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Editorial

Parliamentary democracy has always been fraudulent, but the desperate obfuscations over the Scott report on the illegal sale of arms to Iraq showed once again that parliament even "democratically elected" is not the real government. What is central to government is the power of big business and the ministers of state. The "liberal" press can use phrases like "accountability" but capitalism is accountable to no one. The outrageous injustice that led to the Birmingham and Guildford cases shows that where class interest is concerned abstract justice and law mean nothing. If the rulers of class society are found out in their dealings, it is not because parliamentary democracy has power, it is just that capitalism is socially weak and periodically the truth emerges. The future elections are also being conducted in an atrocious manner. The larger issues of where capitalism is going are never discussed. The famous "globalisation" is treated like the all powerful omniscient deity implacable, jealous and eternal. Thus welfare budgets are too high and must be cut. Everyone has got to get used to insecurity (but not big business which has the divine right to throw thousands out of work) and Nato is a good thing. None of this is argued and there is no discussion. So much for the famous "democracy"—that word always means democracy for the ruling class and their well heeled petit bourgeois acolytes and careerists (and not so many of them).

CAPITALISM IS DOMINATED BY THE NEED TO PREPARE FOR WAR

The reorganisation of the French military following the social defeat of Chiracs plans to smash the welfare system in France is a preparation for both civil and world war—the natural reaction of capitalism to both external and internal

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crises. There as in Britain the capitalist class now concentrates on a professional army. As in Britain they need an army "uncontaminated" by popular influence, a mercenary army to wage war if necessary against the population. On the issue of world war the speech by Thatcher was revealing in this respect because she is linked to the most reactionary political circles in the capitalist world. She goes on about the need of the "West" to defend itself against "dangerous third world countries". But as such a "third world" impinges on the interests of all world powers it means reiterating the need for capitalism to prepare for war against the whole world. This was not simply a speech reflecting special interests who want to profit from an arms race, that comes into it certainly, but such a speech represents the nature of capitalism "Do as we say or we blast you".

Savage social relations are the inevitable result of the mentality of capitalist competition. The rulers of capitalism boast of creating unemployment (helps competition). They ruin small businesses. Their regime as in Britain is dedicated to racism, oppressing the population and developing the police state. When the hideous carnage occurred at Dunblane—bearing in mind the previous massacre at Hungerford a few years back—the sycophants of capitalist social relations speak in pious tones about the "power of evil" and other flights of mystical fancy to cover the putrefying society which this massacre represents. Capitalism in its

pathological degeneration produces not only sinister weapons designed to massacre people, it also produces a large number of lumpenised rubbish, as Marx said, recruited from the Lazarus layers of all sectors of society. The killer at Dunblane was one of these. In the epoch of Hitler, human junk like this would form part of the SS, but capitalism no longer has a workable programme for a mass fascist formation. Who massacred the children of Iraq? World capitalism. Who systematically has tried to exterminate whole populations in Angola? Henchmen of capitalism like Savimbi armed by world capitalism. The bourgeois media keep quiet about this because the majority of these people are no different from the debris that supported the Nuremberg Rally—worshippers of private property and everything that flows from it.

THE IRISH DIMENSION.

If imperialism has nothing to say to the people of England, Scotland and Wales, it has certainly nothing of the slightest importance to say to the people of Ireland. It was brought to discussion about peace because of growing pressure in both Britain and Ireland to end the war. All it wants is to facilitate greater economic integration between north and south and thus some distancing from the unionist apparatus and opening up Northern Ireland to "power sharing". But capitalism in London, Belfast and Dublin has no interest or capacity to solve the problems of unemployment and a low standard of life. They continue

to build police citadels in the catholic areas in Northern Ireland. They do not want to discuss with Sinn Fein because serious issues of principle might arise. Sinn Fein has to develop its socialist programme for Ireland in a united front linked with the class struggle in Britain. Ireland can only be seriously united via the class struggle and this is inseparable from that in the rest of Britain. It is very important that a member of the LP was present at the Sinn Fein conference which shows that Blair's policy of supporting the anti terrorist legislation does not inhibit sectors of the Labour party from thinking. Those in the Irish camp who remain stuck in a "nationalist beyond class" conception are no threat to imperialism, in fact they can be used by imperialism. We believe that the IRA has been used and penetrated before by imperialism. The latter has an interest in explosions to justify their policies—just as world imperialism penetrates and uses groups in the Middle East and has an interest in stimulating fundamentalist groupings. The Irish bourgeoisie are quite content to conceal themselves behind a "nationalist" disguise. Their whole rotten history shows what they stand for and now they gladly submit to the "global" economy. Sinn Fein was right to denounce the government of the republic for its accommodation to the Major government—but they are inevitably submitted. That is their class position. When Clinton and the rest speak with Sinn Fein their only objective is to keep the

facades on "negotiations" and similar humbug. Sinn Fein has to stand on socialist ground, the only solution to the "national" problem. It is perfectly true that the elections in Northern Ireland are part of the Major ploy of talking a lot and doing nothing, but it is right that Sinn Fein should participate and use it as an opportunity to argue the socialist programme and denounce the whole capitalist machine north and south and to unite with the left labour forces in Britain.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CAPITALIST ASSASSINS TO ORGANISE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

The chief terrorists of the universe, that is US imperialism, and the other capitalist powers recently held a conference on "terrorism" and the object of such meetings is to prepare more imperialist terror utilising the pretext of measures against groups such as Hamas. The result of the meeting of the capitalist assassins was the inferno in Lebanon where the Israeli government acting like the nazis has gone on a murder spree systematically exterminating civilians. But it was United States imperialism which set it up. Rabin was murdered because the decided sectors in Yankee capitalism are exerting a pressure to submit the Palestinians to Israel and have decided to re-launch the process of intimidating the Middle East where problems are accumulating in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Clinton's tour was a complete blind. He determines nothing, what decides are the Pentagon, the CIA and the top layers of the American financial oligarchy.

The sending of aircraft carriers to Taiwan shows the level of interference of which these enemies of the human race are capable. On the other hand the Chinese army has made clear that it will not tolerate the

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THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY, THE DEGENERATION OF THE WORKERS STATE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM. J. POSADAS. EXTRACTS.

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The consequences of Stalin still exist today because Stalin impeded the consistent organisation of revolutionary thought. All this was fractured and smashed to bits. The objective pre occupation with marxism was impeded. In all the offices and the streets of Moscow, there were portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, but not the orientation of Marx, Engels and Lenin. The orientation was Stalin. The thought of Lenin was absent because what he achieved, the Russian revolution with the Bolshevik party was amputated by Stalin. Lenins view was that the USSR should be an organising impelling centre of the world revolution, but this was abandoned. Soviet democracy was the most powerful instrument of the Soviet Union in relation to the masses of the world. Undoubtedly the economy and scientific progress influence, but if economic and social progress do not develop in soviet democracy, then the workers state lacks sufficient authority to defy history. It has authority because scientific and economic progress attract the will of the masses. But it does not teach them to organise. There is a limitation between economic and social progress and the forms of organisation.

This process of degeneration of the Workers States is not a consequence of the Communist party nor of the revolution nor of the communist character of the revolution, but of historic conditions which existed in that stage and which now no longer exist. Hence Stalinism cannot be repeated but yes the consequences of Stalinism continue which is what we are experiencing at the present moment.

It cannot be repeated because these are different historic stages. The USSR meant the revolution in one of the poorest countries, industrially the most backward with eighty percent of the population peasant and illiterate and an idiotic monarchy which was quite useless only outstanding in pornography and corruption it had no ideas. Yet the people produced a number of important scientists who contributed to physics, chemistry and the natural sciences. It was not a question of a backward people but a backward leadership.

The ruling clique did not correspond to progress, to the scientific capacity of the country, because in conditions of great backwardness, they produced a Mendeleev and a Pavlov. The regime was backward and maintained the people in a

backward condition. But the country produced capable scientists which showed that there were conditions for very great progress.

The Bolshevik revolution made the necessary equilibrium so that this progress would continue. Yet this was based on the most backward type of economy because industry was weak. Russia needed to import wheat because production was costly and backward.

The revolution took place in these very backward conditions. The war accentuated the backwardness because it disintegrated what little there was of the economy. The revolution and the civil war which lasted two years culminated in a process of destruction so that the Bolshevik party in triumphing had to confront food shortages and a collapse in communications and industry. The main engineers, technicians, doctors and the principal cadres of the communist party died during the civil war.

The Bolshevik party which took power during the period of the war, the revolution and the civil war was decimated. The principal cadres of the Bolshevik party were dead or had to go to develop the economy. To administer the country required secure cadres who did not vacillate because it was necessary to confront all the consequences of destruction. There were no raw materials, no industrial machinery. The peasants refused to produce. These were conditions of utter penury, infinitely worse than the Paris Commune. The revolution triumphed and confronted this situation. To stimulate the economic apparatus required leadership, secure responsible leaders. But the security lay not in industrial, technical or scientific capacity but in social and political capacity, in the party. Then the party had to dedicate cadres, the more important structure of the party to undertake the task of administering the country. This took them from the life of the party. Although it did not eliminate them, they had to dedicate themselves to the concern with the planning, the leadership, the economic organisation of the country, to develop the spirit and the security to develop the economy.

It was necessary to convince the peasantry and only the party could do it. It required persuasion by the leaders of the revolution to convince and win the peasants so that they would produce accompanied by the elevation and the reanimation of the

productive apparatus. Then the Bolshevik party had to dedicate its best cadres to this task which required complete attention, dedication and study. They had to study, to be preoccupied with these problems. They could not live the life of the party and the party was weakened.

The Bolsheviks with Lenin and Trotsky were conscious where this was going to lead to. But they had to solve the problems. If they did not send these cadres, the country would have been paralysed and the counter revolution would have acquired a bridge to sectors of the peasantry. It was necessary to break and impede this, hoping to reanimate the peasantry as they did to triumph, to win time in history, not surreptitiously but with the capacity of the party to organise. All the best cadres of the Bolshevik party were dedicated to this. Trotsky described this in the "History of the Russian Revolution" and "My Life" and in "Stalin", all of which showed the abnegation of the Bolshevik cadres.

THE NEW SECTORS OIN THE PARTY LACKED REVOLUTIONARY SECURITY.

....all these people, these arrivistes were weak and without security. Communists but without security—they accepted the communist party, but they did not have a revolutionary Bolshevik tradition and if having revolutionary traditions, they were weak, they feared the consequences of the revolution and wanted to contain them. The Central Committee, the local cadres developed with all these people and this was the structure of the Bolshevik party which arose from the war. First the illness and then the death of Lenin was a fundamental factor because this impeded the constant action and activity of Lenin. For a whole period from 1918 until 1924 Lenin was constantly ill above all from 1921 which limited his intervention. With a limitation on his intervention, the road was open to the others— to the Kamenevs, the Zinovievs, the Radeks and the Stalins for the limited policy of containing the revolution, of conciliation and of timidity. This found support in cadres who had the necessary qualities in that moment for Russia who were technicians, engineers, economists and planners in the economy and who in this way increased their weight in the party. Hence was formed a whole layer which afterwards Stalin brought together.

