling class but thought this could only be done through constitutional means. He came from a family of landowners and capitalists and owed his fame to having declared himself as a candidate in the 1909 election — Díaz had imprisoned him for his troubles.

At his best Madero desired change and justice but deeply ingrained in his consciousness was his class origins and his loyalty to his family which was tied to the old regime and the landed aristocracy from which it came. Yet the most extreme wing of the revolution gave its support to this timid bourgeois, because Zapata with an intuitive understanding recognised that only a national revolution as opposed to a peasant uprising could secure the land. Lacking a national programme himself Zapata could only follow those who had such a programme.

By May 1911 Díaz was signing away the presidency and Madero was on his way to becoming President. From the beginning he wanted nothing more than to stop the peasant uprising. Three short weeks after Madero became President, Zapata issued the Plan of

Ayala. This alleged that Madero had deserted the revolution and declared that all land taken away from the peasantry should become immediately the property of the villages and citizens who held the deeds. It insisted such property should be resolutely defended by arms in hand. Rejecting bourgeois constitutionalism the Plan of Ayala stated that *Hacendados, científicos* and local chieftains who directly or indirectly opposed the plan would have their property nationalised.

Zapata did not start out with the aim of destroying the capitalist system. He simply wanted to secure justice for the peasants. However to get that justice he was prepared to smash the resistance of the ruling class and there is no doubt that if the Plan of Ayala had ever been implemented it would have 'smashed the living roots of capitalism', as Gilly says. The Plan of Ayala rested on mass initiative and relied on the peasants taking the land which involved revolutionary war. On its own it could and did create dual power but it did not raise the perspective of another centralised state power based on the masses. That idea like it did in Russia had to come from the proletariat and could not arise out of a peasant movement. Thus the final solution of power always stayed with the bourgeoisie.

Madero was unable to satisfy anyone. His refusal to distribute the land exasperated the peasants. His timid brand of reformism was still unacceptable to the forces of the right and he was overturned and shot by the military junta of Victoriano Huerta — a fate that would almost certainly have befallen Kerenky at the hands of Kornilov in Russia if the Bolsheviks had not taken power in 1917.

But the victory of Huerta was short-lived. The armies of the North West led by Villa — never as radical as Zapata, but militarily better organised — showed that the peasants could actually defeat the organised might of the state. Thus Villa not only inflicted crushing blows on the Huerta forces he raised the confidence, expectation and combativity of the most oppressed. The 'real' wing of the bourgeoisie was led by Venustiano Carranza, but like every weak section of the national capitalist class it could only fight the military dictatorship by reliance on the audacious struggle of armed civil war. Thus it relied on Villa and his armed peasants whilst fearing every action that inspired mass confidence.

After Huerta was defeated and the bourgeoisie withdrew from Mexico City in December 1914 the revolution had reached its glorious apex. The peasant armies of Zapata and Villa had within their grasp state power — the capital was theirs, the factions of the national bourgeoisie had become fragmented and their confidence was running out. But lacking a political programme and having no party, the peasant armies and their leaders were paralysed. They could only leave the government to the 'administrators' and power therefore never left the hands of the petty bourgeoisie who acted as custodians for their political masters, the bourgeoisie.

Villa told Zapata: 'I don't want public posts, because I don't know how to deal with them. We'll see what these people are up to doing. We'll just appoint the ones who aren't going to make trouble.' From then on the revolution could only ebb. Both Zapata and



Emiliano Zapata

Villa looked nostalgically at what they knew and understood. Their class origins stopped them going beyond their hatred of the ruling class and compassion for their own kind. Having no perspective for state power both retreated to their strongholds leaving the ground to the radical wings of the bourgeoisie.

In time Zapata was murdered. Villa won an amnesty only to be murdered later. The radical bourgeoisie, figures like Alvaro Obregon, used a 'left' social programme to win support in their war against the armies of the North and Zapata's revolutionary peasants of the South. The revolution never transcended bourgeois limits but it was not simply a bourgeois democratic revolution. It lay between the last of the bourgeois revolutions and the first working class revolution of October 1917. As Gilly says it was 'an interrupted revolution'.

