

# REVOLUTION

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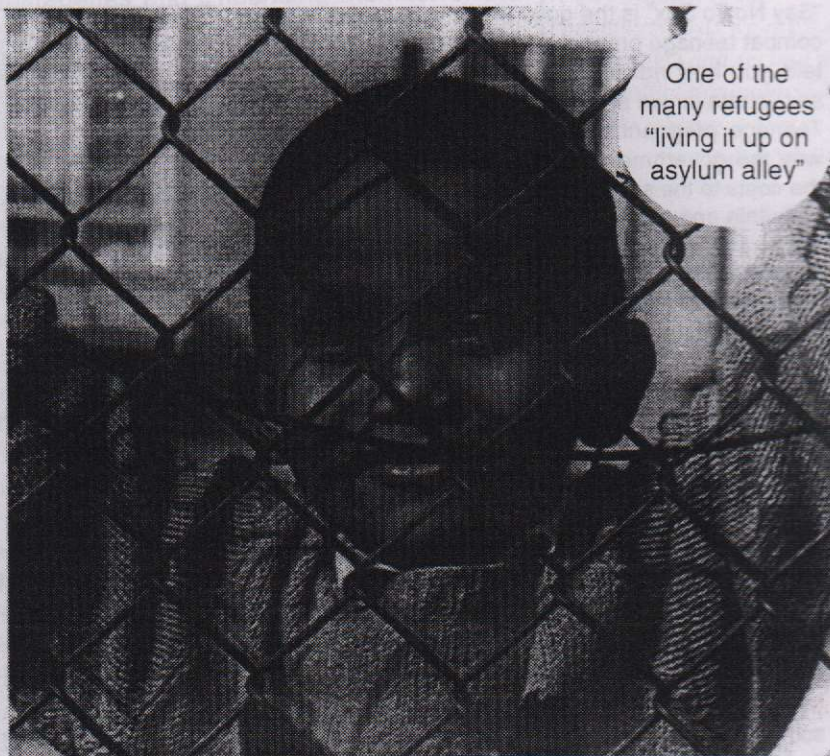
THE FIGHTING PAPER FOR WORKING CLASS YOUTH

## REFUGEES, NOT SCROUNGERS!

The British press have been running a vicious hate campaign against refugees and asylum seekers entering this country. The Daily Mail called it "The Good Life On Asylum Alley" and says 'bogus' asylum seekers are living it up on Britain's over generous benefits system. The Evening Standard plastered "London Swamped By Refugee Crime Wave" across billboards. The local press in Dover, where many of the asylum seekers are forced to stay labelled Roma refugees "scum of the earth" and "human sewage".

The truth is that many of the Roma refugees from the Czech Republic and Slovakia face systematic persecution, with 29 racist killings since 1993. In Kosovo 300,000 are homeless due to the Serbian army's crackdown.

People don't leave their country for a lark. When refugees do arrive in Britain most are barred from claiming benefits. They are housed by local councils in shoddy bed and breakfast accommodation, hostels, or even school gyms and disused hospitals. Most aren't allowed to work and survive off meagre food tokens.



One of the many refugees "living it up on asylum alley"

Hundreds are detained in camps and prisons without being charged with any crime. Is that the good life?

**And now Labour is passing even more draconian asylum laws to appease the racists.**

(see inside, p. 2)

**Demonstrate: Saturday 27 Feb.**

**12 noon at Embankment tube, London**

**Stop Scape-Goating Asylum Seekers! Abolish all immigration laws!**

## REVOLUTION NEWS BITES



**Ambulance anyone? Do not pass hospital. Do not collect medicine. Go straight to your own bed.**

**Rev Blair says, "No sex please - you're girls!"**

"Say No To Sex" is the government's latest initiative to combat teenage pregnancies. Just the title of the plan tells you how ridiculous it is. Young people will have sex, whatever we are told!

