

JAMAICA: ANOTHER TWO PARTY STATE

Last month Michael Manley of the People's National Party replaced Edward Seaga (Jamaica Labour Party) as Jamaican Prime Minister. Since Jamaican independence, the PNP and the JLP have taken it in turns to administer capitalism on the island. In fact, Manley's father Norman was a major figure in the independence movement and later prime minister, although his opposition to colonisation didn't stop him from calling in British troops to help put down an armed revolt by unemployed youth in 1959.

In the '60s the two parties became increasingly discredited in the face of a number of social struggles that took place. These included a strike at the Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation in 1964 (which was supported by strikes by sugar, bauxite, hotel and other workers), violent clashes between slumdwellers and police in Kingston in 1966 and further riots in 1968.

When Michael Manley took over as leader of the PNP in 1969, he gave the party a new "radical" image in an attempt to head off this social movement. Party candidates began to address rallies in patois rather than the Oxford English of the traditional ruling class, and when the PNP came to power in 1972 crumbs were thrown to the poor in the form of food subsidies etc.

"SOCIALISM" IN ONE BACKYARD

In 1974 Manley proclaimed "*The days of capitalism are over, socialism is running the country now*". This "socialism" was later seen to include signing a deal with the IMF under which food subsidies were abolished as part of a series of austerity measures. Between 1978 and October 1979 real incomes fell by 35%, and as resistance grew Manley sent in police and troops against strikers. In January 1979 there were rebellions in Kingston, Spanish Town and Montego Bay with over 500 barricades being set up in clashes with the police. Since Manley's attempt to manage the economic crisis was clearly failing the 1980 elections were engineered to bring Seaga to power.

"NEW REALISM" MANLEY STYLE

Today Manley has adopted the "new realism" which now predominates on the left. According to the Financial Times, in recent years he has instead "*wooded the White House and even won over members of the right wing Heritage Foundation which was so influential under Reagan.*"

One significant policy is the proposal for the 'public participation' in decision-making, including a national advisory council with representatives from trade unions, 'community councils', business, the church etc. Such a "corporatist" approach (attempting to integrate all parts of society into the state) is not new in Jamaican politics, and both parties have attempted to spread their tentacles into the heart of the working class through their control of rival gangs in the slums and trade unions. The JLP was actually set up by the leaders of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union in 1944, while the PNP set up the rival National Workers' Union in 1952. Manley himself started out as bureaucrat in the latter; his activities included working with the bosses of the bauxite plants to blacklist workers.

The mobilisation of sections of the poor in support of rival parties in Jamaica has been an effective means of dividing any potential real opposition on the island. During the 1980 election over 700 people were killed in violence between supporters of the two parties; this year "only" 12 died. Whatever the difference in rhetoric between the PNP and the JLP all they have to offer is more of this feuding, exploitation and poverty.

NONE SHALL ESCAPE

Radical perspectives in the Caribbean
by Fundi

This pamphlet was written by a revolutionary from Jamaica and includes a description of his involvement in strikes by meatpackers and sugar workers in 1967/8. From: News From Everywhere, Box 14, 136 Kingsland High Road, London E8 2NS (90p + A5 S.A.E.)

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"IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL MATTER OF FREE SPEECH" (Thatcher)

"Free speech" is a myth in Britain and everywhere else. All states have attempted to suppress discussion, ideas, publications etc. when it suits them. In 1981 Simon Los, a 16 year old anarchist from Nottingham, was jailed for 3 years just for giving out leaflets supporting riots. The new Official Secrets Act will make it easier than ever to jail government employees for exposing state secrets.

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILITANTS

Islamic fundamentalism, so we are told, is a throwback to middle ages fanaticism; Christianity on the other hand has emerged from its feudal "excesses" as a modern, tolerant religion. This century however Christians have been directly involved in numerous atrocities. Between 1941 and 1945 for instance, over 200,000 people were exterminated at the Jasenovac death camp as part of the Croatian fascists' attempt to forcibly convert local Serbs to Roman Catholicism. In the same war the Vatican backed Hitler while the Russian Orthodox Church backed Stalin and Churchill.