Of course today Mexico needs a new revolution, but its traditions will not be separate from or alien to the revolution that destroyed Díaz and his successor Huerta. The overthrow of these tyrants was due above all else to the self-activity and courage of the oppressed masses. Much can and must be learned from the armies of Zapata and Villa — their example will always be an inspiration to revolutionaries.

Gilly's well-researched, well-written history of the Mexican revolution is a must for all those who want to understand the revolutionary process and who wish to grasp the theory of permanent revolution.

BOB PENNINGTON has been an active revolutionary for 30 years and is now a regular contributor to *Socialist Action*.

Reviews

RETHINKING SEX

Valerie Coultas

Sue Cartledge and Joanne Ryan, *Sex and Love: New Thoughts on Old Contradictions*, The Women's Press, £4.95.

This is an exciting book to read. It recalls the optimistic aspirations of sexual freedom of the young women's liberation movement, and submits them to a critical re-appraisal in the light of a decade of practice. Many of the essays challenge present day feminist morality forcing a relook at our own sexual practice.

The dominant theme of the essays is an attack on idealism about relationships. In contrast to the stress of recent feminist writings on male violence as somehow intrinsic to heterosexual relations these essays argue for a more positive and pluralistic approach to women's (and in passing, men's) sexuality. Coming to terms with the fact that every form of our sexuality — heterosexuality, celibacy, lesbianism, bisexuality — is socially constructed, with no 'escape' to a perfect female form of eroticism where we can evade the pernicious influence of the dominant male-orientated culture, the book's conclusions are optimistic about radical change in relations between and among the sexes. Disappointingly however it does not delve in any detail into what strategies for change flow from the analysis put forward.

Lynne Segal in 'Sensual Uncertainty or Why the Clitoris is not Enough' takes apart Masters and Johnson, the Hite report and many of the permissive values of the sixties. Lynne points out how useful feminists found these sexologists' attack on the 'phallic fallacies' of the vaginal orgasm as the natural sexual expression of the adult woman. But did the rediscovery of the clitoris and the public acceptance of female masturbation establish an authentic female sexuality? Lynne argues no. Although they encouraged women to explore their sexuality, their focus on sexual technique — the flick of the wrist — to the exclusion of viewing sexual desire as part of social relationships did not get to the heart of the problem: the culture of masculinity which still dominates in bed, orgasm or no orgasm.

Anja Meulenbelt in *Our Bodies Ourselves* discovered a fundamental female sexuality somehow more 'natural' because it's cuddly and unconnected to genital penetration. But, Lynne asks, how is it possible for this to be 'natural' when all women's sexual experiences are formed and reproduced within a male culture? What about our masochistic fantasies? Do these not tell us that even in bed, an 'authentic female sexuality' has not yet been attained? And perhaps this also helps to explain women's erotic daydreams and the ambivalence of feminists towards pornography, because although it degrades us it may also titillate us in some instances. Women often fantasise about gaining power through the seduction of the strong. This irrationality is unsurprising given the association of weakness with femininity and strength with masculinity. But the irrational is not confined to women: 'By far the most common service politicians demand from call-girls is to be beaten'. Only by exploring the irrationality of our emotions can we come to terms with our

sexuality. Orgasms, Lynne concludes, will never on their own obliterate the isolation and emptiness we feel in the rest of our lives.

Wendy Holloway in 'Heterosexual Power and Desire for the Other' looks at the social construction of men's sexuality. The phrase 'all men are little boys' is given a new and interesting interpretation in this essay. Fear of being 'tied down' allowed many young men in the sixties and seventies to pursue a free-floating love life. The assumed equality of women to do the same gave justification to men of these practices. Wendy argues that men's fear of feeling strongly about women leads them to project their fears onto women for being 'possessive': 'Martin, "Once you've opened yourself, once you've shown the other person that you need them, then you've made yourself incredibly vulnerable".'

Men do want to be loved, and this exposes their vulnerability to women. Men's defence mechanism is to project their fears of vulnerability onto women, because their own vulnerability conflicts with men's social role.

