

NS 28

# Socialist Outlook

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As Blair invites grovelling union chiefs back to No.10, and TUC talks of common interest with employers ...

# UNIONS MUST BREAK UP THIS DEADLY PARTNERSHIP!



Molly Cooper

Union leaders may not like to admit it, but the interests of their members often clash with those of the employers

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THIS YEAR's Trade Union Congress in Brighton has seen the leaders of our biggest unions on their knees – not only to Tony Blair's right wing government but also to the employers.

TUC General Secretary John Monks summed up the logic of the new ideology of "partnership" between unions and management which has done so much damage to the unions under Tony Blair.

The man who has presided over the loss of millions of members from the trade unions in recent years has now concluded that it is because union representatives are not sufficiently acceptable to the employers. "We must find new representatives who are respected, both by fellow

workers *and managers*, rather than individuals who are personally disaffected. Unions are never strong when their representatives are drawn from the disaffected."

Taking lessons from John Monks on organising unions – which he has never done – is like taking lessons in navigation from the captain of the Titanic. Like Blair, Monks clearly knows nothing and cares less about the history of the labour movement, which has been built over two centuries of struggle precisely by the "disaffected" – as a means of *fighting* the employers who exploit them.

It was these combative unions which secured the living standards, the welfare state and the democratic rights which were taken for granted until Thatcher and now

Blair began to dismantle them.

20 years of grovelling and defeatist leadership from over-paid national bureaucrats has shown us that the less "disaffected" and the more privileged and insulated the union leaders become, the less they are willing to fight for their members.

Unions which follow Blair's and Monks' advice and set out now to embrace the bosses in a "partnership" which involves no-strike deals and a stifling of shop floor struggle will have nothing to offer young workers, and will continue to haemorrhage membership. Only by fighting to regain their lost rights, and for the interests of their members can the unions revive their fortunes.

# Bogus "legal" threats fuel UNISON witch hunt

Birmingham branch seems to have fought too hard for jobs and services



Stalngard O'Neill

## Fred Leplat, Campaign for a Fighting and Democratic UNISON

ATTACKS against the internal union democracy of UNISON are being stepped up.

There is clear conference policy on the right of branches to campaign and to get together to influence union policy. But the national officers of the union are determined to "interpret" conference policy so as to totally undermine it.

The latest example of this is a circular from the general secretary Rodney Bickerstaffe issued at the beginning of August instructing branches not to support the lobby of the Labour Party conference on the 26 September with branch funds or resources (including branch banners).

The lobby has been called in support of the following demands:

- Restore the link - decent pensions
- Welfare not warfare
- £5 an hour - tax the rich
- End privatisation and PFI/PPP
- Scrap the Asylum & Immigration Act
- 35 hour week - no loss of pay
- Full union rights.

The first five demands are national UNISON policy, the sixth is UNISON national local

government service group policy, and the last one is Greater London UNISON Region policy.

The circular from Bickerstaffe claims "independent legal advice" has been obtained declaring that the expenditure of funds to back the lobby would be both a breach of the union's rules and of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992.

### No advice

Yet no copy of the legal advice has yet been seen. It has been admitted to a member of the NEC that there is *no* specific advice on this particular event, but that the union has now collected enough legal opinions in other circumstances to be able to make a judgement on this year's lobby!

The circular goes on to state that to fund people attending the lobby would also be in breach of the Certification Officer's two recent rulings against UNISON concerning "payments to political parties".

Yet when contacted by a branch secretary, the Certification Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints received about past lobbies of the Labour conference, that no rulings had been issued in relation to such lobbies, and that there is no opinion of the certification officer which prevents branches from supporting the lobby.

Spurious and non-existent legal

opinion is being quoted in order to undermine a legitimate campaigning activity - only because it has been initiated by the SWP and supported by the left in the labour movement.

Indeed, the general secretary's circular admits "wider publicity makes it clear that this lobby has been called by the SWP". It is ironic that after issuing his circular, Bickerstaffe was quoted at the TUC this week as welcoming Blair's offer to put pressure on the government and claiming UNISON would do just that on the minimum wage and pensions!

Unfortunately, the threat of disciplinary action against individuals and branches is real. The Bolton branch suddenly had its accounts frozen after protesting against the circular, although agreeing to abide by the instruction.

### Suspended

Branches such as Birmingham and Sheffield remain suspended only because of allegations, as yet not substantiated, against individual branch officers who are on the left.

In the case of the Birmingham branch, a clear commitment had been made at UNISON's conference in June that the suspension would be rescinded without

delay. In Sheffield, the branch remains suspended despite auditors giving the books a clean bill of health.

The right of branches to get together to protest at such attacks on democracy, or to influence union policy in other matters, is also being attacked.

The 1998 conference clearly allowed branches the right to hold conferences with other branches. Yet this will probably be restricted by the NEC if it agrees in October a recommendation that such conferences could only be held with the approval of the relevant region or service

group.

Union democracy is not a luxury. It is essential to ensure that members and branches make officials are accountable and develop union policy as necessary.

If the rights on internal democracy are curtailed, then the agenda of the union will be set by unelected officials such as regional secretaries, and the narrow circle in the "Presidential Team". The national conference will then really be a "show-case" as the Bickerstaffe wishes, and not a democratic forum of debate and decision-making by elected branch delegates.

## Solidarity - needed now!

### George Brown

IN A WEEK when the TUC deepened its drive to get into bed with the bosses, the launch of a new magazine dedicated to the building of opposition to "social partnership" must be welcomed.

*Solidarity* aims to become an arena for discussion on how to build a movement to challenge the domination of our unions by bureaucrats who care little for "their" members.

British union news aside, where *Solidarity* scores is in its coverage of international developments rarely picked up by the bourgeois media. The pilot issue contains in-depth articles looking at developments in Canada and Australia.

In a wave of unlawful strikes across Canada nurses have been fighting for decent pay and conditions and for better quality of patient care. When the government pushed through legislation to order nurses back to work mass meetings decided overwhelmingly to defy court injunctions and continue their action.

A back-to-work deal recommended by union leaders was thrown out 3-1, but then signed and sealed by the leadership. Rank and file members are now organising to call their union leaders to account.

In Australia the membership of the Maritime Union is organising to learn the lessons of the Patrick dockers strike and the sell-out there. A new MUA Rank & File group has come forward to challenge the existing leadership of the union.

As one of the Rank & File activists puts it, "Our movement is about giving MUA members back



some control over their union. Our growth reflects the disillusionment and discontent over the loss of conditions that have taken 100 years of struggle to win."

If *Solidarity* is to play its part in the parallel process in Britain it needs now to become a forum for debate and discussion for the organised left in our unions. Future issues need to take up in depth the debates under way - on what relation unions should have with the Labour Party, on what sort of rank and file movement is needed, on how we rebuild a trade union movement that actually fights for the interests of the working class as a whole.

*Solidarity* needs to become an organiser - which can help build opposition to privatisation, which fights for repeal of all the anti-union laws and which builds genuine solidarity in action at home and internationally.

The pilot edition is a good move in the right direction. Now it is up to us all to make it a success.

● Get your union branch or trades council to sponsor *Solidarity* and order bulk copies for distribution to shop stewards - contact M Wicks, 333 Welcombe Avenue Park North, Swindon SN3 2PF or email martin.wicks@btinternet.com

● More details on the *Solidarity* website - [www.solidarity.zetnet.co.uk](http://www.solidarity.zetnet.co.uk)

## Race to replace Bickerstaffe

### Fred Leplat

Having been General Secretary of UNISON since its formation five years ago, Rodney Bickerstaffe is standing down. No reasons have yet been given for his resignation. He will continue in office until the next annual conference in June..

Although strong on rhetoric against poverty, Bickerstaffe has always steered the union away from taking action against government attacks and left branches to fight on their own, isolated. Even on a popular issue such as the minimum wage, he plotted, without success, to stop the 1998 conference from agreeing to call a demonstration. Despite calling it in Newcastle, 15,000 UNISON members and other trade unionists eventually joined the march.

His attempts at keeping a distance from the Blair government have not been serious. There are no national campaigns, and UNISON's opposition to the Euro collapsed at the TUC when the delegation flouted conference policy and abstained on an AEEU

motion calling on the Labour government to join as soon as possible. His period in office will be remembered for opening a witch-hunt on the left on a scale not seen recently in the labour movement.

Nominations will open in October and voting will take place early in 2000. So far, Dave Prentice, current Deputy General Secretary, has declared he will stand.

He appears to be the bureaucracy's favourite candidate, and also immediately picked up support from the *Morning Star* who claimed that he is not as bad as Bickerstaffe. A regional officer from Yorkshire & Humberside, and SLP supporter has declared her intention to stand. Malkiat Bilku, leader of the Hillingdon hospital strikers, is also throwing her hat into the ring.

The two best placed candidates on the left are Roger Bannister and Geoff Martin.

Bannister is an NEC member, and a supporter of the CFDU (the left caucus) and of the Socialist Party. When he stood against Bickerstaffe in 1994, he obtained a very creditable 20% of the vote,

while the SWP candidate got 4.5%. Geoff Martin is currently London Region Convenor, writes regularly for Labour Left Briefing, and has spoken out loudly against the current witch-hunt.

Given the political situation in the union, Geoff Martin would be the best candidate for the left as he would gather votes from a much wider spectrum of opinion in the union than Bannister could. Even the SWP has stated that it would not oppose Geoff should he stand.

However, the election campaign for any left candidate must be used to prepare the ground for a left in the union that is broader than the CFDU currently is. Such a broad left would be necessary to ensure any victorious left wing candidate would be accountable to their supporters.

A left general secretary would also need the support of a strong broad left to face up to what would be a hostile Millbank-controlled bureaucracy and the right wing NEC.

But this election campaign could also set a precedent - if the SWP, CFDU and others on the left manage to agree at least to co-operate when standing for NEC elections.



Exit: Bickerstaffe

# UN hypocrites won't free East Timor

*Timorese trade unionists march for independence in Dili in August, before the militias were unleashed*



**A**s we go to press an Australian led, multinational "peace keeping" force is poised to go into East Timor under the authority of a unanimous vote of the Security Council. But it was precisely the actions of the UN which created the current barbarism in East Timor.

The referendum on independence, under which the East Timorese people exercised their right of self-determination in such a decisive way, was organised and administered by the UN - with no provision to ensure the safety of the voters afterwards, or the implementation of the outcome if it went for independence.

The referendum itself was a victory won directly out of the magnificent but unfinished revolution which toppled the bloodthirsty regime of Suharto in May last year.

It was one of the concessions Suharto's appointed successor, BJ Habibie, had to make in order to try to stabilise the political situation after the uprising. But it was a concession which was openly opposed by the high command of the Indonesian army and by the bulk of the Indonesian bourgeoisie.

It was thus completely predictable that if the vote went for independence (as it was always going to), the Indonesian army, or forces controlled by it, would intervene to smash up the process, reverse it, and seek to keep East Timor as a part of Indonesia.

Not only that. The agreed framework for the referendum, negotiated by the UN, even had a provision for the result to be ratified by the Indonesian Parliament! What has it got to do with them, it might be asked? Yet this clause could now be the means by which the vote for an independent East Timor is set aside.

It is absolutely clear that detailed plans were laid by the Indonesian army high command how to respond to a vote for independence long before the referendum took place.

On the announcement of the results the death squads would be released, people would be slaughtered and terrorised. The bulk of the population, who voted for independence, would be driven out of the country, most of them into West Timor.

Thousands of other people, opposed to the independence of East Timor, would then be shipped in to replace them, completely altering the political geography of the country. The

Indonesian Parliament would then refuse to ratify the referendum result, and that would be the end of it.

The notion that the UN had no idea that such a situation might arise is just not credible - not least since a campaign of intimidation had been taking place by the terror gangs for months prior to the referendum vote.

Once again, so soon after the Balkans conflict, it is necessary to point out that the UN is not an independent agency dedicated to defending the weak against the strong. It is an agency of imperialism, most importantly US imperialism, and can only act with its agreement.

While UN forces may in the

## EDITORIAL

short term ease or halt the slaughter being carried out by the militias, we can have no confidence that they will achieve any lasting solution in the interests of the East Timorese people.

On the contrary, the UN military presence will also serve to obstruct and prevent the necessary arming of the Timorese liberation forces, which is essential if they are to be able to defend themselves without external assistance.

Only with arms in their own hands can the people of East Timor ensure that they achieve the independence they voted for so overwhelmingly in the referendum.

At the end of the day it is the agenda of imperialism which determines the actions of the UN and the actions carried out under its name. That agenda is to establish the necessary geo-political and military framework which will allow US global economic ambitions the best conditions to succeed.

In fact both the massive turnout in the referendum and the huge vote for independence were not only remarkable but unbelievably courageous. People were not prepared to give up their vote even under the threat of violence.

This was partly because many thought they were safe with the referendum being conducted by the UN and partly because of the strength of feeling on the issue. The lesson once again is that the UN cannot be relied upon to protect national rights or anything else.

**T**he East Timorese people are being butchered by death squads who have been armed and trained by those same Western regimes who now weep crocodile tears at the butchery.

The Habibie regime continues the brutal policies of Suharto whose regime was established in the anti-Communist bloodshed of 1965 in which an estimated one million people were slaughtered.

This was also the regime which carried out the brutal invasion of East Timor in 1975, when an estimated 200,000 people were killed out of a population of 600,000. This makes the East Timorese one of the most persecuted peoples in modern times.

During this whole time the western powers have not wavered in their support for a regime which has guaranteed their interests in the region. Australia, now vocal in its denunciation of the brutality taking place, routinely collaborated with the Suharto regime after the Indonesian invasion, whilst carving up the country's resources. Australia was one of very few to formally recognise Indonesian authority over East Timor.

**B**ritain has supplied the small arms, armoured cars and aircraft used to suppress the people of east Timor (at the British taxpayers' expense) and the colonised regions of Aceh, western New Guinea (Irian Jaya), and north Borneo as well as the masses in central Indonesia. Indonesian Government promises to use these weapons only for the defence have been cynical and transparent lies.

Britain has been prepared to turn a blind eye in order maintain markets. In fact, scandalously, British arms sales to Indonesia have increased sharply since new Labour were elected and Robin Cook announced the "ethical dimension" to his foreign policy.

No one knows at the present time how many people have been slaughtered in East Timor. The figure of 20,000 has been mentioned, but it could be much higher and it is still going up.

Apparently 200,000 people (a quarter of the population) have been transported into West Timor into camps controlled by the death squads. They are being threatened and intimidated under the eyes of the Indonesia army.

Another 150,000 people are said to be starving in the mountains

inside east Timor - pursued by the death squads. The towns and villages are being systematically torched, and it is hard to see what will be left by the time a UN-sponsored force arrives.

And the UN force which is poised to go in is to collaborate with the same Indonesian army which has perpetrated the crimes they are there to stop!

Although some are withdrawing, the elite forces, most responsible for the atrocities are remaining. Yet the Indonesian army and the Indonesian state has no right at all in East Timor.

They had no right there even before the referendum, when even according to UN resolutions East Timor was regarded as being under illegal occupation by Indonesia. They have even less right now and should be forced to leave immediately.

The Australian government has been keen to put its own forces in command of the UN force which is going in. It wants to ensure its own interests in the region if the Indonesian forces are forced out. It has already signed a treaty with the Indonesian government dividing oil deposits in the Timor

Gap, which lays between East Timor and Australia.

**W**hether the intervention of the UN force will bring an end to the massacres only time will tell. It is hard not to be sceptical.

To a great extent the work of the death squads in killing and dispersing the population has already been done: their aim will be to ensure that this is not reversed enough to allow the implementation of the referendum result.

It is even less clear whether the UN will be able or prepared to ensure that the decision of the referendum is implemented. If they are not, as the people of Kosova and Kurdistan can testify, an international protectorate is no substitute for a genuine independent state.

■ Stop the genocide: Indonesian forces out of east Timor now!

■ Arm the liberation forces

■ Immediate recognition of East Timor as an independent state

■ Stop all arms sales to Indonesia.

## Urgent appeal from International Institute IIRE must spend thousands on fire safety

JUST AS we were congratulating ourselves on our financial stability, the IIRE suddenly faces a major, unexpected expense. Our permit to house students and lecturers in our 24 rooms has expired, and the Amsterdam fire inspectors have given us a list of additional safety measures we must take in order to have our permit renewed.

The list includes installing an alarm system covering the whole building and communicating directly with the fire department. The cost will be over 40,000 Dutch guilders (almost \$20,000 US).

Of course we will do what the inspectors ask. The safety of participants in our activities is very important to us.

In any event, we have no choice; these are legal requirements. Our hope now is that we will not have to finance this work by cutting back on our sessions or publications.

In the past many of you have helped generously to support our work. Can we count on you now to see us through this difficulty? Your contributions can be made by bank transfer to Netherlands Postbank (giro) account no. 2079557, IIRE, Amsterdam. Cheques should be made out to 'Center for Changes', earmarked 'International Fund - IIRE', and mailed to us in Amsterdam.

Thank you in advance for your help. When you're next in Amsterdam, we look forward to giving you a personal guided tour of our new alarm system!

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## As union leaders take their partners for collaboration waltz TUC swings even further right

**Alan Davies**

THIS YEAR'S TUC conference must rank as the most right-wing of modern times. It marked a new stage in the domination of the politics of new Labour over the unions. This was summed up in Blair's speech to Congress both in its tone as well as its content.

Talk about breaking the link between the unions and the Labour Party, the Prime Minister told delegates, can now be put to one side, since the TUC have now shown themselves to be utterly committed to the idea of social partnership and the agenda of new Labour.

Since social partnership is the form new Labour politics take at the industrial level, the link no longer poses any threat to Blair. "You are now welcome back into number 10", he told union leaders. But as a further reminder of the change from the old days he stressed they would get "not beer and sandwiches but just tea".

This marks a big defeat for any kind of militant, class based, trade unionism and a victory for the most pernicious form of class collaboration to grip the trade unions since the break with Liberalism at the turn of the century.

When Blair told the TUC conference that new Labour has its "third way" and the unions have theirs, he was again talking of partnership with the employers.