Teenage pregnancies are a problem, but not in the way the government thinks. They are just looking at the costs to the social security bill.

In Britain one per cent of girls between 13 and 15 get pregnant - more than in any other country. To terminate the pregnancy is very difficult - for a start you need the courage to approach your family doctor. You may be too scared to tell your parents.

If you choose to go ahead with the pregnancy, your choices in life are immediately narrowed. Schoolwork will suffer; college will be out of the question for many years. Jobs are nearly impossible without childcare - and low paid. Benefits are pitiful. There is often no network for emotional and practical support.

"Say No To Sex" is just going to denounce another choice for young women. Labour should be opening doors, not closing them. What should they do?

Free abortion and contraceptives on demand and decent sex education would be a start. Free access to education, childcare and better working conditions for young mothers would be even better. A society where women are not judged on their willingness to have sex or bring up babies would be best of all.

## NHS flu crisis

Thousands of ill people without beds, sitting on trolleys in hospital corridors...the dead stacked up in refrigerated meat lorries...only 16 beds left in the accident wards in the whole of Britain...

Wow! Is it the return of the Black Death? Nope, just another flu outbreak. But it has highlighted the chronic underfunding in the NHS, and especially the shortage of nurses. In January, hospitals in Portsmouth had so few nurses to cope with the flu that they asked friends and relatives to come in and look after the sick! Low pay and low morale has meant that there are 13,000 nursing vacancies across the country, and 7 out of 10 current nurses are considering leaving the profession. Whenever they ask for a pay rise, the Labour government say there's no money.

But there is money

- £216 million goes to private nursing agencies who provide supply staff to cover shortages.
- £250 million has just been spent on employing 50 new managers for the NHS, despite Labour rhetoric about ending red tape.
- £300 million is made by pharmaceutical companies every year from flu remedies alone, even though most of these expensive remedies do nothing more than aspirin or paracetamol, which are far cheaper.

Whilst we pay for the crises with our health and our lives the rich can escape the waiting lists, shoddy treatment and crowded wards by turning to the private sector. **Labour Government** most likely to say:

"Don't get sick in winter and you'll be o.k."

**Revolution** most likely to say:

- **KICK THE PROFITEERS OUT OF THE NHS!!**
- **NATIONALISE THE DRUGS INDUSTRY!!**

## Take No (Youth) Prisoners!

By Gerald, Hounslow

In June 1998, New Labour opened MEDWAY, the first private secure centre (read *jail*) for youths.

The 12-14 year old inmates suffer a brutal regime. A recent report revealed:

- There are up to 150 incidents of dangerous neck and wrist holds a month
- Rooms are left smashed up and unrepaired

Not surprisingly, the inmates lash out - 100 assaults on staff have been recorded in the first seven months. Riot police were even called in to crack heads in January.

MEDWAY must be shut down immediately. Expert Helen Edwards says, "If you put a group of only disturbed children in one place, it ends up with a disturbing result." The answer lies not in greater repression and squalor, but in treating young offenders as human beings.

Almost all come from deprived and abusive backgrounds. We need to build a society in which young people have real rights and a future where they hold real power. That is the goal of revolutionary socialists.

### REFUGEES continued from page 1

More than 750 refugees are detained in prisons and camps like the notorious Campsfield without charge - contrast this with General Pinochet, living a life of luxury in a Surrey mansion whilst awaiting the outcome of his extradition proceedings. Now the Labour government is making it worse. In February they will introduce yet more laws restricting refugees' rights. The private sector will be allowed to run accommodation facilities. They will also separate and disperse refugee families to other parts of the country if it proves cheaper. All asylum seekers will be stripped of the right to claim benefits.

The racist laws and press hysteria are all designed for one purpose: to divide the working class by scapegoating refugees for unemployment and poor housing. The ultimate result is to legitimise racism, which just gives the fascists more support - the National Front have staged 3 marches in Dover so far.