But the most explicit attack on an idealist view of sexuality comes from Elizabeth Wilson in 'I'll Climb the Staircase to Heaven: Lesbianism in the Seventies.' Here she develops Alexander Kollantai's polemic in the 'Social Basis of the Woman Question' against the utopian lifestyle of bourgeois feminists in her day. Nearly 80 years ago, she explained the force of the culture of masculinity and the power of bourgeois morality in relationships: 'Before these formulas of "free relationships" and "free love" can become practice, it is above all necessary that a fundamental reform of all social relationships between people take place; furthermore the moral and sexual norms and the whole psychology of mankind would have to undergo a thorough evolution. Is the contemporary person psychologically able to cope with "free love"?'.

Elizabeth Wilson argues that the idea that sexual passion represents the core of the individual is not new and holds no threats for the capitalist system. Western bourgeois values are founded upon 'possessive individualism'. She reiterates Kollantai's point arguing against the view of many feminists that sexual subordination is the source of women's inequality: '...material provision — refuges for battered women, different divorce laws — may change sexual practice every bit as successfully as "liberating" our sexuality.' I would go further and add that only by totally restructuring relations between men and women and eventually replacing the family will women achieve their sexual liberation. And that can only be achieved on the basis of abolishing the capitalist order.

But her polemic with the theorists of Revolutionary Feminism is useful. Political lesbianism — the decision to reject sex with men because of the subordination to men that heterosexual relations impose in our society — comes up for criticism. Is it right to view such choices as the 'flowering of real womanhood'? The tendency in revolutionary feminist definitions to play down the sexual aspect of lesbianism and replace it with a celebration of bonding between women obviously annoys Elizabeth. She also takes issue with the 'technicist' view that women have sex with women simply because women's bodies

go well together or that it is more 'democratic' and 'egalitarian'.

She reviews past and contemporary lesbian literature pointing out that there were positive aspects to lesbian and homosexual culture before the rise of the modern women's liberation movement. Books like *Sita* and *Flying* by Kate Millet are also referred to which point out the self-punishing aspects of lesbianism and how this forces some women to revert to men. Reaffirming the importance of sexual desire in lesbian relationships she argues that, 'to deprive lesbianism of its aura of the forbidden may for some women rob it of its charm'. Her emphasis is on the similarities between heterosexual and lesbian desire. Reich and the sixties' radicals were wrong to believe that 'the fullest orgasm is devoid of fantasy'.

There are many other provocative essays. Lucy Goodwin describes how the experience of being out of control when we 'fall' in love masks the fact that we create our own love affairs. By transferring our passion for individuals into a passion for life itself we would not tie ourselves up in so many knots. Tricia Bickerton explains that because women are still struggling for an adult status in our society this can be a painful experience. But it can also be a time when women discover their own needs and perhaps their own creativity. Her reference to the courage needed in today's economic climate for women to decide on single motherhood made me aware of an absence in the book.

The assumption of many of the writers is that women have financial independence, educational qualifications and the freedom to experiment with their sex lives. Absent is the experience of working class women whose morality would sharply contrast with the views of Sue Cartledge in 'Duty and Desire', but whose practicality about matters of sex would be nonetheless refreshing. Idealism about sexual relations is a wrong approach, so how do we change people's sex lives? Don't we need to change society to change the way we live?

Any ambiguity on this point will be picked on by the alert feminists who support the SDP and write in the pages of *The Guardian*. Jill Tweedie reviewing *The Left and the Erotic* sneers at Lenin and Kollantai, lumping them with the lack of debate in the British Communist Party about personal matters before the rise of the modern women's liberation movement. Her point of view is dishonest and ruthless: both the Left and the Right are totalitarian and only if women drift away from Marxism can they come to terms with sexuality. This rubbish has to be knocked on the head. Her polemic is with the barren 'Marxism' of the Soviet variety that dominated the workers' movement so monolithically after the rise of Stalinism and stifled the debate on anything inside the communist movement.

A revival of debate on these questions began with the Prague Spring of '68 and the second wave of feminism. It has to be continued among revolutionary Marxists today if the work of Bebel, Engels, Zetkin and Kollantai is to be developed and applied to today's conditions. Revolutionary Marxists have a duty to *prove* that our struggle to change the world places us in the very best position to discuss the question of sex.