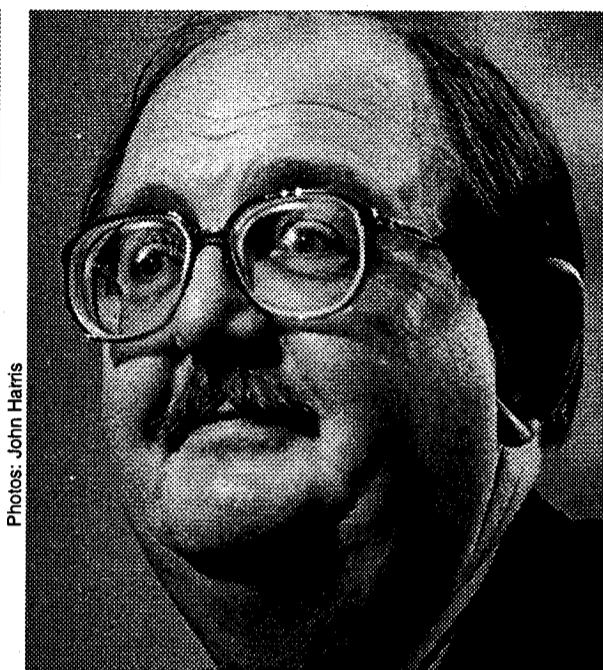
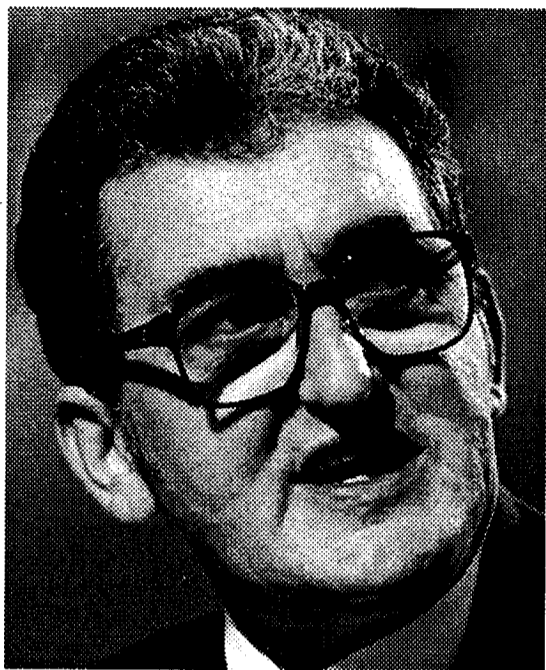
### Extreme

The most extreme form of partnership, however, was not proposed by Blair at the conference - although it was taken up by him. That was the proposal by (Sir) Ken Jackson of the AEEU that the TUC should disband its own annual conference in favour of a biannual conference - to be organised jointly with the CBI! This takes the breath away.

But nevertheless the idea should not be dismissed as the ravings of an ultra right-winger - though he is. Jackson is also the leader of the second biggest union in the TUC and one which is in merger negotiations with the MSF.

Blair took it a stage further and proposed that it be a tripartite conference with the government!

None of this of course is on the



Photos: John Harris

Ken Cameron (left) raised idea of breaking from Labour, but John Edmonds threw his weight behind Blair and the Euro

cards as things stand. But from the logic of social partnership is it excluded in the longer term? If the unions are to subordinate themselves to the employers' interests at the level of the work-place, why not at national level too? That is clearly how Jackson sees it.

What was noticeable at the TUC was that not a single heavyweight union leader was prepared to speak out against the concept of social partnership. Many of them are themselves up to their eyes in negotiating partnership agreements, involving no-strike deals and clauses tying the unions to the interests of the employers.

Many employers, in any case, are looking to such deals to offset the possibility of extended union recognition under new Labour's Employment Relations Act.

If they are going to have to recognise unions, the employers would rather do so in a deal which involves the union committing itself to "partnership".

Examples of this are Unilever, Barclay's Bank, Tesco, Littlewoods and the Legal and General. They listen with interest - and no doubt a smug grin of triumph - when John Monks tells them that "the days of 'them and us' and industrial confrontation are over".

Unfortunately, however, it was not just a deepening of social partnership which marked out this Congress as so right-wing. On the European Union and EMU conference rejected the new Labour line of "wait until the conditions are right" ... but voted instead for a policy well to the right of the government's, calling for Britain to get into EMU as fast as possible.

The key to this was the refusal of the major unions with policies to one degree or another against EMU to argue and vote for their position. Bill Morris suddenly reinterpreted current TGWU opposition to EMU as meaning "we should not go in until the economic conditions are right".

The most spectacular collapse was UNISON, which despite a clear conference policy against early entry to EMU decided to abstain in the vote. If UNISON had argued and voted against it the motion could have been defeated.

TUC leaders have long been prepared to lead the pack in signing up to a job-cutting welfare-destroying scheme in order to pursue their vision of the European social model. Now they can claim a Congress mandate for their position.

Yet the European social model is

evaporating even as they clamour to join it. Maybe they haven't noticed the Thatcherite agenda being driven though by Social democratic parties who are in government in 13 of the 15 EU countries?

There was a limited TUC backlash against this right-wing agenda, at least at the level of the relationship between new Labour and the unions.

Fire Brigade Union leader Ken Cameron ruffled a few feathers when he openly proposed, at the Tribune rally, the breaking of the link between Labour and the unions.

### Allies

Referring to new Labour's predominant relationship with the employers, he argued that "the Labour Party no longer sees us as their natural allies and we can no longer rely on them to be our natural allies".

The trade unions contribute £6m a year to Labour's funds, a third of its entire income. "Why should we keep on signing cheques to a party which no longer represents us?" Cameron argued. "Why don't we give it to organisations and candidates who promote our interests?"

Of course the other general secretaries scoffed at his remarks. But

this is an issue which won't go away - the logic of it is too strong. This debate is happening in a number of unions - at least at the level of giving some political fund money to organisations or candidates which support the aims of the union.

At the present stage socialists should not support the disaffiliation of unions from the Labour Party - but demand that union representatives fight in Labour Party bodies for their union's policies.

In the absence of a serious alternative party, disaffiliation would not progress the struggle. Any remaining union influence inside the party would be lost (even if this is rapidly diminishing) without an alternative being presented.

Cameron himself was reduced to proposing that money should (maybe) be given to the Liberal Democrats under some conditions or Friends of the Earth!

This illustrates the problem. It once again shows, however, that the issue of labour representation, and a new party of the working class to the left of Labour in Britain, is posed at least in the medium term. The left has a big job to do.

But the left also has a big job to do in the unions themselves. Whilst it is true that ideas like the social partnership have less impact at the base of the unions than at the top - sometimes to the extent of the deals being rejected by the membership against the recommendations of the leadership - there is not an active opposition to it. This is a major problem.

Even the left in the unions have not grasped the significance of the ideology of social partnership. It is hardly ever mentioned in most of the left press or the propaganda of the trade union lefts.

The average age of trade union members is now over 40. There is an absolute crisis of the recruitment of young people, yet the answer to this from Monks at the TUC was that the name of the TUC should be changed to "Unions United" since the current name is too complicated for young people to grasp!

There is a crisis in the unions - and a challenge for the left. It is time for the left to take it up in a serious way.

## CWU - Broad Left backs a Blairite!

THE COMMUNICATION Workers Union Broad Left (BL) has voted by a 23-19 margin to back Jeannie Drake the current Clerical Deputy General Secretary for the post of Telecom Deputy General Secretary in the forthcoming union election.

This move, backed by a majority of BL NEC members, represents a significant shift to the right by the BL. Drake is an able soft left bureaucrat, who leads the union negotiating team on major issues of pay and conditions with BT.

She has played a leading role in the last two rounds of pay negotiations which have seen BT staff pay stagnate, the introduction of profit-related pay which opens the way for performance-related pay, and agreement with the creation of a new low paid engineering

grade at £10k per year.

Drake's supporters argue that she "is the only candidate capable of uniting the Telecom Constituency of the CWU." The Telecom Constituency consists of the BL-dominated Engineering and the right-wing controlled Clerical Constituency.

It rapidly became apparent that there was no openly agreed policy basis for this "unity".

NEC member Bernard Roome, in seconding the nomination, pointed out her negotiating abilities, but that sometimes you didn't know who she was negotiating for! Roome is a Socialist Party member. Steve Bell went further, openly admitting that she was a Blairite!

Arguments were advanced that no prominent BL supporter on the

National Executive was willing to stand, that the BL had to be seen to win something after recent defeats in the General and Deputy General Secretary elections.

Opponents argued that the failure of any leading BL supporter to put their heads above the electoral parapet was a problem in itself, that the certainty of victory should never be a criterion for presenting a candidate. Hitherto it has been BL policy only to support BL members in union elections.

Drake's supporters argued that the BL would gain 'prestige' and standing from a Drake victory. Opponents pointed out that by the same token the BL would have to take the rap for Drake's future actions, even though she has no allegiance to the BL and its policies.

The 23-19 vote means that the majority of non-NEC BL members present opposed the proposal. Far from uniting the Telecom Constituency, many traditional BL supporting branches particularly will refuse to endorse her.

The reality is that this represents a shift to the right on the part of the BL leadership and in no way represents a movement to the left on Drake's part. It also represents a failure of strategy and nerve.

While the BL has now become totally dominant in the engineering constituency it has failed to break out into the clerical and above all into the postal (ex UCW) constituency.

Derek Hodgson's victory as General Secretary last year, his subsequent moves to place his ex UCW cronies in key positions, and the

witchhunting of BL NEC member Maria Exall for assisting efforts to organise the postal left has persuaded the BL majority to give up even trying to build a union-wide left.

It must also be remembered that Drake's negotiating "achievements" listed above were all actively supported by the BL Telecom majority.

The CWU Broad Left, one of the most electorally successful of the "new" Broad Lefts which came into existence at the end of the 1970s in the old Post Office Engineering Union, has now reached an impasse.

It is time for socialists within and outside the BL to meet to consider how to take the fight against social partnership forward within the union.

# Back to the Future

A new column by Charlie van Gelderen



## When even Labour's right wing was left

AS WE FACE this year's annual conference of the Labour Party, the third since the current government was elected with an overwhelming Labour majority, it is a useful exercise to look back at the May 1945 conference that discussed the programme for the general election, in which Labour was to win a landslide victory.

The overwhelming impression from reading the report of that conference is that the delegates largely reflected the views of the working class. Workers in the mines and factories, workers still in the armed forces, were demanding change.

The Railway Engineers and Firemen's union argued: "Let us make up our minds now that victory will only come when our people fight for a socialist programme to give all workers a full life".

Other contributions to the discussion echoed this. Delegates were unhappy that the National Executive's proposals, while paying lip service to socialism, were not specific about what this meant.

An amendment made it clear that the programme would include the transfer to public ownership of the land, large scale building, heavy industry, and all forms of banking, transport, fuel and power. It also called for "immediate legislation to ensure that the national assets, services and industries are democratically controlled and operated in the national interest, with workers engaged therein and of consumers".

Even Arthur Deakin, the right wing witch-hunter who succeeded Ernest Bevin as general secretary of the TGWU, was caught up in the euphoric mood. He called for the direct participation of all the workers through the medium of representation by the Trade Unions ... at all levels.

Several delegates stressed the need to bring the manufacture of armaments under public ownership and control. J C

Clokey (AEU), said: "We have all paid tribute, in many ways, to the slogan, "Workers of the World Unite, you have only your chains to lose", the slogan which has been used to greater effect is "Armament makers of the world

unite, you have (only) your profits to lose."

The future Labour Prime Minister, James Callaghan, also voiced his concern that the issue of public ownership was not included in the National Executive's report, "unless the Labour Party is returned to power to bring in a planned system, a planned economy and public ownership, they (the returning armed forces), will come back to unemployment".

Internationalism also featured in the discussion, particularly in the contributions from Dennis Healey and H Short (Eton and Slough DLP), who said "The struggle internationally is an international one..." and then he went on to quote from an interview in Pravda by Mikoyan, a veteran and loyal Stalinist from the Soviet leadership. Mikoyan spoke of the terrible conditions he had witnessed in Berlin at the end of the war and then went on to say .... "Our moral standards and traditions compel a humanitarian attitude towards the peaceful inhabitants of a conquered people".

Stalin must have forgotten to instruct his troops on these lines when they entered Berlin. These sentiments were much more in line with Trotsky's Red Army than Stalin's.

There can be no doubt that it was the general mood expressed at this 1945 conference, reflect-

ing that of the working class, which eventually resulted in Labour fighting the election on a radical programme.

Of course the programme fell short of socialism. It promised nationalisation of key sections of the econ-

omy but made no mention of workers' control, and did not include the demand made by many delegates for the nationalisation of the Bank of England and the Joint Stock banks. Real power was left in the hands of the capitalist class.

There is an unconfirmed report that when Dennis Healey moved an amendment to the proposed Election Mani-

festos, to include the demands for nationalisation of coal, the railways, public utilities etc, Herbert Morrison shook a finger at him and said, "Young man, you have just lost us the general election".

Answer (c) Tony Blair



Attlee: no leftie

### Who said this?

"Privatising electricity as with water shows what happens when you take common senses out of political decisions and just leave dogma. There is no popular groundswell in favour, indeed the reverse - the vast majority oppose it. The immediate effects - higher prices and instability within the industry - will be worse."

Was it: (a) Tony Benn, (b) Ken Livingstone, (c) Tony Blair?

Answer below.



Striking Tameside care workers were among those who lobbied last year's Labour conference

## Labour conference 99:

# Servile union chiefs moisten Blair's rubber stamp

Veronica Fagan

OF COURSE nobody thinks that this year's Labour Party Conference will yield anything like the debates or outcome of 1945. The political situation is different, the party membership is different, the party structures are different. But that certainly doesn't mean that any socialist should be indifferent to what happens in Bournemouth.

It's extremely positive that many activists will be coming down on the Sunday to lobby the conference.

Indeed it is to be hoped that the unity that has been built around that campaign - between trade union activists and single issue campaigners, between those in the Labour Party and those who are not, between supporters of different left newspapers and none, should be built on in the future in each locality.

At the same time it is also necessary to give some attention to what will happen on conference floor as well. Of course that is one of the ways in which things have changed - it's not possible any more to say at this stage what will be discussed and therefore what, if any, the flash points of debate will be.

No longer does every affiliated organisation whether CLP, trade union or socialist society have the right to submit a resolution on an issue of their choice. Instead the majority of the "discussion" will be on the policy documents which are going through the mill of the "policy forums".

One set of these documents, on Health, on Welfare and on Crime and Justice will be voted on by conference this year at the end of a two year cycle.

There will be no amendments moved and no minority reports since these would require a higher percentage of the delegates than the left was able to garner.

This procedure will itself be

open to challenge because it was not laid down in the Partnership into Power document which supposedly set out all these mechanisms. In the end however the result will be the same. Conference will only have the option to accept or reject the text on offer - and no prizes for guessing what the outcome will be.

Another set of six policy documents will come for an initial debate and will then go back through policy forums to return for endorsement next year. The scope of areas covered by all this is vast.

One text covers Industry, Culture and Agriculture for example (and no, I don't know how Culture got slipped in there!)

"Democracy and Citizenship" is shot through with the familiar Blairite tenets that undermine any meaningful understanding of democracy even in Parliamentary terms; it tells us that "rights without responsibilities can lead to greed and a concentration merely on self-interest".

### Frightening

As NEC member Liz Davies points out in the critique of the document she wrote for the Socialist Campaign Group Supporters Network, "the implications of this approach are frightening: the suggestion that democratic rights can only be earned, that they are not in themselves self evident."

Liz also goes on to point out the staggering omissions in the text - no rights for asylum seekers, a weak Freedom of Information Bill, no mention of the Official Secrets Act etc.

"Britain and the World" deals with the world economic situation, Britain and Europe, development and much more.

As Bernie Moss says in his critique for the SCGN: "the main orientation of foreign policy is wrong for the same reason that domestic policy is, because it is

based on the false idea that the competitive market economy and free trade will bring greater prosperity and equality to everyone..."

Moss goes on to explain why the left in the Labour Party needs to be opposed to globalisation, to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, and to the single currency.

Conference does have a slot for what are known as 'contemporary resolutions', which have to be on subjects not covered by the policy documents.

There is nothing laid down as to how many of these resolutions will be debated - last year it was four. Essentially will be chosen by the major unions as these have the deciding weight of votes.

Competing subjects of interest include condemnation of the attempts to ban industrial action by the firefighters, opposition to privatisation of the Post Office and to privatisation of air traffic control as well as a long list of worthy but meaningless motions on every subject under the sun.

If the big unions such as TGWU and UNISON were to go for one of the sharper ones this would give a focus to the undoubted disquiet that exists in many CLPs.

However despite the Guardian's speculation that this will happen, more sober political assessment suggests that sadly it is unlikely. Not only did union leaders duck the possibility last year but their performance at the TUC has showed them as abject devotees of the Blair line.

While it is important that the left continues to raise its voice on conference floor whenever it can, in the end opposition to privatisation, defence of the welfare state and other crucial issues will be more likely to be determined by campaigning nationally and locally with others committed to the same principles than in sterile debates with the Blair mafia.

# Patten's cosmetic changes to RUC mask new offensive

As expected, the Patton commission on the RUC produced a version of the peace process writ small. Like the peace process, it nowhere dealt with reality, replacing grim facts of repression and sectarianism with post-modernist mumbo-jumbo about culture and tradition.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary, or RUC, was formed alongside the birth of the new partitioned state in the North of Ireland. From the start, it was both a vicious colonial police force and the sectarian army for the Protestant parliament at Stormont.

In the past 30 years it has been accused of sectarian bias, torture, a "shoot to kill" policy, involvement in the murder of lawyers and human rights activists and routine collusion with paramilitary death squads. These claims are supported by a series of UN reports ignored by the British.

Evidence of collusion was provided by lorry loads of RUC intelligence files, providing information on Catholic civilians, which were readily available from loyalist death squads. The force has recently faced serious allegations about the murders of solicitors Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson.

None of this was included in the commission's terms of reference, which were "time for a new start". It was to act within the remit of the Good Friday agreement. Its task was to adjust the RUC to the new society proposed by the agreement.