Last year 13 people were injured in Paris when tolerant Christians set light to a cinema showing the 'blasphemous' film "Last Temptation of Christ".

All our rulers use religious and other ideologies (with all their fine phrases about morality and justice) to make their rule seem more acceptable. This applies even in the USSR where humanist, but no less religious, slogans perform this function (e.g. those bombing Afghan villages were doing their "duty to the brotherhood of man"). In the words of a famous revolutionary of the last century: "*Everywhere, in short, religious or philosophical idealism... serves today as the flag of material, bloody and brutal force, of shameless material exploitation*" (Bakunin, *God and the State*).

As much as we oppose Islam we also oppose any new Western crusade against Islam. The old cry remains as true as ever: "*humanity will never be free until the last priest (and mullah) is hanged with the guts of the last capitalist*".



THE RED MENACE

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FREE

DOWN WITH THE FIRST WORD WAR!

Behind the sabre-rattling in the Rushdie affair various factions are pursuing their interests. It is difficult for us to know exactly what is going on. The Irangate scandal partly exposed the secret machinations of world diplomacy and we cannot be sure what deals are being made behind the scenes this time. Some things are clear however.

In the West attention has mainly focused on Iran but it is in Pakistan and India that deaths have actually taken place, rather than just being talked about.

In Pakistan Bhutto, the Oxbridge-educated prime minister, is busy trying to shore up her tentative grip on the state. She is purging the army of old pro-Zia brigadiers. In particular she is out to clip the wings of the Inter Services Intelligence (I.S.I.) directorate. This organisation of 100,000 people was responsible for channelling \$1 billion of U.S. aid to the Afghani rebels. They helped organise Zia's coup in 1977 and were involved in setting up the Islamic Democratic Alliance, the umbrella organisation which fought Bhutto in the elections and now runs the Punjab. It is the I.D.A. which has been behind the demonstrations against Rushdie (as well as against having a woman prime minister) as part of its anti-Bhutto campaign.

At the same time the I.S.I. has attempted to swing the Afghani Mojahedin behind the hardline Islamic fundamentalists. Khomeini's *fatwa* (religious condemnation) against Rushdie relates to Afghanistan as well as to his own internal power struggle in Iran. So does the USSR's intervention in the crisis. Mindful of the millions of Muslims in southern republics they are anxious to see a weak but stable regime in Kabul.

The commotion has also spread to India where the death toll has increased again in the context of mass unemployment and communal tension. The Indian state has been struggling against both Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism, as well as against the better known Sikh nationalism.

PEACE IS WAR

In Iran Khomeini is using the Rushdie affair to strengthen national unity, both by uniting the divided factions of the ruling class and keeping the lid on wider social discontent.

The ceasefire in the Gulf has not brought peace for the proletariat in Iran. State repression has been stepped up to new heights with more than 5000 prisoners being executed in the past few months. This repression has not succeeded in crushing the class struggle that helped bring the war to an end- for instance in December workers at Pirsheh building company in Jardaht staged a successful strike for higher wages.

With the war over Rushdie has replaced Iraq as the enemy against whom all must unite. The Iranian poor are being told to forget their own interests and rush to the defence not only of the nation but of Islam itself.

"ABSOLUTE EVIL"

In the demonology of the West it is Khomeini not Rushdie who is the Great Satan. Mitterand has even referred to the death threat as "*absolute evil*". The western rulers are using the affair to push for a pro-western government in Iran and to mobilise support for the anti-terrorist campaign within Europe (police repression is conveniently justified as a means of defending us from "Islamic terror"). The campaign is also being used to fuel racism- witness Robert Maxwell's call for the repatriation of Iranians (Sunday People, 19/2/89), and the rubbish about the Muslim threat to the Great British Way of Life in all the media.