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XMAS BOOKS REVIEW

Ron Ward

Socialist Theory

Perry Anderson's *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism* (NLB/Verso, £4.95) is recommended reading despite all its attempts at inaccessibility — the title, the price (for 106 text pages!) and Anderson's irritating habit of using a word on almost every page that would have university lecturers reaching for their dictionaries. *Considerations on Western Marxism* left Anderson depressed by bad news from the Parisian Left Bank, awaiting the arrival of the Fourth International cast in the role of the Fifth Cavalry. ITTOHM brings the story up to date: Anderson sharply dissects contemporary French structuralist and post-structuralist writing, arguing that its eclipse of the Latin Marxism that *New Left Review* did so much to bring to an English audience was due less to the strengths of structuralist theory, than the failure of these particular strains in Marxism to address the major substantive questions of socialist strategy. He locates the key centres of Marxist work in the eighties in Britain, Germany and the USA and delineates some of the key questions they need to confront. Anderson is a stimulating writer and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers in Britain today. A little more substance and prescription on his part would be better value.

Anderson pays particular attention to the need to construct a model of socialism that can reconstruct socialism as a desirable goal and rescue it from the grey image of Stalinism. He warmly welcomes Alec Nove's *The Economics of Feasible Socialism* (George Allen and Unwin, £5.95) for its brave attempt to address this problem. Whatever the merits of his book on this score (which will be reviewed in *International* next year), its credibility is not enhanced by Nove's apparent belief that profound social transformations can be achieved by right social democratic means in the present period.

Other noteworthy theoretical books of 1983 were Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Basil Blackwell, £4.95, reviewed in *International* 8/4) and Norman Geras' *Marx and Human Nature: Refutation of a Legend* (NLB/Verso, £2.95, reviewed in 8/3). Paul Thompson provides a useful and comprehensive introduction to Marxist writing on the capitalist labour process in *The Nature of Work* (Macmillan, £5.95) though the level of abstraction at which he of necessity writes does not exactly make the book bedtime reading. Cynthia Cockburn's study of printworkers in the newspaper industry, *Brothers* (Pluto Press, £5.95), on the other hand, is hard to put down. Her account of real labour processes and mental processes illuminates much about new technology and its impact, the sexual division of labour, and strategies for overcoming sectional interests in the trade union movement.



British Politics

Anne Phillips' *Hidden Hands* (Pluto, £2.50) argues for demands which take account of women's lives and work to be given a central place in socialist economic policy. She shows why a considerable shorter working week and working day is the essential centrepiece of any such policy and rejects all variants of the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES) for their failure to countenance the kinds of radical changes women and men require to create a new life. The book is clearly written and requires little prior knowledge of economics. Like the rest of the *Arguments for Socialism* series this is a very short book (116 pages) and the author has obviously made a conscious decision that space does not permit her to link the policies she proposes to tackle the sexual division of labour with a broader strategy or agency for change. This is unfortunate (if understandable) not least because

supporters of the AES usually use the argument that no other coherent strategy has been put forward apart from their own.

The books of the year on British politics are clearly *The Politics of Thatcherism* edited by Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques (Lawrence and Wishart, £4.95, reviewed in *International* 8/4) which for all its political weaknesses is essential reading, and John Ross' excellent analysis of the British political crisis, *Thatcher and Friends* (Pluto, £2.50). *Developments in British Politics* edited by Henry Drucker, Patrick Dunleavy, Andrew Gamble and Gillian Peele (Macmillan, £5.95) provides a useful factual guide to recent changes and the ways political scientists have tried to make sense of them. Two extremely informative books on British and American nuclear policy are *Defended to Death* edited by Gwyn Prins (Penguin, £3.50) and the new revised edition of Duncan Campbell's *War Plan UK* (Granada, £2.95).