This is no mystery. The process had historic causes

which now cannot be repeated. On the other hand it is necessary to understand that yes the Bolshevik party had to yield to all this but it maintained the revolution and developed it. This contradictory character, developing the revolution yet admitting a whole layer of arrivistes into the party was not a consequence, the result of the weakness of the party or of the resolution of the party to push the struggle for power. It was shown that with all the limitations, the errors, the Soviet Union was the centre which influenced the world revolution. This is to say that the measure was correct. It was necessary to confront the situation because if it was not confronted, disillusionment would have been introduced into the party. Then it is possible to understand the basis which led afterwards to the degeneration of the party. It is no mystery. It is a problem of the relations of local, world and historic forces, a local relation of the Bolshevik party and the tendencies within the Bolshevik party. They are processes which are absolutely verifiable, not the result of empiricism, not the result of forces which could not be controlled or dominated nor of the concrete mistakes of Lenin, Trotsky or of the Bolshevik party. They were the conditions in which the Russian revolution took place. The later process of the containing of the revolution allowed the advance of all these various layers, incorporated into the party and stimulated the old leaders who opposed the revolution including Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Radek. It stimulated all those who were afraid, lacked audacity and the theoretical security for tomorrow. This was not the case with Lenin and Trotsky. The degeneration of the workers state has historic, concrete, material, organisational causes in historic conditions which no longer exist. Hence it is possible to make corrections. If this process was the result of impotence, it would not be possible to make corrections. But when the Russian revolution remains a nexus of history, a development, it is necessary to wait for the historic conditions to reanimate the process. Meanwhile they present the stage of Stalin as a mystery. Why Stalin? It is necessary to discuss.

The desolation of the Soviet Union, the lack of raw materials, of machinery and the

need for technical cadres during the process of the war weakened the Bolshevik party. It is not true that the Bolshevik party was small or poor or had few workers or was weak or had few cadres. The Bolshevik party was very powerful though the Russian revolution demanded more powerful means than the party possessed. But the latter answered very well with what it had. It was the most powerful party in the history of humanity. It carried out the most marvellous activity of the human being more important than the astronauts. In the country which was more backward than the other capitalist countries, submerged in peasant backwardness, it created proletarian cadres with the security to construct socialism. It was a country capable of winning over the peasants and the soldiers to the revolution. How was it possible to believe that it was a party weak in cadres?

It proved to be weak for the task which came afterwards which is quite another matter. For the task of the revolution it showed that it was capable but afterwards it showed that it was weak and insufficient because the conditions of history were unfavourable and because the socialist did not support the revolution.

This is the way to measure history. The Bolshevik party was very powerful, but for the later task it was weak because there was a retreat in the historic conditions, not because they were not foreseen by Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolshevik party. The socialists did not carry out their historic obligations. It is undoubted that the Bolsheviks must have considered that the socialists were not going to respond but the experience had to be gone through. It was the first revolution and they could not allow the first opportunity to take power to slip away. Had they not taken power the Russian proletariat would have shown and through it the world working class that the party was impotent, incapable, indecisive, vacillating and fearful. It was necessary to take power, to communicate to the working class of the world, the security and the resolution of the working class to fulfill its historic obligations. They showed that it was in this way that they would construct the workers state and triumph against capitalism.

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND THE TASKS OF THE UNITED FRONT OF THE LEFT AND THE TRADE UNIONS TO IMPEL THE ANTI CAPITALIST PROGRAMME.

The crisis of capitalism is deepening irreversibly in Europe. All the measures and efforts to contain the deterioration of the economy, the increase in unemployment have failed. The agreements of Maastricht are a point of reference when it is a question of reducing social conquests, but already within the bourgeoisie the confrontations have intensified on the stages and rhythms to achieve the parameters of Maastricht.

Capitalism is trying to use the conjuncture which has been created with the crisis in the USSR and the ex socialist camp, to increase the level of world competition through greater technical development. The increase of productivity diminishes the social time of production, increasing profit and the concentration of capital. It is a policy which leads as a consequence to unemployment, worsening conditions in work and a constant closing of enterprises.

Capitalism through its nature cannot achieve harmony between all the interests which exist within it, because there exists via Maastricht a number of norms which cannot be achieved without opposition because they depend on eliminating various sectors. The rush towards Maastricht is going to precipitate forms of inter imperialist war and the left must discuss this, discuss the experiences of history.

The war with Yugoslavia together with the common interest of the bourgeoisie for the destruction of the workers state, brought to light also the differing interests between the main capitalist countries. The Yanks have given a transitory solution and of short duration but the process leads to new confrontations between the sectors of big business over predominance in the world market.

The course which is leading big business to concentrate itself according to the criteria of Maastricht represents on the one hand an ineluctable necessity for the reproduction of capital and on the other contains all its contradictory elements

Thousands of enterprises will be sacrificed on the altar of Maastricht. Capitalism is unleashing a gigantic process of concentration and enrichment but it does this at

the cost of breaking with an important part of its social base. Hence the working class, even with a reduced number in production, in society increases the possibility of influencing and attracting to itself extensive social layers which are evicted from production in the process which big business directs.

The struggles of the masses in Europe are testimony to this process. The great struggles in Spain, Belgium and Germany, with those in Italy which overthrew Berlusconi and his pension plans for the masses, laid the basis so that there was an important first triumph in France which contained the most backward steps of Juppe. This will to struggle of the masses is the most important factor in the crisis of the capitalist system. Capitalism saw in the crisis of the partial disintegration of the workers states, the historic possibility to respond to all the contradictory forces which are concealed within itself, in the former structure of the old MEC. But what it did not see was that in the consciousness of the masses of Europe, the experience of the workers state is alive and the conclusion is maturing that "the next time we will do better, we will correct our errors". Moreover this maturing is realised beyond the present trade union and the dominant leaderships of the left.

The turn to capitalism of the ex workers states has only brought with it poverty, unemployment, the closing of industries, retreats in culture, health and education. The world bourgeoisie brought to these countries the only thing they have to export - corruption, the desire to get rich by whatever means and as rapidly as possible. On the other hand the progress in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria of the ex communists shows the rejection by the masses of the policy of agreements with world capitalism which the nationalist governments have wished to impose, utilising the void left by the capitulation of the former bureaucratic leaderships.

The electoral gains of the Communist party of the Russian Federation have very profound connotations; an important part of the working class and of the masses expressed in this vote the decision to sweep out the camarilla of Yeltsin and contain the destruction of the bases and of the principles on which the soviet workers state

was constructed. Hence in the programme and the objectives of the inheritors of the CPSU the reconstruction of the USSR stands out as paramount.

The crisis of the countries in Eastern Europe has unchained a process of reflection in the workers vanguard and in the whole of the left provoking crises and breaks in the large parties. The social democracy used this situation to propose itself as the alternative to the workers state defending its policy through which the welfare state could be a solution to the capitalist crisis. But this perspective, did not have nor has any possibility of stabilisation due to the crisis of the world economy and the exhaustion of the bourgeoisie which cannot sustain the system of pensions, pay for unemployment and maintain the standard of living attained by the most developed countries. The capitalist state has renounced historically maintaining people when their productive cycle has ended or to educate people or maintain their health or employ them. This has shown that all these conquests had been obtained through mass struggles and fundamentally through the existence of a world dual power which was established with the active presence of the Soviet Union and the ex workers states. The bourgeoisie made concessions to contain the perspective of the social revolutions which the workers states could encourage. Today the bourgeoisie believes it has the strength to be able to impose these retreats, even so it is not secure and hence its crises and vacillations. But there is no other way out for capitalism. The Maastricht agreement is the submission of the policy and programme of the European Union to the desires and plans of the great multinationals. It is the solution of the leading bourgeois layers in this final stage of the exhaustion of capitalism. The state cannot live in a permanent deficit and it is necessary at whatever cost to balance the budgets. This means that any adjustment, any industrial reconversion is placed on the shoulders of the proletariat and the masses as a whole, that is to privatise everything upto pensions and to reduce the social loans of the states of the European Union.

The mobilisations in France have been an outstanding reply of the masses to all this policy. The social reductions proposed by the Juppe

government were rejected by the whole of the population. The mobilisation was stimulated by the railway workers and the public employees, but in the struggle they represented the whole of the working class and the masses. The bourgeoisie felt this and had to retreat in its pretensions and all the European bourgeoisie felt itself to be questioned through the mobilisations in France.

The Juppe government proposed to fulfill to the letter what Maastricht demanded and clashed with the security of the French workers who made the right retreat. Such force the French workers took from the experience of the struggles of all the masses of Europe; without the previous struggles in Spain, Belgium, Germany, Russia the millions who in Italy went beyond Berlusconi, the French workers would not have achieved what they did.

The road to defend the successes achieved and the organisational level to advance towards social transformations are; the mobilisation, class solidarity and United Front of the trade unions and the parties of the left. The trade unions elevate their role in this stage. The crisis through which the main parties of the left are passing impose on the trade union centres to act as a political leadership and lead struggles of political transcendence.

The ultimate great political battles in Europe have had as great protagonists, the working class and its most legitimate instruments, the trade unions and the trade union centres. The leaderships of the left parties, as also many trade union leaderships have been dragged by the hair in the dynamic of confrontation. The worker and trade union vanguard have recovered promptly from the crisis which opened after "1989". It has not doubted for a moment the necessity of continuing the class and revolutionary struggle. Hence it has utilised the trade unions, which have shown themselves more disposed to submit to the pressure which comes from the factories. The next stage demands the incorporation in this process of all the left parties which still wait on and are submitted to the initiative of the bourgeoisie.

In the struggle of past December, France retook the level of May 1968. It did not have the same level in extent

but in the behaviour of people this experience was present; the worker student front, the masses in the streets organising and resolving all the problems, the solidarity among people in struggle. If the government of Juppe did not fail, it has been through the weakness and the conciliation of the trade union and political leaderships of the left which did not feel that they had the capacity and security to organise and centralise the forces in development for a political solution.

There are mobilisations and struggle throughout Europe and an electoral progress of the left as with the triumph of the socialists in Portugal or changes in the main parties that anyway have to express the manifest rejection by the masses of the policy which the big bourgeoisie wishes to impose.

The crisis of Germany is one of the clearest examples of the exhaustion of the capitalist system. The constant increase in unemployment which has reached 11 % has shown the total impossibility of maintaining the Germans in the East at the level of rights and conditions of living which they had gained in the German Workers State. German unification was not to improve the standard of living of the population but had the political objective of smashing an instrument (of the workers state) which could influence all the German proletariat.

The intervention of the PDS (ex communists of the East German workers state) and its support to the social democracy in spite of the attacks the latter has made on it, has contributed enormously to the changes in the social democracy with the election of Lafontaine as leader of the SPD and the unification with the IG Metall in a programme of economic development and of trade union struggle. This process of a leftward push in the social democracy opens the possibility for a united front with the greens and the ex communists which will be the base for a government of progress for Germany.

This front to affirm and develop Germany is going to need the organisation and the support of the trade unions and of the whole of the workers movement to discuss where Germany is going and a

THE BEEF DISASTER.

programme of trade union and political rights and of equality of rights for immigrant workers.