Entirely absent from the agreement and in the commission's report was a recognition of the colonial nature of the Northern Irish society or opposition to sectarianism.

The proposal is to share out sectarian privilege – to have a new police force that will mirror at every level the institutionalised sectarianism of the new society. It will not of course be equal sectarian privilege. Unionism will remain in the driving seat. Behind the scenes, real power will rest where it always does, with the British.

Of the 175 proposals, only seven deal with the question of human rights, and only one is concrete – that officers should take a human rights oath!

More significant proposals are taken under the heading of culture and ethos – again, there are seven such proposals.

The main ones are to retain the RUC under a new name – the Northern Ireland Police Service (NIPS), and that the flying of the Union Jack outside RUC stations should stop.

Outsiders can only stand aghast at the idea that a flag routinely used to signal sectarian intimidation should constantly be displayed by the police, or that the end of the practice should be seen as a concession. Yet the relatively



**Through Irish Eyes**

A column from Socialist Democracy, Irish section of the Fourth International



Andrew Ward

superficial proposal to change the name of the force and its badges has been denounced as an insult by serving members and others.

The rest of the report consists of proposals to modernise the RUC, covering issues like accountability, community policing, management, structures and training. There are 14 points on peace, indicating that the main torture



Patten: minimal changes

centres will be phased out and armoured land rovers gradually withdrawn – all of course conditional on the end of any resistance.

The issue of modernisation holds with it the issue of winning nationalist support and co-opting the nationalist middle class, the Dublin government and the SDLP. There are 36 proposals on accountability, summed up by one for there to be a police board of 10 assembly members and 9 unelected members, and for these structures to be replicated with local police boards at council level.

Implementing this would give the public in the north of Ireland roughly the same amount of control over the police the public in Britain have – that is about zero.

The game is given away by proposition 24 – the chief constable is to have operational responsibility – that is absolute control – over the force. In fact a week after the setting up of the Patton report, the British rushed through a law giving the secretary of state absolute authority over the RUC's chief constable. This indicates their determination that at the end of the day they will remain the real authority hidden

in the background.

The other modernisation recommendations are intended to aid co-option. The main thrust of this is 28 proposals on the composition of the force and recruitment. Number 121 calls for an equal number of Catholics and Protestants to be recruited.

Scattered through the report are hints that former republican activists are to be absorbed into the state forces. For example, the full time reserve is to be abolished but the part time reserve is to be expanded. Non-operational sections of the RUC are to be privatised and tenders from local groups, including community groups, are to be encouraged.

The report suggests that the force is to change from a uni-polar sectarianism to a bi-polar sectarianism, giving the nationalist bourgeoisie jobs and political influence. But this is simply aspiration – the real RUC is to continue in business as a unionist force.

The proposals for equal recruitment are presently illegal under existing fair employment legislation. Even the most optimistic forecasts talk about 20 or 30 years to make the changes – to arrive at a revamp of the old colonial royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) – which was over 90 per cent Catholic.

The proposals on size and public order gives the game away. The force is to remain at or over double its size at the start of the troubles. It is to expand the part-time reserve and is charged with attaining sufficient force to put down substantial public disorder – that is any return of revolt.

'Nationalist' and other supporters of reform argued that to establish a clear break with the past, the Commission should recommend the withdrawal of emergency powers. However, Patten, while importantly advocating the closure of the holding centres and increased regulation of emergency laws, actually echoes the government view that such powers should go but only when the security situation allows.

Similarly, the report does not

call for an immediate end of the use of plastic bullets. The current command structure – which includes officers implicated in the serious ill-treatment of detainees, shoot-to-kill allegations and collusion with loyalist paramilitaries – stays intact.

The RUC is to remain armed and retain the use of plastic bullets – in fact it is to widen its arsenal to give it greater flexibility in repression.

What emerges after the dust settles is in fact a major offensive against the working class and progressive forces.

They would change the sectarian character of the RUC but not end it. They would make the force more effective and include 19 points on co-operation that would integrate the Gardaí – the police force of the formally independent southern state, into a new police co-operation covering the two islands and with a massive database on political militants.

What gives the offensive its special edge is that, while the proposed changes are on the far horizon, nationalist support for the police is demanded now in proposals 113-117. One group of workers – teachers – are specifically listed as required to endorse and recruit for the makeover RUC.

The response from the nationalist bourgeoisie has been one of enthusiastic support. The Dublin government, the SDLP and the Catholic church have immediately endorsed the report.

Sinn Féin are described as being more cautious. In fact they are moving through a set routine which in the past has signalled a way of accepting difficult elements of the peace process. The way in which this works is that the republican leadership, who rule with a rod of iron, disarmingly put down their mantle of power and confess that they don't know the answer. They can't decide if this is the new police service or the old RUC!

This opens the way for consultation with a confused and demoralised base whom the Sinn Féin leadership patronisingly describe

as the most politically sophisticated in Europe while sternly banning any organised resistance within their movement.

They provide plenty of clues to indicate the correct answer.

The August festival centred on a poster of a demonstrator being attacked by the RUC. One of his armbands bears the slogan "Disband the RUC!" – but this is almost illegible. Below the new slogan is revealed – new police service now!

Hiding under the label of anonymous human rights activists, Sinn Féin provide a ten-point ruler that supporters are to use to measure progress. Because this focuses mainly on an equality agenda, the Patton report passes some points and fails others.

The community paper *Andersonstown News* summarised the remorseless reformist logic of this in an editorial. We should accept the "step forward" and work for further changes.

In fact the base of the republican movement, who have been at war with the RUC for the past 30 years, are shocked by the Patton report. The widespread sense of opposition lacks political expression given the lack of a republican resistance that is not primarily military.

Right now the resistance comes from the far right with the Unionist rejection of any change to the RUC. The likelihood is that the peace process will fall to the right. Imperialism will put all the gains that it has made so far in its back pocket and look for a further retreat from republicans to begin the process all over again.

There is one danger for the forces of capitalism and imperialism. Timebombs like the sectarian siege of the Garvaghy Road leave open the danger of a direct confrontation between the RUC and the nationalist working class. Given the levels of demobilisation it is not the most likely outcome, but if it occurred it would sweep away in an instant all the pretence of reform in the Patton report!

**“The only black people in Lithuania appear to be in this camp”**

# Lithuanian jail helps to defend “fortress Europe”

**Steve Cohen & Dave Landau**

In East Lithuania is the town of Pabrade. A main industry in the town is imprisoning asylum-seekers, migrants and immigrants. Pabrade prison (known officially in Stalinist double-speak as the Foreigner's Registration Centre) has about 200 detainees – men, women and children. A couple of years ago it held about 1000 prisoners.

However the International Organisation of Migration then became complicit in paying for and arranging the deportation of the majority of prisoners. This was presented as a “humanitarian” exercise. However it was an offer many prisoners could not refuse: Lithuania has no concept of temporary release or stay on “compassionate grounds – so the alternative is indefinite imprisonment.

This is imprisonment in a camp where there is no formal education for the children, where there are no work opportunities, where prisoners are controlled by the threats of violence. There are reported examples of a Sri Lankan refugee being beaten in front of his family because he refused an order to remove garbage from the camp and another Sri Lankan being beaten by several guards because he wanted to use the telephone.

## Why refugees in Lithuania?

The camp is full of refugees from all over the world. Many are from the old USSR. However many are also from the Indian sub-continent.

This begs the question as to what are Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans and Afghans doing in Lithuania? There is a two-fold answer. First they were double-crossed by criminal racketeers who, for a fortune, promised to get them into mainland Europe.

Second the countries of the European Union are intent on creating a ring of buffer or client states which will operate as a first line of exclusion from Fortress Europe.

The Nordic countries, in particular Sweden, Norway and Denmark, are acting as financiers for the erection of immigration controls around the Baltic states of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. These Baltic countries are in effect on trial.

Not yet fully capitalist, but in transition to capitalism, their role is to act as buffer zones to control migration into Europe. Once they have shown they can fulfil this role then they too may be offered the holy grail of millennium cap-

italism – membership of the European Union.

The Nordic states and Sweden in particular are quite open about this process. Each year the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs issues a report on its Immigration and Refugee Policy. Its 1997 Report states:

“A main objective of Sweden's and the other Nordic countries co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is to approximate these countries' refugee and migration policies to those of Western Europe.

“... As a result the Baltic States will cease to be attractive to refugees as transit countries. This should also facilitate these countries eventual accession to the EU.

“...As a result of the Swedish initiative in the summer of 1996 that led to the setting up of a Council for Baltic Sea Co-operation, exchange and co-operation on migration policy in the Baltic Sea region will be intensified.

The Task Force that has been set up to combat organised crime in the area will also deal with the smuggling in human beings and illegal immigration”

## Fortress Lithuania

Lithuania is itself becoming a fortress. Each year it submits a progress report to the EU as part of its preparation for membership. Its 1997/98 report describes the development of controls on the Belarus border:

“...an additional 1,000 border policemen have been placed at the border ... all the subdivisions of the border police have been supplied with modern radio communications equipment (Motorola), means of transportation (152 Land Rover all-terrain vehicles furnished with radio communications equipment), watchtowers are built (10 of 20 planned towers have already been built) where the observation equipment of the firm Thompson-CSF is installed. ... Following the contract with Siemens Nixdorf AG computerised border information is being installed and will become one of the basic elements of the future integration into the Schengen information system”

The only crumb of comfort in all this is that it is Siemens who have a contract with the British Home Office – and it is the incompetence of Siemens that has now totally disrupted the operations of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

## More on Pabrade

All refugees awaiting expulsion are now kept in Pabrade The only black people in Lithuania appear to be in this camp. The Lithua-

nian Red Cross has established an excellent project to support these refugees – The Legal Assistance Project for Refugees.

Pabrade is not a concentration camp or a death camp It has no gas ovens. However its physical presence of barbed wire and emaciated faces echoes the potent imagery of these camps The racism of immigration laws that necessitate prisons like Pabrade is no more justifiable than the anti-semitism of the Nazis.

Lithuania is itself a graveyard of the Jews. Throughout the country are memories and memorials to the tens of thousands liquidated by the Nazis. There is one such memorial in the town of Prabade There is another memorial a few kilometres away in the town of Svencionys. It is ironic to learn that Prabade prison camp is today under the administrative control of the police at Svencionys. The moral of this story seems to be that history does not automatically teach any lessons.

Learning has to be a conscious effort. Half a century of Soviet occupation has manifestly



blocked all such efforts

## Release the prisoners

Everyone opposed to racism and immigration controls is asked to:

● For more information/offers of help write to: The Legal Assis-

tance Project for Refugees, Gedimino Avenue, 2600 Vilnius, Lithuania.

● In the UK contact Campaign Against Pabrade, via GMIAU, 400 Cheetham Hill Rd, Manchester M8 9LE

# Campaigners gag racist Jensen

**Dave Landau**

ON FRIDAY 17 September People Against Eugenics, a coalition supported by the Genetics Engineering Network, Disability Action Network, National Assembly Against Racism, Searchlight and the Jewish Socialist Group, stopped a meeting of the Galton Institute from hearing racist speakers, Clyde Whitney and Arthur Jensen.

The Galton Institute, which used to be called the Eugenics Society, had its two day annual conference in the meeting hall of the Royal Zoological Society.

The Institute has the support of a number of respectable academics and had speakers from organisations such as Marie Stopes International as well as an Oxford Professor.

On the same platform was Richard Lynn who, on the Thursday spoke about creating a “quality population in the new millennium and was interviewed in the far right magazine “Right Now” advocating immigration control to prevent race mixing, which would pollute the British genetic stock.

On the Friday Glayde Whitney, who wrote a laudatory foreword to a book by David Duke, former leader of the Klu Klux Klan, which claims that Jews and blacks are conspiring against white Americans, was due to speak. He was to be followed by the Annual Gal-

ton Lecture, which was to be given by Arthur Jensen, who claims that the IQ difference between black and white people in the USA is genetically caused, and that “Headstart” programmes to improve African American's achievement are therefore a waste of money.

Before Whitney was due to speak, a woman from People Against Eugenics stood up and exposed Lynn, Whitney and Jensen for the vile racists and anti-disabilists they are.

The Chair was trying to shut her up and a group of Eugenicians were just about to manhandle her when they were surprised by about 20 activists who stormed the platform, unfurling a banner with the slogan Diversity not Discrimination.

After a frank exchange of views the eugenicians retired to the foyer to await the arrival of the police, comforting themselves with remarks like, “they must have escaped from the zoo”.

However, they were to be disappointed because the Royal Zoological Society decided that discretion was the better part of the valour and decided that it was unwise for the meeting to continue.

People Against Eugenics occupied the hall until it was clear that most people had gone home and then came out to talk to awaiting journalists.

Jensen never gave the Galton Lecture and was last seen leaving Regents Park in a hurry with some genetically modified tomatoes splattered across his shirt.

**What are Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans and Afghans doing in Lithuania?**

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# Time to fight for OUR values!

**Elkie Dee**

THINGS can only get better, we were told on election night, May 1 1997, as Labour gained a huge majority in parliament. In the following months, trade unionists eager to make demands on the new government, looking for material changes after 18 years of Tory attacks on trade union rights and cuts in public spending, were told by their leaders not to rock the boat and not to be too impatient. Social partnership and (class?) collaboration were the key to change, we were told.

In local government, a key pledge in Labour's election manifesto was to abolish compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) and replace it with "a duty to obtain best value".

Activists in the Campaign for a Fighting Democratic UNISON (CFDU) and others saw the dangers in this policy quite quickly. It was clear to many working in local government that while Best Value removed some requirements on management about how competitive tenders were sought, competition and market testing were still expected.

Moreover, the duty to obtain best value would cover all areas of work in local government, rather than specified ones as under CCT. Many services previously less exposed to privatisation are to come under scrutiny, such as libraries, social services and education. Councils now have to justify continuing to provide any service

directly in-house.

We need to view this policy in the context of continuing cuts in public spending, and the fact that Labour policy statements on Best Value have consistently maintained an emphasis on reducing costs.

While the legislation is yet to become law, 37 pilot authorities and 17 second-tier authorities are testing Best Value projects, with a view to informing future legislation and guidance. These are half-way through the second year of carrying out Best Value service reviews and planning to implement changes. Trade unionists and activists campaigning against local government cuts and privatisations cannot wait and see - we need to start organising now!

In Camden, these changes include closing libraries and selling off the buildings used, and considering market testing and externalisation for a number of services. Best Value has become the latest buzzword in the town hall to justify cuts, and the aim is to find cost savings of 2 per cent a year, every year and indefinitely. These savings are in addition to any other funding cuts.

Ideas on alternative methods service provision include transfers to housing associations, library books being issued from supermarket kiosks issuing library books and private law, accountancy and consultancy firms doing legal, financial and management work and processing benefit claims.

Non-pilot authorities are already using this new jargon, too, and making plans to attack the workforce and cut services under the cloak of Best Value. Islington has privatised its housing benefit service under voluntary competitive tendering, is transferring several large estates to housing associations and is seeking private tenders to run the Education service, doubtless at a profit.

Despite the evidence to the contrary, UNISON's bureaucracy argues that Best Value should be seen as a positive challenge and an opportunity for the union's members in local government, "a chance to continuously improve services and effectively involve users and local communities in setting and monitoring standards", requiring a "committed and enthusiastic response from elected members, managers and frontline staff". Members should take advantage of their role as "key stakeholders".

UNISON does call for a Best Employment Code to underpin Best Value, focusing on good pay and conditions, job security, training and skill development. It also calls for the repeal of a key part of the CCT legislation, the Local Government Act 1988, preventing councils from taking as non-commercial considerations, such as workers' conditions and rights, into account when contracting services out.

The union puts its faith in the



Stalingrad O'Neill

Best Value puts market values and financial considerations ahead of quality care

consultation process which is supposed to be part of Best Value. The White Paper on Modern Local Government, published last year, states that local authorities will be accountable to local people, and contains a lot of rhetoric about consultation.

The bureaucracy has not outlined what union representatives should do when they find themselves excluded or marginalised in the consultation process, or when their views and those of staff generally are ignored.

In a period of declining membership levels, casualisation, low levels of militancy and a feeling among staff that whatever they say, management will press ahead regardless, the optimism expressed by official UNISON publications about the implications of Best Value is rather naive and quite frightening.

The leadership does not offer a strategy to defend the interests of union members in published guidance. In the UNISON conference debate on Best Value, the bureaucracy showed little understanding that Best Value is worse for workers in local government and for service users than CCT.

Furthermore, recent attacks on

branches and activists fighting against privatisations, letters instructing branches that they should not support a lobby of Labour Party Conference or they would be severely punished, and caving in to attacks on the right to strike or to protest, do not inspire confidence that branches will be supported in defending their members' interests.

Several UNISON branches, including Bromley, Greenwich, Haringey, Islington, Kirklees, Knowsley and Southampton, have called a conference on The Fight against Privatisation on Saturday 6 November. Come and discuss how to start the fight!

**The Fight Against Privatisation**  
**Saturday**  
**November 6**  
 10am-5pm  
 NATFHE headquarters  
 Britannia St  
 London WC1X 9JP  
 £10 per delegate.  
 Details/registration Greenwich  
 UNISON, Rm 110, MacBean  
 Centre, MacBean St London  
 SE18 6LW

## PFI: a profitable passport to Pimlico

**A Teacher**

IN RUSSIA, former Stalinists and criminals use their position in the state apparatus to get hold of public assets. In Britain the same process is called the Private Finance Initiative. It means that public assets such as school playgrounds and playing fields are handed over as sweeteners to private developers.

private developers.

In September, Pimlico School Governors by one vote gave the go ahead for a PFI Scheme to demolish and rebuild the school. This is despite the overwhelming opposition of parents and local residents

The tendering process was a farce: in true Mafiosi style, the

final two bidders were owned by the same parent company. Staff at the School voted narrowly in favour of the deal after a speech in which the Head claimed there was no alternative.

Years of neglect by Westminster City Council, competing to have the lowest Council tax in the country, meant that the building has serious problems but these are not structural and do not require rebuilding. However the DfEE and the Council won't listen to alternatives and are determined to push through with PFI.

