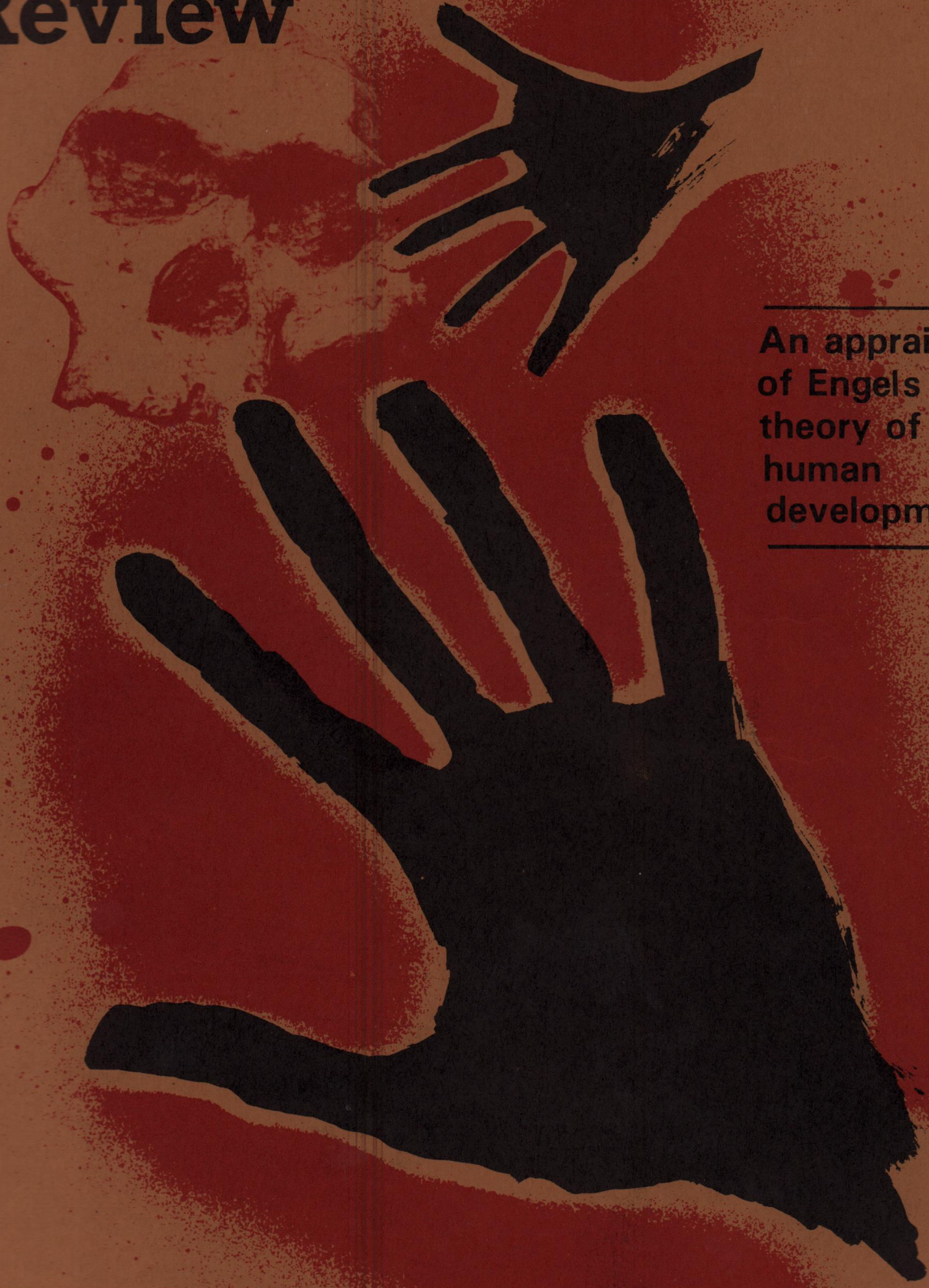


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An appraisal
of Engels
theory of
human
development

INSIDE. *The character of the European revolution / Britain the real situation*

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Editorial

Take the Liverpool road

THE MAY local elections and the three bye-elections which coincided with them were held on the 5th anniversary of Thatcher's coming to power in 1979. Approaching these elections Thatcher had waxed lyrical about the alleged achievements of her Government. She even looked towards a third term after the next General Election in 1988!

The elections show, however, that such hopes are completely illusory. There has been a massive ebbing of support for the Government even in the brief space of time since the General Election of last year. Thatcher described the results as "excellent" but there is not a crumb of comfort for the Tories to be found in any objective analysis.

In Scotland, Wales and most parts of England the Tories suffered some devastating defeats. Labour won control in Edinburgh for the first time. Southampton in the South, and Inverclyde (won from the Liberals) Birmingham—which was a model of the "new Toryism", all were won by Labour.

Even in "true blue" areas such as Eastbourne there was a massive shift away from the Tories which the Liberals benefited from. In Cheltenham, formerly a strong preserve of the Tories, the unpopularity of the ban on trade unions at GCHQ was shown in the defeat of the Conservatives. The local council is now controlled by the Liberals.

But the most outstanding result for Labour, with the biggest gain in seats, came in Liverpool. The strategists of capital are absolutely terrified at the example which Liverpool provides to the labour movement as a whole.

Therefore they have bent every effort to play down and distort the

tremendous victory for Labour in this city. The leading role in this campaign has been played by the *Times* and the *Sunday Times*.

Leon Trotsky once commented that the *Times*, as the semi official organ of British capitalism, tells the truth nine times out of ten the better to lie in a big way when it is vital for the ruling class. This has been confirmed in the "analysis" of the elections in Liverpool by the *Sunday Times*.

We have answered the calumnies against Liverpool Labour Party fully in the *Militant* (11 May). The *Sunday Times* argues that there was a 1% drop in Labour support. Yet with 94,000 votes, the Liverpool Labour Party chalked up the highest vote for Labour ever in a local council election!

The local Tory mouthpiece the *Daily Post* did not share the illusions of the *Sunday Times*: "voters in Liverpool took a huge step to the left in yesterday's local election giving Labour a clear 17 seat majority on the council. It is seen as a massive vote of confidence in Labour's confrontation over spending and local services".

The importance of the Liverpool result cannot be over estimated in the Labour movement. The bourgeois press and their right-wing echoes within the Labour Party have been predicting electoral catastrophe for Labour if it continues with its "militant" policies. But what the Liverpool result shows is that when a clear, bold socialist leadership is provided (Militant supporters have formed the backbone of the Liverpool Labour Party and Council) the working class will respond enthusiastically.

A priceless incident on the day after the election on the BBC news summed up the importance of the Liverpool result and what it means for the future of the labour movement. A worker passing by interrupted Derreck Hatton, Deputy Leader of the Council when he was being interviewed with the comment: "I don't support *Militant*...but leadership at last!" Even the inveterate and frenzied Liberal leader Trevor Jones was compelled to admit: "The Labour Party in



Photo: Mark Pinder.

Liverpool against the Tories: "Leadership at last."

Liverpool has raised the political consciousness of the people...that's why we had such a high turn out".

No other area of the country experienced an increase of 10% turn out. Moreover in 1983 there was already a magnificent turn out. It is unprecedented—certainly in the post war period—to see more than 50% voting in local elections. The bourgeois are worried that the example of Liverpool may prove contagious in the charged atmosphere which now exists in Britain.

It is possible that Manchester could follow in the wake of Liverpool. In every Labour Group up and down the country there are those who are saying that the only viable course for Labour in local councils is "on the Liverpool road."

The Liverpool results become even more striking when compared to those controlled by the right-wing. Thus the effects of the witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters in Blackburn were clearly shown in the election results in that area. The right-wing dominated Labour Council lost one seat to the Tories and gained one! A "no change" situation, given the massive unpopularity of the Tory Government and their local acolytes, represents a defeat for Labour.

The loss of the council in Grimsby is entirely due to the ruinous policies of the Grimsby right-wing—together with the arch witch-hunter Austin Mitchell,

Labour MP for the area. In Birmingham, where Labour came back to power, it was despite the policies of the right wing dominated Labour Group rather than because of them.

It was the revolt of workers at the "privatisation" of council services, including school dinners, which provoked a massive wave of resistance to the Tory Council. This led to the involvement of dinner ladies working for Labour in the campaign.

The stand of Liverpool has now earned widespread support throughout the labour movement. The attempt of the right wing to isolate the Liverpool Labour Group and labour movement has completely failed. Thus in the wake of the spectacular Liverpool result the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party has now gone on record in support of the stand of the Council!

The election results and the miners' strike shows that a mere anti-Tory position is not enough to win back the support for Labour in the next period. On the industrial and political field the working class are demanding that their leaders live up to their roles.

Militant has pointed out many times that the catastrophic situation of British capitalism demands that the labour movement should put forward a socialist alternative. The day-to-day battle in defence of jobs and of services in Liverpool has been combined with the idea

of Labour carrying through the socialist reorganisation of society. This is the only way to consolidate the limited gains achieved by the Liverpool City Council.

The hope of Thatcher for the third term looks increasingly unlikely. Even the most optimistic bourgeois strategists have recognised this. In the wake of the election results they have deliberately attempted to play up the Liberal SDP Alliance. They are desperately attempting to refurbish the image of the Alliance as a safety net for millions of disillusioned Tory voters.

It is a criticism of the Labour leadership nationally and the right-wing at local level that the Alliance did relatively well in this election. In Liverpool the SDP was absolutely shattered because of the firm stand taken by Labour. It is true that the Liberals benefited from a drop in the Tory vote. But even this will be only temporary if the Liverpool labour movement maintains a firm fighting socialist position.

For Marxists, electoral statistics are only a very rough barometer of the mood that is developing within society. But the massive haemorrhage of votes away from the Tories a mere 11 months after the General Election must worry the bourgeois strategists. Together with the miners' strike the election results show that British society has entered an entirely new and disturbed period.

There has never been a period of greater discontent and dissatisfaction amongst the working class than that which exists in Britain at the present time. However, the only way that this will result in victory for the labour movement both on the industrial and the political front is by a clear leadership showing the way forward.

The devastating effects of the Tories' measures are well understood and felt by working people. But the Labour movement needs to explain the nature of the terminal decay of British capitalism. Above all, it needs to outline a clear fighting programme. This has to be combined with a programme of action by a leadership which is prepared to go to the

end to defend the working class.

The present stand in Liverpool is in marked contrast to previous right-wing dominated Labour Councils in that city. These sowed the seeds of disillusionment and cynicism amongst the working class. But now there is an air of confidence and buoyancy which is shown by the proletariat in Merseyside.

The battle in Liverpool and the reaffirmation of Labour's position in the local elections is itself a pointer to the future of the British Labour and Trade Union movement. In the debate in the Council chamber on March 29 a Liberal, the deputy leader Kemp, made a telling point. He warned everyone present that despite Neil Kinnock's attempt to separate the labour leadership

from the struggle in Liverpool "what is happening in the Liverpool Labour Party today is what will happen to the Labour Party nationally in the future."

To his astonishment he got a huge ovation from the public galleries which were filled mainly with Labour supporters! This Liberal spoke with some authority as he was subsequently defeated by a Militant supporter in the local elections!

However his prediction will be born out in the period that is opening up, a period which will see the complete transformation of the labour movement, from top to bottom, making it a worthy instrument for the task of carrying through the socialist transformation of society.



"What is happening in the Liverpool Labour Party today is what will happen to the Labour Party nationally tomorrow."

Photo: Militant

Britain: the real situation

"IN BRITAIN three-quarters of the population is working class. It is a purely proletarian country. It has a small handful of landlords and capitalists—they are very rich and powerful, it is true, but still they are only a handful.

"If MacDonald walked in Parliament, laid his programme on the table, rapped lightly with his knuckles, and said, 'Accept it or I'll drive you all out' (saying it more politely than I've phrased it here)—if he did this,

Britain would be unrecognisable in two weeks, MacDonald would receive an overwhelming majority in any election. The British working class would break out of the shell of conservatism with which it has been so cleverly surrounded: it would discard that slavish reverence for the law of the bourgeoisie, the propertied classes, and church and the monarchy."

—Trotsky, speech to the Tblisi Soviet, 11 April, 1924

By Alan Woods

THE OUTBREAK of the miners' strike has completely transformed the situation in Britain. Overnight, all the whimpering Jeremiads of those who had lost all faith in the working class have been confounded. The sweep of the movement, the outstanding militancy of the active layers, but above all the grim determination to "see the thing through" recall the bitter class battles of the '20s.

But this strike did not drop like a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky. It could be predicted and it was predicted by the Marxist tendency from the pages of the *Militant* and the *MIR* as we affirmed—against all the pessimistic prognoses of the Labour leaders and the Hobsbawms, only a few months ago—that the Tory election victory was not the end of the matter, but that the workers, checked momentarily on the political plane, would inevitably move to the industrial front to fight for their class interests.

The special position of the miners within the British proletariat lends enormous weight to the present battle. But it could have been any other section of the class. What this strike reveals is a colossal accumulation of bitterness, frustration and anger within the working class. It is only the abysmal lack of leadership on the part of the TUC and the right wing, and their soft left allies on the NEC of the Labour Party which has prevented this generalised mood from acquiring an active and organised expression.

If it was up to the official leadership of the workers' organisations, we would by now be in a situation of full retreat before the vicious (and according to these sorry "leaders" unstoppable) onslaught of Thatcher and co. Their shameful role was shown in the *Stockport Messenger* dispute and the GCHQ affair. Like King Midas in reverse, everything these "practical" people lay their hands on turns to ashes.

The lesson of the present situation is clear: where the working class sees even half a lead, they are prepared to fight.

The example of Liverpool in this respect is still clearer than the miners' strike. In Liverpool, where

the Marxists of the *Militant* have had a major influence for a long period, the movement has now entered a new and qualitatively higher phase.

The argument of the Labour right (echoed pathetically by the spokesmen of the badly misnamed "Communist" Party) that it was necessary to water down the socialist programme in order to win over the middle class has been shown to be false to the core.

The magnificent fightback organised by the Liverpool Labour Party has captured the imagination of wide layers of the population, not only the working class, but also the youth, the old age pensioners, the housewives, the unemployed, and an important section of the middle class. This fact has been amply demonstrated in the splendid results of the local elections, discussed elsewhere in this issue. It shows the truth of what the Marxists have always maintained—that the mass of the middle class are not won by watering down Labour's programme but by boldly mobilising the working class to change society. And once again we see how this can only be done on the basis of firm leadership and clear socialist policies.

It would be highly instructive to compare the movement in Liverpool with the miners' strike itself. Both have had an enormous effect on the consciousness of the class, beginning with the active layers of the trade unions and the Labour party.

In Liverpool, despite opposition not only from the capitalist press, the Tory government and the Liberals, but also, unfortunately from right wing spokesman of the Labour leadership, the movement has been completely solid. The reason for this does not reside in the "peculiarities" of Merseyside, but in the role of a Marxist leadership which has prepared the ground thoroughly for this struggle by a lengthy campaign of explanation which has carried the message of the council to every nook and cranny of the population.

The marvellous miners' strike, on the other hand, has been constantly bedevilled by the failure to incorporate the more backward areas such as Nottingham into the struggle. This aspect of the strike constitutes a serious weakness which is largely the



"These young pickets, out in all weathers, far from home, taking on the massed forces of the police, facing arrest, beatings and abuse from the media—this is the cutting edge of our class."

reason for the protracted nature of the dispute.

Nevertheless, all the hired hacks of the government have been taken aback by a factor which none of them had foreseen, and which is equally present both in Liverpool and the miners' dispute: the grim determination of the workers to see the struggle through to the end.

Maybe the problems facing the miners' dispute could have been avoided or minimised had the leadership pursued different tactics from the outset. But the fact remains that this strike, for all the difficulties, has completely cut across the situation. Together with Liverpool it is acting as a catalyst to crystalise the accumulated mood of discontent which has been steadily building up within the working class since the victory of Thatcher.

The role of the youth in these struggles has been decisive. These young pickets, out in all weathers, far from home, taking on the massed forces of the police, facing arrest, beatings and a constant stream of abuse from the media—this is the real cutting edge of our class. This is the salt of the earth. How can one look upon such things, and not be filled with confidence in the future?