It is necessary to struggle for the defence of employment, reducing the hours of work and reorganising the distribution of work and to reject all forms of the so called "flexibility" of work. While adulating privatisation, the bourgeoisie has in various instances maintained by means of state intervention, enterprises which pass through difficult crises. There are many enterprises in Italy, Spain and also Germany which the capitalist state desires to close or sell to the best buyer, but the struggle of the masses for the lack of purchasers for these enterprises of low competitiveness, means that the state has been obliged to prolong its life by means of subsidies.

The left must reject the programme of privatisations which leads to Maastricht and at the same time to demand that the state becomes responsible for the maintenance and functioning of all these enterprises in economic crisis. These enterprises must be nationalised—now the state invests important sums to maintain them—at the same time incorporating them in the productive cycle with workers control of production.

The closing of the Vulcan shipyards in Spain means that twenty three thousand workers were thrown out. These problems cannot have a trade union but primarily a political solution. Hence the trade unions must respond politically at the same time that they include in their struggles the necessity of a united front with the parties of the left. The effect of the struggles in France can be measured by the readiness by which now large sectors of the bourgeoisie are involved in the question of the reduction of hours.

The front of the trade unions and the left must extend throughout Europe the question of the distribution of work. The working class must dispute with the bourgeoisie on who benefits from the technological progress and from the increase of productivity. As all these benefits are the result of the existence and struggle of the working class, these must serve to liberate the energies of the working class to dedicate them to the development of culture, of science, of art and of human relations. The progress of technology must be for the benefit of the masses and not as an instrument of the

enriching of big business.

In this task of unifying all the forces of the left, the communist parties or the ex communist parties have an historic task which changes according to the relations of each country. The intervention of the Russian CP which is a majority party has the task of stimulating the discussion and the mobilisation for the reconstruction of the USSR on the basis of the democratic participation of the masses and breaking with all the old Stalinist past. With the tasks of the other communist parties like the French or the Spanish cases they must develop a front with socialist parties which are the majority and have within them an important part of the worker cadres and intellectuals

In Italy the process must induce the most profound reflection on the split within the former PCI which led to the formation of the PDS and the RC. The level of programme to deal with capitalism is very much on the agenda in both the PDS and the RC. The vanguard develops in a situation which on the one hand is complicated through the crisis which enveloped the whole of the leaderships of the left after the retreat into which the workers states were precipitated. On the other hand the task is facilitated because the crisis of the class enemy is much worse and has no possibility of progress but advances towards war.

The left must use this crisis of capitalism not to contain the levels of the struggles as do the socialist parties and in part the PDS, but to make a united front which will immediately tend to develop a programme that goes beyond the limits of private property because there is no capitalist perspective in the disasters which Maastricht proposes for humanity.

Capitalism is in headlong decomposition. There are crises in all the bourgeois parties and the attempt to develop a strong right wing has failed as can be seen in France, Austria and Italy. Humanity and the workers vanguard are learning rapidly from the experiences of the past. The development of united fronts of all the left forces and the trade unions will face capitalism with overwhelming problems in the next stage and further its paralysis and rout.

OUT WITH THE MONARCHY

FOR THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.

Even the bourgeois press has been unable to conceal the deceitful ploys of the government since the appearance of the CJD problem and the possible link with BSE. The recent death of ten young people with a new strain of CJD made it impossible to contain the problem. Naturally the rest of the European bourgeoisie tried to appear with lily white hands in this matter and banned British beef totally. They took the opportunity to strengthen their own markets. Thus one of the capitalist powers, Britain was given a public thrashing in diplomatic terms. The fact that the scientific issues are not entirely clear does not alter the fact that capitalism is prepared to play fast and loose with public health. The basis for the alarm was that the new form of CJD occurs in Britain which also has by far the larger number of cases of BSE. The scientific link has so far not been proven, but that in no way justified the lack of interest by the capitalist government. Only in 1989 did the government take steps to keep BSE infected food away from humans. But infected food had been lurking about for at least three years before this. So much for the famous

bourgeois concern with the "individual"—in this case all the government was concerned about was the wealthy individuals who run the beef industry.

Thus the rendering of carcasses for feed at very low levels of temperature was a peculiarly British feat. In 1988 they decided on the slaughter of infected animals to prevent the spread of BSE. But it has not been effectively enforced. There have been many cases of infected younger cows since 1988. Pies, burgers and sausages can be dangerous, having bits of infected brain or spinal cord within them. Only in late 1995 did the government stop anyone stripping meat from cows back bones. The control of abattoirs would seem to be totally inadequate. But that is the logical consequence of capitalism which means simply profit at all cost, public health down the drain.

The population will be made by capitalism to shell out for compensation to the farmers. We are all for full compensation for the small producers and the workers in the beef industry, but not the big capitalist farmers and the food chain monopolies. The only way to prevent abuses

whereby the state connives with the big proprietors is the statification of the agricultural economy under the control of representatives of the trade unions, workers and consumer committees, with assistance to the small producers. Health control must be in the hands of independent scientific experts under popular control. The government ministries are all linked inevitably to the deciding capitalist interests. Groups such as the consumer organisation argue rightly that the consumer is constantly being ripped off through the practice of using cheaper products to limit the use of more expensive ones. Adulteration is frequent but legislation is always a step behind the swindlers. The beef crisis has shown that the population has little confidence in the government or the system. Everywhere they turn, they see a collection of accomplished crooks. Only when the economy is collectivised and placed under workers and popular control will it be possible to advance and develop in such a way that serves the interests of all and not just the insatiable demands of private expropriation.

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division of China. This crisis as with others will not go away and confrontation is inevitable at some stage. What is acting as a dead weight on imperialism is the contradictions within the capitalist powers which weakens them profoundly as when France separates from America on the Middle East crisis.

THE DEGENERATION OF BRITISH CAPITALISM.

Blair obviously hopes that the LP will act as a buffer concerned with disciplining and containing the masses but with nothing to offer them. The dropping of rail re-nationalisation shows this. But the LP apparatus is in as serious a crisis as capitalism and on coming to power it will be necessary to measure the relation between apparatus and base, because the pressures from the population for changes will be considerable and the social democracy lacks the strength of a previous period. Any new leadership which tends to arise in this situation cannot ignore the inevitability of civil war as capitalism will seek to maintain itself by violence. The LP never was a socialist party—as Benn has recently reiterated. What is

coming to an end is all the obsessive pragmatism that believed the mere election of a labour government would change everything. It never did—only war and the existence of the Soviet Union imposed a welfare state. Social revolution changes everything not electoral success. The latter may open opportunities for social pressure and that is objectively very important, but social change depends on a whole series of relations including international factors. Moreover it is absurd for socialists to be dominated by what happens in one country alone. The struggle for socialism is international or it limps uncertainly and gets lost in local problems.

The recent meeting of the Scottish TUC shows the pressures for a minimum wage and full employment. It is necessary to pose the renationalisation of all the privatised utilities under workers and popular control and no compensation to the big owners who have plundered state assets. There has to be a minimum wage which meets all the material needs of the worker and his family and is constantly updated by the trade unions via indexation—and not determined by the

statisticians working for capitalism. There has to be a workers plan of production, of public works to overcome the problem of unemployment. No to the Europe of the Monopolies! For the soviet socialist united States of Europe! No to the single currency of capitalism! Yes to a common currency of a socialist Europe! In the socialist alternative, it is necessary both to propose immediate application of parts of the transitional programme according to particular circumstances, allied to propaganda for all the transitional programme, the programme to expropriate the capitalist class. The left in the Labour party and the trade unions has a great responsibility for the future course of events. It is important to discuss the application of marxism, to see the international context in which the fight for socialism in this country is occurring. Above all it is necessary to develop better relations with the population through meetings, discussions and to improve the political life in the left constituencies and the trade unions.

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Editorial

FOR THE UNITED FRONT OF ALL LEFT FORCES ON THE BASIS OF THE TRADE UNIONS! Renationalise all the utilities!

The proposed LP manifesto expresses the fall of the social democracy. In the face of the inability of capitalism to develop an economy which can respond to the social needs of the population, the LP answer is negligible. On this basis any social or economic improvements would be marginal in the event of the return of a Labour government. Thus conservative anti trade union legislation will only be modified, not rejected. The health service may be slightly improved through rationalisation of the medical bureaucracy. It is true that promises are made about reducing taxes for the population, but it is all very unclear. Nothing substantial is said about reducing unemployment. They also propose the thoroughly reactionary idea of more independence for the Bank of England. Blair has reiterated his belief in nuclear weapons. However the apparatus in acting in this way is witness to the convulsive agony of the system. Capitalism cannot look to Blair for salvation, because those who vote Labour seek important changes and when they do not get them, a new phase will open in the crisis of the system and the labour apparatus itself.

they seek to keep them on board as part of the united front against the exploited population. Similarly the attack on welfare fraud is primarily aimed to buttress their class confidence. We are not going to weaken but continue as before.

The most important aspect of the situation in this country and on the international plane is that capitalism in order to maintain itself has none of the advantages of a previous epoch. Then the twin poles of fascism and stalinism paralysed the workers movement and led to the most appalling debacles. Now such forces do not and cannot exist on the same scale. What has to be confronted is the routinism and scepticism of the traditional workers leaderships which continue with the conceptions of collaboration and conciliation inherited from the social democracy and stalinism. On the other hand the pressures of the populations will increase, the more the brutal characteristics of capitalism are expressed—reduction in living standards, precarious employment, preparations for war and outright repression. From the reaction of the French population to the attacks on welfare state, it is certain that capitalism will have difficulties in containing more and more social explosions.

After the second world war the traditional social democracy could utilise the possibilities of welfare state reformism to contain the pressures against capitalism. This is no longer possible. The cliques in the various socialist parties can manoeuvre and avoid the

discussion of principles like Blair, but their intrinsic strength is much reduced. There is the inevitable augmentation of inter capitalist fights and preparations for war. This is why despite the weakness and pessimism of many of the left forces and apparatuses, the international and national situation favours the sectors of progress and undermines the retrograde policies of capitalism. The world workers and revolutionary vanguard has seen the results of the infamous robbery of the state property produced by the soviet people. It has seen quite clearly that the achievements of the Soviet Union benefited the soviet people in spite of the imbecility of the bureaucracy, but what has been the result of the attempt to privatise the economy and abandon the dictatorship of mafia capitalism. This has socially undermined any immediate gains for capitalism.

FAILURE OF THE ATTEMPT TO TERRORISE THE CATHOLIC MASSES IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

The alliance of the RUC with the orange order at Drumcree was a characteristic blow by British capitalism at the most oppressed sectors in Northern Ireland, the catholic minority. This is what is meant by class war. The justification for the connivance of the RUC with the representatives of unionist capitalism "that there would have been loss of life if the march had been disallowed" is particularly rich. We cannot remember this humanitarian doctrine being applied on "Bloody Sunday". In this latest vindictive behaviour on the part of capitalist interests, there was no

defence for the catholic victims of arson and intimidation, but the orange lumpen were allowed to take over Northern Ireland with the open support of the British army and police. The "peace process" (!) did not originate with British imperialism. It resulted from pressures of the population in Britain and Ireland. The Major government systematically sabotaged any discussions by making decommissioning of arms, the sole object of discussion seeking in this way to stimulate actions from the IRA. But they were badly shaken to the point of panic by the strong showing of Sinn Fein in the elections and the growing confidence of the catholic masses to confront the exploiters. Hence the preoccupation of capitalism to intimidate them. The bomb at Enniskillen, a calculated provocation capped the process. The bombing enabled the capitalist government of the republic to throw itself again into the embrace of British imperialism. The latter showed its open contempt for the catholic population when Major held a meeting with unionist representatives—who want "peace" on the basis of repressing the catholic workers. The orange order represents capitalist interests. This fossilised organisation of class repression kept alive by capitalism, feels that its former power is being defied by the permanent resistance of the oppressed. Only the apologists of capitalism justify these marches as a right of "protestant culture". The brown shirts would have appreciated that one. The Nato high command will have taken careful note of all this process because it is not only concerned with organising

external aggression but with internal repression as well.