THE WEST IS THE BEST?

President Bush has said that Khomeini's statements are "*deeply offensive to the norms of civilised behaviour*", neatly stating the lie that the West stands for the defence of humanity against barbarism. The governments of the USA, Europe and Iran are all expressions of a single world economic system which daily sentences thousands of people to death through starvation, repression, "accidents" at work etc. And the

West's civilised behaviour has been every bit as brutal as Iran's- remember the sinking of the Belgrano, the shooting down of an Iranian airliner by the USS Vincennes last year, or the French state's bombing of "the Rainbow Warrior" (there was no question here of New Zealand breaking off diplomatic relations with France for "exporting terrorism to its soil").

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Satan: In the spotlight

EDUCATION: THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION

Despite the rhetoric about reducing "state interference" the government has a unified social policy that seeks to re-structure all areas of social life in line with the changing needs of capital. Examples of the breadth of this policy include the dismantling of the NHS, the increase in the size of the British prison population and a number of changes in the education system. Anything which stands in the way of economic efficiency, i.e. profitable exploitation, faces sacrificial destruction on the altar of British capital's best interests, a "greater good" which political parties and unions have always recognised as paramount.

We can identify at least three strands in the government's policy on "education": a cutback in the social wage, a reduced role for those academics whose contribution to social control isn't adequately up-to-date, and a restructuring of syllabuses and "educational" ideology in line with traditionalist morality.

CUTTING THE SOCIAL WAGE.

The social wage is that part of the price paid to the dispossessed class in return for the expropriation of our creative power, in addition to individual pay packets. At present the whole social wage is being attacked, with cuts in social security, the provision of health care, etc.

In the context of education, an assault on the social wage means clamping down on those students who go into higher "education" solely to get hold of the best it has to offer, namely grants. The introduction of "top-up loans" to gradually replace grants will put pressure on everyone at college to collaborate with the aim that lay behind the expansion of the higher "education" system in the '50s and '60s: the efficient inflow of people into managerial posi-

tions, both in private industry and the State sector. Those who don't take such jobs will find it difficult to afford to pay back their loans.

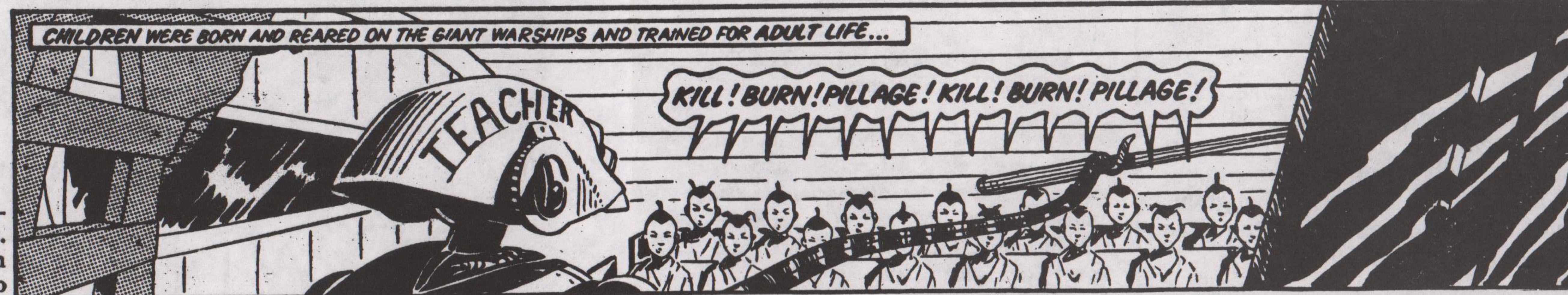
As capitalist competition increases, the British response is to raise industrial productivity whilst expanding financial services in readiness for the single EEC market in 1992. The rulers have a growing need for highly-trained managers, bankers, union hacks and other professionals, and in this sense the government really does want to target State money to the areas of greatest need: *their* need.