Socialists have to combat these racist arguments by pointing to the real causes of this misery - global capitalism, where a tiny minority own and control the huge wealth which is created by society. The masses are encouraged to fight against each other rather than the bosses.

**REVO fights for the repeal of all anti - immigration laws with full citizenship rights for all refugees from day one.**

**By Kuldip, Camberwell**

# Revolutionary Women of the Millennium – Part One

Women make up almost half of the world's population and carry out two thirds of the world's work. Yet we are continually bombarded with lists of exclusively male historical figures who, are presented as 'Men of the Millennium'. Throughout 1999, Revolution is going to celebrate the life and work of revolutionary women. Joy and Joanne have chosen their heroines for part one. Write in and tell us who yours are.



**SOJOURNER TRUTH** Women's liberation and black activist in America. At women's rights convention in 1851, she made the finest speech of the women's rights movement, demolishing the myth of the weak and dainty nature of women: "Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns and no man could head me and ain't I a woman!" Argued that all blacks and all women should get the vote.



**SYLVIA PANKHURST** Organiser of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes and a founding member of the Communist Party. Believed that only working women could liberate all women. "...The existence of a strong self-reliant movement among working women would be the greatest aid in safeguarding their rights... I wanted to rouse these women of the submerged tenth to be fighters on their own account... revolting against the hideous conditions about them and demanding a full share of the benefits of civilisation and progress." She campaigned for unionisation of working women, childcare facilities, communal laundries, restaurants, free health clinics and other measures designed to emancipate women from the tyranny of the capitalist factory and housework.



**ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI** The leader of the Russian women's movement. Deeply involved in the massive strikes of women textile workers in the 1890's. After the revolution in 1905, formed the first political working women's club which later became the backbone of the revolutionary women's organisation called Zhenotdel. She wrote "The woman is not only an independent worker and citizen - at the same time she is a mother, a bearer of the future. This gives rise to a whole series of special demands in areas such as women's labour protection, security for maternity and childhood, and so on."



**CLARA ZETKIN** Insisted that the struggle for women's liberation was part of the struggle for socialism. A fiery and inspirational speaker, Zetkin played a central role in the German women's movement and the International Socialist Women's Organisation. In 1910 Clara instigated International Working-class Women's Day (March 8).



**ROSA LUXEMBURG** From the age of 16, she was involved in the fight for working class politics. In 1897, she moved from Poland to work with the German Social Democrats (SPD). A ground-breaking theoretician, she argued against the reformist leaders of the SPD in the pamphlet 'Social Reform or Revolution.' Author of 'The Mass Strike, the Political Party and the Trade Unions', she criticised and exposed the bureaucratic party and trade union leadership. At the outbreak of WWI, Rosa continued to fight for a socialist revolution, for which she was imprisoned. She was murdered for this by fascists. In her last article she wrote: "Order reigns in Berlin! You stupid lackeys! your order is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again and to your horror will proclaim, with trumpets blazing: 'I was, I am, I will be!'"

## STEPHEN LAWRENCE: LEGALISED RACISM

*After six years the Stephen Lawrence case has still not been closed, an investigation labelled by the Guardian as "error-ridden." Such questions must arise, such as: Why was the case not properly investigated? Why haven't the investigating officers been disciplined? Is this institutionalised racism? As Mrs. Lawrence said, "Yet again the police have failed us."*

*The investigating officers may be sued by the Lawrence family. Ben Bullock, a "well respected man in the community" (as we are told in the press) and second in command of the inquiry, was the only serving senior officer to face a disciplinary hearing. So when the prospect arose of being sued for neglect, it was time for the other police officers to start running. It seems a little too late. Bullock was advised in March to resign. (What a surprise?) The rest of the serving officers have got off "scot-free" by resigning. And this is why the family have decided to sue the investigation for neglect. Why should they not be disciplined, just because they are part of the police force? Who polices the police? Despite mass support for the family, the police refuse to take any action. Is there any hope for the Lawrence family and families of victims of similar crimes by the police? The police must be brought to justice. Do not let these crimes go unpunished! Keep up the pressure on the police! Organise local self-defence committees against racist attacks!*

*By Chantal, Stratford*

# The Lessons of CHILE

*by Kirstie from Pimlico*

On 11 September 1973 the head of the Chilean military, General Pinochet, launched a military coup against the Popular Unity government, its Socialist President Salvador Allende and the Chilean masses.