All this vicious policy has backfired against capitalism because the resistance of the catholic masses has been very marked. It would be wrong to harbour illusions that "modern capitalism" would like to ditch the orange order and all will be well in time. It is true that the old economic structure of Northern Ireland has changed, but capitalism is incapable of developing it beyond a very limited point. At the same time the system is losing social support and fears the confidence of the exploited layers in Northern Ireland and hence it still accepts the orange order.

What has occurred must stimulate thought not only in Ireland but in the British Labour vanguard. It is a very serious warning indeed, about the sinister intentions of the capitalist system. Capitalism has another reason for wariness about any changes in Ireland. It wishes to keep it on the boil because it looks to the time when it confronts the British population as a whole. Its army is in readiness through the Irish experience (although like all the armed forces of imperialism they experience the decomposition of capitalist society). The more capitalism speaks about peace, the more they are concerned with war. Clintons "peace" was rapidly followed by redoubled military confrontations in the Middle East and now Ireland. Capitalism on a world scale is using "terrorism"—which it stimulates or organises in a variety of ways—to justify all its reactionary policies. There will be no solution to the Irish

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THE GREAT ELECTORAL ADVANCE OF THE LEFT, ITS ARRIVAL IN GOVERNMENT AND THE NECESSITY FOR THE ANTI CAPITALIST PROGRAMME IN ITALY.

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF THE POSADIST IV INTERNATIONAL

The coalition of the centre left—the Olive Tree—triumphed in the recent elections and in this the left has been the determining factor. The masses have maintained a great cohesion and the parties of the left voted massively; the PDS, the Refundazione Comunista and the Greens showing their profound aspiration for social changes in Italy and the United Front of all the left. The PDS became the first Italian party with 21.1% of the electorate, the Refundazione Comunista increasing its votes by 830,000 votes, obtained the fifth position at 8.6% and the Greens maintained themselves with 2.5%. The masses after great demonstrations which in 1994 overthrew the government of Berlusconi have stimulated with their struggles during this period, the parties of the left to work in a united front together with the Catholics of the left, bourgeois sectors and the trade unions. It is they who have imposed this electoral triumph and not the capacity of manoeuvre of the PDS.

This electoral result and the social strength of the masses who are behind the Olive Tree alliance have been very great blows to the market policy and plans of capitalism in Italy. It is a very great weakness for the bourgeoisie to have to depend on a government where it has no dominion. Whatever might be the timidity or level of conciliation with capitalism on the part of the leadership of the PDS, it can give no security to the bourgeoisie to be able to contain the working class, the youth, or the poor petit bourgeoisie which concentrated around the vote for the Olive Tree alliance.

The final months before the elections showed the growing pressure of the masses, while the right abandoned its mask and promoted the whole programme of privatisations and the complete opening to the market of the essential services. The left represented by Refundazione Comunista and the base of the PDS, sustained by the trade unions, defended the participation of the State in education, in social health and provision, defended a policy of the creation of employment irrespective of the market and with reduction of hours of work, and also defended the necessity of adjusting wages and pensions in accordance with the increase of the cost of living. These are problems which have been the centre of the struggle of the masses and have been stimulated and agitated as essential in the electoral campaign through the RC which attracted the rest of the left and permitted the centralisation of the masses. It was not the centre, the bourgeois layers or the personalities like

Dini or Macchiaro who attracted the petit bourgeois masses to vote for the Olive Tree alliance, but the parties of the left in a United Front imposed by the working class. For the first time the trade unions expressed their opinion on the electoral struggle and gave their support to the coalition of the centre left. They did not organise in such a way, that the working class could weigh even more in the campaign, with assemblies, mobilisations and public debates with the participation of the candidates. But the support is important as also the confrontation of the CGIL with the Confindustria which exerts a pressure over the Prodi government in proposing a wage freeze irrespective of the trade unions.

The masses celebrated enormously what they consider a first triumph. They impelled this electoral triumph so as to translate it into future social gains, for a programmatic discussion in a process which is very favourable for the left. In this process the weakness of the Italian bourgeoisie and the crisis of the whole of the European bourgeoisie is expressed. This triumph is the continuation of the struggles of the public sector workers in France, the struggles in Germany, in Belgium, Spain, and the advance of the socialists and communists in Portugal and of the Labour sectors in Britain.

The Italian bourgeoisie with its parties, even having the electoral weight and a representation superior to that of the whole of the left (as in the previous parliament), has to seek agreements with the PDS because it does not feel secure in confronting the masses to impose Maastricht. On the other hand, there are also bourgeois sectors who support this process of the entry of the PDS into government because they see this can also be a solution to the crisis which suffocates them. The bourgeoisie do not lose time counting votes and verifying that it had more votes and less representation (this time the electoral system benefited the left). It knows that the decision is social and not electoral and socially the masses have shown much more cohesion and have stimulated the parties of the left and the trade unions to move in a united front.

The bourgeois parties have worked each behind its own particular interests even within the centre of deregulation. There were disputes and ruptures right up to the last moment and the right wing of the National Alliance which submitted to the deregulation programme of Berlusconi lost votes to the fascist group of Rauti. On the other hand the Northern League

which represented the small and medium petit bourgeoisie of the North and North East in full boom and economic growth, gained votes for its regionalist aspirations. As a result the bourgeoisie were not able to show a united and coherent front to govern the country. Also all its efforts to divide the left front failed, that is inciting the PDS against Refundazione Comunista and viceversa.

The bourgeoisie, even the part participating in the Olive Tree coalition hoped to reduce the PDS and break its relation with the masses and confront the RC. On the other hand the PDS has maintained its weight and the RC increased by a great deal. The new votes to the RC came in the majority from the people who voted for the PDS and even those becoming members in the PDS. They voted to sustain in the alliance, an orientation more to the left, the defence of programmatic measures for the defence of the welfare state, of the sliding scale of wages, the reduction of time of work (as with the ten proposals of the RC). They voted for the RC in order to have a means of control and pressure on their own party, the PDS.

The world bourgeoisie does not know what can happen, how to position itself in front of the new process developing in Italy. On the one hand it has plans and the necessity to dismantle all the social gains of the masses, to break its resistance, to meet world competition. On the other, it loses more and more its own social base of support and finds electoral majorities which escape its control as in Italy. Thus it seeks how to adjust to this government of the centre left and to attract it. Clinton says for this reason that he does not have problems with the PDS, as he said in the same way with the possibility of an electoral victory of the communists in the ex USSR. As also he tries to make use of the bourgeois sectors in the Olive Tree coalition who try to condition the weight of the PDS internally or try to avoid the dependency of the PDS on the parliamentary support of the RF.

Dini who represented most openly such a programme has failed decisively and his role has been limited enormously. Before the elections, he invented a party evidently to diminish the weight of the PDS in the alliance. After the result (he got a poor 4.3% despite a series of measures which the government took for his electoral benefit) he launched an appeal to attract the former Christian democrats who were in the opposition in order to condition, from the bourgeois

point of view, the programme of the government of the Olive coalition. The PDS rejected this proposal and intensified the relation with the RC to confront these attempts.

Another chapter in this struggle was the inclusion of the Tangentopoli judge, Di Pietro in the ministerial team. Di Pietro took care not to declare himself in the electoral campaign for either of the two alliances. When the result was known, he welcomed opportunist fashion the triumph of the centre left coalition and offered himself as a minister. Prodi negotiated with him in part to win some popularity for the government and also because he was one of the few notabilities which he could use to counter the weight of the left. The PDS tried to contain him. There was a great internal discussion with a sector who did not favour his participation. Finally he was forced to declare that he was in agreement with the programme and the objectives and they gave him the ministry of public works so that he would continue his work against corruption. With that he had to be satisfied.

In these moves, the bourgeoisie in the Coalition had burnt their boats. On the other hand the PDS insisted on the necessity of a programme which gave priority to the problem of unemployment and the increase of the United Front with the RC. It defended its legitimate participation in the majority and proposed for it some important posts in the parliament. The public and official attitude of the PDS is "with the RC we have the same objectives, the differences are the means to achieve them." The votes of the RC are important above all in the trade union and political vanguard has voted for it. The votes of the old communists like Ingrao, the intellectuals from the Manifesto and part of the worker vanguard in Milan, Turin, Naples and Rome are important. The leadership of the RC has just met and is proposing now that it will seek to influence in the programme of the centre left alliance.

This coalition is not an alliance which is going to government with a programme of the left as was the case in France with the government of the Popular Union in 1981. But in any case the masses considered it as part of the process of the advance of their struggles. This could be seen in the demonstrations of May 1, the scale of which had not been seen for many years. There was a very large trade union representation and even the concert organised by the trade

unions for the young in Rome, had a different character than in the past. There were around half a million young people who listened with many Red Flags and singing the "Bandiera Rossa".

The young people came from every part of Italy to show that they were ready to intervene. They did not come to beg for a job, but to show their strength to change the country.

It is necessary to discuss the experience of the Government of the Left in France which was also imposed by the massive united front of the masses on their leaderships. Even having a programme of twenty one nationalisations of the key sectors of the French economy, that government was paralysed and did not fulfill its proposals in front of the financial power of French and world capitalism. It failed because it relied only on administrative measures and alliances with one capitalist sector against another and did not rely on the leading mobilisation and participation of the masses.

In Italy the Olive coalition has a much more backward programme. It wants to combine a stimulus for capitalist enterprise with the defence of the welfare state. To advance the most timid proposals of the new government, it will be necessary to turn to the mobilisation of the masses, to the trade unions and to the co-ordination with the rest of the European left. The European unification of the left, is an indispensable necessity. It was expressed in the recent meeting in Turin of the European and trade union left held at the same time as that of the G7. These meetings proposed in a more decisive form, proposals for reduction in the hours of work and employment not submitted to the logic of the market. Socialist parties such as those of Sweden and Austria are opposed to the policy of rabid privatisations.

With the new government in Italy, the task which is opening for the left and the trade unions can be of great assistance in the centralisation of future struggles in Europe. The obstinate resolve of Chirac and Kohl to apply their restrictive measures, is determined by the need to confront this process in their countries and to stimulate the rest of the European bourgeoisie to take heart and to meet resistance of the masses head on. The margins for reformist solutions have been reduced to a minimum as the perspectives to solve the problems through fiscal or simple administrative measures are going to be shown to be

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THE FAILURE OF THE YELTSIN REGIME AND THE NEED FOR A DISCUSSION IN THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

We salute the great vote of the communist masses against Yeltsin which continues the recovery of the world revolutionary and communist vanguard against the objectives of world capitalism. In order to continue in the second round Yeltsin was obliged to concede to Lebed and had to offer a line of concession to the masses, such as promising to pay wages and improve social benefits, with better workers rights in the factories and even towards the end, expressing an interest in coalition with the communists. Yeltsin's present semi mummified condition is a fine image of the mortuary of "restoration capitalism". It is highly possible that the desperate exertions of the election campaign will finish him off.