What a contrast between this living reality of the class struggle and the dull, pedantic schemas of the Hobsbawms and the "upwardly mobile" fantasies of Neil Kinnock! Not so long ago, these people were lecturing us on how the young miners were not like their fathers and would not be prepared to fight!

Now we see exactly the opposite of this smug (and quite imaginary) "realism". The miners' strike has now opened the floodgates, and all the other sections of the class are pushing their way through, including the so-called "YUPPIES"—teachers, civil servants,

as well as railwaymen, dockers, nurses. The first four months of this year have already witnessed an increase in the number of strikes. The press is already fearfully anticipating a "long, hot (or cold!) summer".

Ruling class Luddism

There can be no doubt that the miners' strike was deliberately provoked by MacGregor at the instigation of Thatcher. It is clear that the strategists of big business have understood the key position that miners occupy within the working class, and have coldly decided to try to smash the NUM.

This fact alone illustrates at once the cynicism and the blindness of the British ruling class. In the 'fifties and 'sixties they closed hundreds of pits down when the price of oil was low, and then were taken completely off balance by the steep rise in oil prices after 1973. Now, incredibly, they are preparing to continue the decimation of the mining industry at the very time when discussions are taking place about what to do when North Sea oil runs out. The rulers of Britain are utterly incapable of planning for tomorrow. They understand nothing and foresee nothing. They are ignorant and effete money-grubbers who place their narrow class interests before the real needs of the British economy and people. What a contrast with the old ruling class of the period of Britain's world ascendancy. Then they thought ahead, as Trotsky said, not in decades, but in centuries. Now they are incapable of thinking about tomorrow morning. Then their foremost leaders were great statesmen, Disraeli, Gladstone, Asquith, Lloyd George. Now they are stuck with a shopkeeper's daughter from Grantham who imagines

it is possible to solve the most complicated problems of world economy and diplomacy with the mental efforts required for calculating the price of cabbage and broad beans. The comparison is sufficient to reveal the utter collapse of all Britain's former pretensions.

From the former workshop of the world, Britain has been reduced to a third-rate power whose importance in the scale of world politics is not much more than a Third World state. The fact that humiliation at the hands of Colonel Qaddafi could be paraded as a great moral victory is further confirmation of Britain's impotence in the world.

Lenin said that politics is "concentrated economics". The real reason for Britain's decline has been the complete undermining of her industrial base. This, in turn, has not been the result of "lazy" workers or strikes, as the gutter press (and also the "quality" press) would have it, but because of the abject failure of the British capitalists to invest in British industry. This trend, which has gone on for decades, has been accentuated since Thatcher came to power.

There has been a complete collapse of Britain's manufacturing base. Since 1980, in the private sector alone, investment in manufacturing industry fell by one-third—much more than output and even more than the fall in employment. The Bank of England recently pointed out that over the past three years, investment in manufacturing has been so low that it has actually failed to keep pace with depreciation. In other words, the British capitalists have turned into parasites who are no longer interested in the development of productive industry. They look on with indifference while Britain's manufacturing base falls into ruin, with soaring unemployment, devastation of whole communities and the creation of industrial deserts.

This appalling state of affairs has found a "theoretical" justification in the person of Thatcher and her acolytes, who must surely be the most illiterate and near-sighted representative of the ruling class to occupy high office in the land. According to these people, "there is no alternative" to the wholesale destruction of industry. Instead, they propose a shift towards service industries, banking and tourism! This is the modern equivalent of Marie Antoinette's famous observation, when told that the people had no bread: "Let them sell ice-cream." Of course, such an idea is preposterous. Britain is an industrial nation, or it is nothing.

At the root of the philosophy of this government, and the class it represents, is the idea of using mass unemployment to drive down wages and, in this way, compete against their rivals abroad. But all history shows that a low wage economy will never compete with one based on advanced technology and machinery. It is a recipe for catastrophe in the future. Yet this "theory" has been gaily accepted even by the supposedly serious economic spokesmen of the ruling class.

The present "optimism" of the capitalists is based on the ephemeral and artificial "boom" through

which we are passing. Last year productivity and, above all, profits rose by 6% in manufacturing. This phenomenon is due almost entirely to de-manning which has gone on apace throughout the last period, but hardly at all on re-tooling and re-equipping British industry. The real attitude of the ruling class towards the challenge of new technology is shown by the wretched figures of spending on research and development. The UK spends a lower fraction of its Gross Domestic Product on non-military research and development than any other EEC country, Japan or the USA.

The other side of the picture is a boom on the Stock Exchange and a major increase in company profits. Just glance at the financial pages of the "serious" press. Let us take a random example. On Friday 16 March, *The Times* contained the following headlines: "BUMPER COMPANY RESULTS LIFT SHARES TO RECORD 875.6" and "PROFITS POUR IN FOR SHELL AND BP". We shall not waste space going into all the details (for instance, BP's profits up by 55% and Shell's by 38%). Suffice it to say that this is not an exception, but fairly typical of the present situation.

The bosses are laughing all the way to the bank. But this "boom" or boomlet has not altered in the slightest degree Britain's rapid downward slide towards disaster. It is mainly a "boom" inside the pockets of the capitalists! There has been little or no improvement in industrial investment. Factories continue to close, albeit at a slightly reduced rate. Unemployment continues to grow. Even Edward Heath was obliged to point out recently that the government's revenue from North Sea oil was £9 billion a year and expenditure on unemployment amounted to £15 billion!

Yet the Tory "wets", like the TUC, Labour's right wing also the *Tribune* left have no real alternative to the Thatcherite madness. There can be no question of going back to the Keynesian methods of deficit-financing which failed in the past. These would only give rise to a new explosion of inflation leading to an even bigger collapse at a later date.

Under the capitalist system there is no way out for the working class. The crisis of capitalism creates intolerable conditions for the workers and their families. The really significant thing about the miners' strike is the way in which, spontaneously, through the experience of struggle, thousands of the best class fighters, first the youth, but increasingly older workers also, are beginning to draw revolutionary conclusions from the situation. This is a microcosm of a process which will affect every stratum of the working class in the turbulent period which we now enter.

Tories in disarray

Having decided that it was necessary to break the miners' union once and for all, as the prior condition for an all-out assault upon wages and living standards, the government was taken aback by the unex-

pected reaction of the miners. The placard carried on a recent demonstration summed it up in a grimly humorous slogan: "Grass Pie, Here we Come!" The miners and their families are experiencing terrible privations, even actual hunger. But far from being intimidated, their determination to hold out to the end is increased.

The NCB has argued that the terms for redundancy payments are very generous. According to their figures, a man aged 49 earning £165 a week will get £36,480. All the more striking, then, that the areas which have come out have remained so solid. This shows a very high level of class consciousness.

What the Tories and MacGregor failed to understand was the radicalising effect of the strike once it got underway. Many workers who were initially opposed to the strike, once they began to participate, became transformed into the most active and self-sacrificing pickets. "Well, I'm against a strike. I just can't afford it," one miner was quoted as saying. "But once we're into it, well it's a different matter then." Once the workers join the strike, they begin to feel the power and unity of their class. They become a full head taller. And they learn more from one day of action in a strike than in ten years of normal, humdrum existence.

Thatcher was clearly counting on a decisive defeat for the miners, a kind of "industrial Falklands" which would strengthen her position in the Tory party. Now, all these calculations have been upset. The Tory Party which less than a year ago won such a resounding electoral victory, is now more deeply divided than at any time in the past. Exactly as we predicted immediately after the general election and were scoffed at by the wise-acres who saw nothing but doom and gloom ahead.

Against all the conventional wisdom of the Murays, and Hobsbawms, we predicted that Thatcher would most likely be removed as leader of the Tory party.

And now what do we find? Even the capitalist press is openly commenting on the growing hostility towards Thatcher within her own party. This resentment reflects the impasse of the Tories. It was strikingly manifested in the recent speech made by Healey in the course of a debate in the House of Commons when, to the accompaniment of scarcely concealed chortles from Tory benches, he described Thatcher alternatively as Mephistophiles, "The Catherine the Great of Finchley", and even (indirectly) Hitler.

There are some primitive tribes which still worship idols. The idol is the work of a man's hand, hewn out of wood; painted and decorated. The man then falls on his knee before the idol, loudly chanting its praises, in the hopes of getting some practical benefits from the whole operation. But if, at the end of the day, the desired results are not forthcoming, the unfortunate idol is hurled from its pedestal, beaten with whips, cursed at and trodden underfoot.

The attitude of the ruling class towards leaders of the Tory party is not so far removed from this

primitive psychology. Lenin once remarked that, "a man on the edge of a precipice is not apt to reason very clearly". The impasse of capitalism gives rise to all manner of superstitious irrationalism. First the capitalist press ranted and raved about the "Iron Maiden", by whose grace and mercy their system was going to be redeemed. Upon discovering the whole business to be a fraud, they will turn against her. At a certain stage a crisis will open up at the top of the Tory party. The split which the Marxists proclaimed as inevitable even in the moment when the Tory party had apparently achieved its greatest victory, is now being openly discussed in the pages of the capitalist press. While not absolutely certain, it may be doubted that "The Catherine the Great of Finchley" will be permitted to go the distance of this Parliament. Behind the scenes, the capitalists are already looking around for a more suitable candidate. The crushing defeat in the local elections (discussed elsewhere in this issue) will have accelerated the process. If the miners' strike ends in victory, it will have become irreversible.

Shift to the left

The Tories have drawn the conclusion from the local election results that they cannot win the next election. In desperation they have returned to the con trick of selling off council houses at dirt-cheap prices. This they can do with impunity because the full brunt of the costs will fall upon local authorities, not central government. But in the long run it will be of no avail. In the Rhondda two-thirds of the people own their own homes. And the Rhondda is with the miners, not Thatcher.

Seeing the ground slide from under the Tories' feet, the hired liars of Fleet Street lost no time in dragging the Social Democratic and Liberal Alliance out of the cupboard, dusting it down and refurbishing its image as the "real alternative" to Thatcher.

That will cut no ice with the majority of the population. Under conditions of heightened class struggle and increasing social polarisation, the Alliance will be squeezed like a lemon. After the miners will come the teachers, civil servants, railwaymen, dockers, engineers. Every section of the class will be involved in struggle. This in turn, as we have already seen in the miners' strike, will mark the beginnings of a turn to the left in the unions, and the Labour Party. The "move to the right" at the last election will give way to an even more decisive movement in the opposite direction. Beginning with the activists, it will spread to the broader masses of the working class, young people, women, the unemployed and even sections of the middle class repelled by Thatcherite barbarism.

We see the first symptoms of this process already in the trade unions. The completely changed mood was shown in the recent conference of USDAW, traditionally not a very militant section of the class. Tomorrow will see the same process taking place in the AUEW and the GMBATU. This, in turn, will

pave the way for a further swing to the left in the Labour Party.

The lies of the media, which tried to "prove" that the miners' strike would damage Labour's election chances were completely shown up by the results of the local elections. Similarly, the pernicious legend that the policies of *Militant* were an electoral liability was yet again shattered by the spectacular advance of the Labour Party in Liverpool (for the second year running). The NEC of the Labour Party has now drawn the conclusion, unanimously approving a resolution in support of Liverpool City Council and also voting to reconsider the scandalous decision to expel six *Militant* supporters in Blackburn.

The truth of the matter is exactly the opposite of what the Tory press tries to put over. The struggle of the miners, and Labour's support for it, was an important factor in the party's advance at the polls. And far from being frightened by bold socialist policies, the example of Liverpool shows that working people will always respond enthusiastically where a clear-cut socialist alternative is put firmly forward and campaigned on. If the national leadership were prepared to do this, Thatcher's days would already be numbered. But the prevarications and pusillanimity of the right wing of the Labour Party and the trade unions is the biggest factor which helps to keep this reactionary government in power.

In spite of the leadership, the working class cannot accept cuts in their living standards and will fight against all attempts to place the burden of the crisis on their shoulders. The bankruptcy of the right wing trade union leaders was shown by the disgraceful signing of "no strike" contracts by the EETPU and some other unions. This kind of thing will inevitably lead to a radicalisation of the rank and file and a swing to the left, as we already saw in USDAW and the CPSA.

In reality, the position of the right wing, as pointed out by the Marxists long ago, is increasingly untenable. The resignation of Len Murray has nothing whatever to do with his horticultural interests, but everything to do with the groundswell of revolt provoked by his open betrayal of the NGA and his blatant attempts to do a deal with the Thatcher government. Had he not resigned, he would have had to face a storm of opposition at this year's TUC conference, as his friend Alistair Graham will have in the forthcoming conference of the CPSA with 300 resolutions criticising his role. Long ago, we pointed to the inevitability of "sudden and sharp changes" in the situation. And precisely in this way the "new



Photo: Paul Traynor

Paul Astbury addresses building workers meeting for taking action on Liverpool council's 'Budget Day!'

realism" of the TUC leaders has collapsed and is no more. Murray's resignation is like an action-replay of the Sid Weighell affair, but carried out in a "cold" way. There will be many more such "surprises" in the future.

Perspectives for Labour

The political myopia of the Labour right was shown by Hattersley who, four days after the start of the miners' strike was already moaning that it would "make Labour unpopular". These people really live in the stratosphere!

Since he has taken office, Neil Kinnock has acted a bit like the man who was seen dragging his heels behind a great crowd of people. When asked what he was doing, he replied, "I'm their leader".

If the leaders of the Labour Party nationally had had the same clear policies and courage of the Labour Party in Liverpool, Thatcher would now be in deep trouble. Unfortunately, Neil Kinnock's ambiguous stand on every major issue—Liverpool, the miners' strike, re-selection, and his open support for the witch-hunting of supporters of the *Militant*—must cast grave doubts in the minds of many Labour Party members about the position of the new leader. The "honeymoon" is now over, and very serious questions need to be asked about the direction the party has been taking in recent months.

It was just as well that Kinnock finally decided to come off the fence on the miners' dispute at the STUC conference. On other issues, however, his position remains unclear. Of course, all Labour Party members—including supporters of the *Militant*—are in favour of unity. But this could all be blown apart if the right wing attempted to abolish mandatory selection of MPs or press ahead with its witch-hunting activities against socialists. The right wing, and their "soft left" allies must decide whether they really want party unity or whether they intend to persist in pursuing objectives which run counter to the



Photo: Militant

The capitalist press now openly comments on the hostility to Thatcher within the Tory Party.

wishes of the overwhelming majority of party members and which would inevitably lead to open civil war.

In reality, the base of the right wing is extremely weak. A further swing to the left in the unions and the Labour Party would undermine them completely. Under these conditions, a further spate of defections cannot be ruled out, as these ladies and gentlemen try to find a new and more secure avenue for their careers in the ranks of the Alliance, or the Tory party directly.

In any event, the most likely perspective is for a Labour government at the next general election. This will be formed under radically different conditions to the last Labour government of 1974-79. On the one hand, the crisis of British capitalism will be immeasurably more profound. The present boomlet will not last much beyond next year or 1986 at the latest,

and will prepare the way for a still more terrible collapse.

The present situation is a harbinger of far more bitter and generalised class conflict in the future. The miners' strike shows how the consciousness of the workers can be transformed in a question of weeks, days or even in a few hours. Whichever way the present strike may end, the consciousness of the miners will never be the same again. A whole new generation of class fighters have now been "blooded" in the struggle against the employers and the government.

This government is in the process of becoming the most hated government in modern history. Its representatives, like MacGregor, speak the language of naked, undisguised class warfare. It is completely different to the refined and diplomatic "consensus" policies of the past. The fact, in itself, reflects the catastrophic crisis of British capitalism. It is this, and not the personal quirks of Thatcher and MacGregor, which predetermines the nature of the period in which we live.

But the workers are also beginning to draw their conclusions from all this. In the course of the struggle to defend their living standards and jobs they will inevitably begin to understand that on the basis of capitalism there is no way forward.

The policies of the Labour right and the "soft" lefts are bankrupt. They will only repeat the traumatic experiences of 1974-79, with disastrous consequences. The *Tribune* left's so-called "Alternative Policy" is no alternative at all, but merely a slightly more radical version of the old Keynesian nonsense which has been shown to be false time and again.

The experience of left governments in Europe shows what happens when you try to carry out a reformist policy without carrying through a thoroughgoing socialist transformation of society. In France and Greece, the socialist leaders have been compelled to abandon their programme and pass from reforms to counter-reforms. In Spain, the right wing leaders of the PSOE actually began with attacks on living standards and employment!