Supported by the CIA, the army acted swiftly. Within hours workers' and student leaders were rounded up in Santiago football stadium and over the coming days and months, tortured and murdered by Pinochet's military junta. Allende, who had placed so much trust in the military, was killed by Pinochet's henchmen. Felipe Hernandez, a socialist activist told how workers heroically resisted the coup:

"Several of the armoured tanks tried to smash through the barricades, but because the street was narrow and crooked, they made their way slowly. For the next half hour or so they contented themselves with spraying the whole area indiscriminately with machine-gun fire. Dozens and dozens of our people were killed or seriously wounded in the few hours of resistance. Others however still continued to blast away at the enemy."

Pinochet ordered the army to execute any workers who resisted arrest. All opposition was drowned in blood. All political parties were banned and a military dictatorship with Pinochet as president installed. Hernandez, like thousands of others was eventually caught, imprisoned and tortured in a concentration camp. He survived. Others didn't. Over the next decade thousands of workers, socialists and communists 'disappeared'. Hundreds and thousands of Chileans were

forced into exile.

These tragic events could have been avoided. Millions supported Allende's government and were prepared to fight to defend it. But the politics of Allende and the Popular Unity government proved incapable of defending the workers and peasants from the bosses and their military state.

## **The Popular Unity regime**

In 1970, Allende was elected president of Chile, supported by the Popular Unity Coalition (UP). This was a coalition of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and a number of small bosses' parties. For the workers and poor peasants, the election of Allende signalled a victory against exploitation and poverty.

Within the first year, the government gave some land to the peasants, increased wages by 35% and nationalised Chile's copper mines. Copper was crucial to the Chilean economy, but the industry was owned and controlled by US multi-nationals who systematically ripped off the Chilean masses.

However, the Popular Unity government had no intention of really challenging capitalist rule. Despite Allende's adherence to 'Marxism' this government was what Marxists call a popular front government - an alliance of workers' and bosses' parties in which the workers' parties agreed not to fight for their interests in the name of unity.

The socialists and communists argued that the first task was to build a strong 'national' economy. They argued this

required an alliance with the 'progressive' Chilean bourgeoisie. In the future, once this 'democratic' and sovereign government had been established, then the workers could have their socialism.

But the workers and peasants were not prepared to limit their goals. Peasants refused to wait for government decrees that compensated the rich landowners - they seized the land for themselves. Workers began to organise in the factories, demanding the government intervene when bosses laid off workers, drove down wages or closed factories.

The Chilean bourgeoisie feared that the masses were growing in confidence and organisation. Such a movement had to be stopped before it went too far. The imperialists, in particular the US, refused loans to the government and attempted to put an embargo on Chilean copper exports.

The bosses' courts ruled Allende's reforms illegal. In June 1971, the Comptroller of the Republic, a powerful government official, ordered the return of a textile factory that had been nationalised to its owner.

In 1972 the bosses stepped up their offensive. An economic crisis was developing across Chile. Inflation stood at 100% and hoarding and speculation by distributors and shopkeepers caused widespread shortages.

In October the bosses' opposition declared Allende's government illegitimate and launched a truck owners strike (funded by the US) to bring the country to a standstill. The bosses were now openly sabotaging Allende's government.

What was the response of the Socialists and Communists? They appealed to the bourgeois opposition and turned to the military to restore 'order', placing 13 provinces under martial law.