Of course the cost to the public sector of the new building will be much higher because the State can borrow more cheaply than the private sector. The only reason PFI can be made to seem cheaper is by handing a quarter of an already cramped site to the developer.

With a site valued at least £20m and 160 luxury flats the developer stands to make a vast profit. For the developers, the school is an afterthought and they could walk away from the deal a couple of years down the road leaving the Governors and the Council to negotiate an even higher service charge with another business.

An acre of prime SW1 property

is being handed over to a developer in return for the demolition and rebuilding. The Council is also committed to paying an annual fee for 35 years in return for the "service" i.e. the school.

The developer will control almost every aspect of running the school other than the teaching staff. Support and caretaking staff will be switched immediately to the developer and their terms and conditions will only be protected for 6 months. It is another step to the privatisation of education in Westminster.

In the North of the Borough teachers and parents are fighting the introduction of an Education Action Zone. Nord Anglia, which is looking for contracts to run schools on a commercial basis, is already involved in the selection and training of Heads and senior staff.

The Council is pushing ahead under a Labour Government with policies which it didn't dare try under the Tories.

There are a couple of lessons from the long battle against PFI at Pimlico. Firstly, the main rea-

son the staff voted for it was that a layer of NUT members at Pimlico have gone over to Blair - not just on the question of PFI but also on mixed ability teaching.

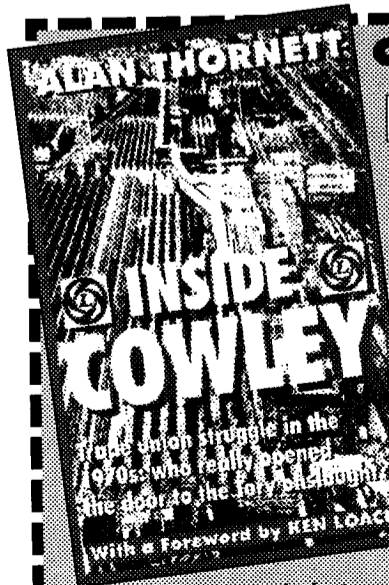
Secondly, there was very little attempt to link up with other anti PFI campaigns in the NHS and elsewhere.

**The Council is pushing ahead policies which it didn't dare try under the Tories**

Some argued that this would make it "political" and lose some potential support. Of course this approach simply disarmed us in the face of what is clearly a political attack on the public sector.

Teachers, already punch drunk from a series of changes to the curriculum and to working conditions, cannot look to the NUT leadership to protect them. Instead of standing up to Blunket and Blair, McAvoy attempts to appease them.

But PFI, attacks on teachers' conditions and the attack on comprehensive education will provide plenty of scope for building among rank and file teachers and for the left to spread the lessons across the public sector.



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# Is the crisis in the world economy over?

Andrew Kilmister updates the analysis

**A** year ago, business pundits like George Soros and politicians like Bill Clinton spoke of the world economy being in its most dangerous situation for 50 years.

After a year of turmoil in East and South East Asia, the collapse of the Russian rouble and the panic resulting from the bankruptcy of the US 'hedge fund' Long-Term Capital Management put the stability of the world financial system in question. But in recent months the media and many economists have begun to talk of a new era of prosperity based on low inflation and steady growth. Does this mean that the world economic crisis is over and that capitalism has solved its economic problems? To answer this question, we need to look at some of the general features of capitalism as a system.

Capitalist economies are continually prone to crises resulting from their basic instability and unplanned nature. But these crises do not simply mean that the system is in a state of constant stagnation. Rather, crises can actually perform a positive function for capital; wiping out unprofitable companies and speculative ventures and laying the foundations for future growth. However, such temporary resolutions of a crisis do not alter the fundamental nature of the system. The contradictions and problems which gave rise to the initial crisis can be suppressed for a while but are likely to reoccur in new forms. How such developments are then resolved, either in the interests of labour or of capital cannot be predicted abstractly in advance. It depends upon the strength of class struggle and the quality of the leadership and activity of both the working class and the capitalist class.

Viewing the world economy from this perspective can help us to understand the developments of the last year. Some of the most dangerous features of the economic situation a year ago have been staved off by governments and international institutions like the IMF. But in doing so they have created new tensions and difficulties which are likely to determine the struggles of the next twelve months.

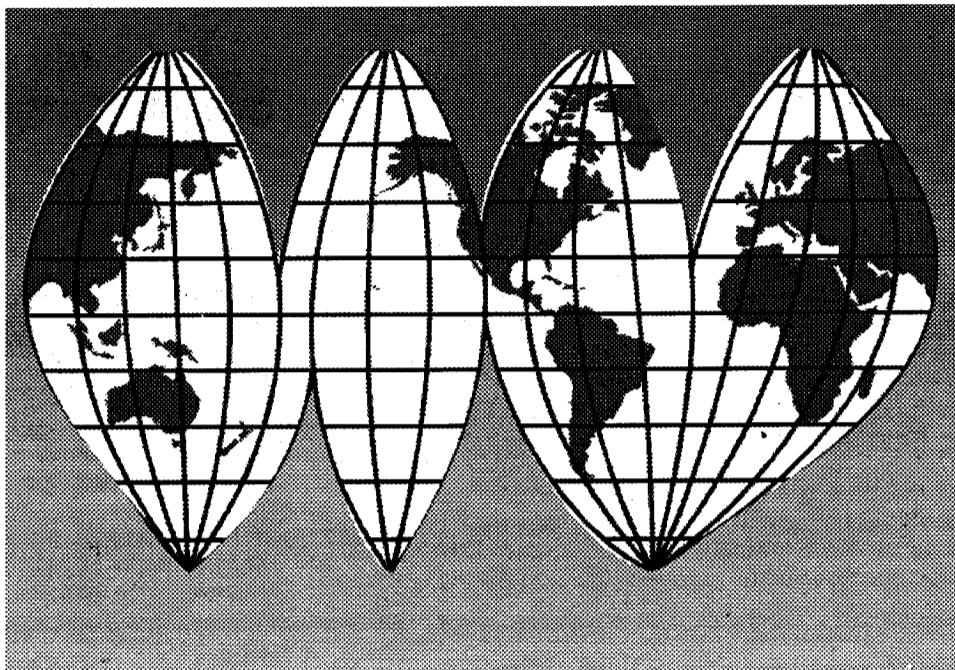
**I**n past issues of *Socialist Outlook* we have looked at three main, interlocking aspects of the world economic crisis: the stagnation in Japan, the bubble economy in the USA and the crisis in the international financial system.

These three questions remain crucial today.

The Japanese economy continues to grow very slowly if at all. It is true that so far the impact of this on the rest of the world economy has been relatively small, compared to what might have been expected from prolonged stagnation in such a large economy.

This is for two reasons. First, Japan's imports of goods and services have always been fairly limited. So, slow growth has not meant a massive cutback in sales to the country. Second, the Japanese government has been able to avoid a massive recession and financial meltdown which would have meant the large-scale withdrawal of funds for investment from the US and Europe.

But it has only managed to do this through a huge expansion of government spending. The Japanese government budget deficit now stands at 6 per cent of GDP,



twice the level of the Maastricht criteria for the EU economies.

This is bound to mean fewer funds flowing from Japan to the rest of the world as Japanese capital invests at home in government bonds.

From a more long-term perspective, while Japanese manufacturers like Nissan are restructuring aggressively and real wages have fallen by around 7 per cent this year, the structural changes which free marketeers have argued for in Japanese services, agriculture and finance have not proceeded very far. Japan remains a significant drag on world growth.

**T**he US economy has now become central to the immediate prospects for capitalism. Ironically, despite all the talk of 'globalisation', economic activity is becoming ever more polarised with growth centred in a few 'favoured' areas - Japan in the 1980s, South East Asia in the first half of the 1990s and the US today.

Half of the increase in world imports over the last year went to just one economy, the USA. But it is important not to be taken in by exaggerated accounts of an economic miracle in the US. As American Marxist Robert Brenner has shown, US growth has been lower in the 1990s than in the 1980s, and was lower in the 1980s than in the 1970s.

Despite a recent upturn in productivity growth in manufacturing, US productivity growth remains generally slower than in Europe. Income inequality is at record levels and real wages are growing very slowly after falling through the 1980s. Even low unemployment rates look less impressive when compared against the dramatic rise in the prison population.

Perhaps most seriously, while the US government is running a budget surplus, public borrowing has been replaced by an explosion of private borrowing, with corporate debt doubling as a percentage of GDP in the last two years and net household borrowing and personal bankruptcy rates at record levels.

This borrowing has fuelled a dramatic stock market boom and an increasing balance of payments deficit. US capitalism is gambling heavily on the belief that information technology related industries will fundamentally reshape production in a wide range of areas - finance, the media and leisure industries, retailing - and that the USA will have a decisive lead over its competitors in this process.

It would be wrong to ignore the way in which the USA has been able to achieve a competitive edge over Western Europe and Japan in a number of fast growing new areas.

But so far there is little hard evidence that these new industries will lead to the kind of major transformations which will justify current US share prices.

**A**s yet, the productivity increases which have been achieved in the US seem to result more from outsourcing, downsizing and an assault on working practices than from a significant technological breakthrough.

If the gamble of US capital doesn't win out and share prices fall significantly, then given the extent to which share ownership has become more important there over the last decade, a US recession becomes a real possibility. And with the US accounting for such a large proportion of international demand the effects of this would be felt internationally.

Over the last year a key strategic objective for international capital has been to avoid a simultaneous end to the US bubble and a further crisis in the international financial markets. The aim has been to cool down the US economy before the next round of currency crises in the 'emerging markets'.

However, this has been difficult to achieve as money has flowed out of Asia, Russia and Latin America encouraging the US financial boom. Nonetheless, up until now the markets have been stabilised temporarily.

The biggest challenge for the US government and the IMF has been the crisis in Brazil. By managing the immediate situation quite cleverly, allowing a controlled devaluation backed up by a massive IMF package, they managed to avoid both the panic seen earlier in Indonesia and South Korea and a strong impact from Brazil on the US stock market.

But in the longer term the effects are not so favourable. The Brazilian economy remains stagnant and the impact of the IMF programme has been to undercut dramatically support for the Cardoso government, a key element in the neo-liberal offensive in Latin America.

Further, events in Brazil have thrown a number of other South American countries into economic turmoil and have caused major problems in the Mercosur trading block of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

**T**he most important destination for imperialist investment capital remains China. Again, in the short-term the USA and IMF have managed to stabilise the situation. China has not devalued the yuan and, while growth has slowed, it remains reasonably strong.

But the weight of bad debts in the Chinese banking system is becoming more and more widely recognised, as are other potential barriers to successful capitalist exploitation there - labour unrest, ecological destruction, regional imbalances.

In the rest of Asia, declines in output have largely ceased and stock markets are rising. Countries like South Korea are now running large balance of payments surpluses. But as *The Economist* bemoaned last month, there has been relatively little fundamental restructuring in East and South East Asia as a result of the crisis of 1997 and the opening up to foreign capital in areas like the financial sector is still quite limited. As yet the most ambitious neo-liberal projects remain unfulfilled.

The other key project of international capital over the last year is of course the Euro. Up until now the EU economies, particularly Germany, and the Euro have been weaker than was expected.

To some extent, this is a satisfactory development for US capital; a strong dollar has kept inflation down in the USA while the US has been able to use its importance in immediate economic developments as a bargaining counter in pushing for concessions in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other forums.

But again, in the longer term the relative weakness of the Euro can be a source of instability as European capital flows into the US and feeds financial speculation there.

Over the last year the potential nightmare for capitalism of the coming together of crises in Japan, the USA and the international markets has been avoided. This has meant that the economic situation has appeared more stable than many thought possible a year ago. But this stability masks the continuation of many of the old tensions and contradictions in new forms. Japan continues to be close to recession.

The US economic upturn has become significantly more speculative over the last two years, as the world economy has become more dependent on it.

Much of Latin America, China and other regions remain vulnerable to currency and financial crises. The neo-liberal offensive has not yet been able to transform the East and South East Asian economies.

**T**o see capitalism as having restored global economic stability on a long-term basis would be as much of an error as to believe that each particular aspect of global economic crisis will automatically transform itself into a generalised crisis of the system.

But if instability is inevitable under capitalism, the outcome of such instability is not.

That depends on the response of the working class to economic crisis. The successes of international capital over the last year have largely resulted from the relative weakness of resistance to its strategies in a number of key countries.

The strengthening of such resistance will be the key factor which decides what the outcome of the global economic crisis over the next twelve months will be.

## Indonesian Trade Unionists back East Timor

The following statement was made by the National Front for Indonesian Labour Struggle in Jakarta on September 11:

The ballot, offered as a way to resolve the 24-year old crisis in East Timor has been completed. The results show that the Timorese people reject the special autonomy offered by the Indonesian government and have chosen to be a free nation.

The Timorese struggle to be a free nation have gone on for many centuries against Portuguese colonialism and then against the militaristic Indonesian government. They have paid a high price, both physically and materially to wage that struggle.

The Indonesian military invasion since 1975 has cost more than 200,000 lives and led to many human rights abuses including beatings and rapes. The interna-

tional community's response to the military acts of Indonesia depended on the Cold War interests of each country at the time.

After the ballot was completed and a series massacres of pro-independence forces, UN staff and journalists by pro-integration militia members (supported by Indonesian military and police) commenced, the international community has again taken a position on the issue of East Timor. In this case, the international community has condemned the Indonesian government who are thought of as no longer able to provide security in the territory.

Condemnation and international pressure has come from Australia from its government and through the call for bans on Indonesian products by Australian trade unions.

In one instance, there was even the incident of flag burning at a demonstration outside an Indonesian consulate. The response to

this by several forces was to retaliate and burn the Australian flag and to invade the Australian Embassy in Indonesia.

These actions show the low level of understanding of the history of the struggle in East Timor and the shifting of the conflict from the massacres carried out in East Timor to a conflict between two countries.

In responding to the situation that has arisen since the ballot in East Timor, the National Front for Indonesian Labour Struggle (FNBP) hereby express:

- \* Our full support for the results of the ballot in East Timor, as a reflection of the aspirations of the East Timorese to determine their own fate
- \* Our condemnation of the anti democratic acts committed by the pro-autonomy forces of TNI and POLRI (Indonesian police)
- \* Our condemnation of all acts of murder and destruction by TNI and POLRI committed against the

Jakarta cops get stuck into a trade unionist, January 1998



innocent civilians of East Timor

\* Our condemnation of all acts of violence by TNI and POLRI which have driven out the Timorese from their own country

The FNBP therefore demand:

- \* Immediate withdrawal of TNI and POLRI from East Timor
- \* Disbanding of militias which are supported and armed by TNI and POLRI
- \* Formation and entry of international peacekeeping forces into East Timor
- \* That all forces to respect the results of the ballot which is a reflection of the aspirations of the

Timorese

\* End to all support given by the Indonesian government to the militias

\* End to the sending of Indonesian security forces to East Timor  
We declare our full support for all the solidarity actions and strikes conducted by trade unions worldwide.

We call on the international community, especially the workers to maintain pressure on the Indonesian government through strikes/industrial action, economic sanctions and other forms of pressure.

## Britain arms Indonesian dictators Their Ethics and ours

Adam Hartman

LABOUR came to power in 1997 promising that Britain's arms sales would be governed by a new moral framework. The secretive world of arms deals would be opened up to public scrutiny, and priority would be given to human rights. Indonesia would be a test case of the new ethical foreign policy, a test which it has failed.

The new government declared that it would not allow the sale of equipment which was likely to be used for repression.

In fact, this formulation left the door open for continuing with business as usual. Campaigners would have to show not only that a regime was repressive, but also that the equipment in question was likely to be used for repression, for example by providing photographic evidence that similar equipment had been so used in the past.

In practice this was difficult, considering the dangers to photographers in filming the activities of the police and armed forces. The Indonesian authorities denied access for journalists to large parts of East Timor and other areas of conflict.

Ministers were inclined to believe official assurances that equipment would not be used for repression. They were anxious not to offend the Indonesian regime and put at risk lucrative civil and military contracts.

According to the *Financial Times* (August 30 1997) "officials hope the approval of defence contracts will also help the interests of other sections of British industry which are bidding for billions of pounds worth of contracts linked to [the] Natuna [oil and gas fields in the South China Sea]."

In 1994, while in opposition, Robin Cook stated that "Hawk aircraft have been observed on bombing runs in East Timor in

most years since 1984". By 1997 his tune had changed.

The new government repeated Tory claims that there was no satisfactory evidence Hawks had been used in East Timor. In fact there have been many eye-witness accounts of their use, backed up with admissions by Indonesian officials.

Campaigners argued that the distinction between repressive and non-repressive equipment was irrelevant. All new equipment strengthens the armed forces and therefore puts their opponents at a disadvantage. All arms sales provide political support to the regime.

Activists demanded a full arms embargo on Indonesia. We demanded the cancellation of licences granted by the Tories. These included licences for 16 British Aerospace Hawk-209 jets with ground-attack capability, 7 Tactica water cannon made by Glover Webb, a subsidiary of GKN, 220 Land Rover general service vehicles and 50 Alvis Scorpion vehicles fitted with machine guns.

The government claimed that it would not be "realistic or practical" to revoke those licences. In fact Article 7(1) of the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1994 states that a licence "may be varied or revoked by the Secretary of State at any time".

Furthermore the government would not be liable to pay compensation unless it had been guaranteed in the terms of the licence.

So for over two years the government presided over the delivery of lethal equipment to Indonesia when it was entirely possible for them to stop those deliveries. During this time Scorpion vehicles were filmed in use during student protests where protesters were killed (Jakarta, May 1998), and General Wiranto admitted that Hawks were flying

over East Timor on "reconnaissance exercises" (July 23 1999).