Any attempt to carry through a programme of counter-reforms or a new version of the "Social Contract" will inevitably lead to a revolt on the part of the rank and file of the unions and the Labour Party. The workers will come to understand the need for a Marxist alternative based on a complete socialist transformation as the only way to carry society forward.

It is no accident that the ideas of Marxism, represented by the *Militant* and the *MIR* have gained increasing support in the recent period in the Labour Party and the trade unions. This is not the result of some "conspiracy" or "infiltration" as the right wing and the Tory press like to pretend. The ideas of Marxism reflect the realities of the life of the workers in the present epoch. They, and they alone, provide a viable alternative for the labour movement, of which they are an organic and inseparable part. Armed with these ideas and policies, the unions and the Labour Party will be invincible.

Character of the European revolution

By Ted Grant

Editor's Note: We republish below a long out-of-print article by Ted Grant, which deserves serious study by the readers of the MIR.

This article was first published in October 1945 as a contribution to the polemic which had developed among the Marxists about the perspectives for the revolutionary movement in Europe after the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The author of this article correctly analysed this development in advance as counter-revolution in a democratic guise." The betrayal of the revolution in Western Europe by the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships provided the pre-conditions for the economic recovery of capitalism on a world scale and a postponement of the perspective of socialist revolution for a period of four decades.

The small emigre German sect against which the article polemicalises has long since vanished. But the defence of the fundamental ideas of Marxism contained in these lines remains as fresh and valid as when they were first written. These arguments have a special relevance to the development of the Colonial revolution.

In the underdeveloped countries, the immediate tasks of the revolution invariably have a bourgeois-democratic character (national independence, unification, agrarian reform, democratic rights etc.). Even here, only the proletariat organised as a class and placing itself at the head of the nation can lead the struggle

against the foreign and native oppressor to a triumphant conclusion. But the seizure of power by the proletariat and the revolutionary liquidation of imperialism and feudal oppression can only be the first step in the uninterrupted process of the Socialist revolution.

For decades the Stalinist leaderships in Asia, Africa and Latin America have led the masses to defeat after defeat by insisting upon the "theory" of the "revolution by stages", vainly seeking to invent a "progressive" role for the colonial bourgeoisie.

The anti-Marxist theory of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," which Lenin discarded and denounced in 1917, and which was later resurrected by the Stalinists to justify their reactionary class collaborationist policy in the colonial world, has recently been revived by certain ex-Trotskyist sects to "explain" the phenomenon of the revolution in Central America!

The present work is a timely and relevant re-statement of the fundamentals of Marxism, as these questions which, forty years later, are regrettably still not sufficiently understood even by the most active and conscious layers of the labour movement internationally.

This will be the first of a series of theoretical reprints which will appear in these pages, and which will represent important additions to the available arsenal of Marxist ideas. It has been slightly edited for publication.

THE CONTRIBUTION of our German comrades (*Problems of the European Revolution* published in July-August WIN) is an indication of "retrogression" from the fundamental doctrines of Marxism. Abandoning the Leninist criterion, the class criterion, of all processes taking place in society, they have adopted a pre-Leninist, even pre-Menshevik theory of "democratic" revolution in Europe. A "national democratic" revolution which, after the collapse of Hitler, will now be directed throughout Europe against the Allies!

It would seem incredible that, after the tremendous struggle that Trotsky waged for the conception of the permanent revolution against the revisionists of Stalinism, a petit-bourgeois democratic, revisionist tendency would develop within the ranks of the Marxists, explained as it is, of course, by the uninterrupted series of defeats which have been suffered by the proletariat and the isolation to which the comrades have been doomed by the emigration. They have succumbed to the pressure of the petit-bourgeois reaction.

These comrades pride themselves on their understanding of dialectics, but fail even to attempt to examine the problem they are facing from a genuine historical

point of view. From what to what is society today evolving? The coming to power of Hitler, the war and its aftermath are a reflection of the blind alley of capitalism, its disintegration and decay, its incapacity to solve a single one of the problems confronting it. It is a result of the failure of the proletariat through the treachery of its leadership (Stalinist and Reformist) to overthrow capitalism and institute the rule of the working class. To these elementary propositions, not even the confused comrades of the IKD, would dare to object, but, not stating the problem clearly, they draw the most fantastic conclusions from the gangrenous and rotting collapse of capitalism. They draw the conclusion that the bourgeoisie, through a "democratic" revolution, can still play a progressive role! It is true that they put this forward under the guise of a "people's" movement, the class character of which they do not define. But never in modern times has the "people" or the "nation" as such played an independent role. The petit-bourgeois masses, in all their layers, can support either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. There cannot be, in modern society, any other state but that of the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. Lenin clearly developed this idea when he wrote:

"All political economy—if one has learned anything at all from it—the whole history of the revolution, the whole history of political development during the nineteenth century, teaches us that the peasant goes either with the worker or with the bourgeois. If you do not know this, I should like to say to such citizens, just reflect upon the development of any one of the great revolutions of the eighteenth or the nineteenth centuries; upon the political history of any country in the nineteenth century. It will tell you why. The economy of capitalist society is such that the ruling power can only be either capital or the proletariat which overthrows it. Other forces there are none in the economics of society." (Vol. XVI, page 217).

The IKD's intentionally vague talk of the struggle of the "whole people against the national and political oppressor" is intended to cover up their capitulation to the petit-bourgeois conception of the revolution. Confronted with the above quotation they would undoubtedly be compelled to accept it, if only in words. But what follows from it? What is the class character of this "people's" movement? Is it proletarian, is it bourgeois or is it petit-bourgeois? In attempting to skip over the class character (always a characteristic of petit-bourgeois thought) of this movement, the IKD reveal the genesis of their ideas, petit-bourgeois capitulation to bourgeois democracy and imperialism.

A 'Democratic' or Proletarian revolution?

Taking as their point of departure the failure of the proletariat to overthrow capitalism, the IKD comrades argue that society has been thrown so far back that the bourgeois-democratic revolution solved by the French revolution of 1789 is posed anew for solution! What a conclusion! From the failure of the proletariat (due to its leadership) they turn to the petit-bourgeoisie, the people, for salvation. But precisely the impotence of the petit-bourgeoisie to find a new road, and its frenzy opened the way for the fascist gangs to come to power. From the petit-bourgeoisie, there can come no leadership. In modern society, they must find leadership in one or the other basic classes, bourgeoisie or proletariat. Having rejected the proletarian revolution as a solution, quite naturally the IKD find themselves in tow to the bourgeoisie. But these conceptions represent an entire break with the Marxist conception of the epoch which is, in the words of Lenin, one of wars and revolutions, proletarian revolutions. Thus the bourgeoisie is plunged into wars and bestial repressions not because there is any solution for it thereby, but because they are driven to these extremities by the insoluble contradictions of the system. Wars and repressions cannot provide a solution, but only aggravate the problem.

The victory of the German imperialists led to the collaboration of the conquered bourgeoisie of France and other countries in Europe with the victors as junior partners in the exploitation of the masses. This could only lead to an intensification of the class hatred of the workers, not alone against the foreign oppressor but against his agents at home. The petit-bourgeoisie as well as the workers could not but conceive hatred for the trusts and combines who placed their profits above the fiction of the "nation". Consequently, the basis for an alliance of proletariat and the petit-bourgeoisie against the foreign and home oppressors, against capitalism, arose.

In the backward countries, the national bourgeoisie prefers in the last analysis to combine with the landlords and foreign imperialist oppression against their own workers and peasants because of the incapacity to solve the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, according to Lenin and Trotsky. (Especially the latter developed this idea with the theory of permanent revolution.) Because of the impossibility of the petit-bourgeois playing an independent role, only the proletariat as a class could lead the struggle against the foreign oppressor and carry through the bourgeois democratic revolution and the struggle for national liberation. But such a struggle, by its very nature, could only lead, either to the victory of the imperialist bourgeois counter revolution or to the conquest of power by the proletariat. Under such conditions, the task of the proletariat and its vanguard, is to maintain its independence from the bourgeoisie and to fight to win the plebian masses to its side.

The ideas of the IKD thus revise the conception developed by Trotsky for the Chinese and Indian revolutions and apply this revised conception to the advanced countries of Europe!

The confusion in the minds of these comrades is shown by their insistence on the necessity of a transitional revolution before the proletarian revolution, a so-called "democratic" revolution. In this they repeat all the mistakes of Stalin-Bukharin in 1925-27, in the Chinese revolution. With the difference that the Stalinist clique could manufacture the semblance of a case, as the national democratic revolution had not been accomplished in the East. Even here, as the experience of the Russian revolution had already shown, such conceptions could only lead to disaster. But to apply an even more crass formulation than that which the Stalinists applied in China to Europe, is to reach the limit of revisionism of the doctrines of Trotskyism. At least Stalin tried to cover his confusion with the outworn Bolshevik formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry". That was the only class formula he could find to describe the "democratic" revolution which he foresaw in Asia. Not having sufficiently thought out the problem, our German comrades leave these questions unanswered. What will this democratic revolution look like? Which class will play the leading role of its realization? Which class will rule in the government? What difference is there between the regime of bourgeois democracy and the regime of this "democratic" revolution?

Posing the problem correctly is already half-way to answering it. Not using the Marxist method, our comrades have lost themselves in a fog of petit-bourgeois phrasemongering.

It seems fantastic that there should be any argument on questions that any raw student of Trotskyism should understand. Especially so with people with great "theoretical" pretensions. It underlines the necessity for a regular re-statement of the basic theories of the movement, not alone for the benefit of new recruits but for people to whom such propositions ought to be elementary.

In dealing with the problem of the permanent revolution in China, Trotsky, answering in advance, our comrades of the emigration, explained:

"... in China, the question of national liberation occupies a large place. This demonstrates that the formula of the democratic dictatorship (to replace that of struggle for proletariat dictatorship) represents a

much more dangerous reactionary snare..." And again: *"In a bourgeois society with already developed class antagonisms, there can only be either an open or disguised dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. There cannot be any talk of a transitional regime."*

Our comrades have been unable to think their ideas through to the end and thus they end up with a policy which is a ludicrous caricature of Stalinism. They argue:

"The retrogressive development of capitalism led to the destruction of national independence and democratic liberties of the most important European nations. Nowhere did the movement go beyond the limits of bourgeois demands, the first attempt of the suppressed masses of Europe to realise the democratic revolution and to re-conquer national independence, was doomed to failure... the second wave of democratic revolution will find many obstacles removed which impeded the first..."

Since these comrades argue that Europe has been thrown back centuries and that the task is to carry out the bourgeois revolution (for that is the class nature of the "democratic revolution"). How is this to be accomplished? In the past it was carried through by the plebian masses who could not go beyond the limits of the bourgeois forms of property. If this so-called bourgeois revolution is to be carried through by the proletariat, then the whole scheme does not make sense. For if the proletariat is to play the leading role, then the revolution can only be the proletarian revolution, leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In lashing the Stalinists, Trotsky remarked on the attempt to separate "democracy" from its social content. *"This hopelessness of the epigones is most crassly expressed in the fact that even now they still attempt to contrast the democratic dictatorship with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, as well as to the dictatorship of the proletariat. But this means that the democratic dictatorship must have a transitional character, that is, a petit-bourgeois content"*. If the comrades argue that they stand for a bourgeois democracy then the leading role of the bourgeoisie is reinforced and their criticism of the Stalinist line in France is absurd. The Stalinists and reformists who had developed a "line" in France and the other occupied countries very similar to that of the IKD, consistently fought for the "national war of liberation" in which *all classes* were involved in the fight for "democracy" without explaining its social content. Consequently the IKD's feeble criticism of their role in the "national liberation" movement is completely unreal. If the position of the IKD were correct, instead of criticising, they should have agreed entirely with the course pursued by the old workers' organisations in Europe.

The trouble with the IKD is that, having been thrown off course by the reactionary wave, they mistake history's posterior for its face. Searching for an impossible "democratic" revolution, they cannot see the visage of the early stages of the proletarian revolution and equate bourgeois "democratic" counter-revolution, of the period of the decline of the bourgeoisie with the democratic revolution of its rise! They do this because they confuse the democratic demands of the proletariat with the nature of the revolution which the proletariat is called on to face. **Democratic demands, the right to strike and organisation, the right to free speech, press, elections, constituent assembly, etc, etc, are part of the**

transitional demands of the proletariat in its struggle for the socialist revolution. These demands must be inscribed on the banner of the Revolutionary Party in its efforts to mobilise the masses in the struggle to educate them in the need for the conquest of power. In every revolution of the proletariat in modern times, one or the other democratic demand has played its part in the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. But in and of itself, this did not determine the nature of the struggle upon which the proletariat had embarked.

Both the opportunists of the IKD and various sectarians were answered in advance by the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks in the Russian revolution. Here, while steering a course towards the October insurrection, on the basis of the understanding of the social nature of the tasks facing the proletariat, the Bolsheviks combined this strategical objective with flexible tactics. They fought for democratic demands, but this struggle was indissolubly linked with the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Proletariats' leading role

Our epoch, even in the backward countries, which have not accomplished the democratic revolution, remains the epoch of proletarian revolution and bourgeois counter-revolution (whatever its specific form) not at all the epoch of democratic revolution. The victory of fascism in no way alters the social character of the regime, the economy of capitalism or the role of the different classes in society. The victory in war, the plunder and national oppression by one capitalist nation of other imperialist powers, in itself marks no decisive change within bourgeois society. The epoch of the democratic revolution is long since past. Consequently, the policies that base themselves on non-existent phantoms of "democratic revolution" can only play into the hands of the bourgeoisie. Not at all accidental is the fact that the Stalinists-reformists in Spain during the civil war, and under the German occupation in Europe carried out their counter-revolutionary work under the guise of a "struggle for democracy".

Such a conception of the tasks facing the proletariat can be no less than a "democratic noose" to strangle the movement of the proletariat. It represents an idealisation of the role of the petit-bourgeois masses and because it involves capitulation to their conceptions inevitably hands the proletariat bound hand and foot to the "national" bourgeoisie.

Precisely because of this, what the "Three Theses" comrades imagine to be the "clever" utilisation by the Stalinists of the so-called "national" movement constituted the greatest betrayal. Our comrades announce "unconditional support" of the "Resistance Movement". But which section of the Resistance Movement they do not explain. They reject, apparently, the leadership of de Gaulle and the other Imperialists who were in control of it. Perhaps they meant unconditional support of the Stalinist wing of the Resistance Movement? We can imagine the shudders such a suggestion would bring to the comrades of the I.K.D.

However, they land themselves in the camp of Stalinist theory, simply because they have not understood, or have forgotten, the social content of the 'democratic' revolution: the creation of the national state; the overthrow of feudalism and the introduction

of bourgeois relations; the separation of Church from State; the agrarian revolution.

What they imagine is the basic content of 'democracy': freedom of organisation, speech, etc, is in reality a by-product of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. It is the building up of the bulwarks of proletarian democracy within capitalism, points of support for the new system within the framework of the old. Precisely here is the real 'retrogressive' mark of fascism: the razing to the ground of all the independent organisations of the proletariat. It is not without importance that this work is accomplished using the petit-bourgeoisie as a lever against the working class. True, the petit-bourgeoisie can play a different role under certain conditions. But only if the proletariat in an independent struggle fights to win the middle classes to its side and does not dissolve itself into the petit-bourgeois swamp.

Certainly the plebian masses carried through the bourgeois revolution in 1789. But they are incapable of ever again playing a leading role, an independent role in the development of society. They will always be an adjunct to one of the two basic classes, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, as all history shows, they inevitably land in the camp of the reaction. Thus in the struggle for the socialist revolution, under the Nazis as well as under the regime of the 'liberated' countries and the Allies, the proletariat fights for the winning over of the petit-bourgeoisie to the socialist revolution by economic as well as democratic transitional demands. There may be many ebbs and flows in the struggle. At one stage or another the revolutionary socialists may demand a fight for elections, local and national, Constituent Assembly, etc. But whether successfully realised or not, the struggle for these demands can only be episodes on the road to the proletarian revolution and the programme of the socialist revolution with which they must be linked.