As there have been no active soviets since the first years of the Russian revolution, there are no means by which the vanguard and the most progressive sectors of the population can discuss and win over the rest. The present junk in power in Moscow who incessantly talk about democracy, ignored the wishes of the soviet people who voted to keep the Soviet Union. Many of those who voted for Yeltsin, voted for him as the lesser evil because they lack confidence in the leadership of the Communist party. They see too many links with the old apparatus who still justify stalinism. When Zyuganov attempts to excuse Stalin- trying to excuse the indefensible- no wonder many may think "we do not want any more of that". Many of these people would be influenced if there was an honest and profound appraisal of the past instead of justifications.

The Yeltsin campaign naturally played on these fears.

Nonetheless the immense pressure coming from the decisive proletarian sectors for a return to the structure of the workers state is not to be confused with the conservative limitations of the CP apparatus and its concern to come to an accomodation with the various sectors of the bureaucracy and kleptocracy

As we have argued before against those who seemed to believe that all was over with the soviet experience, the thieves who have stolen state property do not have social legitimacy. Capitalism to gain authority has to show that it is capable of benefiting social progress. All the kleptocracy has done is to boast about going back to "primitive accumulation" when the planned economy in spite of stalinism had proved its social capacity. Imports have flooded in destroying the balance of the economy and investment is denied to productive industry. International capitalism is in process of trying to finish off the Russian car industry. The social welfare of the masses has been ruined.

In their wildest moments world capitalism hopes that the communists will simply die off, leaving the thieves to enjoy their loot in peace and tranquility. But capitalist policies have decisively failed. Private firms have even asked for renationalisation and the proletariat far from being smashed down by unemployment have intervened more strongly with strikes and the miners

strike has taken on a national confrontation. It has been clear for some time that even Yeltsin has to take account of the fact that the structure of the workers state is very much alive not just in those parts of the economy that have not succumbed to privatisation but above all in the hearts of the decisive sectors of the Soviet Union, that is the soviet proletariat. This communist consciousness expressed not only by the tradition of the Revolution but in the triumph over the nazis, is a permanent opposition to the kleptocracy and prepares the ground for a more concentrated opposition in the future. Even before the election Yeltsin had had to allow the reappearance of the hammer and sickle in the parade celebrating the defeat by the Red Army of the nazis. He had made a treaty with China in which they affirmed their opposition to NATO and the support for the Chinese claim to Taiwan. Moreover the disaster of the return to capitalism in the USSR is going to have repercussions in China itself where the devastating effects of pro capitalist reforms are very clear.

It is possible to envisage in the ex Soviet Union forms of coalition between the various sectors of the ruling cliques. There is a general anti imperialist nationalist sentiment sustained by the communists which can be used for this purpose

Sectors of the new dispensation who fear being totally submitted to the world market dominated by the imperialist powers, may seek some restructuring and protection of the economy and

thus gain some prestige with the population.

The results of the elections in themselves will not decide the future course of events in the former USSR. In fact the "victory" of the Yeltsin clique is rapidly backfiring. The plundering of the resources of the state to finance the electoral campaign is leading to further exacerbation of the problems caused by private appropriation- non payment of wages, no resources to develop the regions etc. The incapacity to deal with the Chechen problem has led Yeltsin to seek for support in Lebed. If that does not work more instability is inevitable. The world communist movement must discuss the events in the ex Soviet Union, and the need for a profound re appraisal on the objective reasons for what has happened there. For example Yeltsin who has led the attempt to restore capitalism in the ex USSR came from the communist party. If it was a marxist party how come it could produce a Yeltsin and many others of his ilk? This discussion is necessary not as a pedantic pursuit, but as a means to reorientate the world communist movement back to its revolutionary roots, towards the importance of the soviets in the destruction of capitalism and the development of the workers state, the need for a mass communist international, for the construction of communist parties which have a genuine political life and not just a routinist existence submitted to the exigencies of elections, winning seats in local government with socialism as a remote project (typical of the classical social democracy). In other words back to Lenin and

the first seven years of the Soviet Union. Without a profound discussion of revolutionary experience, it will not be possible to advance with the necessary agility in the great events that are to come.

The crisis in Chechnya particularly expresses the criminal disaster of the Yeltsin regime. Now partially confronting the kleptocracy, Lebed has openly referred to the war as being maintained for "commercial objectives" and has demanded changes. The repeated catastrophe to the army is witness to all the destructive effects of mafia capitalism on an instrument constructed to defend the gains of the workers state. This is what the attempt to restore capitalism has led to- misery and collapse, a very bad advertisement for international capitalism and its religious belief in smashing people into the ground.

In any case what occurs in the ex Soviet Union is conditioned not only by internal processes, but by the whole international situation and the chaos of a decomposing capitalist world order, rapidly losing social support. It is only necessary to see the crisis of the Middle East, the confrontation over Taiwan, the debacle in Indonesia, and the intense economic competition between the capitalist blocks to see that new catastrophes are on the way. The criminal looters of the workers states will have limited time to enjoy their plunder.

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situation until capitalism and the monarchy is ended throughout Britain and Ireland and the programme of social transformations applied. Sinn Fein has to reanimate its socialist programme, to develop links with the trade unions in a united Front with all the forces of the left throughout Britain, Ireland and the whole of Europe. Whatever the plans of imperialism the most important aspect is that it is constantly weakening. The more it is opposed, the more it is demoralised.

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS,

The conflicts over Maastricht are profound in

both the Conservative and Labour parties. In the former there are diverse capitalist interests, some of whom fear total submission to the multi nationals. Within the LP the opposition comes from the left and trade unions who reject the Maastricht proposals which on implementation inaugurate in practice a ruthless attack on the standard of living and employment through a deflationary policy.

The demands put forward at recent trade union conferences show the anti capitalist decision of the proletariat. USDAW voted for the renationalisation of the privatised utilities and the RMT, voting against the

leadership proposed the nationalisation of the shipping industry without compensation. The miners union has also voted for the renationalisation of the mines without compensation. Recent strikes of postal workers and metro workers affirm class resistance to the exploiters. The trade unions are a fundamental point of concentration against the capitulation of the social democratic leaderships. Capitalism is preparing to take the population to the cleaners yet again, but they lack the social strength to do as they like. Hence their desperation to develop racial tensions and strengthen the hand of repression. The forces

of the anti capitalist opposition are gathering strength and must intensify the arguments and analysis for the programme of nationalisations under workers control, the end of the monarchy, a massive public housing programme and a workers plan of production in the perspective of a unified struggle throughout Europe against the enemy of human progress, the capitalist system.

Out with the monarchy!

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to the success it achieved. Lenin showed that it was not mistaken in taking power. If they had not taken power the working class would have been shown as weak, fearful and insecure and this would have been communicated to the world working class. They took power, constructed the workers state and endured the nazis. Half of France and Italy ended in the hands of the nazis. The nazis tried to break the Soviet Union but were smashed. The Soviet Union did this in spite of the weakness from which it suffered. This has to be seen and judged.

TO BE CONTINUED.

insufficient. The left must impose the state as the organ of active participation, management and control of an important part of the economy in a transparent form and with the direct participation of the population.

Another important problem is the discussion posed by the Northern League on the separation of Northern Italy from the rest of the country. It is a problem posed by the development of the economy. The North is a sector which is very rich thanks to the proximity of the great markets of Germany, Austria, France, Benelux and now the new markets of the former workers states and it has made use also of a cheap lira in relation to the other European currencies. As this zone is also homogeneous, the bourgeois leadership wants to abandon the rest of the country which is more backward and which for them means an expense they do not wish to maintain. In part it is the same process which has occurred in Eastern Europe where the richest part breaking from the rest, stimulated by the world bourgeoisie, adheres to the rules and functioning of the market. In this last situation of course there is primarily the interest in disintegrating and weakening the states of eastern Europe so as to be able to impose greater political retreats.

The level of the world development of the capitalist market, the volatility of capital transfers which are rapidly displaced, imposes ruthless solutions. This means eliminating social gains and destroying countries which are considered useless costs ie dead wood. Seen from this point of view the secession which is proclaimed by the Northern League corresponds to the necessity of part of the bourgeoisie—although the League of Bossi does not represent it politically in a complete way because he criticises the Maastricht treaty and Nato. But the regional bourgeoisie which measures according to the immediate interest of profit, impels the League towards the objective of a break in order to have a greater freedom for its business operations.

But there are also the bourgeois sectors who measure rather more globally. They are afraid and try to resist this process because they see that on the one hand, they can obtain an immediate benefit, but at a cost which can put at risk the entire system. The experiences of Yugoslavia, of the Baltic states and of Czechoslovakia are demonstrations of this. The Baltic countries have been able to benefit from some commercial advantages with which they were able to corrupt the leading caste and to satisfy some sectors of the population, but the rest of the republics, parliaments and local administrations in Eastern Europe have returned to the ex-

communists. The League argue from the experience of Czechoslovakia. There also a rich sector was integrated with the capitalist market while the other sector remained in the hands of the communists. In Yugoslavia capitalism did everything to attract Slovenia and Croatia and thus disintegrate the Yugoslavia of Tito, but afterwards they had to launch a war to maintain this separation.

That is to say that the bourgeoisie, even needing separation economically fears the political and social results of a break. In the case of Italy, it will not be so simple. On the one hand it will not be a question of all the North. Emilia Romagna, Umbria and Tuscany have a great communist tradition and also, if less, Piedmont and Liguria. On the other hand, the world bourgeoisie does not have much illusion on being able to benefit from a small rich zone which is integrated and another large zone which passes into the hands of the left and with a very weak Italian bourgeoisie.

The left and now the centre left government itself must launch a programme for the national development of the country and make the unions weigh much more in the discussion. These are paying for the mistakes of the political "agreements" with the bourgeoisie in defence of bourgeois interests. It is the working class which pays the taxes which these bourgeois "innovators" lament are all wasted in Rome. It is the working class of the whole country which has paid and will pay for the advantage which the bourgeoisie has acquired in the world market. It is the masses of the country who have paid for all the communications and tunnels which have been opened in the Alps and the Appenines to connect Italy to the rest of Europe. The bourgeoisie is the real cancer which utilises all these social benefits to extract individual profit, to deposit immense wealth abroad or invest outside the country.

The regional bourgeoisie seeks to exert a pressure on the Prodi government, so that it limits the necessary plan of investments for the social development of the country. It can have an effect on the bourgeois layers of the government, but the left must not limit its objectives under these pressures. It is necessary to develop a programme of development of the public services, of employment based on the intervention of the masses.

The trade unions, the left parties, the local and regional administrations, led by the left, the different youth movements and associations must develop this programme taking as a centre the greatest participation of the masses. This is the primordial condition so that the left can weigh more in the centre left government and counter the bourgeois opposition. The electoral

THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY AND THE DEGENERATION OF THE WORKERS STATE

CONTINUED FROM THE LAST ISSUE.