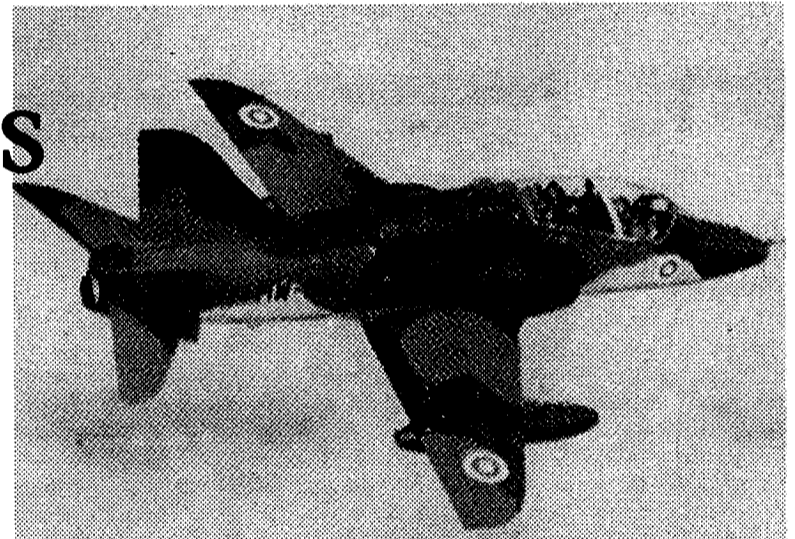
From May 1 1997 to autumn 1999 the change of government made no significant difference to the character of equipment licensed or to the proportion of licence applications turned down. There was however a significant reduction in the number and value of licences granted.

However this was largely due to the economic crisis which hit Indonesia in 1997, which reduced the purchasing power of the Indonesian currency. This in turn meant an increased reluctance by the British government's Export Credit Guarantee Department to underwrite contracts on which Indonesia was likely to default.

Up to the end of 1998 the government granted 91 licences in total, 4 for equipment in the category of "large calibre weapons", 4 in the category of "bombs, torpedoes, rockets, missiles, mines etc", 2 for "military vehicles", 33 for "aircraft and aircraft equipment", 2 for "combat vessels", 1 for "toxicological agents or riot control agents", 31 for "electronic equipment for military use", amongst others.

These categories are broad and they do not indicate the exact nature of the equipment in question. However some of them could clearly be used for repression.

From 1994 to 1998 the Tories refused 5.9% of licence applications and Labour refused 8.4%. Most of Labour's refusals were in 1997, including a high-profile rejection of a licence for 6 armoured Land Rovers made by Courtaulds Aerospace. In 1998 Labour refused just one licence out of 41, suggesting that, after an initial attempt to show that Labour's "ethical foreign policy" had teeth, political and economic "realities" had once again taken precedence.



Hawk jets have been sold - and 24 of their pilots trained - under Labour

Writing in the *Observer* (September 19 1999) Robin Cook claims that "arms sales to Indonesia under this government have all but vanished. Last year we licensed a grand total of £16 million of arms exports, nearly all of it spares and services for historic contracts and a mere £1 million for new contracts."

We cannot tell whether or not he is telling the truth because, despite the government's promise to open up arms sales to public scrutiny, the information in the public domain is very patchy and imprecise.

The government published its first "annual report" on arms sales in March 1999. For each licence the report only gives the manufacturer, the general type of equipment (which is very broad) and the number of items involved. It does not include the value of the deal.

Cook also denies that the government has given a fresh subsidy for the Hawks. However according to Hansard (December 9 1998) the government rescheduled US\$167 of debt repayments relating to the Hawk deal (as part of a rescheduling package covering £240 million of public sector debt repayments).

Cook is not so keen to stress the training that Britain has given to Indonesian military officers. According to *Private Eye* (April 17 1998) seven officers from the notorious counter-insurgency force

Kopassus, which has played a key role in orchestrating the present violence in East Timor, were then on a Security Studies course at Hull University. By July 1998 the RAF had trained 5 instructors and 24 pilots in flying the Hawk jets.

Under the pressure of the situation in East Timor, the government has at long last cancelled all exports of arms to Indonesia. A statement by Tony Blair before the 1997 General Election sheds some light on why it took so long.

"A new Labour government will be committed to creating the conditions in which the defence industries can survive and prosper. .... A Labour government will work with the industry to win export orders."

But Labour's support for the arms trade goes beyond subservience to the arms industry and the value of arms exports to the British economy. Arms sales are an important tool for projecting British influence in the world.

They are a lever for giving British business a favourable position in markets worldwide. And, in the hands of repressive regimes, they help to maintain a stable environment for British investors by defending the political status quo and suppressing any challenge from below to their exploitation of natural resources and labour and to their domination of markets.

# Western governments share blame for Timor slaughter

**Noam Chomsky**

THE TRAGEDY of East Timor has been one of the most awesome of this terrible century. It is also of particular moral significance for us, for the simplest and most obvious of reasons. Western complicity has been direct and decisive.

The expected corollary also holds: unlike the crimes of official enemies, these can be ended by means that have always been readily available, and still are...

Citing diplomatic, church, and militia sources, Australian journalists reported in July "that hundreds of modern assault rifles, grenades and mortars are being stockpiled, ready for use if the autonomy [within Indonesia] option is rejected at the ballot box."

They warned that the army-run militias might be planning a violent takeover of much of the territory if, despite the terror, the popular will would be expressed.

All of this was well understood by the "foreign friends," who also knew how to bring the terror to an end, but preferred to delay, hesitate, and keep to evasive and ambiguous reactions that the

Indonesian Generals could easily interpret as a "green light" to carry out their grim work.

In a display of extraordinary courage and heroism, virtually the entire population made their way to the ballot-boxes, many emerging from hiding to do so...

Immediately, the Indonesian occupying forces reacted as had been predicted by observers on the scene. The weapons that had been stockpiled, and the forces that had been mobilized, conducted a well-planned operation.

They proceeded to drive out anyone who might bring the terrible story to the outside world and cut off communications, while massacring, expelling tens of thousands of people to an unknown fate, burning and destroying, murdering priests and nuns, and no one knows how many other hapless victims.

The capital city of Dili has been virtually destroyed. In the countryside, where the army can rampage undetected, one can only guess what has taken place.

Even before the latest outrages, highly credible Church sources had reported 3-5000 killed in 1999, well beyond the scale of

atrocities in Kosovo prior to the NATO bombings.

The scale might even reach the level of Rwanda if the "foreign friends" keep to timid expressions of disapproval while insisting that internal security in East Timor "is the responsibility of the Government of Indonesia, and we don't want to take that responsibility away from them" — the official position of the State Department a few days before the August 30 referendum.

It would have been far less hypocritical to have said, early this year, that internal security in Kosovo "is the responsibility of the Government of Yugoslavia, and we don't want to take that responsibility away from them."

Indonesia's crimes in East Timor have been vastly greater, even just this year, not to speak of their actions during the years of aggression and terror; Western-backed, we should never allow ourselves to forget.

That aside, Indonesia has no claim whatsoever to the territory it invaded and occupied, apart from the claim based on support by the Great Powers.

The "foreign friends" also

*Working the strings behind President Habibie, General Wiranto has been the real power in Indonesia — with whom the West is happy to deal*



understand that direct intervention in the occupied territory, however justified, might not even be necessary. If the United States were to take a clear, unambiguous, and public stand, informing the Indonesian Generals that this game is over, that might very well suffice. The same has been true for the past quarter-century, as the US provided critical military and diplomatic support for the invasion and atrocities.

These were directed by General Suharto, compiling yet another chapter in his gruesome record, always with Western support, and often acclaim. He was once again praised by the Clinton Administration.

He is "our kind of guy," the Administration declared as he visited Washington shortly before he fell from grace by losing control and dragging his feet on IMF orders.

If changing the former green light to a new red light does not suffice, Washington and its allies have ample means at their dis-

posal: termination of arms sales to the killers; initiation of war crimes trials against the army leadership — not an insignificant threat; cutting the economic support funds that are, incidentally, not without their ambiguities; putting a hold on Western energy corporations and multinationals, along with other investment and commercial activities.

There is also no reason to shy away from peacekeeping forces to replace the occupying terrorist army, if that proves necessary. Indonesia has no authority to "invite" foreign intervention, as President Clinton urged, any more than Saddam Hussein had authority to invite foreign intervention in Kuwait, or Nazi Germany in France in 1944 for that matter. If dispatch of peacekeeping forces is disguised by such prettified terminology, it is of no great importance, as long as we do not succumb to illusions that prevent us from understanding what has happened, and what it portends.

Over 100,000 people recently filled the streets of Lisbon in the largest demonstrations since the Portuguese revolution in 1975.

Although part of the appeals for these demonstrations came from the Portuguese media, government and state institutions, these mobilisations were so huge and spontaneous that there was no possible centralised political direction. The traditional political parties were completely overtaken during the process.

The main demand of the masses was the respect for the results of the referendum held in East Timor and a UN intervention in East Timor as the only immediate way of stopping the massacres.

Until September 12, when Jakarta finally accepted the UN intervention, these demonstrations were also accompanied by a very visible anti-American feeling.

The contrast in American positions on East Timor and Kosovo was clear to everyone.

## Portuguese left rallies to support East Timor

### Left Bloc statement

According to a leaflet issued by Portugal's radical Left Bloc, "President Habibie's acceptance of the entrance of a United Nations peace force into East Timor constitutes a significant defeat of the Indonesian dictatorship that has occupied the territory for 24 years, with the complicity of the United States of America and the whole "international community".

This defeat was possible, on one hand, thanks to the heroic resistance of the people of East Timor, and their decades-long fight for self-determination and independence. The massive mobilisations, and the results of the referendum of August 30th, show clearly what the East Timorese people want.

The amazing popular international mobilisation of the last few days helped achieve the defeat of

the Indonesian position. In efforts that took new forms of expression, revolt took the streets forcing the most powerful governments of the world to look at East Timor, and stop the return of the silence of the cemeteries.

Through our mobilisations, we have encouraged the reinforcement of diplomatic pressure for the end of the massacres and for the respect of the will of the Timorese people.

This first success proves that popular mobilisation was and still is the great force that can determine the course of history.

The deployment of a UN peace force cannot, must not stop this struggle of solidarity.

The murderers are still in the territory, developing their politics of burned land, forced deportations of thousand of Timorese and physical elimination of the leaders and fighters of the resistance, of CNRT and FALINTIL.

Those responsible for these

massacres are still freely walking through the corridors of international diplomacy, gaining time in order to pursue their genocide plan. Enough wasted time! It is necessary to act now!

Humanitarian help can arrive immediately to the territory and to the refugee camps of East and Western Timor if the necessary means are deployed...

The army, the police and the militias cannot continue killing. The international community cannot accept — under any conditions — the maintenance of more than 20,000 murderers of the Timorese people in its territory. One cannot make the same mistake twice.

The entrance of the UN force must be accompanied by the total and immediate retreat of the Indonesian forces that occupy East Timor!

The UN forces have to assure the immediate and safe return of the thousands of refugees, of the leaders and speakers of the resistance, and of commander Xanana Gusmao, as well as the immediate disarmament of the pro-integration militias.



Army behind militias

Those responsible for the massacres and deportations must respond to a International Court to answer the accusation of genocide and extermination of the people of East Timor.

Bloco de Esquerda, Lisbon, 13 September 1999 [The left bloc includes the PSR, Portuguese section of the Fourth International]

**Popular mobilisation was and still is the great force that can determine the course of history**

John Lister

**K**arl Marx and Friedrich Engels were able to deduce from early in the 19th century the extent to which capitalist production despoils the natural world, and how a minority of capitalists in pursuit of profits could ride roughshod over the needs and interests of the world's oppressed and exploited peoples.

But writing at a later stage of the development of capitalism Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, was able to go even further in making the inextricable link between environmental destruction and the rise of a new form of capitalism - imperialism.

Although it is clearly linked to political control, and often to military repression of dominated countries, the essential feature of modern imperialism is as a system of economic domination of even apparently "independent" countries by the banks and finance houses and major corporations. These are still based in the imperialist nations - including Britain, France, Germany, and the USA, which between them in 1917 owned nearly 80 percent of the world's finance capital.

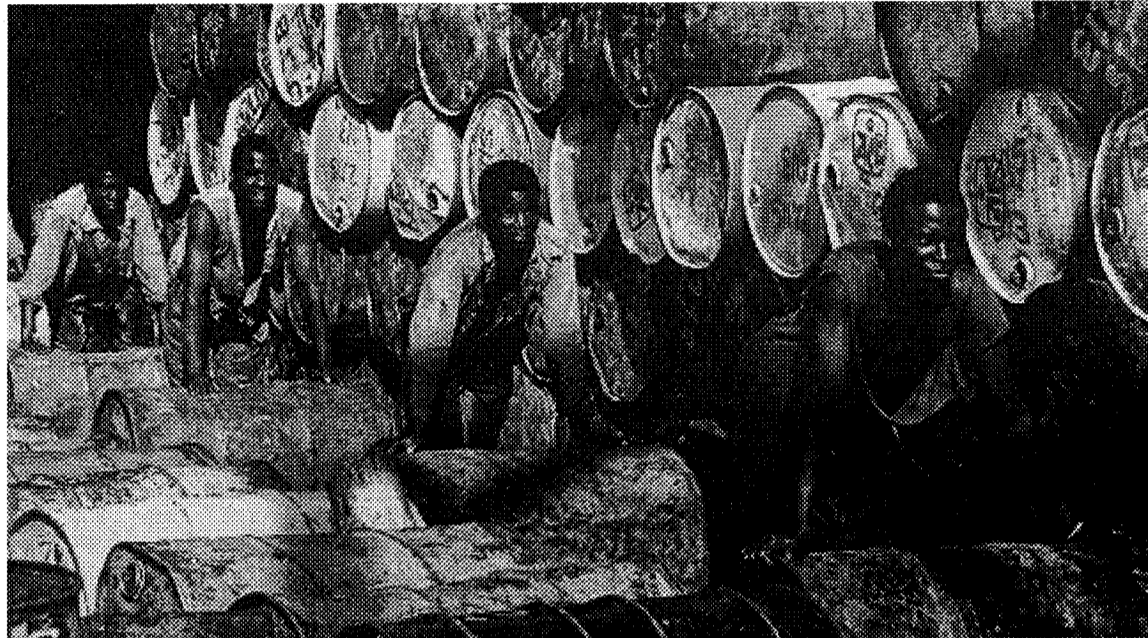
Imperialism is described by Lenin as the stage of capitalist development in which the competition between capitalist enterprises is replaced by the growth of cartels and monopolies, which combine forces to control vast areas of markets and to fix prices.

In the age of imperialism, the scale of profits to be made through the export of manufactured commodities (which was the dominant factor in the early development of capitalism) is eclipsed by those flowing from the export of capital.

Capital investment enables the monopolies in the imperialist countries to exploit cheap labour and raw materials in the less developed economies. Writing in 1917, Lenin insisted that:

"The facts show [...] that the rise of monopolies, as the result of

# World counts cost of imperialist vandalism



The "first world" makes the waste - and dumps it on the "third" world

the concentration of production, is a general and fundamental law of the present stage of development of capitalism." (*Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*)

Lenin's view of the world system of exploitation being created under this "general law" seems remarkably modern and appropriate over 80 years later:

"On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly monopolist capitalist combines in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous "superabundance of capital" has arisen in the advanced countries.

"It goes without saying that if

capitalism could develop agriculture, which today frightfully lags behind industry everywhere, if it could raise the standard of living of the masses, who are everywhere still half-starved and poverty-stricken, in spite of the amazing technical progress, then there could be no talk of a superabundance of capital. ...

"But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism: for both uneven development and a semi-starvation level of existence of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions of this mode of production."

Lenin goes on to underline the significance of the "strings" blatantly attached then (and now) to loans from the imperialist countries to less developed countries:

"The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan that is granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor country, particularly on orders for war materials or for ships, etc. [...] The export of capital abroad thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities."

Lenin goes out of his way to stress that the system is not shaped by the individual moral choices of the capitalists, but by the working through of the laws of a system driven by profit and exploitation:

"The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits."

Unlike previous "empires"

which had been built by pre-capitalist nations on the basis of military conquest and subjugation, imperialist domination can continue to control day to day life even in politically independent countries:

"Finance capital is such a great, it may be said such a decisive force in all economic and in all international relations that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence [...]"

He returns to this theme, pointing out that:

"Typical of this epoch is not only the two main groups of countries: those owning colonies and colonies, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, officially, are politically independent, but in fact are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence."

Lenin derides those liberals of the time (and would equally deride today's liberals) who complained that monopolies could improve their own access to raw materials by improving the conditions of the masses:

"Where," asks Lenin, "except in the imagination of sentimental reformists, are there any trusts capable of interesting themselves in the condition of the masses instead of the conquest of colonies?"

"Finance capital is interested not only in the already discovered sources of raw materials, but also in potential sources, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, and land which is useless today may be made fertile tomorrow if new methods are employed and if large amounts of capital are invested. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of working up and utilising raw materials, etc."

For Lenin, the coming of the epoch of imperialism signified the end of the period in which capitalism had played a historically progressive role by revolutionising and developing the productive forces.

From now on, with the bulk of the earth's surface carved up between the rival imperialist powers, the century was certain to involve a succession of wars for markets and access raw materials.

But it would also be a period of revolutions, in which the exploited and oppressed would be obliged to fight back and struggle for power against the might of imperialism.

Lenin's immense strength in developing this analysis was that he went from this to conclude the need for the development of a conscious, organised revolutionary leadership both at national and international level if these revolutionary struggles were to succeed.

On this issue, too, Lenin's contribution gives vital perspective on today's struggles.

## McLibel protests continue

Paul Hubert

The 15th annual Worldwide Anti-McDonald's Day takes place on Saturday October 16th. One of the issues that will be highlighted is the continued struggle to expose the company's practices by the 'McLibel Two', Helen Steele and Dave Morris.

In September 1990 McDonalds issued libel writs in order to suppress the distribution of campaigning leaflets outside their stores by a small group called London Greenpeace, with the wider aim of frightening off and silencing all other critics of the company.

Because two of the group refused to capitulate to this use of Britain's oppressive libel laws to suppress dissent, the issue has turned into a massive headache for McDonalds. Although the corporation won its case on some issues, British courts have now found that: McDonald's marketing has "pretended to a positive nutritional benefit which their food (high in fat & salt etc) did not match"; that McDonald's "exploit children" with their advertising strategy;

are "culpably responsible for animal cruelty"; and "pay low wages, helping to depress wages in the catering trade."