Transitional demands

The hopeless muddle and eclectic outlook of the comrades is indicated when they say in one passage, which contradicts everything else they write, that the 'democratic revolution' they visualise can only be carried out by the proletariat. As a matter of fact, in the sense in which they visualise 'democratic revolution', it is not at all excluded for a longer or shorter period that parliamentary democracy will exist in Western Europe. Indeed, this process is taking place before their eyes in France, Italy and other countries. They are too blinded and biased by the so-called 'national question' to see this process taking place and to understand what it means. No, comrades, this is not the democratic revolution, but the means utilized by the bourgeoisie (democratic counter-revolution) in its struggle against the proletarian revolution.

But transitional demands, if allowed to become ends in themselves and separated from the strategic policy to be pursued by the Marxists, must inevitably become a trap for the proletariat. Thus under the Nazis, the struggle for national liberation had to be linked to the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe. The collapse of the national states objectively posed the problem of the unification of the proletariat of Europe against the oppressors.

The movement of the resistance in the various countries was a class movement of the proletariat and the lower strata of the petit-bourgeoisie. Directed against German Imperialism under correct guidance and leadership, it should have been directed against the quisling bourgeoisie as well. Events have shown that it was the mass organisations which constituted the core of the resistance movement. The class antagonism, despite the Stalinists' attempt to reconcile the proletariat to the 'national' bourgeoisie (which could only be done by capitulating to it), could not damp down the class struggle which burst forth in Yugoslavia, Greece, Poland in civil war even before the ousting of the Germans. Was this also the result of the attempted carrying through of the democratic revolution?

In reality the so-called "democratic" struggle, the uniting of the whole "people" was in itself an example of the worst caricature of Popular Frontism and class collaboration, under the pretext of unity with the middle class. It was unity in a national struggle together with the agents of the bourgeoisie while the decisive sections of the bourgeoisie were in the camp of the foreign oppressor.

Against the foreign oppressor, as the comrades in Europe correctly understood, the struggle could only be waged as a class struggle appealing to the solidarity of the German workers and peasant soldiers. The chauvinist methods of Stalinism and reformism were grist to the mill of Hitler. A "democratic" phase in Europe will result not from the objective need for the phase of democratic revolution but because of the sell-out of the old workers' organisations. Had Stalinism and Social Democracy stood on the programme of Marxism, there would have been the possibility of a transition immediately to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The one thing lacking was precisely the revolutionary party which could imbue the masses with a consciousness of their Socialist task. Only the weakness of the revolutionary party and the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism has given capitalism a breathing space. Seeing that it is virtually impossible to rule by the method of fascist or military dictatorship, the bourgeoisie has prepared to switch, for the time being to the bourgeois democratic manipulation of their Stalino-reformist agents. This does not constitute a democratic revolution, but, on the contrary, a preventative democratic counter-revolution against the proletariat. Under modern conditions, there can be no other kind of democratic revolution or regimes. In Germany in 1918, precisely the Social-Democracy carried out their hangman's work under the slogan of "democracy". But this was no democratic revolution wherein different classes replaced those already in power. It was a proletarian revolution which was strangled by the agents of the bourgeoisie.

Similarly, what Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin (who understood the problem much better apparently, than the comrades of the IKD) were afraid of in Italy, Greece, Germany, France, Belgium, was not the "democratic" revolution, but the proletarian revolution, as Churchill clearly explained.

After the recent experiences in Europe, only those who have abandoned the idea of the class struggle, could in any way doubt this. Our comrades must have a peculiar sense of humour to say, with a straight face,

"The situation today is, therefore, in its fundamental traits, the same as that of 1941 and the 'Three

Theses' have not only been confirmed, but their practical proposals retain full validity." To back this up, they tell us "The national oppression has remained, only the uniforms of the oppressors have changed. For the French, 'national independence' by grace of the USA, is a farce and an ever-growing part of the French people realise this . . . American Imperialism has not the slightest interest in restoring to health an old imperialist competitor. In consequence, it does not lift a finger to put on its feet again, the absolutely broken down French industry and, with it, French national independence."

To compare the domination of America over France and "liberated" Europe which is maintained by means of economic pressure, with the direct visible jackboot of the Nazis is ridiculous. In the consciousness of the masses, while there may be a dislike of Uncle Sam, it is against the French bourgeoisie, the trusts and combines, that the hatred of the masses is directed. This talk of merely the uniform being changed is an indication of how far from reality the comrades have strayed. The workers' parties and organisations are legal in France and the totalitarian heel has been lifted. It would have been quite impossible for the Anglo-American Imperialists to rule France and the other liberated countries with the methods of the Gestapo and SS, if only because of the resistance of their own soldiers to the playing of such a role.

Thus the attempt to justify a false position only leads to further errors. In reality, the position in Europe arising out of the collapse of capitalism and the aftermath of war is that the most favourable objective conditions are created for the victory of the proletarian revolution. All the conditions laid down by Lenin are present: loss of confidence and uncertainty of the ruling class, vacillation and discontent of the petit-bourgeoisie, readiness of the discontented working class to make the most heroic sacrifices in order to overthrow the capitalists. All that is lacking is the subjective condition—the revolutionary party.

Capitalists backed Hitler

The mass, not alone of the working class, but of large strata of the petit-bourgeoisie, are looking towards socialism as a way out of the social impasse. Yet the revisionists and faint-hearts put forward a policy far more backward and reactionary than even the reformists in Europe have dared to do, for the period which now unfolds. The "crisis" in Europe consists only in the fact that the Stalinists and reformists are carrying out a policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the construction of "democracy". With this, the comrades of the "Three Theses" should really have no quarrel. It is impossible with an orientation towards a "democratic" revolution to carry out any other policy.

If the comrades of the "Three Theses" condemn the Stalinist course, that can only be from force of habit and because they have not thought out their own policy to its necessary conclusions.

The shift away from the ideas of the proletarian revolution and the petit-bourgeois capitulation to nationalism can best be seen in the references to Germany. Here, the comrades appeal to the tradition of the national liberation war of 1813-15, the students' movement (Burschenschaft) and 1848. This is an entirely reactionary and retrogressive movement on the part of the

comrades. The great tradition of the proletarian revolution of 1918, the tradition of Liebknecht and Luxemburg: this is not even thought worthy of mention!

It is true, that, as a consequence of her defeat, Germany will suffer national oppression and dismemberment. But after the last war, Germany was also reduced to the status of a state oppressed by her imperialist rivals. Nevertheless, the emphasis was laid on the class issues in Germany by the Leninist Comintern while opposition to the Versailles Treaty was maintained. Similarly, today, the German workers can struggle against the foreign oppressor, only through the struggle against the national bourgeoisie, which collaborates with the victors. The struggle against national oppression can only be waged as a struggle for the proletarian revolution.

The comrades have written a lot of nonsense about the change from the regime of the Nazis to that of the Allies in Europe merely being a change of uniform (as usual with opportunists, they find themselves in warm support of the ideas of the ultra-lefts). Even in Germany itself, that is not so. The Allies rapidly, even if reluctantly, were convinced of the impossibility of merely continuing the Nazi regimes with the Allies in the place of the Hitler gangsters. They had neither the internal points of support within the population, the backing among the masses at home, nor the willingness of the British and American troops to play the role of SS. Thus in order to gain some sort of basis, they have had to allow organisations and rights to the proletariat, however limited these may be.

In Germany, obviously it will be the duty of the Trotskyists to fight for an extension of democratic rights, against the dismemberment and reparations, against the occupation of Germany. But, no more than the struggle against Versailles, can such a struggle be regarded as a "detour through the democratic revolution".

The struggle for the national liberation of Germany, by its very essence can only be a struggle directed against the German bourgeoisie. The German ruling class will be only too willing to play the same lackey role to the Allies as the French bourgeoisie played to Nazi imperialism. The German capitalists called Hitler to power, they bear the responsibility for the catastrophe Germany has suffered. That should be the axis around which the propaganda of the German Marxists will revolve. Far from being separated, the struggle for German freedom can only be won as a struggle for the proletarian revolution. The British and American troops will only respond to class propaganda, to the idea of a Socialist Germany and a Socialist Europe, as an answer to the nightmare of war and economic misery.

The ideas of the "Three Theses", especially for Germany, are false through and through. In appealing to the moth-eaten now reactionary tradition of 1813 etc., they are playing the traditional role of the German petit-bourgeois intellectuals, whom Marx so scathingly castigated. If these ideas played any role at all they could only be the basis for a new petit-bourgeois reaction. Having been utterly discredited in its Nazi guise, the Nationalist reaction is quite likely to hark back to these old traditions. The Stalino-Social Democracy, acting as agents of the conquerors, will discredit themselves in the eyes of the masses. If the Trotskyists not put forward a clear internationalist revolutionary alternative, the way will be cleared for the petit-bourgeoisie to rally round such a platform and become a helpless tool once again in the hands of the bourgeoisie.



Left; Nazi occupation of Paris. Right; French resistance members.

However "imminent" or not the proletarian revolution in Germany may be, it is the goal to which all the "democratic" and economic demands form the transitional bridge and not the bridge to the "democratic" revolution. In Germany, as in Europe, there can be no "democratic" revolution separate and apart from the proletarian revolution.

In Europe today, we stand, not on the threshold of the struggle for "democracy" and "great national wars of liberation" but the struggle for the proletarian revolution and revolutionary wars against all attempts at capitalist intervention.

To end this article, we can do no better than quote extensively from Trotsky on the problems of the revolution against Fascism in Italy. Foreseeing, in advance, the reactionary arguments of the type of those of the IKD, though he could not have expected that such would emanate from within the ranks of his own 'supporters', Trotsky wrote:—

"...what social character will the anti-fascist revolution acquire? You deny the possibility of a bourgeois revolution in Italy. You are perfectly right. History cannot turn backward a big number of pages, each of which is equivalent to half a decade. The Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party already tried once to duck the question by proclaiming that the revolution would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian but popular, (i.e. "democratic", E.G.). It is a simple repetition of what the Russian Populists said at the beginning of this century when they were asked what character the revolution against Czarism would acquire. And it is still the same answer that the Communist International gives today about China and India. It is quite simply a so-called revolu-

tionary variant of the social democratic theory of Otto Bauer and others, according to which the state can raise itself above the classes, that is, be neither bourgeois nor proletarian. This theory is as pernicious for the proletariat as for the revolution. In China it transformed the proletariat into cannon fodder for the bourgeois counter-revolution.

"Every great revolution proves to be 'popular' in the sense that it draws into its tracks the entire people. Both the great French Revolution and the October Revolution were absolutely popular. Nevertheless, the first was bourgeois because it instituted individual property, whereas the second was proletarian because it abolished this same individual property. Only a few petit-bourgeois revolutionists, hopelessly backward, can still dream of a revolution that would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but 'popular' (that is, petit-bourgeois)"...

"However, while holding to this or that democratic slogan, we must take good care to fight relentlessly against all forms of democratic charlatanism. The 'Democratic Republic of the Workers,' watchword of the Italian Social Democracy, is a sample of this low-grade charlatanism. A republic of the workers can only be a proletarian class state. The democratic republic is only a masked form of the bourgeois state."

It is precisely the type of "democratic charlatanism" propagated by the supporters of the "Three Theses" that Trotsky warned genuine Marxists against. Continuation on the road mapped out by the comrades of the IKD must, in the long run, lead to a break with the Marxism, with the programme of the proletarian revolution.

Engels and human development

By John Pickard

Engels' pamphlet, *The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*, written in 1876, but not published until 20 years later, contained many brilliant insights into the theory of human development. Against a background of very scarce fossil or other evidence, his application of the method of dialectical materialism to the problem allowed him to provide a consistent and coherent explanation of human development well in advance of the majority of his scientific contemporaries, an explanation that remains to this day the main pivot of any Marxist view of human development.

An examination of his work in the light of modern scientific evidence and theory would perhaps refute this or that secondary detail of Engels' work, but would show that in broad outlines his arguments were correct. The pamphlet remains, in other words, a masterpiece of the dialectical method. What specific issues and questions led Engels to writing such an essay?

Marx and Engels had both arrived at the same philosophical method—dialectical materialism—although by different paths. Their outlook was materialist in the sense that they considered that all natural phenomena and social development to be firmly based, in the final analysis, on material processes, rather than spiritual or metaphysical (idealist) causes. At the same time, they considered that society and nature were in a constant process of dialectical change, that is, change through contradictions; everything was in a state of motion, of coming into being and passing away.

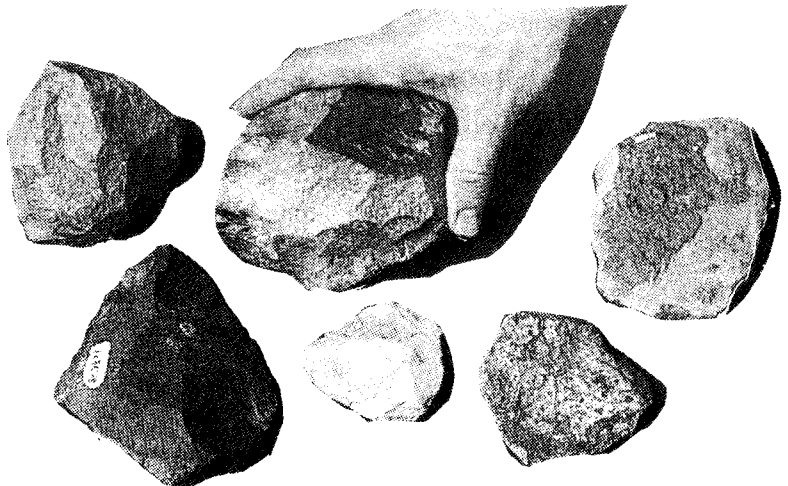
Both Marx and Engels applied their philosophical

method particularly to social and political development, as historical materialism. Marx's greatest work, *Capital*, laid bare the general laws of motion of the capitalist system itself, but the two great founders of scientific socialism were at pains to explain that capitalism was only a single stage in social development. Just as the capitalist system came into being as a result of the social forces and contradictions within feudal society, so it would be overthrown by the contradictions it carried within itself to be replaced by a socialist society.

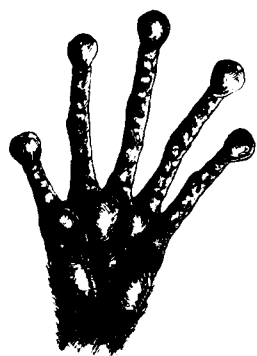
The emphasis placed by Marx and Engels on the transitory nature of capitalism inevitably led them to a consideration of pre-capitalist societies. They sought to demonstrate that the method of historical materialism, just as it had revealed the inner mechanism and laws of capitalism would also find application in earlier societies, revealing their own special laws of social development. Casting an even wider net, they also sought to use contemporary scientific studies to show the general validity and applicability of dialectical materialism as a universal world outlook. As Engels explained in *Dialectic of Nature*:

"...it is precisely dialectics that constitutes the most important form of thinking for present day natural science, for it alone offers the analogue for and thereby the method of explaining the evolutionary processes occurring in nature, interconnections in general, and transitions from one field of investigation to another."

The notes of Marx and Engels on pre-capitalist societies were both used by the latter in his work *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* published 100 years ago. Engels' own notes and essays on the relationship between science and dialectical materialism were only published in 1924, nearly 30 years after his death, in *Dialectics of Nature*.



Left; Baboon bones together with hand axes and above; early stone tools.



Tarsier



Gibbon



Chimpanzee



Hominid

Opposable thumb, and ability to grip is a feature of hominid hand.