J. POSADAS

The Bolshevik party showed that it was weak in front of Stalin, in front of its own structure, but in front of capitalism, no it showed that it was powerful and that it triumphed.

If Lenin had not died the course of history would have changed a great deal. Had the socialists taken power in Germany in 1918, the course of history could have changed. And it was not excluded that they could have taken power. Lenin and Trotsky discussed at Brest Litovsk to gain time so that the German masses could take power. Hence the policy of Trotsky, "neither peace nor war". The communists when they mocked at Trotsky and at us tried to show Trotsky as indecisive, fearful "neither war nor peace", but it was not like this. It was not indecision. It was a policy aimed at winning time so that the German working class would not see the Russian revolution as weak but a stimulus to take power. Hence Lenin and Trotsky unanimously were believers in intervening towards Germany. And if the allied armies invaded the USSR and smashed it, Lenin and Trotsky said "if they do this they could defeat us, but the world working class will see that we have fulfilled our obligations; it will draw the conclusion from our transitory defeat and afterwards will know how to retake power and they will do it better than us, because they will have more experience than us."

The Soviet Union was considered as an instrument which was the base to diffuse, to develop, to generalise the experiences for the taking of power and the construction of the workers state. It was not considered as a conception closed within itself, but an instrument to develop the world revolution. Afterwards Lenin said "we yielded at Brest Litovsk because we saw that the Germans were not going to take power, the moment had passed.

triumph of the left coalition and the Prodi government open a process which is not the same as the previous phase. The masses feel that they have created conditions to favour enormously future struggles. It is not a question now to develop a competition within the left, but to deepen the discussion to arrive at an anti capitalist programme and to organise in daily life, in the workers areas, in the factories, at all the levels of power won by the left, the united front of the left. International Bureau of the Posadist IV International. 25.5.96.

Then it was necessary to defend the USSR, to sustain it and there on the basis of the possibilities which it had, to support, impel and sustain the world course of the revolution. And if they could not do it, then to develop the Soviet Union, to show to the world revolution, to the national struggles, to the struggles of the backward peoples, the experiences of the Soviet Union, to generalise the anti capitalist struggle. Hence they formed the Communist International.

If they had conceived that socialism was possible in a single country, they would not have formed the Communist International. The latter is a conception far from Socialism in One country. On the contrary it is the conception of the universality of the revolution, not simultaneous but neither in decades, by which the Soviet Union would transmit the experiences, the security, the points of support and the military economic, social and military support to revolutions throughout the world. Thus the Soviet Union was conceived as a conscious instrument of the proletariat, because it was the programme of the proletariat and the historic function of the proletariat which was exercised by the Soviet Union. It was conceived as an instrument to diffuse the world revolution.

THE ROOTS OF THE BUREAUCRACY LIE IN LOCAL INTEREST AND WORSHIP OF THE APPARATUS.

At no time in the first four congresses of the Communist International did they put forward the slogan, "Socialism in a single country". When Lenin used this term, it was in the form of propaganda. When he said "we must construct socialism in Russia to give an example" he did not say we would construct "socialism in a single country". He said we must advance socialist measures. Hence when they had to adopt the NEP to develop the economy, Lenin resolved, proposed and it was approved in the Communist International, that at the same time that there was the NEP—which meant investment of imperialist capital drawing on imperialist technicians and administrators experienced in the imperialist economy—it was necessary to extend, modify and generalise the dictatorship of the proletariat to confront the consequences of accumulation which the NEP was going to produce.

One of the consequences was to stimulate production among small private sectors in agriculture. Lenin said that this reproduced capitalism

daily. In reproducing capitalism, it reproduced the way of capitalist thinking and it reproduced this in the party itself, that is the individual conception of the group, of private interest, of caste, of sectors who think as a sector and a caste.

Lenin conceived in this way the Russian revolution and this was its essence, but already before the death of Lenin as Trotsky said very well, the party was weakening in its structure. From a proletarian party of proletarian origin, base and structure, it went towards depending more on those of petit bourgeois and intellectual origins. The arrivistes, people new to the party were incorporated into positions of leadership, people who had some scientific, cultural and political knowledge and the proletariat was pushed into the background. But this was not because the Bolshevik party was like this but because it did not have sufficient time to restructure its cadres and elevate the worker cadre.

The bureaucracy did not originate in 1924. It originated when the Bolshevik party was formed. The roots of the bureaucracy are the local conception of the revolution which germinates, determines and develops the local interest of the revolution. Then this develops narrow, local conceptions. It prevents seeing the world objectively and the world is seen in antagonism with local interest. All this was sustained by weak, indecisive, vacillating, fearful and individualist elements. They were not against the revolution, but yes they were against the level of the revolution and they rapidly took hold of the party. This had already been devastated by war and revolution and all these people had positions because they had intelligence and culture and the masses did not have culture and the proletariat was very small. All these people afterwards supported Stalin. It was a local, sedentary, conservative interest which supported all this process.

It was not that the Bolshevik party was wrong and created all this. The Bolshevik party did not have sufficient strength but it had resolution. It took power. Was the Bolshevik party right or wrong? If it was not historically justified we would not be here. All the objections to the Bolshevik party are minute in relation

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Editorial

Nothing of substance is being discussed by the main parties for the 1997 general election in Britain. Parliament is seen by the population as corrupt and the monarchy redundant. The line of the conservatives is openly repressive, threatening further reduction of trade union rights and control of strikes by public sector workers. The budget merely confirmed that what capitalism may give in reduced income tax is surpassed by what it will take in council tax. The poor such as pensioners or people on benefits will continue to be punished by capitalism for having the gross effrontery to be alive. Above all capitalism has shown it can increase taxes but is incapable of developing the productive forces to meet the needs of society. The Conservative, Liberal and Labour party leaderships have nothing to say about Ireland because imperialism has shown that it has no interest or capacity to provide a solution.

The Labour party leadership which has always been an integral part of capitalism exhibited the emptiness of its conclusions in the conference. The line of Blair that "we are all on the same side" is so preposterous that it confirms the total bankruptcy of the apparatus. It is a political caste with no interest in ideas but a great deal of interest in winning office, on the ludicrous premise that it can run capitalism better than the capitalists. They reflect the influence of the state bureaucracy which has developed in the latest phases of capitalism and whose function is to control the masses via the allocation of resources ("finite resources" in the language of capitalism) to various social needs. But the population has a desire for important changes and this is where there will be problems on an electoral

victory for the LP. The recent poll of LP membership to support "new Labourism", was so fearful of discussion that not even amendments were allowed. All the recent party conferences with their attempted cult of the "leader" were farcical because neither the leaders, the programmes nor the vacuous applause have the slightest historic importance or authority. They are the opium of the ruling class.

"MORAL CRUSADE."

Capitalism has waged a ruthless class struggle against the masses of Britain imposing de industrialisation, unemployment and systematic attacks on the welfare state and now there is much talk supported by all the parties of the need for a "moral crusade". The rip off artists are going to lecture us on ethics. This is really very, very dire and expresses the total incapacity of capitalism. Undoubtedly there is a popular revulsion against the violence and egotism engendered by a capitalist society geared to exploitation. However "moral reform" can hardly be entrusted to the worshippers of private property, deregulation and nuclear weapons who have been quite happy to go along with the systematic murder of Iraqi children. The more putrescent capitalist society, the more they will talk about "moral reform" to block any discussion about social change. Having made conditions in many schools impossible, the ruling cliques now have the insufferable impudence to propose "moral teaching" in the curriculum. Even the head of the TUC, a notorious

collaborator with capitalism was obliged to say that it was impossible to talk about morality when workers are treated like dirt. Now the most reactionary sectors are drooning on about the "family". The latter is used by reaction as a means of distracting attention from the most important aspect of society that is the social relations of that society, how its classes function. The object of the cult of the family is a hopeless effort to diminish the social and political preoccupation. It will not work of course. All this exhibits the profound social weakness of capitalist society which the workers organisations have not been capable of using.

"WE HAVE MISSILES".

As the imperialist powers prepare for future interventions against the Russian-Chinese block by promoting the extension of Nato into eastern Europe, Lebed, since dismissed, put the position quite simply. "We have missiles". Such a remark is objectively an encouragement to all the forces in the world who combat imperialism and capitalism. The observation of Khrushchev "we will bury you" in its period was apposite. The fact that the bureaucracy is incapable of leading the struggle does not alter the validity of such observations. Next to the party, the army is the force closest to the former structure of the workers state. Whatever the disputes in the bureaucracy, imperialism is faced with a force expressed in missiles. It has to move stealthily pretending that "there is no enemy", that "communism is dead". The brutal return to

oppressing the Arab peoples in the Middle East, the direct American encouragement to the Taliban reactionary group in Afghanistan and the quite unnecessary execution of the North Korean submarine crew by the Southern Korean government are examples of the constant provocations imperialism is developing against the eastern block. The forces responsible for the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki have to be reminded that next time around or as Lebed said from the cold to the hot war, the capitalist states will face a different outcome.

THE LACK OF A WORLD LEADERSHIP

The principle problem facing humanity in its struggle to free itself from the mounting barbarism of the capitalist system remains on the subjective plane—the lack of a world leadership to organise the overthrow of the system. There is obviously growing resistance to capitalist policies on a world scale. The Yankee bombing of Iraq showed up the weakness of the most powerful capitalist power. Its actions were not supported even by the pathetic Arab bourgeois leaders such as Mubarak in Egypt or by French capitalism. The new government in India however limited shows that considerable anti capitalist forces are developing against the policies of privatisation. The recovery in part of the Sandinista forces in Nicaragua and the incapacity of imperialism to liquidate Castro show that imperialism is not objectively strong. However the world communist and socialist parties have to date not produced any important or convincing texts on the reasons for the genesis of Stalinism, its consequences

or the reasons for the fall of the Soviet Union. This points to a routine limited party life where probing into politics is not encouraged in comparison with gaining posts in trade unions, parliament or local government. In the RC of Italy led by Cossutta and Bertinotti for example there are no texts which go into these issues and recently a document was issued on the problems arising from the alliance with the PDS which finally concluded with no clear world or national perspectives but vague aspirations of a reformist character (despite criticising reformism). Do they believe that capitalism has abandoned war as a means of imposing its will? Do they believe that capitalism can be made to concede? Nothing is clear. They do not accept capitalism, like the cadavers of the social democracy, but they certainly do not speak with clear revolutionary objectives. They make no analysis of the world perspectives of socialism and capitalism which is the marxist basis for making political decisions. They then lay themselves quite open to the bourgeois pressures of parliament, local government and the state bureaucracy. Despite the wave of capitalist privatisations resulting from the weakness and incapacity of the workers organisations, capitalism is weakening substantially, decaying on an institutional basis. The government scandals in Belgium represent an unprecedented fall in the authority of capitalist institutions such as parliament, the monarchy and the organs of government. The demonstrations of the Belgian

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THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY, THE DEGENERATION OF THE WORKERS STATE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM. J. POSADAS. EXTRACTS.