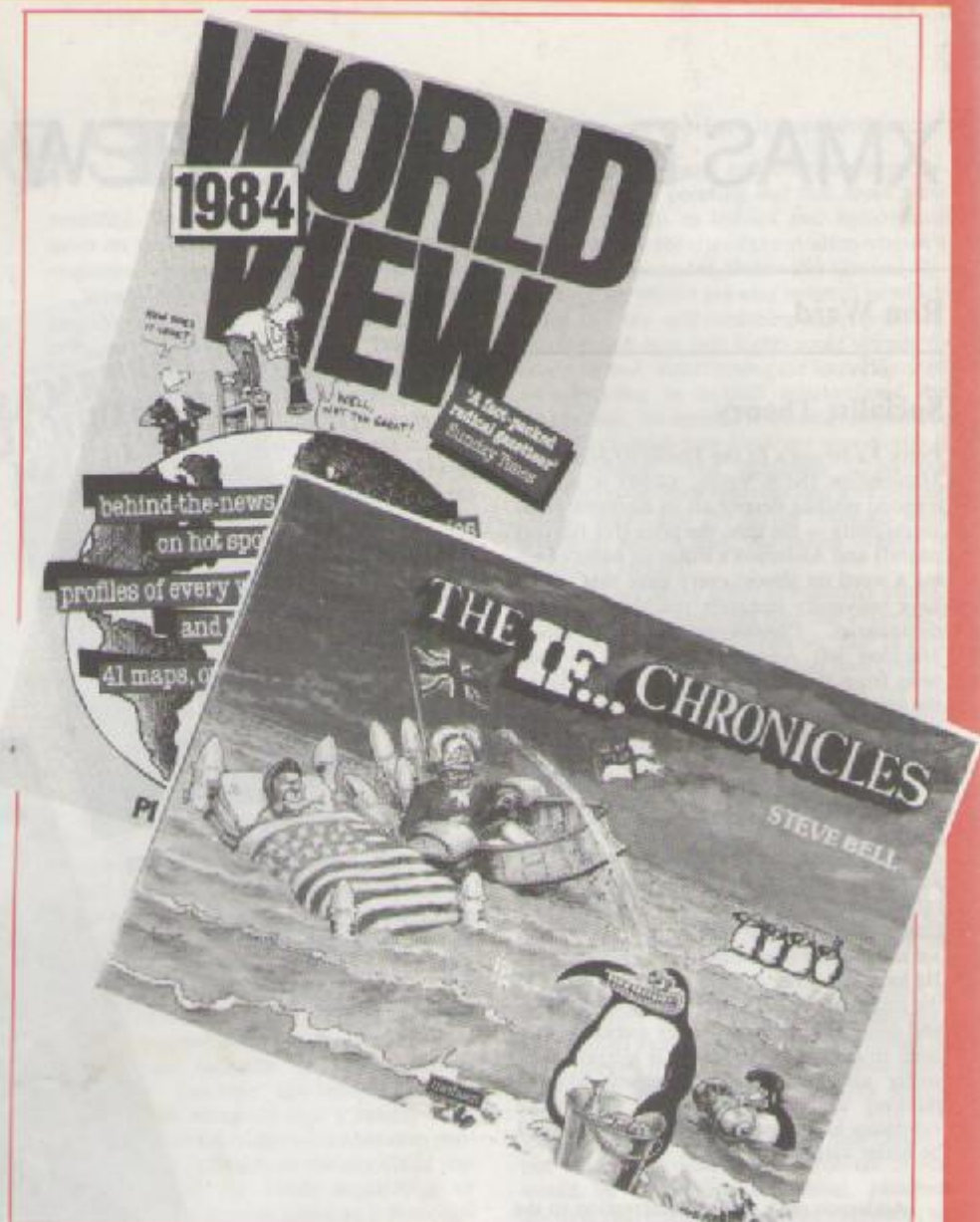
International Politics

Fred Halliday's *The Making of the Second Cold War* (NLB/Verso, £4.95) is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Despite some weaknesses it is the first sustained attempt to provide a clear and accessible Marxist account of the basic structure of international politics in the 1980s. Bob Sutcliffe's *Hard Times* (Pluto, £2.50) provides a solid basic introduction to the world recession and the attempts of the capitalist class to resolve it at all our expense. Gregor Benton's *The Hongkong Crisis* (Pluto, £3.50) is essential reading for anyone who wants to know the story behind the newspaper headlines of next year or the year after. Tariq Ali's *Can Pakistan Survive?* (Penguin Books, £2.95) provides the background to the impending crisis, while Fitzroy Ambursley and Robin Cohen's *Crisis in the Caribbean* (Heinemann Educational, £6.95) contains several important articles on Reagan's backyard; both books are reviewed in International 8/4.