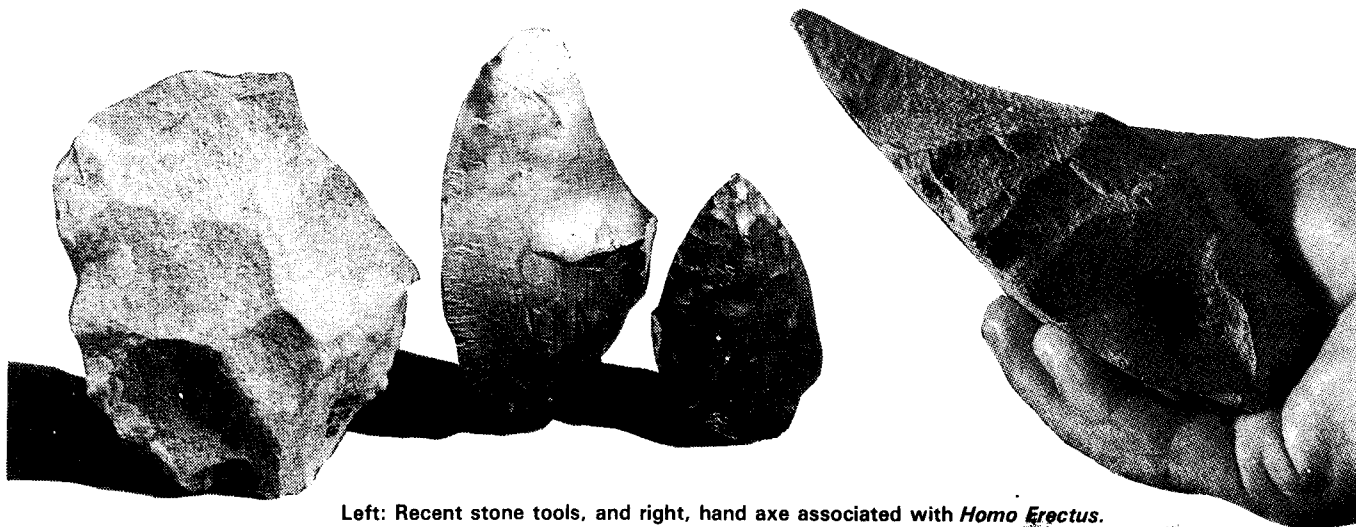
There was a natural bridge, therefore, linking Marx and Engels' ideas on political issues and Engels' interest in anthropology and the origins of humanity. Marx and Engels had hailed Darwin's theory of Natural Selection as a triumph for materialism because it provided a scientific foundation to human evolution from 'lower' animals. After Darwin, the origin of the human species was firmly rooted in the natural material sciences rather than in theology or metaphysics.

But while Darwin emphasised the material continuities between the animal kingdom and *homo sapiens*, Engels stressed the dissimilarities; arising as a result of material processes from the animal world, mankind was nevertheless unique, a social animal. Without ever leaving the high firm ground of materialism, Marx and Engels sought to explain how the quantitative evolutionary changes in apes had produced a qualitatively different species, a unique thinking, social animal. Man, Engels explained, was the only animal that undertook labour—a conscious interaction with nature, purposefully altering nature to Man's advantage, but altering Man also in the same process.

The central purpose of Engels' essay on the part played by labour was to show that human labour and social organisation were not the product so much as the cause of the development of the human hand and brain, those features most generally used to characterise human likeness. "Labour", Engels explained, "Is the primary basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself." Engels' view was presented in direct opposition to those contemporaries of his who saw human development through the spectacles of "Civilisation", as a process motivated by ideas and thoughts. Engels complained;

"All merit for the swift advance of civilisation was ascribed to the mind, to the development and activity of the brain. Men became accustomed to explain their actions from their thoughts, instead of their needs...even the most materialistic natural scientists of the Darwinian school are still unable to form any clear idea of the origin of Man, because under this ideological influence they do not recognise the part that has been played therein by labour."

The idealistic notion of the origin of humanity



Left: Recent stone tools, and right, hand axe associated with *Homo Erectus*.

found its expression in scientific circles in the generally held theory that mankind developed a large brain before the development of the hand and before bipedalism (erect walking). Hypnotised by the wonders of society, the scientists of Engels' day (and indeed very much later) pushed the more modest productions of the working hand into the background. With scarcely any direct and concrete scientific evidence, but using only the method of dialectical materialism, Engels was able to show that the common scientific theories of human development were in fact incorrect. His pamphlet explained that in early man the upright posture and bipedalism had freed the hands for the manipulation and manufacture of tools. The making of tools and their use led to a further refinement and development of the hand so that the hand was both the 'organ' and the 'product' of labour. The conscious interaction of man with nature—altering both at the same time—was an active process in contradistinction to other animals' interaction with nature which is entirely passive. Man is the only animal which engages in labour.

"Animals in the narrower sense also have tools, but only as limbs of their bodies...Man alone has succeeded in impressing his stamp on nature."

But the use and manufacturing of tools, Engels explained, also increases the usefulness and purposefulness of joint activity, of social labour. Both tool production—and social labour raised the question of language and speech.

"First comes labour, after it and side by side with it, articulate speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man."

The further development of the brain, of course, would interact with labour processes and social intercourse to develop greater capacity for language, for reflection, judgement and abstract thought. The accumulated effects of these interacting processes led to human evolution.

"By the combined functioning of hands, organs of speech and brain, not only in each individual but also in society, human beings became capable of executing more complicated operations..."

The social accumulation of knowledge, skill and expertise would mean that these things could be passed on by speech from one generation to another: a cultural evolution is thereby set in train.

A re-examination of Engels' ideas in the light of modern discoveries shows their complete validity. If he could be alive today, he would no doubt immerse himself in the mass of accumulated detail, facts and knowledge, and after studying them in his normal meticulous fashion, he would rewrite *"The Part*



Friedrich Engels.

Played By Labour..." with fundamentally the same view.

The great weight of material evidence on the origin of the human species comes from palaeontology—the collection of fossils, and stone tools. The earliest stone tools are between 2.5 and 3.0 million years old. These hominid (human-like) artifacts include tools used to make other tools and they mark a clear distinction with the present day apes, who though they make and use tools of soft materials (twigs and leaves), never use them to manufacture other tools.

The hominid tools, often associated with particular sites where they were manufactured or used, were relatively simple to begin with, but over a period of a million years or so increased in complexity and sophistication. The simple Oldowan stone culture, named after the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania where the implements were found, became transformed between 2.5 and 1.5 million years ago into the Acheulian, a more refined, stone culture. But of course stone tools are preserved, while others that may have been made of bone, wood or hide could not be. It is generally assumed that such tools were made and used before progress was made on to stone materials which are much harder to shape and to adapt to a particular use.

Even extremely simple tools would be the product of a long period of experimentation, experience, observation, reflection and recollection. The simplest tools like sharpened sticks to dig roots, or hide bags to carry food, would represent almost a revolution in human development—they would give any early hominid species a huge advantage for survival, yet none of these soft artifacts would be preserved. Long before the 2.5 million year old Oldowan stone culture, therefore, it is likely that early hominids were using tools, although of perishable materials.

This scenario fits in with recent fossil discoveries made in East Africa by the American paleo-anthropologist Johanson, notably the female skeleton, nick-named Lucy, which belongs to the species he describes as *Australopithecus Afarensis* (around 3.5 to 3.75 million years old), which demonstrated a number of remarkable facts:

1. Lucy and her cousins were fully bipedal, they walked upright. The configuration of the hip, thigh and knee bones pointed to a capacity for an upright gait no less efficient than that of modern humans.
2. The hand had a fully opposable thumb, was capable of a strong grip, and capable of good manipulation. It was a very human like hand, capable of making and using tools, but not a completely human hand.
3. The cranial capacity, a measure of the brain-size of the species, was only marginally larger than that for comparable apes of the same body weight. The

cranial capacity of a chimpanzee is 300 or 400 ccs. Specimens of *Australopithecus Afarensis* had cranial capacities of between 380 or 450 ccs. (The average cranial capacity for *homo sapiens* is 1,400 ccs).

These fossil remains therefore pointed to an apparently small brained but upright hominid with clear manipulative ability. These discoveries were complemented by those of another palaeontologist, Mary Leakey, who discovered in Laetoli, in Northern Tanzania, two sets of remarkable footprints fossilised in ash. Examination of these footprints, between 3.5 and 3.75 million years old, shows unmistakably that they made by a hominid. Once again, to use Mary Leakey's words, "A fully-upright, bipedal and free striding species".

Both Johanson and Leakey have suggested that the finds at Hadar in Ethiopia and Laetoli in Tanzania are related, the former even suggesting that they represent remains of the same species. What these finds do show is that a highly developed manipulative skill, indicative of tool use, and a fully upright gait clearly preceded the full human brain development.

Stone tools have not been associated with these fossils, they are normally associated with a later, different species of fossil (although some palaeontologists would argue a later development of this same species) *Homo Habilis* with, among other things, a slightly larger cranial capacity and other more human characteristics. These finds would seem to confirm the dawning realisation among modern anthropologists, that tool use and upright walking anticipated the development of the human brain. Ten years before these discoveries, an American anthropologist Napier, had written

"It is now becoming clear that this important cultural phase in evolution (the use and manufacture of tools) had its inception at a much earlier stage in the biological evolution of man, that it existed for a much longer period of time and that it was set in motion by a much less advanced hominid and a much less specialised hand than was previously believed."

There is no doubt that the 3.5 million year old Lucy would have had sufficient manipulative skill to have made and used implements, perhaps of materials like wood and skin—which were not preserved along with her own bones. Moreover, she had an upright gait as developed as that of modern humans, allowing her the full freedom to use her hands to make, use and carry implements or food. Indeed, there is no other explanation for the shape of Lucy's hands except that she was a regular and habitual user of tools. As Engels says

"It stands to reason that if erect gait among our hairy ancestors became first the rule and then, a necessity, other diverse functions must in the meantime have developed upon the hands."

Whereas with modern apes, tool use is casual and not passed on in any way from one generation to the next, in a species beginning to learn social organisa-

tion, including communicative speech, expertise in tool use is cumulative from one generation to the next. Lucy's hand would already suggest a dexterity qualitatively superior to modern apes, but without a brain very much bigger. Yet the continuous and regular manufacture and use of tools would tend to lead, as Engels explained, to an even greater

development and refinement of human characteristics, especially the hand and brain. That, in later hominid species, appears to be exactly what happened. The hand, to use Engels' expression, becomes therefore both the organ of labour and also the product of labour.

"One sees the great gulf between the undeveloped hand of even the most manlike apes and the human hand that has been highly perfected by hundreds of thousands of years of labour...The hand is not only the organ of labour, it is also the product of labour. Labour, adaption to ever new operations, the inheritance of muscles, ligaments and, over large periods of time, bones that had undergone special development and the ever renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new more and more complicated operations, have given the human hand the high degree of perfection required to conjure into being the pictures of Raphael, the statues of Thorwaldsen, and the music of Paginini." (Dialectics of Nature)

Lucy the large brained ape, was capable of the use and manufacture of tools, but by the performance of labour, she also thereby capable of pushing primate development on to the road of the perfecting of the human hand and brain. Scientific disputes about the precise relationship of Lucy's species to the human lineage do not alter the fundamental fact of bipedalism and hand development preceding the large growth of the brain.

As Richard Leakey, son of Mary, explained:

"As the fossils from Africa illustrate, the hominids were ape-like in size. Presumably the hominids were living very differently from their ape relatives because they were also walking around on two legs. But whatever their lifestyle, it does not seem to have demanded a significantly expanded brain. Not until 2 million years ago is there firm evidence of Homo Habilis whose cranial capacity was close to 800 ccs."

This creature had a brain nearly twice as big as Lucy, but without being any bigger in stature. The next step in hominid development, Homo Erectus showed an even greater brain development, reaching 1,000 ccs."

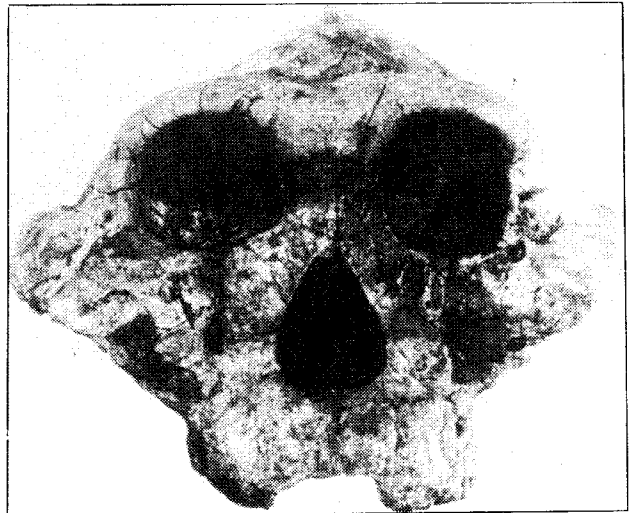


Marx and Engels' emphasis on the social character of human development is now repeated almost universally by modern palaeo-anthropologists. Concrete evidence of social behaviour does not exist and could never be preserved, but there are enough indications pointing in that direction. Stone tools, for example, are not found at random, but often in particular sites whose functions seem to vary. One two million year old site at Koobi-Fora, in Kenya, is associated with hippopotamus bones and it is clear from the stones and flakes found there that tools must have been made and used on the spot. But the materials used to make the tools (hammer stones and smaller stones) did not originate in that area but must have been carried there from some 3 or 4 Kilometres distance. Apart from this 'butchering' site, others have been discovered with apparently different special functions—as living places, as sites used purely for the preparation of tools to be used elsewhere. In addition to these preserved tools, as has been said, it is likely that there were, over an extended earlier period, tools of materials that were not preserved.

Even without any further evidence, the manufacture and use of tools would suggest already some form of cooperative organisation. The collection of stones, their selection, preparation, transport, use and retention are all operations that would be inconceivable without social labour. No modern ape collects and transports food to be eaten elsewhere: and although hunting occasionally, no ape will ever persevere in a hunt for a long period of time.

The early hominids, in collecting food, carrying it and storing it, had already taken a qualitative evolutionary leap. But all these operations suggest that there would be sharing, cooperation and a division of labour, and therefore a more or less well-established pattern of social relationships and behaviour.

How else would it be possible to transmit the large accumulation of experience and practice from one generation to the next, except through some form of social organisation? Cooperative behaviour is even suggested by the anatomical development of hominids. Lucy herself had not apparently developed a hip sufficiently well adapted to give birth to large brained infants. As the size of the brain expanded from one species to the next, however, problems would have arisen with birth because of the size of the infant's brain. But evolutionary development found a way around this problem by delaying certain aspects of growth until after the birth. At birth the brain of a Rhesus monkey is 65% of its final size, a chimpanzee's is 40% and that of a human child only 23%. Consequently, compared with the nearest ape relatives, human children have to have an extremely long and protracted childhood, something that would be inconceivable without some social mechanism to provide the necessary care and attention. Moreover, such a social organisation and a pro-



Australopithecine skull. Small-brained, primitive hominid

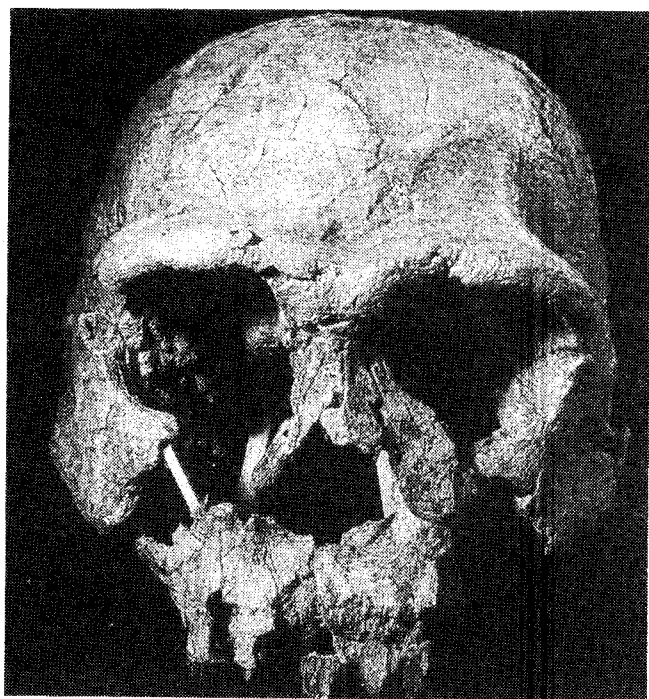
longed childhood would be the only way to give the child time to absorb the tradition of labour to which it would be heir.

In evolution in general the development of a particular physical attribute (colour, size, shape, etc) can give a selective advantage to a particular species or strain of organism; therefore that attribute is likely to be passed on from one generation to the next. But in the development of humankind, tool use and social behaviour can themselves become adaptive, carried from one generation to the next by the teaching of these cultural skills to the young.

The constant social use of implements—as Engels would have said, the labour—becomes more and more a necessary part of the hominid lifestyle, without which it would perish. But having the faculty of labour imparts to the hominid an enormous selective advantage over any other species that lacks it altogether, or over one that may possess the same faculty in a crude and rudimentary form. Biological evolution—change through genes—is not eliminated, but a powerful impetus is given to cultural evolution—the accumulation generation by generation, of a vast store of skill, knowledge, expertise, and language.