Of course many students do go to college so as to become managers after they graduate in firms, unions, or government departments. (We should make it clear here that this includes some people from working class backgrounds and that a few people from "middle class" backgrounds resolutely refuse to do so. Contrary to advertising propaganda, class does not depend on cultural background.) Others however will end up doing the same boring, badly-paid work as everybody else. After all there are plenty of jobs available in the South: young people can always clean hotel rooms or go on training schemes (i.e. work for their dole-money).

STREAMLINING SOCIAL CONTROL

Universities and colleges are currently being made more "economic" with cuts in social sciences and humanities funding and an increase in business studies and direct co-operation between science departments and industry. Academics in the threatened departments may bleat about education being taken over by business, but the fact is that education has always been geared to the needs of capitalism. All that has changed is its political usefulness to the state. In the past the buffer-zone of "community leaders", lefty councillors and other experts at defusing radical efforts has largely been recruited from the universities and polys, and has been strongly influenced by the ideas of left academics.

Sociologists who think getting rid of alienation means integrating people more effectively into the existing society might not be taken seriously by urban rioters, but in less harsh times



their knowledge has proved useful in various soft-cop "community" ventures. Nowadays, Ridley's centralism (the curtailment of local government) and the politicians' "moral offensive" against "wickedness" and in favour of citizenship makes a lot of this look quite old-fashioned.

The functions of the buffer-zone are today being taken over by central government, the police and charities. For instance an increasing number of "community" groups are being set up with a more direct involvement of the police than used to be the case in the 1970s. The London Labour Party talks of "community watch" while the Tories speak of "neighbourhood watch". Either way, we doubt whether any of the cops involved carry sociology degrees in their pockets! Other examples of this process can be found in fields further away from the sharp end of social control.

Sometimes big business gets involved too. For example, we know of at least one tenants' group set up in Sutton by a Democrat council with the Prudential assurance company lurking in the background on the lookout for a bit of real estate speculation. What need do they have of '60s-style research into delinquency or divorce? How many of *their* managers have degrees in "peace studies"?

At Bristol University, researchers at the School of Veterinary Science are threatening to resign rather than accept a grant from the Ministry of Defence, who want them to investigate the conditions under which a pneumonia-type bacterium is most active, with obvious applications in biological warfare. Our bet is that the University authorities will try to kick them out, as a prelude to handing the research over to direct (although probably covert) control by the military.

ONE NATION, ONE FAITH, ONE PEOPLE.

At the Tory party conference in October, the "Education" Secretary Kenneth Baker spoke of how "steps to ensure that religious education and daily acts of worship in all schools meant that the Government had reaf-

firmed the commitment to reflect the country's history and traditions, which were based on Christian beliefs." [The Guardian, 14/10/88]. What these Christian beliefs involve was recently shown by Thatcher, whose death-threat to work-resisters among the poor took the form of a quotation from the bible: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat" seventy years ago the same message was posted on the walls after the Bolshevik counterrevolution in Russia.

The new national curriculum for schools will ensure that the correct moral message gets across. History for instance will have to show "how a free and democratic society has developed over the centuries" (Baker). It has also been suggested that a GCSE in Active Citizenship should be introduced.

It has long been known that the ruling ideas are the rulers' ideas, and the education system has always reflected this. Thus wage-labour, private property, the State and the commodity economy (buying and selling) appear to be natural and eternal. So does the existence of nations, hierarchy and the war of each against all ("human nature"). Alienation is presented as being merely one of "society's problems". The totality of "alternatives" is painted as being a set of ways of organising what already exists, and this is why capitalism on a world scale has been totalitarian ever since the defeat of the revolutionary movements after the World War One.