World View 1984, Pluto Press' radical yearbook (£7.95), is a great advance on last year's version. Particularly welcome are the improved maps and tables. The chronology of world events in 1983 and its detailed coverage of countries and regions are book's greatest strength though its coverage of trends and debates and developments behind the news is considerably less ephemeral than last year. The wierdest thing about the book is gestion in the cover blurb that the ideology of video games and the rise of feminist fiction are two (out of seven) of the year's key issues! But every trade union and Labour Party branch if not every household would benefit from buying a copy.

Social Welfare

Bob Deacon's *Social Policy and Socialism: The Struggle for Socialist Relations of Welfare* (Pluto, £6.95) is a brave and wide-ranging attempt to assemble the elements of a socialist and feminist welfare strategy and measure its objectives against what has been achieved (or not achieved) in 'actually existing socialist' societies. Though it is very informative at a factual level and in drawing together classical and contemporary Marxist ideas with feminist ideas about welfare, in its project of clarifying and advancing the struggle for socialist relation of welfare it must be counted a failure. This is largely a problem of method, of putting the cart before the horse. Marxism is about the real movement of history, not the construction of abstract schemas against which real history can be given marks out of ten. Deacon's approach is to tabulate criteria for socialist and communist welfare policies and relations drawn from the writings of theorists and then assess the performance of six socialist countries — China, Cuba, Mozambique, Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union. It is hard to quarrel with his conclusions: that the first three countries despite their relative underdevelopment are more socialist in their social policy than the others, that the Russian Revolution period was more progressive in the welfare field than the present, that socialist means of welfare delivery tend to arise out of struggle and be stifled by bureaucratic interests. But the book tells us little about how these are to be understood and acted upon. Surely it would have been better to start by looking at the forms of welfare and welfare-related demands that have emerged in the course of different revolutionary struggles and the real history of their development and dissipation.



Ken Jones' *Beyond Progressive Education* (Macmillan, £4.95) critically examines the traditions of educational strategy of social democracy and libertarian progressivism and their challengers from the Left. (The book's conclusions are developed in an article by Ken Jones and Ric Hatcher in International 8/3). Ideal for Christmas presents (complete with gory *Punch* cartoons of street crime in the 18th century) is *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears* by Geoffrey Pearson (Macmillan, £5.95). Pearson shows with considerable humour how respectable opinion-formers of every generation — politicians, journalists, writers (and more recently police chiefs) have always believed that the delinquency of their youthful contemporaries represented a fall from the mythical grace of social peace that existed '20 years ago'.

Fiction

Marge Piercy's *Braided lives* (Penguin, £1.95) is a really good read but also for my money has more to say about the dilemmas of sexual politics and everyday life than anything else issued this year. 1983 was not a great year for new fiction so I am unashamed to mention Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (Picador, £2.50) despite the fact it first appeared in paperback in 1982. Rushdie's new book *Shame* should be paperbacked in 1984.

Schindler's Ark by Thomas Keneally (Coronet, £2.95) is a non-fictional novel based on the apparently true story of a Polish in-

dustrialist who risked his own life and diverted his wealth and profits to save hundreds of Jews from death in the ghettos and concentration camps of the Nazi occupation. It is compulsive reading and more reassuring about the possibility of creating a better world than any treatise against the evil fixity of human nature. And then of course there is 1984. And the best Xmas laugh will undoubtedly be found in Steve Bell's *If Chronicles* (Methuen, £2.50).

Reminders

Pierre Frank's *Long March of the Fourth International* is currently selling in Collet's London bookshop for £1.75, and the excellent Alexander Rabinowitch's *The Bolsheviks Come to Power*, hardback, on sale at the Economist Bookshop for just £3.95.

Coming Soon

Michael Farrell's *Arming the Protestants* (Pluto Press, approx £7.95) tells the story of how Britain armed, financed and legalised Protestant paramilitaries in the 1920s and how the government of the Irish Republic cut off its support for the IRA and reached a rapprochement with the Protestant ascendancy. *The Face of the Ruling Class* and *The Day of Reckoning* (Allison and Busby, approx £2.50 each) are collections of George Grosz's satirical drawings of German society and politics under the Weimar Republic.