There are a variety of modern theories dealing with the specific environmental conditions of development of the human species. The most generally held view is that humankind began to develop in an environment of semi-open savanna land at a time, 4 or 5 million years ago, when there was a shrinking of the large forests, particularly in what is now East Africa. Such an environmental pressure—moving out from a forest to a more open environment—could also correspond to the development of an upright posture described by Engels as “the decisive step in the transition from ape to man.”

Even within this general framework, however, there are differences of emphasis, for example on the relative importance of gathering vegetable foods compared to hunting for meat. Studies of modern hunter-gatherer communities would indicate that for



Homo Erectus skull found at Koobi Fora in East Africa.

the amount of time per person spent on each activity, gathering food is nearly 70% more productive of calories than hunting. In addition, whilst modern apes like baboons and chimpanzees do hunt from time to time, their meat consumption represents only a tiny proportion of their diet.

The evidence of hominid development, especially the use of stone tools with special butchering sites, shows that at some stage there must have been a big increase in the incidence of hunting as compared to apes, moving perhaps from small to larger prey, something also commented upon by Engels, who also pointed out that meat had a higher nutritional value than vegetable matter. But nevertheless vegetables would probably have remained the main part of the diet and the implements most likely associated with their production and collection—digging sticks or carrying sacks, would have perished.

But the characteristic common to all modern theories of human evolution is that they all recognise the essential role of *social* organisation and behaviour. Early hominids were adept at hunting, gathering, collection, transportation, tool manufacture and use—these as has been said would suggest sharing, cooperation and division of labour. None of these are even conceivable without well developed social rules and practices.

Another important element in the evolution of Man, intertwined with social labour and tool use, is the development of speech, of language.

"The development of labour," Engels pointed out, "necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by increasing cases of mutual support and joint activity and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at

the point where they had something to say to each other. Necessity created the organ... this explanation of the origin of language from and in the process of labour is the only correct one."

It would follow from Engels' view, despite the eccentric references to parrots in his own essay, that man, being the only animal able to perform labour, would be the only animal capable of language. This is in fact the case. Repeated attempts have been made, especially by American anthropologists, to teach sign language to chimpanzees. But after years of learning, there is no evidence that the chimpanzees have achieved anything more than complex rote learning, involving variations of signs, each of which in its own right is meaningless to the animal. In individual chimpanzees, even the most celebrated, the learning of sign language, even where it apparently increases in vocabulary is qualitatively different to learning in human infants. Chimpanzees simply learn to mimick longer strings of sign words, whereas a human child learns a deeper and more complex use of words and concepts as it grows older.

Key elements of human language are completely absent in apes, Man's nearest relative in the animal kingdom. With apes, communication is entirely emotional and always concerns the immediate environment. Human language is necessarily associated with the development of human cognitive processes and both are necessarily associated with labour.

None of the processes mentioned earlier—tool making and social labour—would have been possible without a parallel development of thought processes. Man must have developed the faculty of mental 'displacement', that is, the capacity to have a mental picture of a situation removed in time and place from the immediate surroundings. The manufacture of tools would be impossible without a preconceived idea of what the implement would look like, what its function would be and where it would be used, and these faculties are way beyond even the most intelligent ape.

Just as tools are a product of labour, so also human mental processes and language develop from labour, from an active interaction with nature. Mental reflection is not a passive but an active process and language or speech becomes integral to it. Words and language, to use Lenin's expression, help humankind make the transition from elementary sense perception to generalised abstract thinking. Modern anthropologists, of course, have no concrete evidence, like fossil evidence, upon which to base their theories of language development, but most link the origin of



language with tool use and the social labour of the early hominids for example.

"Developing hominids, at the australopithecine stage and perhaps even before, were able to predict the utility of a hand held tool beyond the period of immediate use, beyond immediate relationships to ones expanded in time and place." (Montagu 1976)

Thus the practical labour is interwoven with speech, the development of tools with cognitive abilities and language. "Language", to use the even briefer expression of Karl Marx, "Is practical consciousness".

Another anthropologist explains:

"The capacity to form and operate with abstract ideas is correlated in evolution if not in physiology, with the capacity to use human language. Here too the product grows with the instrument and vice versa. And these capacities in turn are correlated with tool making."

(Dobzhansky)

Certain biological conditions must have been present for early hominids to begin to develop and interweave the processes of speech, tool making and social labour. But Engels makes it clear that in his view the fully human brain was a product of labour, not its originator. "First labour, after it and then with it, speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed to that of man."

This view is fully endorsed by the modern fossil evidence, not only by the growth of brain capacity, but also by examination of the cranial casts to show which parts of the brain developed from the earlier man-apes. Referring to the very earliest hominid brains, the American anthropologist Washburn makes it clear, "From the immediate point of view, this brain makes culture (ie labour—JP) possible. But from the long term evolutionary point of view, it is culture which creates the human brain."

With a co-worker, Lancaster, Washburn explains—

"It appears that the form of the human hand, the large area of the brain directly related to the hand, the much larger areas of the cortex related to skillful motor activity, and a greatly expanded cerebellum, also related to skillful activity, all evolved long after initial tool use and in response to new selection pressures arising from the success of implements of many kinds."

All the modern evidence, therefore, more than there is scope to mention here, supports the basic theme of Engels' essay: and confirms the materialist explanation for the origin of mankind. Engels perceived more than one hundred years ago, the dialectical relationship between language, intelligence, brain size, manual dexterity and their common denominator—labour.

It was the capacity to form labour in the pursuit of the basic necessities of life that catapulted some ape-like species onto the road of becoming a human-like species. Labour became the basis of human development.

Engels succeeded in showing the dialectical relationship between biological and cultural development. Once it became a part of mankind's necessary lifestyle, labour perfected the human hand and brain. But labour, or social production, also achieved an impetus of its own—an extension of, but a qualitative development from, biological evolution.

Thus, social phenomena or the development of labour, cannot be crudely explained by genetic or biological factors—they can only be described in terms of their own separate laws. But they nevertheless have their foundation in the last analysis on material processes. In a sense, the capacity to labour became a means of transcending the blind process of biological change. As Engels said

"... The more human beings became removed from animals, in the narrower sense of the word, the more they make their history themselves, consciously, the less becomes the influence of unforeseen effects and uncontrolled forces... The animal merely uses its environment, and brings about changes in it simply by its presence. Man by his changes makes it to serve his ends, masters it. This is the final essential distinction between man and other animals, and once again it is labour that brings about this distinction."

The enormous achievements of science and technique have all been made in what seems to be the twinkling of an eye compared to the millions of years of primate evolution—all the 2.5 to 3 million years during which culture, or labour was being created and was creating mankind. Yet none of the enormous cultural achievements of the last 10,000 years—civilization, science, etc.—have been due in any significant way to biological change, they have all been achieved by labour.

"Man alone", Engels explained, "Has succeeded in impressing his stamp upon nature, not only by shifting plant and animal species from one place to another, but also by so altering the aspect and climate of his dwelling place, and even the plants and animals themselves, that the consequences of his activity can disappear only with the general extinction of the terrestrial globe. And he has accomplished this, primarily and essentially by means of the hand."

But Marx and Engels were not passive commentators on human development. They also understood that real human development, the real culture of humanity, would only succeed and flourish when society itself was changed appropriately. The rise of social classes, they recognised, was a necessary stage in social development, corresponding to changes in the mode of production, of labour. But a further stage of production could only be achieved by the abolition of classes and the social organisation of labour on a new and higher level, in other words by socialism.

"Only conscious organisation of social production, in which production carried on in a planned way, can lift mankind in the specifically biological aspect." (*Dialectics of Nature*)

Hanging on the Tories' coat-tails

By Bob Wade

THE RECENT furore over fascist infiltration of the Tory Party is not an isolated incident in the Conservatives' post war history. Because they have been prepared to use the politics of racism to achieve their ends, they have always had the nuisance of the fascist madmen hanging around their coat tails. But it would be wrong to interpret this, as some elements in the labour movement have proclaimed, that the *Panorama* episode alongside the increased police powers witnessed in the miners' strike means that the Tory party is somehow 'moving towards fascism'.

It is certainly true that the Tories, as representatives of the capitalist class use racism in an attempt to split and divide the working class. For capitalism, the question of immigration has a double role. Primarily, as with the Irish immigrants at the turn of the century, the Jewish workers from Eastern Europe in the 1920's and 30's, and as with black and Asian workers after World War Two, immigrant workers are looked upon as a source of cheap labour. But on arrival they immediately become the scapegoats for all the ills of capitalism.

The post war capitalists scoured the remnants of the old Empire for immigrant labour in the 1950s and '60s. Recruits were needed for the dirty and unsociable public sector jobs necessary to service the booming economy. Indeed, amongst those looking for cheap labour for the National Health Service was none other than the then Minister of Health for the Tory government of the early 1960s; Enoch Powell!

However, as soon as the Asian and West Indian workers arrived, having been promised a land of milk and honey, they instead found slum housing, low wages and blatant discrimination whipped up by the Tory press.

The Tories were quick to cash in on this atmosphere, an atmosphere created largely by their own propaganda. Sections of the Tory Party, especially amongst the backwoodsmen with all their old imperialist prejudices, were quick to throw in the card of racism.

The small fascist sectlets, which had no basis of support within British society immediately clung to these racist elements. The miniscule fascist

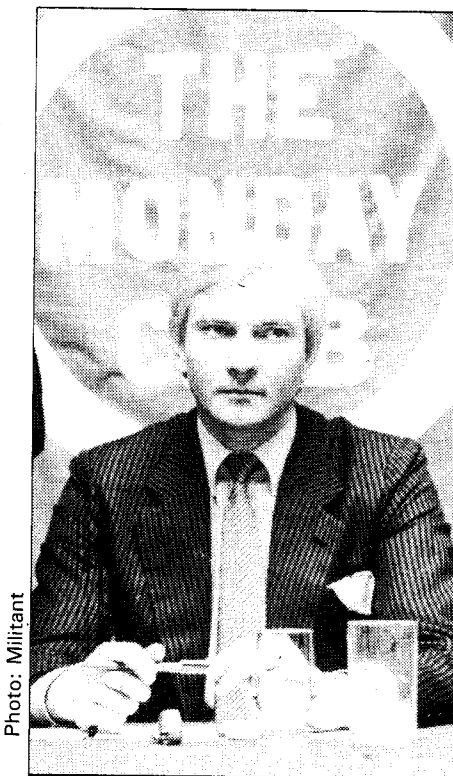


Photo: Militant

Extreme right-wing Tory MP Harvey Proctor at a Monday Club meeting.

groups dropped their sporadic bombing of synagogues and looked to the 'political arena', some infiltrating the Tory Party, others heading racist campaigns outside the Tory party. The most notorious chapter of this period was in Smethwick during the 1964 election campaign. With little opposition from the right wing Labour leaders of the time, the racists won the seat for their candidate, Peter Griffiths. The Tory leadership gave the Smethwick Tories only the mildest rebukes—after all, their tactics had inflicted enormous damage in what should have been a safe Labour seat.

While the Labour leaders learnt little from the Smethwick debacle, right wing Tories ruthlessly pursued this issue, backed up by the propaganda of the capitalist press. With the first fissures appearing in the economy, the bosses were keen to throw up the policies of the scapegoat in the path of the British labour movement.

At the forefront of this task was Enoch Powell, at the time a Tory front bench spokesman. In 1968 he talked darkly of "alien cultures" and "rivers

of blood" following race riots. The reactionary press and Tory backbenchers heralded Powell as a great visionary.

Of course history has proved Powell totally and utterly wrong. The working class in Britain, given the country's long history of an influx of immigrant workers and a strong united labour movement, has always overcome the attempts of the ruling class to whip up racist and sectarian feelings amongst backward sections of the workers.

With the election of the Heath government in 1970, Powell was admonished and quietly ushered into the wings. However, with every blow suffered by Heath during the mighty trade union struggles in the early '70s, so the backwoodsmen of the Tory party, based around the Monday Club, began joint activities with the racist and fascist groups outside the Tory party, recently united in the National Front. The right wing Tories were not merely concerned with racism, but pushed the spectrum further out into anti-Common Market campaigns and futile attempts to hit at the organised working class. Perhaps the most pathetic episode was the setting up of the so-called United Association of Professional Engineers, a supposed rival to the AUEW.

Campaigns such as these amounted to no more than a pin prick on the labour movement. But more ominously the rantings of the reactionaries began to find an echo amongst the ruling class after the victory of the Labour government in 1974. Frustrated at the impotence of the Heath government to deal with the unions, and now faced with a Labour government under enormous pressure from below to carry out reforms, sections of the ruling class actually debated the possibility of a military coup in the pages of *The Times*.

However, the ruling class settled back into their leather bound chairs in the top London clubs as it became clear that the Callaghan/Healey leadership represented no danger to the interests of the capitalist class.

The reactionary right also changed their tactics. With disillusionment setting in amongst workers with the Callaghan government, which had begun to follow a policy of watered down monetarism, the National Front were pushed to the fore. With the activities of the NF continually played up by the media, many of the sectarian

groups on the fringes of the Labour movement put forward the perspective of an immediate turn towards fascism in Britain. This idea was decisively rejected by the Marxist tendency represented by the *Militant* and the *MIR* at the time.

But despite a few isolated successes for the fascists in decaying inner city areas, by the late 1970s the steamroller of the labour movement had begun to lumber forward and the fascists were swept from the streets. Where ever the NF marched, whether in London, Birmingham, Cardiff or Glasgow, they were met with massive counter demonstrations.

The campaign against racism came from below. Mass rallies against the NF, counter demonstrations and anti-racist campaigns at shop floor level, put pressure on the leadership to act. The labour movement flexed its muscles and within two to three years the fascists were swept aside.

Primarily through the labour movement campaign, but also with the arrival of the Thatcher government, the fascist groups have all but collapsed. In any event, fascism in the traditional form of jackbooted, uniformed thugs has no appeal to the British working class. The rising tide of the class struggle and the shift to the left in the trade unions and Labour Party, cut the ground from the feet of these poisonous vermin. The National Front has split and factionalised in squabbling Nazi sects. Many individual fascists have collapsed into the Tory Party. Those cliques which remain outside will tend to degenerate into terrorist gangs. The moves towards terrorism on the one hand, and the 'infiltration' of the Tory party on the other shows the total incapability of fascism to gain any mass basis of support in society today.

But the presence of an ever increasing number of former members of fascist groups on the right of the Tory Party is a serious warning to the labour movement. The attempts of Thatcher and the apparatus of the Tory Party to cover up this fact are significant. There may be a few expulsions of fascists to appease public opinion, as the Tories have done over the years. But the Tories have no intention of conducting a serious purge of these reactionary louts, partly because they have support amongst a significant layer of the Party activists, and partly because their services may be needed in the future. The fascists will be used as auxiliaries against the working class. But, after the experience of Hitler and Mussolini, and more recently the experience of Chile, Argentina, Greece and Pakistan, the ruling class will think twice before handing over



Because the Tories, as representatives of the ruling class, have been prepared to use the policies of racism, they have had the Fascist madmen hanging around their periphery.

direct power to the fascist madmen.

The mass of working people, with their long standing democratic traditions and the abhorrence of dictatorships engrained on their memories from the horrors of fascism in the 1930s and the Second World War, would not tolerate such a development without a struggle.

Socialists must understand what fascism is. It is wrong, as some in the labour movement have done, to wildly denounce this or that policy or this or that regime as "fascist" without a deeper analysis. This is not just a pedantic argument, it is not just a question of being theoretically correct. To prematurely and continuously proclaim the arrival of fascism can have a demoralising effect on the

labour movement. More importantly, it is vital the labour movement understands its own strength, and recognise where the real threat of reaction could come from.

Fascism is a manifestation of reaction that can take hold after a decisive defeat for the labour movement, based around hysterical elements within the middle classes, who draw in support from the lumpen proletariat and (where they exist) the peasantry. It is a system of reaction that can gain mass support amongst society. As such the labour movement—given fascism's widespread support amongst the masses—can be weeded out at street level and totally atomised. But on the other hand, the capitalist class do not have full control over the



The battle of Lewisham, 1977. By the late '70s the labour movement began to mobilise and swept the fascists from the streets.

regime.