In a hearing this year, the Court of Appeal ruled that it was fair comment to say that McDonald's employees worldwide "do badly in terms of pay and conditions", and true that "if one eats enough McDonald's food, one's diet may well become high in fat etc., with the very real risk of heart disease."

The company still won on some issues, but, recognising the considerable damage the case has done, have not attempted to collect damages or costs. Their opponents estimate McDonalds spent £10 million worldwide on the case.

The McLibel campaign is continuing in the courts, in the hope of undermining the right of the powerful to suppress criticism. There is also an action against the police for feeding information about the campaigners to the company and they are seeking funds to help them carry on.

However they recognise that this is only one tactic in a fightback which includes continuing distribution of the disputed

leaflet, campaigns against new stores, unionisation struggles by some McDonalds workers and mass anti-McDonald's protests by French farmers opposing the 'free trade' drive of American monopolies.

In a period when some believe that struggle is futile, the McLibel campaign has been "a real DIY victory", echoing other recent movements. These include road protests and Reclaim The Streets and direct action on other environmental issues.

These movements and the refusal of millions to take genetically-modified food on trust from monopoly food businesses show there remains a significant element in our society looking for alternatives to Blairite sucking-up to the capitalist class.

■ The McLibel Campaign is making a financial appeal - funds urgently needed for legal costs (transcripts, photocopying of papers for court etc). Not a penny will go to McDonald's of course! (Cheques to McLibel Support Campaign). London Greenpeace / McLibel Support Campaign 5 Caledonian Rd, London, N1 9DX, UK. Tel/Fax +44-(0)171 713 1269

Email: [mclibel@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:mclibel@globalnet.co.uk) Internet info: <http://www.mcspotlight.org>

Their opponents estimate McDonalds spent £10 million worldwide on the case.

# Hand-wringing liberals cannot solve eco-crisis

John Lister

**M**arxists may have been too slow to rise to the challenge of developing an analysis of the growing environmental disaster created by imperialism: but Marxism offers the only serious answer to the most fundamental question of all – what is to be done to resolve the crisis?

All manner of well-intentioned liberals and environmentalists have developed very detailed critiques of the ways in which capitalism – led by the multi-national monopolies – and the old Stalinist regimes have poisoned, wasted and destroyed the earth's precious resources.

But when it comes down to offering a fundamental alternative, they all stop short.

Many turn to emphasise the "moral" duty of individuals, whether to boycott the most offensive multinationals or to combine in political activity to press for action by governments or by international bodies.

Others seek to devise ever-more sophisticated ways in which the very companies and profiteers who caused the damage can be persuaded through taxation or through treaties to moderate or reverse their rapacious behaviour.

Perhaps the most comprehensive recent example of this approach is the compendious study *Global Environmental Outlook (GEO 2000)* just published by the United Nations Environment Programme.

The document contains a wealth of valuable information charting the chaos that has been created in the global environment, and is much too lengthy to deal with fully here.

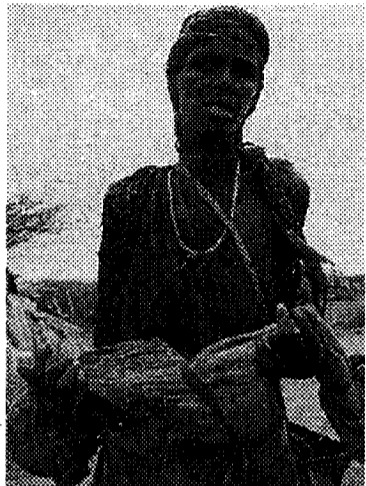
But while many of the facts it parades are sufficient to create anger and frustration, the conclusions and recommendations of *GEO 2000* embody precisely the weaknesses outlined above.

The report shows a world in chaos and riven by grotesque inequalities arising from capitalist exploitation.

**W**e read that despite a five-fold expansion of the world economy since 1950, more than a quarter of the world's population remains in severe poverty, and 1.3 billion people live on less than a dollar a day.

We are told that while a comfortable "global middle class" is emerging, the inequalities of the system mean that poverty is expected to increase in Africa during the next century. 14 African countries are already subject to "water stress" – and another 11 are expected to face the same problems by 2025.

On the eve of the new millennium "at least" one in three Asians has no access to safe drinking water, but this is not seen as the key issue in the eyes of governments and the UN. Instead their concern is free trade: "One of the greatest chal-



*Somali mother with her dead baby: imperialism promotes cash crops for export, worsening famine*

lenges is to promote liberal trade yet maintain and strengthen the protection of the environment and natural resources."

In West Asia the oil-producing countries exploited by US-owned oil monopolies are also left to deal with the deadly waste products and "generate from 2-8 times more hazardous waste per capita than does the United States".

The "free-trade" dogma enforced by the World Trade Organisation also helps to undercut any attempt to preserve the environment:

"WTO recently ruled that the US could not discriminate against imports of shrimp caught without the use of turtle excluder devices which allow sea turtles to escape from shrimp nets". The same WTO has ruled against EU countries promoting banana imports from former colonies in the Caribbean.

But *GEO 2000* appears oblivious to the key driving forces behind this inequality.

**I**t is no coincidence that this pattern of deprivation and environmental degradation runs alongside a massive expansion of the global role of imperialist capitalism.

The report points out that by 1996 speculative trading in foreign exchange amounted to a massive \$350 trillion, more than ten times the world's Gross Domestic Product (\$30 trillion).

The total revenue of the world's top 500 companies was \$11 trillion, dwarfing the total of \$250 billion invested by private companies in a select number of developing countries, and the miserable \$50 billion of western governments' combined Overseas Development Assistance.

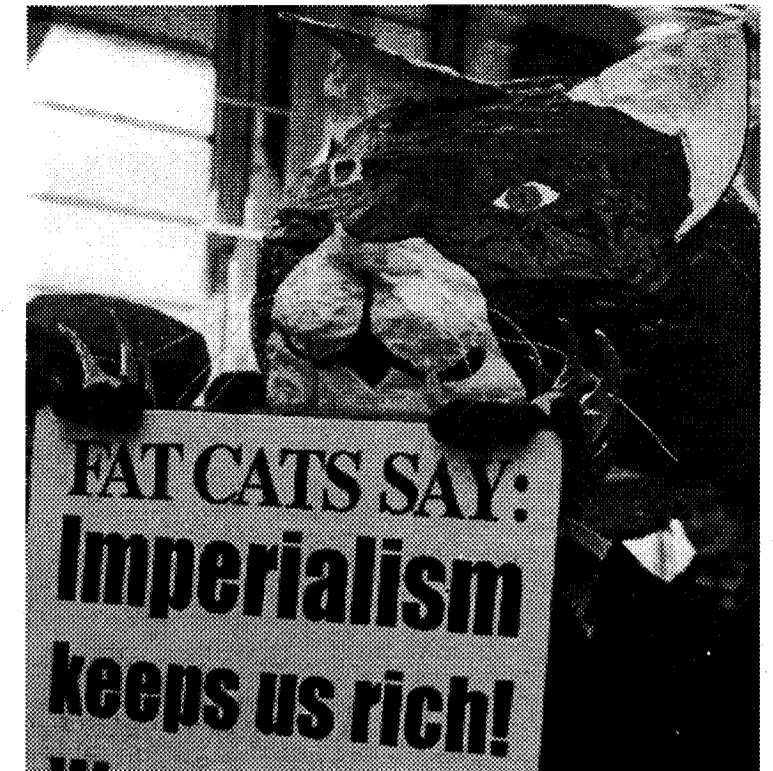
As the flows of private cash have increased, the resources for "aid" programmes has been cut back, complains UNEP, "leading, in effect to a decreased capacity of public sector and multilateral agencies to deliver public goods such as environmental health."

But while the imperialist banks and finance houses can be expected to mop up cheap raw materials and

exploit cheap labour while pocketing the profits, UNEP argues that "Transnational corporations, private banks and pension funds cannot be expected to cover major public health and environmental infrastructure costs."

No: they are after all only there for the profits. But their demands for low (or no) taxation on their operations in the developing countries – and for hefty interest payments on loans extended to governments and to local enterprises – makes it even more difficult to raise the resources required: "Public agencies in most countries are hampered by their tremendous debt burden, and environmental agencies and activities are often among the first to be cut back in order to manage deficits and interest payments."

Worse, the sheer weight of debt and scale of repayments is itself driving towards environmental destruction, compelling many developing countries "to sell off



gamut of reactionary third world regimes, can only offer the most mealy-mouthed of solutions:

"Ideally such measures must simultaneously maintain the living standards of the wealthy [...] upgrade the living standards of the disadvantaged, and increase sustainability."

Who is to lead this mission impossible?

"Individuals are vitally important – they experience the deteriorating environment at first hand and they often know the best solutions."

How are individuals to dent the power of the multinationals?

"Their cumulative lifestyles make a huge impact – a small adaptation made millions of times over can add up to a significant change."

The old chestnut of civic action is also wheeled out:

"Public participation is a key element in improved environmental management."

**T**here is a problem, however, which is that, as UNEP quaintly phrases it: "Many citizens still lack a feeling of ownership with regard to national environmental legislation..."

Perhaps this is because the "citizens" are all too painfully aware that they *don't* own or control the firms that are wrecking their environment, and that they are ruled by tin-pot despotic regimes which are craven toadies to the banks and multinationals?

UNEP admits that even where they are relatively progressive "national governments are losing influence". But hope is at hand: enter as the most unlikely saviours... the multinationals!

"Although their first priority is profit, many leading international corporations and banks are adding environmental and social value to economic value as corporate priorities, and leading significant initiatives towards more sustainable development."

Phew! So that's alright then.

"Multinational corporations, for long powerful forces in the global economy, have led the action to establish and implement voluntary actions such as codes of conduct."

These codes of conduct would presumably be the "multilateral environmental agreements" with which according to *GEO 2000* it has been difficult to secure compliance in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean – in other words in any of the developing countries.

The real bad guys, apparently are

"small and medium-sized firms" which have yet to measure up to the "improved environmental performance" of the monopolies.

UNEP suggests "Large industries can be encouraged to help small and medium sized industries with voluntary action and implementing the "triple bottom line" – social, economic and environmental accountability, or 'people, profit and planet'."

The display of naivete could not be more comprehensive or pathetic. Even while cataloguing the ways in which working people throughout the world have been systematically shafted by imperialist multinationals, the UN turns back to these same cynical profiteers to help clean up the mess!

Marxism starts from the opposite premise. The capitalist drive for profit created both the inequality and the environmental crisis. Capitalism cannot exist without perpetuating extremes of inequality and without the exploitation of the vast majority by a small minority.

**L**enin pointed out that in creating such huge monopoly enterprises, capitalism had also foreshadowed the possibility of a better, more rational system: socialism.

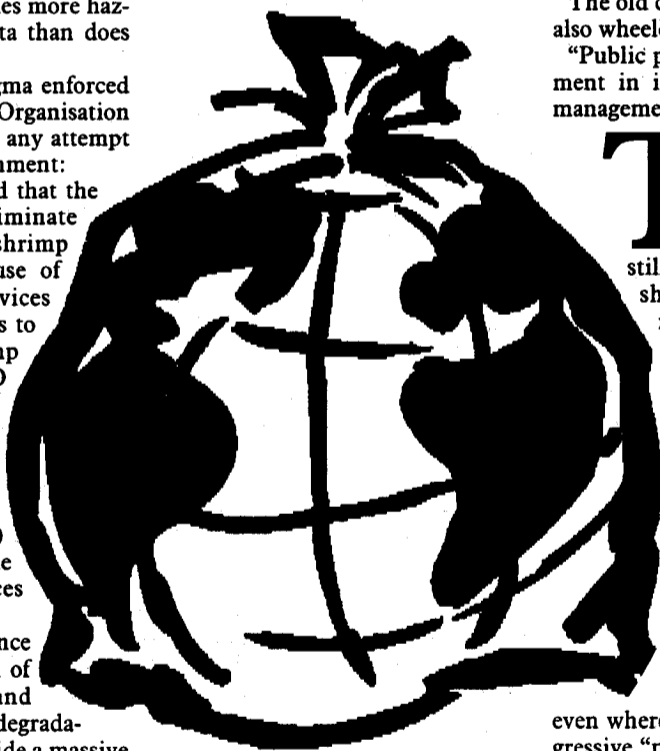
"Capitalism in its imperialist stage leads right up to the most comprehensive socialisation of production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, into some sort of new social order, a transitional one from free competition to complete socialisation.

"Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally recognised free competition remains, but the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable."

The answer is not individual boycotts and lifestyle choices, but *collective, mass* action by the oppressed, the working class and the poor peasants, to challenge and overturn the ownership of the monopolies.

There is no solution in the anguished plea of liberals for an enlightened imperialism, only in the fight for internationalism, class action and socialist revolution.

By breaking the fetters of capitalist control and liberating the means of production from the demands of the profit system, space can be opened up for the rational planning of sustainable production to meet the needs of the many, not to line the pockets of a wealthy few.



their natural resources, particularly timber and minerals, for whatever price they could obtain, often in environmentally destructive ways."

Imperialism is forcing governments to vandalise their own countries and starve their own people:

"Export cash crops have been favoured over food production for local consumption. Environmental standards have been kept low or non-existent to help attract foreign investment"

But despite all of this evidence of where the blame lies for the fouling of the earth, the UNEP report returns time and again to the notion that the very multinationals and the despicable stooge regimes which do their bidding at national level can offer the solution rather than constituting the problem.

**U**NEP, itself seeking to balance in an organisation dominated by imperialist powers and representing a wide

## Veronica Fagan

In June a truly international conference was held in Paris under the banner of ATTAC – a recently formed organisation that calls for a tax on speculative financial transactions – the so called Tobin tax – and for the money so raised to fund socially useful services such as health and education.

The aim of the campaign is to reduce dramatically the volume of speculative transactions which outnumber those required by foreign trade by a factor of many thousands.

The currency crises caused by these bouts of speculation are used by such organisations as the IMF to force governments to adopt massive deflationary policies, throwing millions out of work practically overnight, as we saw in the SE Asian crisis in the recent past.

Advocates of this tax do not claim that it is a panacea to resolve all economic problems, nor that capitalism would not seek ways of either evading such a tax or of passing the costs on to those who it is supposed to benefit, the poor and oppressed of the world.

Rather it is posed as an interim first step to rein in the unbridled forces of financial speculation. Even if it were levied at a modest rate, revenues of \$40bn would be generated which could be used to eliminate world poverty.

The tax is obviously primarily targeted at the main world currencies such as the dollar, the euro and the yen. It would not require the co-operation of all countries to initiate such a tax, so for example the eurozone could implement the tax without the co-operation of the USA, such is the size and attraction of the eurozone in the global economy.

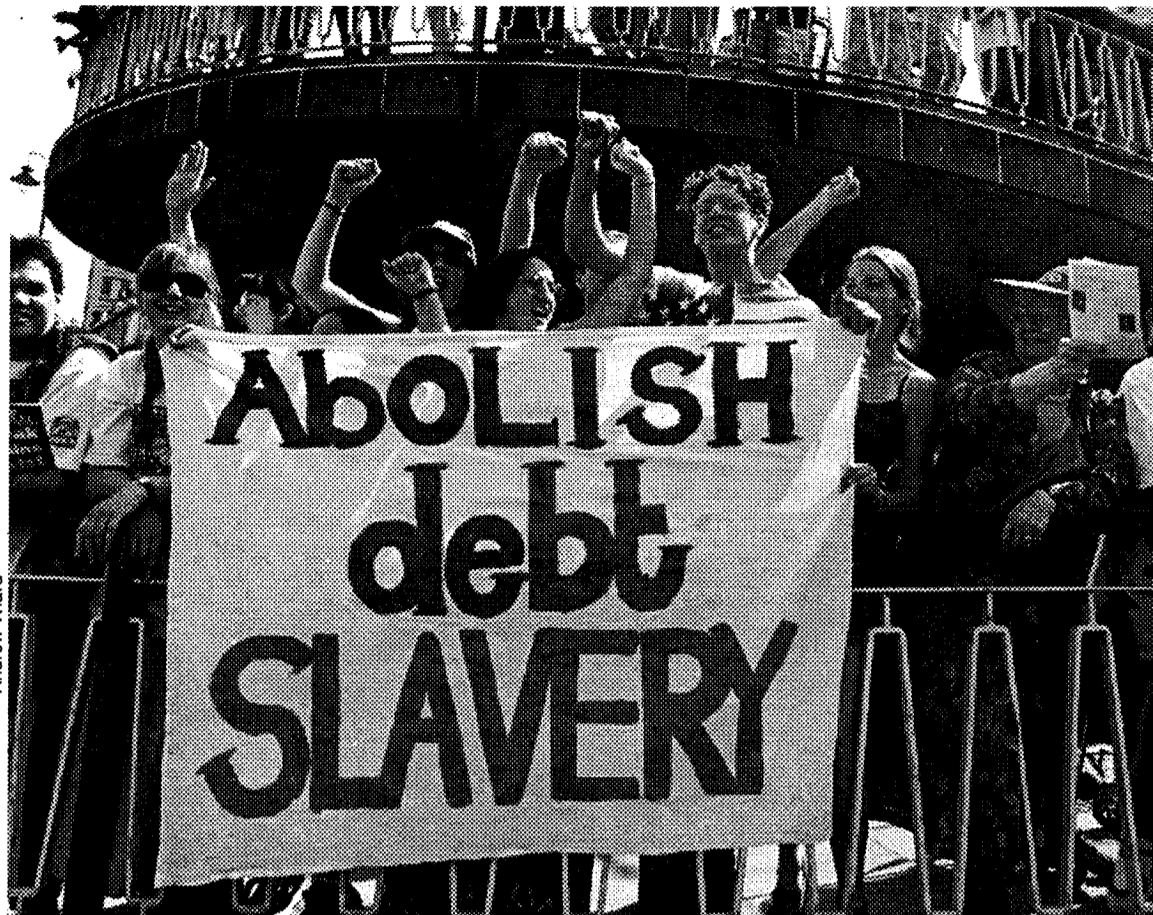
An attack on the scandal of tax havens is clearly a concomitant of the strategy to prevent tax evasion.