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The party was a small minority, but it had the capacity to concentrate judgement and analysis, to generalise experience and to concentrate the attention on what it was necessary to do and why it was necessary to do it. This is monolithism, this is discipline. This was Lenin and the Bolshevik party. Otherwise power would not have been taken, everything would have been dispersed in insecurity individual interest, doubt, vacillation and fear of confronting the immense forces of the capitalist system. The Bolshevik party created security, but in front of the world retreat of the socialists who did not take power, a force was given to capitalism which it did not have. This experience was necessary in history. This was the problem of the socialist parties. The only party which had a revolutionary socialist party was the Soviet Union. Lenin could not wait until they made revolutionary or communist parties. But with the taking of power he developed revolutionary parties throughout the world.

The power of Stalin was not that he succeeded in lying or deceiving Lenin or Trotsky. Stalin was a revolutionary and was imprisoned for years and suffered tortures and he also tortured. But before dying Lenin execrated him as being corrupt, immoral and arrogant. Publicly he said to him either you correct your errors or I am breaking off relations with you. This was the testament of Lenin which showed that it was possible to be a revolutionary but also corrupt and immoral. Hence Stalin played the role that he did and which no one else played because he brought together these particular elements. Hence Lenin condemned him, not Trotsky or the others who had made political errors. He condemned Stalin not for political errors but for being corrupt and immoral. He condemned him for one of the most ignominious characteristics in the history of the revolutionary movement, that of being arrogant and dishonest. This is the most ignominious characterisation in the world revolutionary movement and after this comes betrayal. In spite of this Stalin formed part of the movement and he brought together the qualities which afterwards made him the representative of the bureaucracy.

Stalin and the bureaucracy developed their power because the world process of the revolution retreated, not because their power increased. Stalin had supported the revolution, but he did not want to advance anymore and was afraid. To justify his function, to give an organising centre for the bureaucratic function, Stalin invented "socialism in a single country". It was not just a mistake. Such a conception had no basis, there were no means for socialism in a single country. Neither in Marx, or Engels or Lenin or Trotsky or in the tradition of marxist theory, of the analysis of history, could there be socialism in a single country. Socialism is a necessity of history for the progress of humanity and in this sense for any country whatever.

With the needs of the process of history, with the combined and unequal world economy which depends on the world structure of production, made in this way by private property, socialism in a single country cannot be constructed. No country has all the material means, raw materials, all the means for the production of machinery, the scientific technological capacity and the proletariat. The world wide division of labour develops the productive capacity under capitalist private property. This creates an interdependence on a world scale. It is not that capitalism proposed to do it in this way. Capitalism based itself on the previous stage of the feudal epoch when the process was already under way.

In taking power the Bolsheviks had to confront an enormously difficult situation. There was an immense backwardness, a peasant economy where plough and horses were still used. In agriculture production was far inferior to other countries. Thus the conditions arose for this layer of intellectuals— who frightened by the advance of the revolution were concerned to protect the interests which had been acquired and to develop them— to find acceptance in the party. But even so this welcome in the party was very partial. Trotsky and the Bolsheviks who were all Leninists found an immense support for the programme of the permanent revolution which meant, means and will mean that the revolution can have any point of departure, that it

develops in a continuous form or with stages and pauses, but it can begin in a backward country as a democratic bourgeois revolution and without passing through the bourgeois period can advance with socialist measures. Instead of it being the bourgeoisie which promotes democratic liberties, the economy and heavy industry, the proletariat acts by taking power which is what the bourgeoisie should have done. This is permanent revolution.

Thus take Mali which comes from an immense backwardness. How does the permanent revolution show itself? In accordance with Stalinist conception the bourgeoisie should have taken power which takes power after feudalism and develops industry, democracy, parliament, the university and afterwards the proletariat arises. Capitalism creates the proletariat and at some stage this says to the bourgeoisie "your stage is over, now we are running things". The conception of Trotsky was that of Lenin, but Trotsky was the one who first thought of it, basing himself on Marx. For in a backward country the proletariat is small, does not have a great strength, great number but has on the other hand, the conception, the programme, the policy which is learned from the Soviet Union or other countries and it applies it. What is missing is the party to win over the will of the masses. The proletarian conception is necessary, the programme of industrial production, economic development, the combination of town and country, the development of democracy to construct this power, but workers power and not capitalist power. Why does the bourgeoisie have to give democracy? Why cannot the proletariat do it, constructing socialism and not capitalism? The proletariat does this and thus the democratic bourgeois revolution is achieved by proletarian measures. The stages of history are not altered, the dates are not removed from the almanac. These stages are there, but they are realised by proletarian methods and not bourgeois methods as was the case with the Russian revolution. Russia passed from a country of backward peasants to the socialist revolution. This is a concrete example. Why not discuss this? But the communists do not discuss in this way.

Russia was a backward country, a peasant country ruled over by the Tzar. The democratic bourgeois revolution was not made nor had they succeeded in bringing the agrarian revolution to the countryside. In 1861 they made certain reforms but still real forms of slavery continued to exist in Russia. But the Soviet Union was constructed. Why do not the communists discuss this? These are concrete and vivid experiences to generalise. China was a backward country and women in China had no rights. The woman was the slave of all the men in the house. This was contempt for women and such social relations indicate economic backwardness, because if the economy was advanced women would be incorporated because she is necessary in production. When they treat women in this way, it is because they do not require them in production. It was a backward production but the Chinese took power. On the road to the taking of power, they incorporated women into the revolution. They made the bourgeois democratic revolution. From 1948-1975 in twenty seven years, they made a development corresponding to five hundred years of the capitalist system. These are concrete and precise examples which show the progress of the theory of the permanent revolution.

The bureaucracy in the workers states concealed all this because the USSR passed from being a peasant country to being one of the most powerful industrial countries in the world. This was through the programme, the policy and the party. If afterwards the bureaucracy advanced and buried the Bolshevik programme and produced the policy of socialism in a single country, this was through the world retreat of the revolution. These were not the mistakes or weaknesses of the Bolshevik party.

Stalin made a series of policies including what was called the "third period" and afterwards the alliance with world capitalism hanging on to the coat tails of capitalism. He decapitated the communist parties and weakened them. In weakening them, this had the repercussion in a greater weight and capacity of the world bourgeoisie. Then Stalin said the bourgeoisie had a

greater weight, but he provided the policy for the bourgeoisie to weigh more—for example in Spain. Then he justified in the Soviet Union that it was not possible to advance anymore because they did not have the strength. This was not a logical consequence, but it was the consequence of the policy of Stalin. The cadres who were assassinated and shot were not executed because they were mistaken or because they were enemy agents, but because they defended Bolshevik policy. Hence they were all shot and no one remained. All these cadres were in every way a testament to the Bolshevik policy. They were a living example, a weight in history. But the bureaucracy was afraid. It wanted a quiet life, not a revolutionary policy.

The bureaucracy had the conception of a caste of group interests. It is not based on knowledge of world experience. It is based on its own particular interests and hence the bureaucracy selected its people locally and on a world scale. It transmitted into the communist parties of the world, the policy of tranquility. In a small time which lasted from 1929 to 1933, it made the policy which was called the "third period". This was under the pressure of the soviet masses and reacting in front of the enormous pressure of their own party educated by Lenin with the experience acquired in the Russian revolution, who saw that the revolution could be extended and that Russia was not an especial case, and that it was a norm which could be generalised. It exerted a pressure on the leadership to continue such a policy. Stalin to contain all this produced what was called the "third period". He launched the communist parties throughout the world on the road to take power. In all this ultimist policy they decapitated an immense number of communists. They demoralised and destroyed the confidence and method of an enormous number of communist intellectuals, cadres and leaders. As it was a massacre, Stalin turned round and said "It is not possible to take power" so he justified "socialism in one country". He threw the meat to the dragon and said "you see the dragon eats the meat". This was the policy of the bureaucracy to justify itself and in the party Stalin got rid of all those who proposed, maintained

THE GLOBALISATION MYTH.

The less justification capitalism has for its continued existence the more it fabricates myths. Its utter parasitism can be seen in the events in Eastern Europe where it has simply savaged the workers state and been incapable of any creative transformation.

The most ridiculous myth is that of globalisation. The new and information technology is supposed to have created such new conditions that the nation state has been totally surpassed and the new world escapes prior economic analysis. However the interminable contradictions of capitalism have not been transcended despite all the mystification.

Information technology reduces communication and transaction costs. The codification of information allows it to be communicated very rapidly and accelerates the speed of decisions. But that only accelerates capitalist competition. It cannot transcend the results of it. The propagation of the myth says much about the psychology of contemporary capitalism. On the one hand via the globalisation fantasy, it attempts to intimidate people with the spectre of a new economic paradigm outside all control, on the other hand it also reflects a great deal of its own insecurity that they do not know where they are going.

Certainly in the last period trade has grown twice as fast as output. The multi nationals have barged into many closed economies. Foreign exchange transactions are well over a trillion dollars a day. All this is very impressive on a superficial level because the production of wealth is prodigious in comparison with pre capitalist economies. But under capitalism, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

There is nothing especially new about the internationalisation of the world economy. The epoch of imperialism announced the division of the whole world by the imperialist powers and consequent increase in world trade. In this respect alone nothing has changed. The global economy remains firmly in the hands of the leading imperialist powers. These dictate to the rest of the globe. North America, Western Europe and Japan dominate in accumulated stock, foreign direct investment and world trade. In fact two thirds of the world's population are very firmly outside this famous globalisation. They are left to rot because capitalism has no interest and no capacity to develop the world economy, to develop productive industry, to solve the needs of the population. The famous massive capital flows are not international but primarily between the main industrialised countries. Approximately two thirds of the multi nationals continued to have their main base in their own countries of origin. They may have many outlets abroad, but capitalism however much it tries cannot transcend the nation state. Thus in this era of transnationals the competition between the capitalist powers becomes more and more acute.

It is perfectly possible for left governments to confront the bourgeoisie of their own countries and not submit to the international banks but that means being prepared for extra parliamentary action and not accepting the rules of the exploiter class. Not only are more political crises on the agenda as in the Middle East but more economic and financial disturbances. The struggle to develop a Europe under the control of the German-French hegemony is going to lead to all manner of crises on top of these which exist already. The fact

that Chirac endeavors to intervene in the Middle East crisis is an example of the exacerbation of inter imperialist dispute.

The genuine globalised economy can only develop on the basis of a planned world economy in which the market which determines the function of the economy is not the market which the capitalists create, but the objective market of human needs in all spheres of life, food, transport, education, a healthy environment. The absurdity of the existing global economy is that the majority are rejected from it. Millions of children die every year because of disease and malnutrition and poverty is endemic. The parasitism and barbarism of capitalism is shown in the fact that it has adopted the medieval view that "the poor you shall always have with you" and this despite all the development of science and technology which can allow the complete satisfaction of human needs.

In the absence of an explicit world centre advocating socialism as did the Soviet Union, giving aid to Cuba, Angola, Mozambique etc capitalism has gained a little margin but its own debility cannot restore its authority or capacity to develop. Tendencies develop which have no historic future. The organisers of the massacres in Central Africa, the cliques like the Taliban in Afghanistan or regimes like those of Saddam Hussein are attempts to develop new ruling classes but they have no possibility to develop because they have neither the resources, perspectives or authority. They are examples of the costly failure to liquidate capitalism in a previous stage.