In the 1930s, as the revolutionary wave swept across Europe, the capitalist class were prepared to take the gamble of handing over power to the fascist gangsters in central Europe. They hoped it would act as a bulwark against Stalinist Russia, which, despite all the horrors of repression was still looked upon as the 'mother of the revolution' by the mass of workers and the gains of the planned economy could be seen.

The capitalists' gamble proved a disaster. They were dragged into a war on the side of Stalinist Russia. The war left once mighty nations such as Britain totally impoverished; Germany divided into two and Stalinism left immeasurably stronger. In Eastern Europe, capitalism and landlordism were banished forever.

It is a lesson the capitalist class will never forget. Yet that does not mean they have dismissed dictatorial methods. In the postwar period, when the capitalist class have been faced with crisis, they have looked towards Bonapartism—the destruction of democratic rights to varying degrees, enforced by strict state control, usually in the form of a military dictatorship, but under control of the capitalist class. This has been the method of control favoured by the capitalists in the countries of Latin America and Southern Europe in the past.

The ruthlessness with which the ruling class can enforce this regime depends on the strength of the work-

ing class. The Thatcher government is leaning towards a form of 'parliamentary bonapartism' at present—the banning of trade unions at GCHQ, heavy financial penalties for secondary picketing, the police methods used in the miners strike. The severity of these measures are finely balanced against the strength of the working class—for example, the ruling class backed off taking the Yorkshire miners to court because they knew they would unleash a whirlwind of solidarity and change the course of the miners' strike.

The trade union movement is still too strong for the Tories to implement full dictatorial powers—but it is towards these methods that the Tories, and the capitalist class, are looking as the economic crisis deepens and they face an enraged working class. While they may denounce the fascists in the current infiltration scare, the 'democrats' of the Tory party are quite prepared to use dictatorial methods themselves. Indeed, the current row over the fascists has deflected attention from the vicious reactionaries ensconced in the hierarchy of the party.

The so-called 'Salisbury Group' is typical of this new Tory breed. Named after the Marquis of Salisbury, who resigned from parliament in protest at the passing of the 1866 Reform Act which effectively enfranchised the male working class, its leading lights include Roger Scruton, of *The Times*, Peregrine Worsthorpe, of *The Telegraph*, and George Gale of the *Dai-*

ly Express. Scruton, in the group's launching document, wrote that democracy "can be discarded without detriment to the civil well being as the Conservatives conceive it." Worsthorpe has said that "authority should be the by-word—not freedom." What makes these reactionaries more dangerous is that they have access to the mass media through which their propaganda can seep. These views of 'democracy' are not only the property of the right wing. Prominent wets such as Sir Ian Gilmour share this 'detached' view of democratic rights. His book, *Inside Right*, encapsulates the Tory attitude to democracy: "Conservatives do not worship democracy. For them majority rule is a device. . . Majorities do not always see where their best interests lie and then act upon their understanding. For Conservatives therefore, democracy is a means to an end and not an end in itself. . . And if it is leading to an end that is undesirable or inconsistent with itself, then there is a theoretical case for ending it."

As British capitalism plunges deeper into crisis, and if the labour movement does not take decisive action, it is around these elements that the ideas of reaction could conglomerate, possibly using the monarchy as a figure head—a 'saviour' for the nation, placed 'above' society. This Royalist Bonapartist tendency would gain its recruits from the middle class, driven to a frenzy by the inability of society to solve the crushing problems they face. The fascist gangs that existed would be drawn into this grouping—while the ruling class would have no intention of allowing the fascists to take power, they would be used as auxiliaries to a would-be bonapartist dictatorship, to be unleashed like wild dogs on the labour movement, breaking up meetings, attacking trade unionists etc. similar to the way they were used in Latin America, Spain and Italy.

It is towards these methods that sections of the Tory party and the capitalist class will look as they see their profit system plunge deeper into crisis and their aims of driving down workers' living standards—to satisfy the economic demands of an ailing capitalist system—repeatedly frustrated by an aroused labour movement. However, such a method of dictatorial rule could **only** occur after a decisive, massive defeat for the organised strength of the working class. The British labour movement is still one of the strongest sections of the working class in the world. It must ensure the frustrated dreams of the Tory middle class reactionaries never become a grim reality.

Did you see the boom?

The government continues to paint a rosier picture of Britain's economic prospects over the next two years than do the majority of economic forecasting institutes. The Treasury predicts a 3.1% growth in gross domestic product by the end of this year (and that includes North Sea oil and gas production) which is on par with the average of the predictions for growth by all the major forecasters. But while the Treasury will only admit to a decline in expansion for 1985 to 2.6%, the forecasters' average predicts only a 2% increase in 1985, and some forecasters expect growth to be well under 2%.

Even if the Treasury is proved right, output in manufacturing will only be restored to 1980 levels by 1985. UK producers continue to lose their share of the home market in manufactures, with manufacturing imports currently rising at over 12% a year.

As for the world economy, the Organisation for Economy Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicts a growth in production for the top 24 advanced capitalist countries of 3.5% this year, but this relative 'boom' compared to the last few years is dependent on the faster expansion of the US and Japanese economies, which are expected to grow at between 7-9% in the two years to the end of 1985. Europe, on the other hand, can expect only a 1½% growth rate per year.

If these production forecasts are achieved what will be the effect on prices and unemployment? The Treasury predicts a fall in inflation to 4% by the end of 1985, but most economic forecasters find this much too optimistic and expect prices to be rising by as much as 6%, some even say nearly 8%. The government refuses to publish any forecast on unemployment! But given the moderate prospects for growth and the continued low levels of profitability—despite the improvement in profit rates in 1983 they are still only at the poor 1980 levels—most forecasters predict a continuing (albeit slow) rise in unemployment levels.

On a world scale the OCED predicts 6% inflation during this year, and despite a fall in unemployment in the USA to 8%, the jobless rate will rise to a 12% average throughout Europe.

Many commentators predict that the ever growing balance of payments deficit for the US economy will eventually force down the value of the dollar

on world currency markets, setting up inflationary pressures on all the advanced economies. Further cuts in public expenditure, high interest rates and declining profits in manufacturing would be the result, leading to a new world depression by 1986-7. The 'boom' would be over before we noticed it.

North Sea oil and gas revenue, oil bonanza in decline

The government's own 1984 budget forecasts predict that the revenue going to the coffers of the Treasury from taxes on North Sea oil and gas profits will be more than 20% lower in five years time.

Last year the government received £9000m in revenue and this is expected to rise to £10,000m this year. Thereafter it will decline to around £9000m by 1988/9. The amount of revenue received by the government, assuming tax laws are unchanged, depends on the level of oil prices in sterling, the amount of oil and gas production and the size of investment by the North Sea oil companies. Any decline in these elements will reduce revenue.

Even if the predicted figures are achieved it is clear that the government will find it more and more difficult to continue to use North Sea oil revenues as a major contribution to unemployment benefit and so avoid either increased taxation or further cuts in benefits or other sectors of public spending. Over the next five years, assuming no change in the capitalist economic system in Britain, the number of unemployed requiring finance will increase while government funds to pay for people to do nothing will decline.

Third World debt crisis: another chapter

The recent riots in the Dominican Republic, following the government's attempts to raise prices across the board by 50%, emphasise the continuing debt crisis for the non-oil producing nations of the Third World, dealt with in the last issue of MIR 'Economic Notes'.

Over 50 people lay dead after riots

which came about because the International Monetary Fund would not advance the government of the Dominican Republic loans worth \$466m unless the government agreed to pay for all imports from foreign companies at a rate of exchange with the dollar one third below the official rate. That meant that all imports would automatically cost three times as much and the riots followed, but it had no choice if it was to meet its 'obligations'. Foreign debts now stand at \$2.6bn and a further \$800m loan from the international commercial banks is required to meet repayments of interest and advances. These banks would not make the loan without agreement to IMF terms. However as we see, the imposition of IMF terms has backfired on the bankers.

The Dominican Republic is not alone with such a dilemma. The right-wing Jamaican government had made much play of its reliance on the beneficence of the IMF and the bankers in reviving the economy along capitalist lines. But growing debts have forced the government to devalue the Jamaican dollar by 62% since November 1983. This has still failed to satisfy the IMF. Similarly in Guyana, the government is under pressure to meet IMF terms in order to obtain a rescheduling of its \$1.3bn foreign debt.

Because Argentina is a much more important economy and because its working-class is a powerful and volatile factor in the deliberations of the Argentine capitalists and their bankers, the government has been able to play brinkmanship with its foreign debtors. The government has refused to pay \$650m of overdue interest payments to US bankers, complaining that nearly two-thirds of all its export receipts and 8% of total national production was needed to meet just interest payments on foreign debts! This refusal to pay has already hit US banking profits. But this could be only the beginning.

The bankers are insisting that Argentina agree to an IMF package before they will advance further loans or a rescheduling of existing loans. The new Radical government refuses to agree to a package if it is likely to provoke a social upheaval that could kill 'the goose that lays the golden egg' for capitalism in the country. The bankers desperately search for other ways of regaining their loans while the government desperately hopes for more loans without having to provoke a struggle with the Argentine workers. Watch this space.

Tax burden increases worldwide

With the decline in the capitalist production of commodities and services over the last decade, the governments of the major capitalist nations have been forced to increase the burden of taxation and social security contributions in order to try and maintain levels of government financed services (without success).

Between 1971 and 1981, the percentage of gross national product taken up by taxes and social security contributions rose steadily for all OECD countries.

The tables also show that while the UK is a relatively highly taxed nation, when social security contributions are included, then the UK is only in the middle ranks, thus lending the lie to those Tories who complain that government taxation is a disincentive to the 'enterprise' of high income earners.

In fact, the increased taxation burden has fallen much more heavily on the income of ordinary people than it has on companies. As the tables below show, there has been a sharp increase in government demands in Belgium and Italy, with a small decline in the UK after a rise in the mid-seventies. For companies there has been little change anywhere.

Soviet agriculture: No bread on the table

The level of production of agricultural goods in the Soviet Union continues to fall far short of the expectations and exhortations of the bureaucratic rulers of that state. The latest figures on the grain harvest in 1983 show that it fell some 50m tonnes short of the official target of 243m tonnes.

Despite massively increased inputs of capital investment in machines and fertiliser (up to 120% in some areas) harvests had hardly increased at all. Clearly the waste, inefficiency and corruption of the bureaucratic planning methods of state officials continues to stifle agricultural growth. The deputy minister for tractor and machinery building has been fired for corruption, and Gorbachev, the heir apparent to Chernenko, has formed a new department of the central committee for agriculture and food processing in another vain hope to bring about effective changes.

In the meantime the Soviet Union is expected to spend 40% of its foreign currency earnings on food imports during 1984.

TABLE "A"

Taxes and social security contributions as a percentage of gross national product at factor cost.

including social security contributions.

	1971		1976		1981	
	Per- centage	Rank	Per- centage	Rank	Per- centage	Rank
Sweden	50	3	54	2	58	1
Norway	52	1	56	1	56	2
Denmark	51	2	48	4	55	3
Netherlands	47	4	51	3	51	4
Austria	44	5	45	6	50	5
Belgium	40	9	45	7	49	6
France	40	8	44	8	48	7
German Fed Rep	41	6	46	5	46	8
United Kingdom	40	7	40	10	44	9
Finland	38	10	44	9	41	10
Italy	31	13	33	13	39	11
Canada	37	11	37	11	38	12
Australia	29	14	34	12	36	13
United States	32	12	33	14	34	14
Switzerland	25	16	32	15	30	15
Greece	28	15	30	16	30	16
Japan	22	17	24	17	29	17

Excluding social security contributions.

	1971		1976		1981	
	Per- centage	Rank	Per- centage	Rank	Per- centage	Rank
Denmark	49	1	48	1	54	1
Norway	39	3	41	3	42	2
Sweden	40	2	42	2	41	3
United Kingdom	35	4	32	8	37	4
Australia	29	9	34	5	36	5
Finland	32	7	36	4	36	6
Austria	33	6	33	6	35	7
Belgium	28	11	31	10	34	8
Canada	34	5	32	7	34	9
Netherlands	30	8	31	9	30	10
German Fed Rep	28	10	29	11	28	11
France	25	13	26	12	27	12
Italy	19	16	19	16	25	14
United States	25	12	25	13	25	14
Switzerland	19	15	23	14	21	15
Japan	17	17	17	17	20	16
Greece	21	14	22	15	20	17

TABLE "B"

Percentage of total taxation (including social security contributions) derived from taxes on household income.

Percentage of total taxation (including social security contributions) derived from taxes on corporate income.

	1971	1976	1981		1971	1976	1981
Australia	39	45	46	Japan	20	18	18
Finland	38	44	41	Canada	12	12	12
Sweden	43	44	40	Australia	16	12	11
United States	33	34	38	United Kingdom	8	5	9
Switzerland	36	39	38	United States	12	12	8
Belgium	26	32	36	Switzerland	10	10	8
Canada	34	35	36	Netherlands	7	7	7
Italy	16	20	30	France	6	6	6
United Kingdom	34	39	30	Belgium	7	7	6
Austria	25	25	28	Italy	4	5	5
Netherlands	28	28	26	German F R	4	4	4
German FR	27	27	26	Austria	5	4	4
Japan	22	23	24	Finland	5	5	4
France	13	15	15	Sweden	3	3	2

Source: Economic Trends December 1983.

Book Reviews

CHILD OF THE
REVOLUTION

By Wolfgang Leonhard
Published by Ink Links,
price £5.95

Reviewed by
John Pickard



"I BEGAN to realise that I was now released from all the burdensome difficulties and adversities which I had experienced before. No more sleepless nights at railway stations. No more struggling to find a niche. No more trotting around offices. No more starvation." Thus Wolfgang Leonhard entered the Russian bureaucrat's world of special shops, chauffeur-driven cars, private hotel suites and all the other perks and privileges.

His book, "Child of the Revolution" is an autobiography of his own move from Germany to Russia in 1935, his rise through the Stalinist bureaucracy and his subsequent defection to Yugoslavia in 1949. It is a fascinating account of the workings of the system and well worth reading. Leonhard's book is not a dry political analysis of Eastern European Stalinism: on the contrary, it gives the reader a life-like description of the training of important functionaries; we see the system through the eyes of one who was involved in it.

When he went to Russia as a 13 year old, Leonhard had enormous illusions in the 'Soviet' system, fostered by his own family's involvement in the German KPD. Despite all the insecurities of the purges—his own mother disappeared in 1937—he remained a loyal supporter of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League (Komsomol). The attitude of many young émigrés was similar to his: the struggle against "Trotskyism, Zinovievism" and various other forms of 'sabotage' was absolutely justified, even if one or two individual cases of imprisonment seemed to be rather difficult to understand. Leonhard's years at school and college were years of unstinted faith in the Party line.

It was later in the Comintern School that the workings of the system

became more apparent to Leonhard and he realised that there was a 'niche' for him. At the school, émigrés of various nationalities were trained for about a year in the political line of the Comintern, in order to do political work in their home countries. The political line of the Comintern was hammered into the students day in and day out. Every single word had its significance, whether from Pravda or from the lectures. Like today's "Kremlin-watchers", the students soon learned that the change of one word could spell an important change in the party line. For example, Leonhard describes how the lectures and the line of Pravda during the war concentrated on the anti-fascist alliance of the USSR, USA and Britain. This theme was repeated *ad nauseam*. Then in one lecture there was a mention of the struggle against "sectarianism", without any further elaboration. The students pricked up their ears—here was a new line!—and listened carefully while for days on end the lectures were punctuated with the references to "sectarianism". Finally, a special lecture on the subject was arranged. It was now the duty of the students to be absolutely familiar with the struggle against "sectarianism": how to identify it, analyse it and condemn it. "It was hammered into us again and again, that nothing could be more dangerous than presenting excessive demands or isolating oneself from potential allies." Behind the change in the line (although Leonhard does not mention it) it is clear that the price the Allies are demanding for assistance to the USSR includes the toning down of all the economic and

social policies of the Communist Parties, and, later the dissolution of the Comintern itself.

The regime of the school was arranged so that nothing could divert the students' attention from their tasks: character-building was as much a part of training as the political line. From time to time the students were subjected to the humiliation of public "self-criticism" when long-forgotten remarks or jokes were brought up, analysed and deemed to be some sort of profound political deviation that had to be corrected. The students were strictly forbidden any alcohol or association with the opposite sex: even the students' own 'free time' was organised so that they all sat round stiffly and seriously singing German folk songs. (It reminded me of the Flash Gordon film when the wicked Ming exhorted, "all my subjects will rejoice and be merry... on pain of death"). Failure or expulsion from the school meant a total loss of position and prospects, indeed one of the expelled is later seen as a beggar.