But the military and its officer caste, pruned from the families of the Chilean bourgeoisie and trained by the USA, would never bring the bosses to 'order'. Only the workers and peasants

could do that - and they did. They met the bosses strike with a wave of occupations. Workers' regional committees - the Cordones Industriales - spread across Chile. They organised the transport of food and materials and defence against the bosses fascist thugs. Committees of housewives opened the supermarkets, requisitioning food and distributing it amongst the poor. The workers were developing their own forms of revolutionary organisation and control.

After this militant response, the bosses were on their knees demanding negotiations. At this point a decisive revolutionary leadership could have smashed the bosses' system once and for all. The Cordones Industriales could have taken over the running of the factories and expropriated the bosses' land and factories and demanded the cancellation of debt repayments. In the face of fascist violence and the army revolutionaries would have organised workers' militias and lead an urgent campaign amongst the rank and file of army to win them to the side of the workers and peasants. In short, a revolutionary party would have prepared the workers for a *revolutionary civil war*.

This was not the strategy of the Socialists and Communists. Instead they invited the army into the cabinet! The Socialist Party Minister of Agriculture declared: "The armed forces enter the cabinet to preserve the institutional system which the hottest heads in the opposition wish to destroy. In this way they help assure the conditions for the program to advance."

They believed it was possible to use the army and the capitalist state to protect their government. This was because they believed it was possible to use parliament to build socialism through peaceful and legal means. These leaders had learnt nothing from history. Every struggle against capitalism has shown that the civil service, the legal system, the police

and the army all serve to defend the property and power of the bosses. As soon as their wealth and interests are threatened, they will mobilise this state apparatus to smash any militant opposition. That is why Marxists argue that only a revolutionary struggle to smash up this state, armed and lead by the working class is capable of defeating the capitalists. This is the real difference between reformists and revolutionaries.

## & THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE STATE TODAY...

I've got a scarf over the lower part of my face to protect me from the tear gas, which is like breathing a cloud of white pepper."

Helen, an East London student, gave this account of a student demo in Valparaiso, Chile last May. 190 students were violently arrested, beaten up and released late at night. This, Helen was told, was just routine brutality against a demo.

The students were protesting against the "Ley Marco", the ending of state funding for universities. This is part of Pinochet's legacy. Chile is a training ground for radical cuts in welfare and education. So, expect Britain to follow suit!

This picture also exposes the lie that Pinochet must be released in the interests of "democracy". The police and the army still tower menacingly above Chilean society. Pinochet will be protected. The best form of solidarity with the Chilean students is to demand Pinochet's immediate extradition to Spain.

- Thanks to Lina & FUEL, UEL student magazine, for the info.

Allende was so busy looking for allies amongst his enemies that he turned his back on an army of millions of workers and peasants who had the means to break the rule of capital. Instead of arming the workers, he gave more power to the military generals. Instead of supporting the workers and peasants occupations against the bosses, he declared them illegal. The government was so desperate to reassure the bourgeoisie that they were not a threat, that in January of 1973, the Communist Minister, Milas put forward a plan to return 123 occupied enterprises to their owners! The Cordones Industriales blocked this legislation through determined resistance.

After a failed attempt to oust Allende in the elections of March 1973, the bourgeoisie turned to the army. The events over the past months had shown that while Allende posed no

threat, the workers movement did.

The workers knew that the army were preparing a coup. Army raids against trade union and left party headquarters were increasingly used to intimidate workers. In August a group of sailors and petty officers after opposing coup preparations and informing the Popular Unity parties, were arrested and tortured.