The campaign and its demand are rapidly becoming the central global alternative to the neo-liberal agenda of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, the Transatlantic Partnership between the EU and NAFTA, and the World Trade Organisation Millennium round of tariff reduction negotiations which is being kicked off in Seattle this autumn.

**S**ocialists should support the demand for the Tobin tax because we are in favour of any attempt to shackle the operations of capitalism at any level. The constant threat posed by such speculative activity is a real pressure in itself on the ability on workers and the masses to defend themselves.

Our support for the tax is within the framework of posing it as one measure amongst a whole series of anti-capitalist measures which are necessary to achieve the abolition of poverty and insecurity on a global level. This is a perspective of course which is probably shared by most supporters of ATTAC.

ATTAC was founded by various trade unions and social movements including many of the forces who have been involved in the Euromarches in France. In the year since its creation it has grown to be a significant force with a membership of around



*The Tobin tax only makes sense as part of a package of anti-capitalist measures*

Another world is possible

# Time to join the ATTAC!

11,000 organised in 120 branches. It also has a group of supporters in the French parliament.

The conference itself was attended by some 1100 people from 70 countries. Less than half the participants were French, and there were few from western Europe and America.

The best-represented countries were Brazil, South Africa, Senegal, Morocco, Philipinines and South Korea. Unfortunately there was virtually no representation from Britain, despite the fact that the themes of the conference are close to the aims of other networks that have had success in this country, such as Jubilee 2000 and Reclaim the Streets.

The conference aimed to develop a common international campaign of resistance to neo-liberal attacks and the dominance of the finance markets.

The key international campaign demands agreed to were the abolition of Third World debt, suppression of tax havens, restructuring of international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), taxation of financial speculation and opposition to multilateral free trade agreements (such as the Multilateral Agreement on Investment).

Before the conference there were regional caucuses for delegates from Latin America, Africa and Asia to develop better links between countries in each region.

The Asian meeting included activists from Afghanistan, Australia, India, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philip-

pines and Thailand.

The Asian caucus discussed forming an ongoing network. Several campaign ideas were tabled, such as for the cancellation of Third World debt and against the IMF solidarity with the people of Indonesia, East Timor and Burma, including a "Put Suharto on trial" campaign. No independent ATTAC network was formed for the region, but the TransATTAC e-mail list will be used as a forum for collaboration and exchange.

**A**frican delegates issued a statement in which they condemned the stereotyping of Africa as victim and instead based themselves on the deep tradition of resistance in their continent.

They went on to say that "... we share a common experience of debt-induced austerity, massive unemployment, of the destruction of our environment and are already being ravaged by wholesale privatisation, by the destruction of public social services such as water, health, education, housing, transport, pensions, communications, electricity, public infrastructure, food security, and are being dispossessed of land and in addition of having our subsistence eroded by the dumping of the North's heavily subsidised commodities.

"We also emphasise the fact that neo-liberalist rule has serious negative consequences on women's rights, emancipation and development, and in addi-

tion, is leaving vast numbers of people helpless as epidemics like AIDS reaches dramatic proportions in Africa".

They resolved to build regional and sub-regional networks to:

- develop a common understanding of the impact of neo-liberal policies and globalisation,

- build resistance to these and develop common strategies and find alternatives together to neo-liberalism in Africa;

- and co-operate with existing networks in their continent and

**WOMEN IN BLACK AGAINST WAR**  
**Eighth International Meeting**  
**"Network of Women's Solidarity**  
**Against War"**

**Ulcinj, Montenegro**  
**7-10 October 1999**

**IF YOU WANT PEACE - PREPARE PEACE**

This year Women in Black are gathering for the first time in Montenegro. We have chosen to meet, exchange our thoughts, feelings and common actions right here for different reasons: first, because this is a place on which it is possible that activists from all divided regions of the country that is still called FR Yugoslavia can meet: Kosovo, Vojvodina, Serbia, Sandzak, Montenegro. Second, this is one of the regions in which foreign people with passports can come in, without visas. Third, the city of Ulcinj is on the Adriatic coast - we believe that we need beauty of Mediterranean nature and joy of different cultures and languages we can find there. We invite participants to prepare 5 minutes in which they will inform us how they resist - individually or collectively - war, sexism, militarism, nationalism in the last year. Translation is simultaneous.

Called by Women in Black Belgrade, Spain, Belgium, Italy, and Women in Black London: c.cockburn@ktown.demon.co.uk

with other activists internationally.

On the final day of the conference, participants joined other ATTAC members at a rally in Paris. The rally marched through the centre of the city behind the ATTAC banner which announced: "The dictatorship of financial markets? Another world is possible."

The slogans and chants centred on fighting back neo-liberal budget cuts, placing the taxation burden on the rich and financial institutions, and international solidarity.

The first coordinated international campaign is aimed at the new round of WTO negotiations at the end of July. An international week of protest is planned for October 12-17. Each country will decide the nature of the action to be undertaken during the week.

A day of activities will be organised on 20 November, to mark the opening of the Seattle WTO meeting to discuss a new Multilateral Agreement on Investment.

A South-South meeting will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November. A counter-summit will be organised at the G7 summit in Okinawa, Japan, in July 2000.

Other activities include a Europe-wide "world petition" for taxation of financial speculation and the abolition of tax havens. This will be followed up with mobilisations including a Europe-wide demonstration in Brussels in the spring of 2000.

Discussions are taking place as to the most effective way to start a campaign on this issue here in Britain. How can we link up with all those existing networks who are campaigning against neo-liberalism in their own ways?

How can we make trade union activists more aware that the attacks they face here in Britain are part of the same offensive faced by worker's world wide?

- If you are interested in being part of these discussions contact ATTAC Britain c/o PO BOX 1109 or e-mail outlook@gn.apc.org
- ATTAC c/o 9 bis rue de Valence, F 75005 Paris 331-43-363054 e mail attac@attac.org http://attac.org

**GRAFFITI on Belfast walls last year compared Gerry Adams to Michael Collins, with the implied threat that if he sold out, Adams would meet the same fate as the main signatory of the 1921 Treaty with Britain which partitioned the country.**

**A more apt comparison might be Yasser Arafat since Adams and the Republican leadership are now locked into a process which, as has been pointed out often in these pages, is destined to lead to the very opposite of the aims of the republicans.**

**The Unionists know that, which is why they are increasing their bluster: most recently in their "concern" at the threats by the Provos against joyriders and other anti-social behaviour, reports DAVID COEN.**

THE REPUBLICANS' main goal is to achieve their two Ministerial places on the Executive, which is to implicitly recognise the Northern State.

They have already accepted the Unionist veto on Irish unity and are almost in a position of having to admit that 25 years of armed struggle has achieved precisely nothing.

Disarmament would be to admit this publicly hence its difficulty, though according to the *Independent on Sunday*, IRA leaders did promise this to Blair – on condition Sinn Fein were allowed into the Executive. Even then, the Unionists refused to play ball, believing they can extract more from the Republicans in Mitchell's review.

It is likely that more will be extracted. The Unionists' grandstanding over the Patten report on the RUC shows their position clearly.

They don't even want the symbolic changes: uniforms, badges and photographs of the Queen in every station. Most Unionists want the old pre-1972 Stormont back, and want to keep the RUC in its original pristine sectarian shape.

Even if the Republicans surrendered their arms and cheered Orange marches down every nationalist area, a sizeable section of Unionists would still not allow them into any position of power.

### **British backing**

But symbolic surrender by the Republicans is what they are after and they know they can't lose – because in the end they have the support of the British ruling class, including Blair.

The Republicans will either make more concessions or they



Stalagrad O'Neill

# Gerry Arafat?

will be put out, and the Unionists and the British can resume the war in much more favourable conditions.

Why then the attempted importation of arms by the IRA which the Unionists made so much of? One reason is to keep the more militaristic of their supporters happy: after all, the rank and file have been assured that "not an ounce of Semtex" would be handed over.

A more sinister motive is suggested by the nature of the weapons intercepted by the police; these were mostly short arms, and while it was reported that those arrested in the US had claimed they were for use against the Army and the RUC, it seems

much more likely that they were for internal "security", i.e. against dissidents.

The dilemma of the Republican leadership is this: 25 years of armed struggle has yielded no more than a seat at the conference table and a deal which they would have had under the 1974 Sunningdale Agreement. Seamus Mallon, Deputy first Minister until resigning in protest at the antics of the Unionists, called the Stormont Agreement "Sunningdale for slow learners".

The "cutting edge" against the Northern State and the British has, apart from a brief period around the Hunger Strikes in 1981, been the armed struggle.

Now they have to explain the

futility of this to their supporters. Clever games such as betting that that the Unionists would refuse to deal, or, (a favourite among some of their supporters in the Dublin media) the idea that if they sit tight for twenty years demographic changes will give the nationalists a majority, are merely sops to a disgruntled membership.

### **No alternative**

But there is no "Plan B": if abandoning the armed struggle and negotiating fails, then there is no alternative to biting the bullet and making the best of it within a (mildly) reformed six-County Statelet.

However long it takes, however many further concessions have to be made before the Unionists deal (and at current reckoning it will sooner or later be disarmament), however many appeals to Blair's best instincts or the republican heart of Fianna Fail, in the end there will be a bitter pill to be swallowed by the Republican rank and file.

At this point the rumbling dissent now just kept out of the public eye by "visits" to the homes of dissidents might erupt into something more serious requiring a return to the use of armed force, this time used against its own members.

You can bet that when this starts to happen the Unionists now weeping bitter tears over the exile of nationalist youth for anti-social activities, will be quietly urging the use of weapons against republican dissidents.

### **Dissidents**

So how should the swelling band of Republican dissidents and socialists respond to stalemate? They must resist the temptation of militarism.

A generation of heroic and dedicated guerrillas, at best, fought the British to a standstill. A smaller and more isolated group returning to war now, while they might manage a few "spectaculars in Britain", could be annihilated, if only because the British would have the excuse to unleash again the loyalist death squads.

They must refuse on any account to give up their weapons: to do so would be to commit themselves into the hands the RUC, the armed wing of Unionism. Local defence committees should supervise the protection of each area.

They should oppose all Orange marches and actively participate in local committees. They should fiercely oppose any hint of sectarianism in their own ranks and should open/maintain contact with loyalist working class organisations who have not participated in sectarian violence.

### **Socialist**

Most of all, they must begin the building of a socialist party on the island which challenge the ruling classes in Britain and Ireland and the sectarianism which they foment.

Socialists in Britain should continue to oppose the Stormont Agreement.

The essential principle which must be kept in mind is this: the Six Country state cannot be reformed, not by Tony Blair, not by Sinn Fein Ministers in the Executive. Sooner or later it must be destroyed.

While we support the cease-fire, we oppose the Stormont Agreement for what it represents: another British attempt to stabilise its rule in Ireland.

We oppose it because of the way it sets in concrete the sectarian divide in the North of Ireland and for the way in which the Republican leadership has betrayed its principles.

Palestine under Arafat is a terrifying model for what could happen in Ireland if the "peace" treaty is imposed by the British.

The only brake on their doing so is the mass opposition of local communities and working class organisations in Britain and Ireland.



1907: Rosa Luxemburg speaks at a mass meeting of the German SPD, on a platform carrying pictures of Karl Marx and Lassalle

“Throughout living memory social democracy has limited itself to seeking piecemeal reforms through parliamentary action within the framework of capitalism, and opposed any notion of class struggle or the overthrow of the system.”

# When social democracy turned its back on internationalism

**T**ONY BLAIR's eagerness to ensure that his Defence Secretary George Robertson step in as the new Secretary General of the imperialist NATO alliance is a natural consequence of the "partnership" politics of New Labour at home. Blair argued at this year's TUC

Congress in Brighton that workers (and their trade unions) and the employers now have only interests in common and no reason to oppose each other. If this was true, then it would make equal sense for workers (and their parliamentary representatives) to join forces with the same employers in promoting

their international ambitions as well, sometimes through political and military alliances. But if the new cosy world of "partnership" has in Blair's eyes eliminated conflict between worker and employer, it has not eliminated the bitter conflict of competition between different sections of employers – at home and abroad.

Indeed it is in the name of this competition that Blair has become the most hawkish advocate of increased "flexibility" of labour – a polite word for the acceptance of low pay, minimal welfare provision, poor working conditions and chronic insecurity – to keep prices low enough to secure increased market share.

This contradiction between partnership and competition raises a potential problem even for the most diehard of class collaborators. With so many powerful bosses to form partnerships with, what happens when they fall out among themselves?

Where the interests of "British" employers clash with those of "foreign" employers, it would appear that the trade union and labour movement – which has

obligingly identified its interests as identical to the "British" employers – should line up alongside them, and help them fight it out.

But many of the "British" employers with whom right wing union leaders are most eager to partner up are also "foreign" employers – whether they be Japanese, Korean, French, German or American.

**D**oes "partnership" between Rover workers and their German bosses in BMW mean that they must hope to undercut and defeat Jaguar workers and their American Ford owners? The very question shows how absurd is Blair's idea of partnership. The only people to gain from this notion are the employers, who are able to push home the advantage and pocket the profits untroubled by even the vaguest threat of resistance from union leaders.

The confusion of this approach is bad enough when it comes to the day to day economic struggles over jobs, pay and conditions in industry: but it becomes even more dramatic when it comes to

the question of international military conflict.

Imperialist countries preserve the trappings of democracy and relative prosperity for their own workers at home at the expense of the exploitation, oppression and misery of countless millions of workers and peasants in dependent economies throughout the world. Their ruling classes and the military machine created to defend them have no intention of allowing that relationship of forces to alter.

Whatever the rhetoric, they fight wars – whether against Hitler, Saddam Hussein or Slobodan Milosevic – not to liberate the oppressed but to strengthen their own control, extend their access to oil and other raw materials, and improve the conditions for exploitation.

**T**hroughout most of this century Labour politicians have in essence shared Blair's view that their job is to act as the most loyal recruiting sergeants for the armed adventures of the British ruling class.

Labour and trade union leaders not only slavishly supported their "own" imperialists in wars against "foreign" imperialists in two world wars, but in government they have shamelessly used armed force to repress colonial liberation struggles. Labour's extreme right wing Foreign Secretary, former TGWU leader Ernest Bevin, was a key architect of the Cold War NATO alliance, now to be presided over by the equally right wing Lord Robertson of Kosovo.

Many would assume that this has always been the politics of social democracy – a political current which throughout living memory has limited itself to seeking piecemeal reforms through parliamentary action within the framework of capitalism, and opposed any notion of class struggle or the overthrow of the system.

But that would be a mistake. Today's social democracy – and the laughable "Socialist International" which includes not only Blair's imperialist Labour Party but also the vicious Zionists of the Israeli Labour Party – is a bastard offspring of what was originally a Marxist movement, the Second International, co-founded in 1889 by Friederich Engels, and committed to an internationalist, class struggle programme.

Right up to the eve of the First World War, the Second International remained formally in support of a programme of internationalism and revolution,

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enshrined in 1912 in the Basle Manifesto, reprinted opposite.

Within the International at that stage were revolutionaries including Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks, who in their efforts to stem the degeneration of into nationalism and patriotism referred back to the formulations of Basle and urged for them to be upheld.

As Lenin pointed out:

"The Basle Manifesto says (1) that war will create an economic and military crisis; (2) that the workers will regard their participation in the war as a crime; and as criminal any 'shooting each other down for the profit of the capitalists, for the sake of dynastic honour and of diplomatic secret treaties', and that war evoked 'indignation and revolt' in the workers; (3) that it is the duty of socialists to take advantage of this crisis and of the workers' temper so as to 'rouse the people and hasten the downfall of capitalism'; (4) that all 'governments' without exception can start a war only at 'their own peril'; (5) that governments 'are afraid of a proletarian revolution'; (6) that governments 'should remember' the Paris Commune (i.e. civil war), the 1905 Revolution in Russia, etc."

The capitulation of the major European social democratic parties to their "own" imperialist ruling classes came with the shameful vote in the Reichstag and in parliaments elsewhere in 1914 for war credits to finance the slaughter of what became the first World War.

This abandonment of the policies and principles of internationalism on which the Second International had been based became the key dividing line in the workers' movement.

**L**enin and the revolutionaries recognised the need to fight on and develop a new Third International. This would seek to guard against the opportunist and nationalist degeneration which had effectively destroyed the Second International, and resulted in its various leading parties each endorsing a war effort in which their working class supporters wound up shooting each other.

The Third (Communist) International, formed in the aftermath of the successful October Revolution fell victim to a different type of degeneration, with the emergence of a cynical and ruthless bureaucracy in the Kremlin which turned its back on the idea of internationalism and revolution in order to preserve its caricature of "socialism in one country".

Today, while Blair and his social democratic cronies in Europe shamelessly do the bidding of the US and imperialist ruling classes, only one organisation fights to keep alive the spirit of internationalism which was once the preserve of social democracy.

The forces of the Fourth International may be small and appear isolated. But the FI continues a vital fight for the principles which can unite the working class internationally against its real



Russian infantry on parade before the Czar on the eve of war, 1914: Lenin's anti-war stance was key to revolution

enemies.

In May 1917 Lenin in "A Lecture on War" pointed out the importance of principles:

"We are told: 'Things seem to be asleep in a number of countries. In Germany all the Socialists are unanimously in favour of the war; only Liebknecht is opposed to it.'

"To this I reply: This one

Liebknecht represents the working class; in him alone, in his adherents, in the German proletariat, lie the hopes of all.'

85 years after the historic split and collapse of the Second International there are again people in the Labour Party and elsewhere who believe themselves to be internationalists and who reject the wretched class collaboration,

chauvinism and pro-imperialism of Tony Blair.

The Basle Manifesto serves to remind us that it is this minority which represents the real strengths of that International.

They must fight today alongside the left throughout the labour movement for a rebuilding of socialism and internationalism.

# The Basle Manifesto

AT ITS Stuttgart and Copenhagen congresses the International formulated these guiding principles for the proletariat of all countries in the struggle against war:

"If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working classes and their parliamentary representatives in the countries involved, supported by the co-ordinating activity of the International Socialist Bureau, to exert every effort in order to prevent its outbreak. They must employ the means they consider most effective, which naturally vary according to the sharpening of the class struggle and the general political situation.