The lectures, essays and not least the "self-criticism" sessions taught the students to say as little as possible to anyone, and when it was necessary to speak, to carefully weigh and measure the significance of each word, so as not to transgress the line.

Even in this cosy bureaucratic haven the spectre of Trotskyism loomed large. On the day of Trotsky's death a popular festival was suddenly announced. A worker told Leonhard.

"Do you know what some of the workers in the factory are saying? They say that this festival has been announced now just because of Trotsky's death."

I did not reply. In spite of the end of the purges, it was still too dangerous to talk about Trotsky. I thought it interesting, however, that in August 1940, thirteen years after Trotsky's expulsion from the party and eleven years after he had been exiled from the Soviet Union, there were still a few workers who did not believe the official version of Trotsky's death and considered Stalin capable of celebrating the death of a revolutionary by a popular festival.

It was quite clear that the students and the Komsomol members played no part whatsoever in determining exactly what the line was: there was not one iota of what could be called free debate and discussion. Even hard facts and information were restricted to those 'above'. Leonhard noted how the circulation of information was restricted

and the students were only given what they were supposed to know. "We were given the literature on the Trotskyist argument, which consisted of a cyclostyled document, carefully put together out of Lenin's statements against Trotsky (naturally omitting his far more numerous statements in favour of Trotsky), together with extracts of Stalin's writings. The document contained not a single line written by Trotsky or any of his followers... there was no risk whatsoever involved in putting into our hands speeches by Hitler or Goebbels, or manifestos from the bourgeois parties, or encyclicals from the Pope, because it was certain from the first that none of them would have the slightest influence on us. On the other hand, books by Trotsky and manifestos by anti-Stalinist organisations... would at least have made some impression on us."

"Our instructor, Klassner, became quite unrecognisable when he was dealing with the subject (of Trotskyism). Uncontrollable hatred filled his voice, and instead of expounding the relevant arguments his lecture became a flood of abuse—something unique in our lectures at the school."

Later on, by accident, Leonhard came across some articles by Trotsky in the American 'Militant' and he discovered that the Trotskyites "wrote in our own language", although his reading of Trotsky and his opinions on the matter do not seem to have gone too far. Leonhard explains the electric effect of this discovery. "I could not have been more startled if I had found a pack of dynamite." From that day on he hurried through his filing so that he could devote three or four minutes to reading Trotskyist publications, looking over his shoulder to see nobody was watching.

Later, Leonhard went to the part of Germany occupied by the Red Army and took part in establishing a government. He illustrates in a variety of ways the contrast between the aspirations of the workers who had fought in the underground—they wanted a socialist transformation—and, on the other hand, the emigré bureaucrats key positions in a "people's government". The German workers often set up their own anti-Nazi committees after liberation, but according to Leonhard, "every initiative from below was nipped in the bud." Ulbricht, later to become head of the East German regime, justified the 'line' of the KPD before a meeting of members: the new KPD charter "did not go beyond a general anti-fascist programme. Marx and Engels were not even mentioned: the term 'Socialism' did not occur... there were one or two surprises,

as when Ulbricht read out the phrase, 'Complete and unrestricted development of free commerce and private enterprise on the basis of private property'".

When Ulbricht was asked how this was different from any democratic programme he answered with a wink, "You'll soon see, comrade! Just wait a bit".

"When Ulbricht had finished his speech and the International had been sung, many of those present raised their fists in the old salute of the Red Front, which Party members had used before 1933. Ulbricht, together with his colleagues on the Presidium did not do so. Many others thereupon lowered their arms again. It was a small but typical example of the change which had taken place in the KPD since 1933". In reality it was the outward showing of changes that had been taking place since 1923.

The line of the new KPD—for a "bourgeois-democratic revolution to complete the tasks of the 1848 revolution"—overcame any independent movement of the workers themselves, alongside the important fact that the bureaucracy patronised by the Red Army had the effective control of the new state. The control over the levers of state power were later the means of overcoming the very bourgeois leaders and political figures that they had installed themselves in 1945, as the bureaucracy, balancing, Bonapartist-style, between the classes, moved to take over industry and the economy. East Germany became a model of Stalinist Russia.

The value of Leonhard's account is that it confirms from the inside the analysis outlined at the time by Ted Grant in the "Marxist theory of the State".

"The Stalinists proceeded to make an agreement with the shadow of the bourgeoisie... But the difference with Spain (in 1936) was that here the key positions in this so-called coalition, where the shadow of the bourgeoisie possessed no power, remained firmly in Stalinist hands."

Compare Leonhard. "In the early days of May, the Russian Commandants had established Mayors and local administrations of their own. Their appointments were often entirely capricious... One Commandant, on receiving the order to establish local Mayors in office. Simply went out into the street and seized by the arm the first passer-by whose face he liked for some reason, saying: 'Come here! You are now Mayor!'"

Ulbricht insisted on at least half the administrative posts being filled by "anti-fascist bourgeois". He said "it's

quite clear—it's got to look democratic, but we must have everything in our control."

Yet they could find nothing but Communists! Leonhard describes hilariously his hunt to fill the quota of "anti-fascist bourgeois", who in 1945 were as rare as the holy grail, to fill the administrative apparatus.

Leonhard eventually broke with the East German regime, but despite misgivings about the privileges and perks of the bureaucracy, he does not really explain why and how the bureaucracy arose and even less how it could be overcome. His break could be said to have been made from the standpoint of a 'reforming bureaucrat'—he seemed to have had illusions about Yugoslavia, as if Tito's break with Stalin somehow represented a fundamental difference between the two states, and he sought after East German independence from the USSR. He does not suggest at any stage that the workers themselves will ever settle accounts with the bureaucracy—but then the lack of confidence in the workers is itself part of the make-up of the bureaucrat. All in all, a book well worth reading to fit together more pieces in the puzzle, to complete, from a bureaucrat's point of view, the picture of how Stalinism operates.

KARL MARX: Man and fighter

By Nicolaievsky
and Maenchen-Helfen
Pelican: Price £3.95

Reviewed by
Mick Brooks

Penguin Books republished Nicolaievsky's biography of Marx on the centenary of his death. It seems a useful account concentrating on the life of Marx as a practical revolutionary rather than his theoretical works. But Nicolaievsky was a Menshevik. He misinterprets Marx's position on the 1848 revolutions in the spirit of class compromise.

Marxism developed in preparation for the revolutions which broke out in 1848. The "Red Year" in its turn provided the inspiration for the Russian Marxists, who were faced with a very similar situation at the turn of the century. The old order was crumbling

away. Who would carry through the revolution against Tsarism? What would that revolution achieve?

The Mensheviks believed that the coming Russian revolution would be bourgeois. It would install a democratic republic and clear the way for capitalist development. It would be led by liberal capitalists, whom the workers should support!

The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, believed that for the fullest and most rapid achievement of the tasks of the revolution, the peasantry, led by the working class, would have to be the vanguard fighters for democracy.

This position was developed further by Trotsky. The workers would indeed lead the struggle against Tsarism. However, having achieved power they would not stop at land reform and political democracy but make the revolution "permanent" by moving on to socialist tasks. This is, of course, exactly what happened in 1917.

Nicolaievsky attempts to justify his position by asserting that Marx held a Menshevik position in 1848. He speaks repeatedly of the "coalition of proletariat and revolutionary bourgeoisie." The *Communist Manifesto* too refers to Germany as "on the eve of a bourgeois revolution", and says that Communists "fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way."

This is a cautious "algebraic" formulation. How far the capitalist class would in fact "act in revolutionary way" was to be tested in the fire of events. But in no sense was a "coalition" between the workers and their natural enemies the capitalists advocated. The *Manifesto* goes on, to say, "But they (the Communists) never cease for a single instant to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that... after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin", and again "the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution".

According to Nicolaievsky as soon as he became editor of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* Marx dissolved the Communist League. The implication is clear—once a democratic paper was set up all independent working class action was superfluous.

The only evidence to this assertion is from a Communist later arrested and threatened with hard labour for his political activities. It was certainly in his interests to deny the existence of the League! Even the editors are forced to step in at this point and ex-

plain that Marx simply did not have the power to dissolve the League.

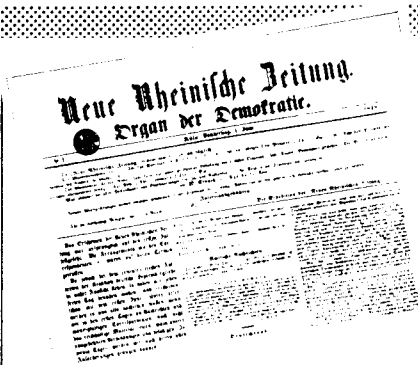
As for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Nicolaievsky asserts that "there was not a word about the special interest of the working classes or of the workers' special tasks in the German revolution" up to the end of 1848. Evidently in this key revolutionary year Marx behaved like a simple revolutionary democrat!

A few pages later, however, we find that half the wealthy shareholders of the paper defected after "articles about the June fighting". What was this "June fighting" to which this is the sole reference in the book?

In June 1848 the French working class rose against the capitalists and were bloodily put down. The democratic petty-bourgeois vacillated and stood to one side. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was the only paper in Germany to support the French workers.

At the end of 1848 Marx and Engels drew a balance sheet of the revolution. In articles such as "The Bourgeoisie and the Counter-revolution" they explained how the rising capitalist class, so far from destroying the reaction, were attempting to hide behind it for fear of the people. In practice, as Nicolaievsky has to recognise, "the revolution could only be accomplished against the bourgeoisie."

In Germany, particularly, the working class was a small minority. Marx looked at developments in France to reinvigorate the revolution—and understood that the petty-bourgeoisie would first be thrust forward by the new movement. The petty-bourgeois



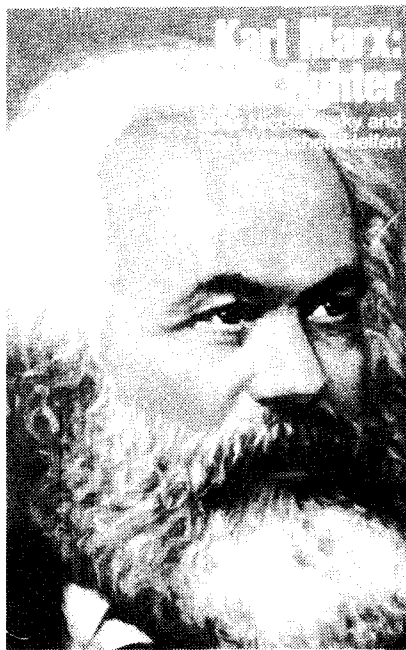
republicans in France allowed themselves to be out-manoeuvred in 1849, eternally vacillating between capitalists and workers, and their German equivalents too were defeated and dispersed!

The lessons of the revolution were drawn by Marx and Engels in their 'Address to the Communist League' of March 1850. For Nicolaievsky, however, this period "proves better than anything else the extent to which his judgement had been affected by the break-down of his immeasurable hopes." But it is Nicolaievsky's judgement which has been affected by the clear revolutionary line struck by the "Address". He asserts, "whether the document in all its detail really represents Marx's ideas is difficult to decide". No shred of evidence is provided for this.

What were the lessons of the 1848 revolutions? Precisely that "the independence of the workers must be restored." Secondly, the "Address" goes on to say, "this so treacherous role which the German liberal bourgeois played in 1848 against the people, will in the impending revolution be taken over by the democratic petty bourgeois, who at present occupy the same position in the opposition as the liberal bourgeois before 1848."

"While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible... it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power". This is necessary "not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world."

It was from this appraisal that Trotsky applied the theory of permanent revolution to bring the Russian working class to power in 1917—despite the desperate resistance of the Menshevik co-thinkers of Nicolaievsky. Permanent revolution remains the only hope for the workers and peasants of the under-developed countries, and the foundations for that perspective were laid down in Marx's revolutionary activity in the 1840's.



"PROLETARIAN PHILOSOPHERS"

by Jonathan Ree
(Oxford University
Press 1984).

Price £15

(Review by
Dudley Edwards)

"He will be a smart policeman who can arrest the spread of ideas". (Quotation from the old *Plebs* magazine which was published by the National Council of Labour Colleges during the 1920s.

This book gives a valuable picture of those more thoughtful working men and women, who during the first quarter of the century, strove to grasp the principles of scientific socialism as it was followed by Marx and Engels, elaborated by Lenin, Trotsky and others and skillfully expounded in Britain by the Scottish Marxist John Maclean, and the great Irish workers' leader James Connolly.

In drawing attention to these early worker students of Marx, the author has done the labour movement a service.

Unfortunately this long essay at no point sets out in a clear way the main principals of Marxism considered as a 'guide to action' which if properly used by the working-class can bring about the transformation of society and the carrying forward of mankind to the next necessary stage in the organisation of civilization. Where the author commits himself to any expression of view about the science of Marxism, he reveals those prejudices frequent among university lecturers on philosophy who see Marxism as a threat to their own trade of teaching various philosophic systems, from which their students may pick the one most suited to their taste. ("If you pays your money, you takes your choice".)

Here is an example of how that prejudice comes out in print:—"Who, might it be asked, could trust a social theory which is affiliated to the recedite, sectarian and implausible dogmas of Dialectical Materialism?"

Yet nowhere does he attempt to set out what this theory is; contenting himself with a priori condemnations of the above kind. Neither he, nor any of his professional colleagues can explain why this allegedly "implausible



Scottish Marxist Pioneer, John MacLean.

dogma" has been more successful in predicting the course of historical events over the last 100 years than any other social theory produced by university professors—nor why the influence of Marxism has steadily increased in all parts of the globe, even though government spokesmen and their university allies have presented a false, cut or dried, version of Marxism to the masses of workers.

This book does give a useful historical outline of two sections of proletarian would-be Marxists—those that supported the versions of Marxist philosophy conceived by the old National Council of Labour Colleges in the early '20s, and the ever-changing versions developed by the Communist Party theoreticians, constantly forced to adapt their theoretical positions to fit the ever-growing political zigs-zags of the Stalinist dominated Communist International of those years.

The early NCLC versions of Marxist philosophy suffered from the lack of any serious knowledge of the writings of Lenin, the most successful revolutionary leader of the 20th century, who adhered to the materialist philosophy of Marx, exactly defined as dialectical materialism. He found it a guide to successful action.

The school of Communist theoreticians lambasted this early school of

working men and women because they did not acknowledge the completely incorrect additions to Marxist philosophy made by Stalin. Nor would they adapt their theoretical notions to the opportunist political tactics of Stalinism which sprang from Stalin's theory of 'Socialism in one country'—the idea of building a socialist society alone without the assistance of working-class governments in other lands.

Because this controversy between two distorted versions of Marxism ended in confusion we are told that the whole materialist philosophy of Marxism "collapsed", when in fact a new generation of working-class Marxists are now coming into being, many of whom are gathering around the *Militant* paper. Young workers in particular are learning to apply Marxism as a guide to action.

Since this review charges the author with nowhere attempting to define what he means by dialectical materialism, although he abuses it, it would be well to conclude with such a definition. Two quotations are taken from Engels, who formulated this materialist theory, and Trotsky, who brilliantly continued to express those ideas in the 20th century.

Engels tells us that "... Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion of nature, human society, and thought. (Engels)—Anti-Dühring.) This scientific method came to be known as dialectical materialism because Marx and Engels saw that universal matter preceeded the appearance of Man and therefore man and his ideas are the product of material change.

The brief definition given by Engels is rounded off by a more detailed explanation from Trotsky written 60 years later.

"The essence of Marxism consists in this; that it approaches society concretely, as a subject for objective research, and analyses human history as one would a colossal laboratory record. Marxism appraises ideology as a subordinate integral element of the class structure of society, as a historically conditioned form of the development of the productive forces. Marxism deduces from the productive forces of society the inter-relationships between human society and surrounding nature, and these in turn are determined at each historical stage by man's technology, his instruments and weapons, his capacities and methods for struggle with nature. Precisely this objective approach arms Marxism with the insuperable power of historical foresight." (Leon Trotsky—address to Mendeleyev Congress Sept. 1925 in USSR)

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