The workers were demanding arms and yet Allende and his government did nothing. When the coup came the workers were unarmed and powerless to resist. In the words of a worker Filipe Hernandez, who survived the coup: "Allende, in many ways, was a father to us. We never had a President who was not only respected because of his high office, but who was actually loved by at least half of the population. But many of us feel that Allende made a big mistake when he would not give arms to the people to defend themselves against the possible coup. Allende argued, and so did many of his advisors, that by

giving arms to the people the putsch would have arrived even sooner. He thought that we would have never had a chance, even if we would have had rifles and machine guns, standing up against an army that had cannons and bombers. He thought hundreds and thousands of us would have been massacred. But I felt that I would rather have died fighting than become a prisoner as happened to me."

The greatest tribute we can give to Filipe and the millions of workers who have fought and died in the struggle for socialism is to learn the lessons of Chile - only a revolutionary party, clear in its goals and determined to lead the workers to revolution can ensure that we rid the world of Pinochets once and for all.

Quotes taken from: Storm over Chile - Samuel Chavkin Lawrence Hill Books (1982)

**BACKGROUND:** Pinochet's troops guard hundreds of political prisoners in the National stadium after the coup



What's the alternative? An elected and accountable planning committee, based on delegates elected from around the

By Simon from Manchester and Andy from London

On June 18th the world's most powerful bosses, bankers and politicians are getting together at the annual meeting of the G8 (the seven leading capitalist countries plus Russia) to discuss how to make us and the environment pay for the crisis of their system.

Imagine if, as they were sitting down to a working breakfast of smoked salmon and quail's eggs, all the financial centres of the world ground to a halt. This is the declared aim of the Imagine Day of Action, organised largely by the direct action movement, especially Reclaim the Streets (RTS).

Workers, unemployed, peasants and environmentalists will hit the streets of Cologne to confront the G8 leaders and let them know just what we think about their system, alongside demos all over the world, including London. London is the third most important financial centre in the world. It contains the headquarters of some of the world's biggest multinationals and banks. It's home to one of the world's main stockmarkets, the bosses' casinos, where they bank the billions in profits they make from third world debt. Exploitation, private property, the anarchy of the market - few places symbolise this better than London.

How can we "shut down the City"? Through workers' action. Commuting brokers and analysts couldn't get into town without the workers on the tubes, rail, and buses. Electricity workers could turn the power off. Postal and BT workers could make London incommunicado with the rest of the world - George Soros wouldn't be able to phone his mum, much less phone Tokyo to do a billion dollar deal. Bank and computer workers are organised in

unions such as BIFU and MSF and have gone on strike before. And the cops are going to mobilise on a mass scale to protect this heartland of capitalism. Mass action could really break through the "ring of steel" protecting the City offices.

We need to orient to the working class. And to sustain mass action we need mass organisation. So why do groups like RTS base their strategy on disorganisation and stunts? They don't like getting involved in trade unions. When they do, as with the Liverpool Dockers, it's as a direct action bit added on, separate from the fight within the unions.

This comes partly from their radicalism. They look at the unions and see bureaucratic organisations whose leaders are dedicated to propping up the capitalist system. So what should we do? Get into them and we win the workers to taking control of them and kick out the reformist leaders.

The Poll Tax demos were also based on a huge, well organised campaigns rooted in neighbourhoods and housing estates.

The RTS think otherwise. Since they don't believe that you can win the working class to mass struggle, or at least not right now, then the answer is obvious: we need to do it ourselves. And small groups by themselves can only be effective through media stunts or sabotage and obstruction, as in the tunnel complexes and tree villages used to block road schemes. This is illegal, so to preserve the small core of activists you need secrecy. In other words a network of small cells, sort of like the IRA (but without the guns and without the mass support).

country to ensure it is not just down to London-based activists, should be planning the action. There would be scope for illegal action, through "committees" set up of proven trustworthy members of different organisations.

A serious orientation to workers doesn't mean we need to get the trade union leaders' go ahead before we organise direct action against capitalism in the City. But the campaign should approach workers in the city and try convince them to take action on the day over their own struggles (for instance, tube workers could be convinced to strike against privatisation). The best way to do this is to approach rank and file union members AND the union leaders with a simple call for UNITY on the day.