"In case war should break out anyway, it is their duty to intervene for its speedy termination and to strive with all their power to utilise the economic and political crisis created by the war to rouse the masses and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

Recent events oblige the proletariat more than ever to devote the utmost force and energy to planned and concerted action. On the one hand, the general craze for armaments has aggravated the high cost of living, thereby intensifying class antagonisms and creating in the working class an implacable spirit of revolt. The workers want to put a stop to this system of panic and waste. On the other hand, the incessantly recurring threats of war have a more and more inciting effect. The major European peoples are constantly on the verge of being driven against one another. Yet these assaults on humanity and reason cannot be justified by even the slightest pretext of service to the peoples' interest.

If the Balkan crisis, which has already caused such terrible disasters, should spread further, it would pose the most frightful danger to civilisation and the proletariat. It would also be the greatest outrage in all history, because of the crying discrepancy between the immensity of the catastrophe



1910: German social democrats stage a massive 100,000-strong anti-war rally in Berlin

and the insignificance of the interests at stake.

The congress records with satisfaction the complete unanimity of the Socialist parties and of the trade unions of all countries in declaring war against war.

The proletarians of all countries have risen simultaneously in a struggle against imperialism. Each section of the International has rallied the resistance of the proletariat against the government of its own country and mobilised the public opinion of its nation against all desires for war. This has produced a mighty co-operation of the workers of all countries, which has already contributed a great deal toward saving the threatened peace of the world. The ruling classes' fear of a proletarian revolution resulting from a world war has proved to be an essential guarantee of peace.

The congress, therefore, calls upon the Social Democratic parties to continue their campaign by every means that seems appropriate to them....

The congress records that the entire

Socialist International is unanimous on these principles of foreign policy. It calls upon the workers of all countries to rally the power of international proletarian solidarity against capitalist imperialism. It warns the ruling classes of all states not to increase by acts of war the misery of the masses brought on by the capitalist system of production. It emphatically demands peace.

Let the governments remember that, given the present condition of Europe and the mood of the working class, they cannot unleash a war without danger to themselves. Let them remember that the Franco-German War was followed by the revolutionary outbreak of the Commune: that the Russo-Japanese War set into motion the revolutionary energies of the peoples of the Russian Empire; that the military and naval arms race gave the class conflicts in England and on the continent an unheard-of sharpness and unleashed an enormous wave of strikes.

It would be insanity for the governments not to realise that the very idea of a mon-

strous world war must inevitably call forth the indignation and the revolt of the working class.

Proletarians consider it a crime to fire at each other for the profits of the capitalists, the ambitions of dynasties, or the greater glory of secret diplomatic treaties.

If the governments cut off every possibility of normal progress, and thereby drive the proletariat to desperate steps, they themselves will have to bear the entire responsibility for the consequences of the crisis they bring about.

The International will redouble its efforts to prevent this crisis; it will raise its protest with greater vigour and make its propaganda more and more energetic and comprehensive.

The congress therefore directs the International Socialist Bureau to follow events even more closely, and, no matter what may happen, to maintain and strengthen the bonds uniting the proletarian parties.

The proletariat is conscious that at this moment it is the bearer of the entire future of humanity. The proletariat will exert all its energy to prevent the annihilation of the flower of all peoples, threatened by all the horrors of mass murder, starvation, and pestilence.

The congress therefore appeals to you, proletarians and Socialists of all countries: Make your voices heard in this decisive hour. Proclaim your will everywhere and in every form; raise your protest in the parliaments with all your force; unite in great mass demonstrations; use every means that the organisation and the strength of the proletariat place at your disposal.

See to it that the governments are constantly kept aware of the proletariat's vigilance and its passionate desire for peace. Counterpose the proletarian world of peace and fraternity of peoples to the capitalist world of exploitation and mass murder.

## Playing it again – without the feeling

**Black Music, White Business by Frank Kofsky, Pathfinder, £10.45**

**Reviewed by Paul Hubert**

THE LATE Frank Kofsky offers in this book to 'illuminate the history and political economy of jazz'. With its companion volume *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution*, it springs from an attempt to revise and update *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music*, which Pathfinder also published, in 1970.

Like the earlier book, the central thesis is very clear: jazz is principally an African-American art arising from black culture and experience. The main innovators have been black, and the changes in the music are not simply the product of individual brilliance but rooted in fundamental changes in the culture and experience of black Americans.

The mainly black jazz innovators have been both exploited and oppressed by the white business executives and capitalists.

Those who have read the earlier book will perhaps remember what to expect. It is helpful to have this argument boldly stated, and there is much here which is stimulating. However now we begin to confront problems.

Kofsky's focus is overwhelmingly American. This is perhaps not surprising in a book on jazz by a US-based writer. However

jazz has become more globalised in the past 30 years, and he does not reflect this.

There are a few mentions for non-American and non-jazz musicians, but the musical frame of reference is US jazz through to the 1960s in a more narrow way than before.

Another problem of the past 30 years is that the boundaries of jazz have become harder to make out. This is significant not least because it has been a matter of dispute between leading black American players such as Wynton Marsalis and Lester Bowie.

### Neo-classical

Marsalis has been a leading 'neo-classicist', not only playing classical trumpet concertos but also counterposing classic styles of jazz from the past to avant-garde experimentation. Bowie, with the Art Ensemble of Chicago and other groups, has played music by Hendrix, collaborated with soul musicians and African drummers and looked for other ways to develop the music.

However Kofsky's main interest was not to account for these developments using Marxist method but to settle scores with white critics and business figures. The readability of the book depends on the reader's willingness to watch him sally forth against such former doyens of US jazz criticism as Leonard Feather, Nat Hentoff and, in particular, Martin Williams.

He also exposes the pretensions of 'friends of jazz' in the record

business who made a career and a fortune out of ensuring that black artists were not rewarded for their artistry. A large part of his first chapter relays details of John Hammond's role in signing both Bessie Smith and Billie Holliday to no-royalty deals with Columbia.

Some of the most interesting material in the book is documentation of equally squalid business dealings in the 1970s. However this is not particular to jazz, although Kofsky takes the view that there is something special about the abuse of it.

Some of this is interesting, and undoubtedly he scores some hits on his targets. He quotes Martin Williams saying, after declaring his 'belief in the equality of men', that "Negroes as a race have a rhythmic genius that is not like that of other races".

However he goes from this to argue that Williams' method justifies white domination of the monopoly record companies and that Williams consciously gave his approval to an order in which black people should know their place. Williams is in no place to respond, being dead.

### Marxism

Kofsky's most interesting promise for readers of this newspaper is to use Marxism to analyse his subject. In his first chapter he introduces the concepts of 'Alienation', 'Underemployment and contempt', 'Powerlessness and qualitatively heightened exploitation', and 'Ideological mystification' as nec-



essary to reveal the history and political economy of jazz.

They are used in structuring the book – but most strikingly in the chapter headings. His most extended explanation of the Marxist method is as a response to Williams' dismissal of Marxism.

He makes a rather forced effort to apply dialectical materialism to John Coltrane's stylistic developments, as material illustration of propositions such as "Changes in quantity beyond a certain point must produce corresponding changes in quality".

This exposition is unconvincing not least because it is compressed into two pages, before returning to sniping at Williams.

It is only in the last chapter, consisting of just 13 pages, that Kofsky really sets aside his arguments with other critics and attempts to put forward an analysis of the 'Afro-American Folk Roots in Innovation'.

It would have improved this book immeasurably if he had started from this point and

attempted to formulate something new, rather than rehashing his own previous work.

Unfortunately even here there are moments where he assumes – the very points he needs to establish to build his argument.

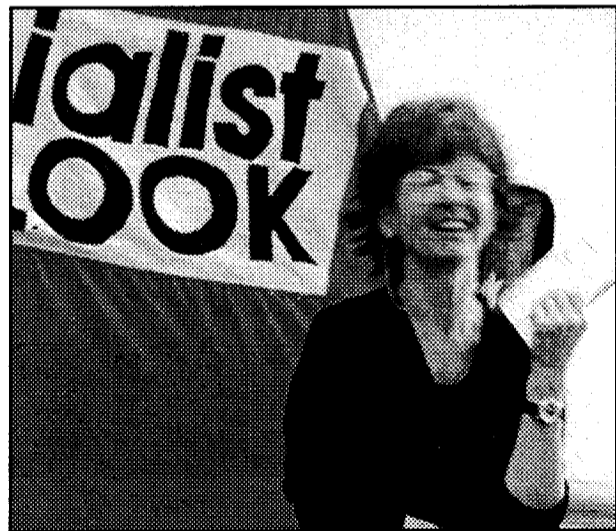
For the reader interested in jazz who has not considered these questions there is much here which is stimulating and informative. However any reader is likely to find much that is tiresome and repetitive.

The original book was of its time, and particularly reflected arguments about black nationalism and the then politics of the US Socialist Workers Party.

This time the material conditions are reflected in the weary scrapping with figures of the past, failure to connect with more recent developments and the paler version of the politics which moved its predecessor.

The latter is still apparently available on import – if you want a version of this argument, why not have the one with the vitality?

## Outlook Summer School success

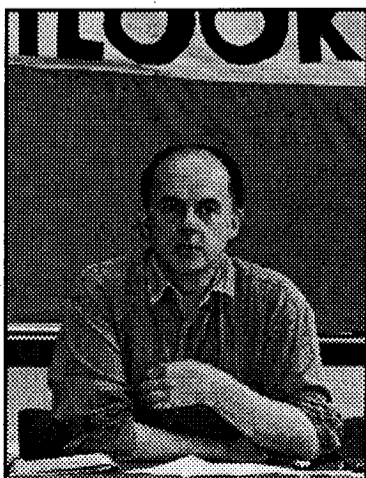


Sheila Malone on Kurdistan; Andy Kilmister on the economy

DISCUSSIONS on the world economic crisis and on the situation of imperialism after the Kosova war were among the highlights of a busy 4-day summer school for Socialist Outlook supporters in Bangor, north Wales.

The residential school, held over the August Bank Holiday weekend also tackled topics including the Kurdish struggle for national liberation, and a number of issues of history.

Veteran Trotskyist Charlie van Gelderen entertained with two contributions dealing with the history of the Trotskyist movement – the first dealing with politics dur-



ing World War 2 and the second an informal chat on the development of the work-

ing class.

As in previous years comrades from a number of other left currents in Britain participated constructively in the school, and the event was in many ways a model of how it is possible for sections of the left to discuss problems and differences in a non-sectarian fashion.

Several of the keynote contributions are included in this issue or scheduled for publication in future issues of Socialist Outlook.

For more details of educational activities in your area contact us at PO Box 1109 London N4 2UU.

## Defend Public Services Conference

Hosted by Birmingham Trades Council  
11am 16 October

The Union Club, 723 Pershore Rd (A441)  
Selly Park, Birmingham  
(Buses 45 & 47)

Following the conference in Manchester in July this conference will look at local & national struggles to defend the public sector from further attack. PFI and the selling off of council provided services are major attacks on the principle of public provision.

The conference will discuss tactics and strategy and will adopt an action programme as decided in Manchester

■ Details 0121 249 5250 (Mick Rice) 0121 608 8477 (Geoff Smith)

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## Abortion rights answer to Britain's over-hyped youth pregnancy "crisis"

So Tony Blair thinks the way to stop teenage pregnancies is too impose curfews, does he?

Well apart from the fact that that seems to be his solution to everything, he clearly had a very different adolescence to mine. What I remember was trying out as many things as I could that were illegal - or against my parents instructions - pretty much for the sake of it.

Why - not as pop psychology is wont to tell you because young people like rebelling for the hell of it - but actually because I was fed up with being treated as irresponsible

and childish when I felt ready for something more.

If you don't believe me - check the statistics. Britain has the highest level on teenage pregnancies in Europe at the same time as it has one of the worst attitudes to young people in general, poor sex education, lousy access to contraception and abortion and few other aspirations that seem realistic for young working class people other than parenthood.

Young women have always had children while they have been at school - I could tell you about a few at my nice convent school, but the media

didn't get hold of the stories as readily as they do now.

And if twelve does seem ridiculously young that's because young people really are maturing younger - a scientific fact based on improved nutrition rather than a caused for tabloid hype.

Socialists and feminists are in favour of choice for women as to when to and whether to have children.

That's why we fight for comprehensive, non-moralistic sex education and free contraception & abortion on demand.

It's also why we fight for a



decent minimum wage and for the right to a proper, socially useful job for all. I think our solutions would be a lot better at reducing the rate of teenage pregnancies than Blair's.

Susan Moore, London



## Letters

Write to us (preferably 400 words or less) on any topic at PO Box 1109 London N4 2UU or e-mail outlook@gn.apc.org. Visit our web site: www.labournet.org.uk/so

## Skychefs global war on catering staff

I am e mailing you concerning the catering company LSG Skychefs. In March of this year they were successful in being awarded the catering kitchen at Pittsburg International Airport where I am employed.

For 23 years we were organized under the International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers however when this company arrived on the scene they brought their own company union with them - refusing to recognize the IAM and offered all the 153 employees a take it or leave it job.

Some of our members have 40 years of service in catering and none of our employees had less the 10 years. We were very experienced in the catering business which meant nothing to this company.

They claimed they had a mas-

ter agreement with the government granting them the right to be under the Railroad Labor act, which for the past 30 years we were never under, and to bring their union in to replace ours.

The IAM currently has this action in the courts attempting to gain us the right to those who represents us.

This company is a vicious anti-labor organization that is grabbing onto as many catering kitchens here in the States as possible.

If you have been dealing with the company for some time and have any information which might help us in our battle with them it would be greatly appreciated.

They have all but destroyed everything we have worked for the past twenty years.

All of us are now new hires

with no sick days, no holidays, a two year wage freeze and no representation. Their company union agrees with everything the company has imposed on us.

We have tried to voice our dissatisfaction but were told we do have a choice, we don't have to work there.

By the way I am the President of LL1044 IAMAW which has represented these employees for the past 23 years.

We have had other companies take over the catering business in the past ten years but always recognized our union, hired all current employees and negotiated a fair contract with our membership.

You can reach me at my e mail address which is january@cob-web.net

T.M.Moreau

President LL1044



## SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

### Where we stand

IN THE NINETIES, millions of women and men have taken part in mobilisations against the evils of capitalism and the bureaucratic dictatorships. This reflects the fact that humanity face widening dangers. Ecological, military, social and economic devastation faces millions of people.

Many more people recognise the barbaric nature of capitalism. In a situation where the inability of the social democratic and communist parties to provide socialist solutions is becoming clearer, the task of creating new leaderships remains ahead.

**Socialist Outlook** is written and sold by socialists committed to this struggle. We are the British supporters of the world-wide marxist organisation, the Fourth International. We stand for the revolutionary transformation of society and a pluralist, socialist democracy world wide.

The overall goal which we pursue is the emancipation of all human beings from every form of exploitation, oppression, alienation and violence.

Socialism must be under the control of ordinary people, democratic, pluralist, multi-party, feminist, ecologist, anti-militarist and internationalist. It must abolish wage slavery and national oppression.

The working class is the backbone of unity among all the exploited and oppressed. The working class and its allies must uncompromisingly fight against capitalism and for a clear programme of action in order to gradually acquire the experience and consciousness needed to defeat capitalism at the decisive moment of crisis.

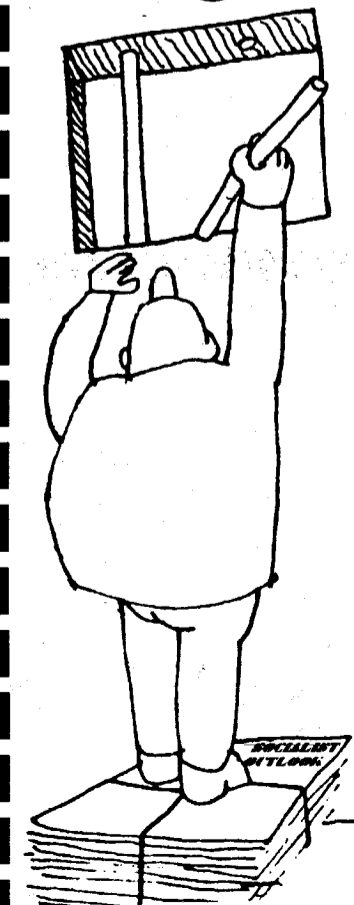
The movements of women, lesbians and gay men, and black people to fight their particular forms of oppression make an essential contribution to the struggle for a different society. They are organised around the principle "None so fit to break the chains as those who wear them".

The whole working class needs to fully commit itself to these struggles. Furthermore we fight for a strategic alliance between workers and these organisations - an alliance which respects their legitimate autonomy.

By building simultaneously revolutionary organisations in each country and a revolutionary International, we aim to guide and encompass the global interests of the workers and oppressed. By building a united struggle against exploitation and oppression we aim to ensure the survival of the human race.

If you think this is worth fighting for, and you like what you read in *Socialist Outlook*, why not join us? Drop a line to us at PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU, and we'll be in touch.

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# Socialist OUTLOOK

## Indonesia out of East Timor!



*Indonesian troops have worked hand in glove with pro-Indonesian militias to block East Timor's independence*

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- Campaign against the Arms Trade 11 Godwin St London N4 3HQ 0171 281 0297 e mail [enquires@caat.demon.co.uk](mailto:enquires@caat.demon.co.uk) <http://www.caat.demon.co.uk>
- British Coalition for East Timor (BCET) [www.gn.apc.org/bcet](http://www.gn.apc.org/bcet) has action updates on solidarity actions across Britain on a daily basis
- Tapol: 111 Northworld Rd Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 8HW [tapol@gn.apc.org](mailto:tapol@gn.apc.org) [www.gn.apc.org/tapol](http://www.gn.apc.org/tapol)
- CNRT - National Council of Timorese Resistance [www.ozemail.com.au/~cnrt](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~cnrt)
- Action in Solidarity with Indonesia & East Timor ASIET [www.peg.apc.org/~asiet](http://www.peg.apc.org/~asiet)

# Arm the Timor liberation forces!

SEE our  
coverage  
inside, pages 3  
(editorial), 10  
and 11