There is no question that the failure of capitalist globalisation poses a

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DECAY IN CAPITALIST EDUCATION.

The present uproar in education concerns the state sector. But the private sector with its privileged character due to private funding goes on regardless. Major has the odious mendacity to talk about going towards a classless society when the class character of capitalism is being affirmed at every instant. The new rich may sneer at the "old boy" network but they all merge in one happy band of exploiters and oppressors.

Capitalism, whatever the turnover from currency transactions and the successes of some sectors of production has exhausted its capacities for anything save a minimum expansion. It moves from minor boom to recession and back again. It moves forward on the basis of ever greater concentration and rationalisation. The result is structural unemployment and severe restriction of the market. Some sectors of the population are flattened into what Marx called an absolute pauperisation. This is world wide and will increase with the insoluble contradictions of the system. In these circumstances the bourgeois state hopelessly indebted to high finance and unable to meet the needs of society tries to reduce the level of state expenditures. In education they try to maintain the allegiance of layers of the petit bourgeois by developing differentiation and hierarchy in the state sector. This has been done by the opt out system whereby local government loses control of some schools who with special status receive more finance from the state. The emphasis on "choice" tends to concentrate the most deprived children into what are now referred to as "sink schools" where the bourgeoisie cheerfully leave them. The

capitalist policy to encourage schools to compete for pupils, with examination leagues and selection, means inevitably that some schools are going to suffer. This is then put down to bad teaching and in the process as part of the capitalist desire to return to the world of Victorian bigotry the most reactionary elements have even suggested a return to corporal punishment. The facts speak for themselves class sizes are growing and the difficulties of the learning process become magnified. Capitalism then tries to blame the teachers for incompetence. In extreme cases the latter can become engulfed in discipline problems leading to conflict with parents. Teachers are said to be responsible for poor standards and indeed the Inspectorate was so inspired that fifteen thousand were said to be incompetent.

A new wheeze has even been suggested so that in written contracts, parents are supposed to guarantee the behaviour of their children. Thus capitalism attempts to solve its social problems by legal coercion.

As capitalism has cut back on the welfare system, they demand more from the resources which exist. In so called higher education they have cut funding while increasing the number of students and reducing staff. At the same time students are obliged to get loans to cover their costs and experience more and more difficulties in living conditions and educational facilities. Within the terms of capitalism there is going to be no change because its capacity to concede to the population is over. It will be simply more of the same. The immense productive forces and potential of society are being ruthlessly throttled by

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or defended revolutionary policy. BOLSEVISM WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR STALINISM.

Stalin based himself on the interest of all this bureaucratic layer which he organised and purged the party. This layer than generalised the conception of socialism in one country with the excuse that the Soviet Union was the lighthouse that illuminated the world, but with the alteration that it was a lighthouse which illuminated the soviet bureaucracy and not the world. It was making of the revolution an instrument of the bureaucracy.

Hence the Soviet bureaucracy had no capacity for initiative, ideas, programme, policy and experience. The Communist International lasted four years and Lenin and Trotsky organised it. Lenin was the one who had the initiative in founding the Communist International and it formed part of the Soviet Union. The Communist International was the extension of the Soviet Union in the form of programme, policy, principles and experience. It made four congresses. The most excellent texts in history after Marx

were elaborated. They are still valid today, although they are not specifically useful for today. They are valid as instruments for the understanding of history, of the analysis of the classes, of the economy, of the human being, of the tendencies and of the party. They are indispensable. These revolutionaries did not have enough to eat but they made four congresses of the Communist International and they created communist parties throughout the world. This was to extend the Russian revolution.

The aim of the Communist International was to communicate to the world the experiences which it had made, to give them the security in the objectives and to intervene actively, economically, militarily, politically in support of the revolution. They said this and they did not find any problem in referring to the capitalists as "capitalist bandits". They had to trade with capitalism, but Lenin referred to the League of Nations as a "gang of bandits". They were not definitions by Lenin just to

be humorous. The joke is implicit but the objective was not the joke nor did it diminish the political level of the accusation. He wanted to show that it was a nest of bandits because they met there to deceive humanity. They were supposed to resolve the problems of differences between peoples, but it was a complete deception. They were preparing a new war and the proof is that in 1918 the first world war finished but the second began in 1939 twenty one years after. Was it yes or no a nest of bandits?

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THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

The re-election of Clinton as President of the US has no important significance because the differences between himself and Dole were marginal. Clinton adapted himself rapidly to the mood of the ruling class on all welfare issues, so much so that the Republican candidate Dole said that he was a republican in all but name. Both parties speak a great deal about compassion while their rotting, cretinous, system breeds poverty, insecurity and repression.

As capitalism becomes more and more incapable and decomposed, its political system becomes especially fatuous. Clinton may have got a larger share of the votes cast than last time, but the mass of the population show their contempt by the continuous fall in electoral turnout. Less than fifty percent voted which is the lowest for years and continues a drift of the past decades. Clinton got only 23.9% of the votes cast. Elections mean little save for the power hungry capitalist interests and their various lobbies. Clinton had proceeded to confine welfare benefits to only two years for the unemployed. Thus unemployment is decreed to be "sponging" on the state. This is what these creeps mean by "modernisation" ie savagery. This United States has the highest child poverty rate of any industrialised country and its health service is characterised by huge premiums and one in seven have no health cover.

Although the defenders of capitalism boast about

economic recovery, this means a very precarious rate of growth, lower than that after the world war, which had allowed American capitalism a breather. Wage inequality has increased and this has led to signs of greater militancy in the workers movement.

Nothing can be expected of the second Clinton presidency save the same dictatorship of big business, astronomical military spending and the polarisation of class forces. The ruling class consensus is expressed by the republican hold on the Senate and House of Representatives. As they have no historic perspective the fights of the bourgeois politicians are bitter and provide no solution to their problems. Already the bourgeois journalists foresee more scandals—a circus distraction from the basic issue that capitalism has nothing of consequence to say or do. The continuous erosion of capitalist political authority is now the norm in all capitalist states.

In the sphere of foreign policy the weakness of Yankee imperialism is evident. On the Pacific side they are preparing for war at some later stage with the Russo Chinese block through the recent treaty with Japan which has shown a mounting aggression against China and is increasing its military budget substantially. But nowhere can the US exercise the same power as before. This was shown in the recent attack on Iraq where not even Saudi Arabia was keen to become

involved and France its NATO ally was hostile. This has continued with the Chirac visit to Palestine where there was direct conflict with Netanyahu who represents the hardest sectors of Yankee capitalism. At the same time within Israel itself—apart from the vigorous resistance of the Palestinians—the strikes of public sector workers and the resistance of large sectors of the Israeli population to the fascist actions of the government are vivid examples of the resistance to the most reactionary aspects of Yankee policy.

Clinton and company will seek to sustain Yeltsin, but it is not they who will decide the fate of the "reforms" there, but the whole synthesis of world conditions expressed in the balance of class forces. Even when the Yanks were hoping to use the Taliban to impose a reactionary government in Afghanistan, they faced a front of Iran, India and Russia which they cannot control.

The most reactionary bourgeois sectors want Clinton to get tougher with "entitlements" and complete the destruction of what remains of the Roosevelt New Deal. They mutter about dealing with the inner cities but capitalism has no interest or capacity to answer such problems. The great weakness on the US scene is the absence of a workers party based upon the trade unions which intervenes in the elections independently of the bourgeois parties on an anti capitalist programme. There has certainly been greater union

militancy in the last period, but only an independent class party can combat the irreversible decline into barbarism of capitalism, by proposing the alternative programme of social transformations, the planned economy under collective control and the elimination of

the capitalist ownership of the banks and industry. The fall of the Soviet Union has certainly complicated the life of the American left but the reanimation of the communist and revolutionary forces in the world will eventually weigh decisively in the US which is far weaker than in the period of Roosevelt.

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people against the level of corruption are against capitalism because the latter is hopelessly ensnared in sleet. Italian politics are constantly dominated by the various cases of mafia-state corruption. Britain has become notorious for quangoes and parliamentary corruption. Many French capitalists are now held on corruption charges. The problem is not capitalism, but the lack of a leadership secure in its perspectives and with the necessary

authority. But the international workers movements can only do this on the basis of an honest appraisal of the mistakes of the past.

Despite the attempted thought control in Britain so that the elections are centred around taxation policy, the left in the unions and the Labour party itself is not going to go away. The crisis over entry into a single currency with its implications for further attacks on the standard of living of the population is stimulating much thought on

the need for an alternative policy to the line of the capitalist class. Despite the efforts of the leaderships of the workers parties to conciliate with capitalism and contain discussion, they do not have the strength of previous epochs. The election must be used for a concentrated vote for the LP but proposing the anti capitalist programme, for the immediate renationalisation of the public utilities under workers control proceeding to the nationalisation of the rest of industry and the banks under workers control, a workers plan of production on the basis of the trade unions to meet all the needs of the population, the abolition of the private education sector, pensions to be related to the average increase in wages and indexed, the elimination of nuclear bases and the ending of NATO. The monarchy must be abolished and the Socialist Republic proclaimed.

For the Socialist Republic

Globalisation.

from page 3.

perspective for socialism, passing through phases of uninterrupted social crises, civil and global war. Socialism is one country was a cover for a privileged caste in the ex Soviet Union which has led to attempts to return to capitalism and that has led to catastrophe. The process that is developing will be tumultuous and there will be no bureaucracy with the power to control or betray it as happened in Spain or Greece or Germany. All the social democratic and stalinist conceptions have been discredited despite the almost complete silence about the reasons for these failures on the part of these parties. The exigencies of the process requires a much greater amplitude of discussion in the communist, socialist and nationalist movements. New

generations of leaders will develop throughout the world for what will be a world socialist revolution uncontrollable within any national borders. That will be socialist globalisation. Then history will really begin.

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Education.

the capitalist form of private property. This is very clear in education and makes for a more and more tense social situation. The recent disputes over pupils with behavioural problems has led to thousands of exclusions, which means in effect abandonment. There are no resources to deal with these problems and they are compounded by the league tables for schools which inject a brutal competition into everything.

A programme for educational reform must be part of a workers plan of production where reconstruction of school buildings is a top priority. There must be such a reduction in class sizes which allows a flexible progress of all students. The private system of education for the ruling class must be terminated. The desperate competitive struggle in education must be surpassed by a collective concern with the advance of all with guaranteed employment at the end of school and university studies. This requires fundamental social changes linked to the establishment of the workers state, the planning of production and thus the transformation of social relations.

Out with the monarchy

Out of NATO,

Naturally there were different levels among them but they were all bandits.

The bureaucracy was not structured because it had acquired power, because the Bolshevik party showed that it was weak or because there was an historic mistake or because the Russian revolution made mistakes. Undoubtedly the revolution made mistakes and had weak aspects but the revolution is not judged by its weak aspects but by its historic grandeur. The

Bolshevik party a small nucleus took power and gave humanity the example that socialism was possible and realisable. This is how it is to be judged. The weakness of the Bolshevik party is not what it achieved in history. The weakness was shown in relation to factors which afterwards developed in history and demanded a more powerful party, more resources and better conditions than were possible.