We don't just want a catchy slogan. WE WANT TO STOP THE CITY! A mass action must be built which attacks the heart of this global beast and shows the bosses that we mean business. And then it won't just be for a day.

## Revo's Italian Job

Revo member Luke reports from Italy.

Venice is sinking. In the autumn and winter, the sea level rises and floods the whole city in up to a metre of water. If you're a tourist, the "acqua alta" is part of the charm of Venice, but if you live there, it's a different matter.

If you're a student, then you have to put up with buildings flooding. Of course, businesses like the huge "Generali", a big Italian insurance company, never flood, despite being located right by the Grand Canal. As well as appalling conditions we face cuts in course funding. Recently students occupied their university demanding change. After 8 days, the occupation collapsed but we learnt that by linking the fight for education to the struggles of the working class generally we can build the solidarity needed to win.

United we stand, divided we ... sink.

# Rehearsal for Revolution

In 1979 Augusto Boal – a Brazilian theatre director – wrote a book called “The Theatre of the Oppressed” which exposed how theatre had come to reflect ruling class control. He attacked the aristocratic sagas which held up the apparent “noble” nature of the state and the “mindless” anonymity of the masses. The book revolutionised theatre forcing those involved to choose between dramatic masturbation celebrating a perfect society or using theatre to fight in an imperfect world for the real liberation of ordinary people.

Police brutality, the kidnapping and murder of children, being evicted from your land – this is reality for millions of Brazilians. Boal developed his techniques from a political standpoint because he focuses on real problems and makes liberation from oppression a goal. Boal openly challenged the murdering of street children and got at least one police officer prosecuted over this.

Boal was, not surprisingly, banned from traditional and institutional theatre. His company would work in a community and talk to the people about their lives. They would develop a play to confront an oppressive

by Joanne  
from Brighton

situation that  
faced the  
community,  
like male

violence against women. But the dilemma – how to beat the oppressors – would replace the “magic endings” of bourgeois culture. At this point, those watching the play would go on stage and seek to beat the oppressors in the story. The audience is transformed from passive spectators into active “spect-actors”.

Compare this approach with the token role-playing, where everyone knows what they’re supposed to do, say and think. Panorama on BBC showed a cop blatantly going through the motions in an anti-racist training session where he arrested a racist shopkeeper for discriminating against an Asian customer. It might as well have been scripted. You knew the cop was going to be just as racist afterwards.

Boal’s work, in contrast, has led to working class and peasant communities fighting for real political changes. This is why Boal called his approach a “rehearsal for revolution”. The results of his work, in his book “Games for Actors and Non-actors”, are staggering.

Bourgeois theatre critics say that his work is not “true” theatre, but critics such as these always talk, utter bollocks and have never ever considered how to change the world. They are far too busy

forming intimate relations with Damien Hirst’s assortment of dead animals to care about real people.

Unfortunately, Boal has more recently turned away from the revolutionary potential of his techniques. A play his company performed in a remote part of Northern Brazil ended with the characters holding guns aloft proclaiming, “We will spill our blood for our land”, to which the peasants responded excitedly. The next day the peasants came to see Boal and told him an armed uprising had begun in their village and that he and his company were to bring their weapons. Boal had to explain that their guns were not real and that they would not fight. The peasants were not altogether chuffed!

At heart Boal is a reformist. He sees changing the world as a result of many small reforms, choosing to stand for position as mayor in Brazil. But that should not detract from the value of his techniques which start in the real world, turn the audience into active participants and, most importantly, end in the real world with a struggle for liberation. This is why his work should be read and then practiced.



## What is war?

As a child, whose life is war, I do not know

What is war?

All I know is what war does.

I've seen it right before my eyes

I've seen it destroy my family, my community, my nation

Is it all worth it?