It is nothing new for submission to the dominant order, and various compensations (including "alternative" ones), to be portrayed as the only imaginable forms of sanity. Rebels are always portrayed by the State as being anti-social. In Britain official propaganda is conflating class-conscious rioters with nationalist football fans, squatters with drug-pushers, strikers with child-molesters ("liberty" infringers).

What is relatively new in "peacetime" is that the government is trying to rally a majority of the working class around the State in opposition to the

"problem" presented by those who refuse to play the game, who choose to be the Enemy Within rather than Active Citizens. Cut half your brain out and Big Brother will protect you...

The rulers want to gain all the benefits of a war without having to fight one. Increasing State despotism and national unity, plus a greater encouragement of competition within the (world) working class, plus an attack on our health standards and life expectancy, and the violent elimination of the "losers" (either in prisons or US-style "mercy hospitals") -- these are the offshoots of the national rulers' need to regain international competitiveness.

The uniformisation of official "education" along traditional Christian, moronic, pro-family, pro-careerist lines is part of a reactionary social mobilisation that, taken in its totality, could lead the dispossessed of Europe into the bleakest period since the massacres of World War Two. Unless, of course, revolution smashes the whole show. Whilst most people's idea of revolution is a coup d'etat by manipulators and leaders specialising in strong language, worldwide social revolution would mean the armed destruction of this civilisation's foundations and its replacement with a better one. Such a revolution, proletarian and self-organised, would permanently change life by abolishing the foundations of capitalism and inaugurating a world where time is lived and not merely survived through being sold.

Since this article was written, there have been strikes by Muslim schoolkids organised by the mosques. The British state overcame its historic antagonism with catholicism in the nineteenth century, and introduced state-funded catholic schools. Muslim leaders are seeking a similar arrangement as regards state funding for Islamic schools. The mosques have even gained confidence from the Rushdie affair. One thing that we can be sure of - whether it is Christian or Islamic lies, it is the kids who directly suffer through this re-inforcement of religious indoctrination.

REVIEW

NON-MARKET SOCIALISM IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES- Maximilien Rubel and John Crump, eds. (London, Macmillan, 1987).

Communism has got nothing to do with state control of the economy (as leninists suggest) nor for that matter with workers owning their own factories and exchanging products with other workers (as advocated by some anarchists). Communism, as the authors of this book make clear, is the abolition of all forms of the state, exchange (buying and selling) and property- including "collective property". In short it is a "moneyless, classless, stateless world community".

In a communist society all the world's resources will be for the free and common use of everybody to satisfy their needs- like air today. This is incompatible with the existence of any form of money, because for things to be bought, sold or bartered, they have to belong to one part of society alone (individual, company, workers' collective, state, etc.). Naturally this existence of property presuppose non-owners being denied free access, "for how is property to be defined if not by the exclusion of the other from the use and enjoyment of the object of property?" (Bordiga). So even if the bosses were kicked out and workplaces run along collective lines, the continued existence of exchange would act as a barrier to satisfying human needs.

Non-market socialism describes the contribution of various currents to the real communist movement, including anarcho-communism, council communism, the situationists and bordigism. Perhaps most interestingly it presents the ideas of a number of people whose writings are mostly unavailable in English, such as Joseph Dejacque (1822-1864) and the Italian-born Amadeo Bordiga (1899-1970). Dejacque, a French house painter, looked forward to a "state of affairs where each would be free to produce and consume at will" and "the abolition of any sign of agricultural, individual, artistic or scientific property". Despite his many faults (adequately criticised in the book), Bordiga too understood the importance of doing away with all types of property and money.

One problem with some of the contributions to this book is that they treat communism as an idea about the future rather than something which relates to our activity in the present. Thus a chapter is included on the Socialist Party of Great Britain who, whatever their ideas about socialism, believe that parliament can be used in the transformation of society, and are not therefore part of the revolutionary movement.

Non-market socialism is a useful book in outlining a vision of communism; it is less useful in outlining how we might get there from here.

Send all comments or criticism, death threats or donations to:

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