To see millions of bodies lying in a pit

To see thousands die of starvation

Over politicians' reputation

It's not even like they're fighting for us

They fight over land, it's only dust

Either that or it's about religion or cash

Dying around, it's all so irash

I don't know what war is or why it's so angry and mad

I just need to know one thing, why did you take my mummy and dad?

by Chantal

# AS BRITISH PLANES BOMB IRAQ ... BLAIR WANTED FOR MURDER!

For four days in December last year, US and British forces bombed Iraq firing more cruise missiles than during the whole two month-long Gulf War of 1991.

Blair and Clinton justified this attack on the grounds that Iraq had obstructed investigations by United Nations (UN) weapons inspectors, whose free access to military sites is one of the conditions of ending the UN sanctions against Iraq. These sanctions have already killed about 1 million people, with

around half of them children. 31 percent of children under five years old are suffering from chronic malnutrition, which will have lifelong consequences of stunted growth, brain deficiencies and disablement. All of this is compounded by the fact that Iraq's hospitals, once the most advanced in the Arab world, find it virtually impossible to get medicines, equipment, or even to repair buildings, heating systems or buy new beds because of the UN sanctions.

The Labour government tell us that these sustained attacks on the Iraqi people are justified because Saddam Hussein is an evil dictator who has violated UN resolutions and international law and supposedly possesses "weapons of mass destruction" which pose a "threat to peace" in the Middle East or even the world.

This is pure hypocrisy. They were quite happy to support Saddam Hussein in the 1980s when he was

fighting a war against Iran during which they supplied him with arms and intelligence. They are quite happy to support dictatorships like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait now. In the past they have supported dictatorships which have killed thousands of people like that of Suharto in Indonesia and Pinochet in Chile, when it suited their interests.

The US has more weapons of mass destruction than any other country in the world, and is the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons in war (against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

The real reasons they are attacking and blockading Iraq are oil and imperialism. Imperialism is the world system that ensures a small number of rich countries exploit and dominate the world. Western-based multinational companies like Shell and BP which control important parts of Third World industry ensure that the super profits keep flowing while the masses of poor workers and peasants remain in absolute poverty. By preventing economic development which might allow these countries to compete with the West, and enslaving them through the massive system of international debt, the imperialists maintain their economic control over these countries. In the case of the Middle East, the main interest of imperialism is oil, which generates huge profits and which is vital to the armed forces of the rich countries.

In order to protect the massive wealth gained in this way from the impoverished masses of the "Third World", the imperialist countries create and support dictatorships which oppress their own people and control them on behalf of imperialism, like they have with Saddam Hussein, Pinochet, and

Suharto. But sometimes these dictatorships become too strong and begin having ideas of their own, and imperialism has to step in with its own armed forces to bring them back down to size and control their people.

This is the real reason why the Iraqi people have been starved, humiliated, bombed and killed by sanctions: to "teach a lesson" to governments and peoples in the Third World that the same fate awaits them if they threaten Western interests and try to take control of their own wealth and resources. It has absolutely nothing to do with democracy or human rights in Iraq: in fact, the sort of regime the West want to replace Saddam's with would be another brutal dictatorship like his own.

We do not support Saddam Hussein or his dictatorship: it has killed and oppressed thousands of its own people, and in the past has supported the interests of imperialism in the Middle East. But if Blair and Clinton decide again to bomb Iraq, we are entirely on the side of the Iraqi people in trying to defeat US and British imperialist attack. The defeat of the US and British troops will signal to the oppressed peoples of the world that imperialist aggression can be stopped.

The only force which can really bring democracy to Iraq is the Iraqi workers and peasants, and their struggle against Saddam's regime. We say:

No to bombing and sanctions!  
End the imperialist UN sanctions against Iraq!  
Oppose all military attacks against Iraq!  
Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!

INSIDE: one dictator Tony Blair isn't fussed about letting go free...

## PINOCHET: GUILTY

& how he came to power - the lessons of Chile

