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The political economy of starvation

BENGAL 1943

For the first time in decades, food has become an object of concern for all the world's people, and famine and starvation deaths loom as a real possibility for many of them. Confronted by the humanitarian rhetoric of academic experts and political leaders, it is worth recalling the last major world famine and seeing the lessons that can be drawn from it.

This was in Bengal in 1943, the last famine for which no relief grains were available to compensate for bad weather and crop failures, the last famine in which millions, not tens or hundreds of thousands, died.

By the Second World War, the majority of people in this crucial part of the British empire in India were living at subsistence or starvation levels, dying in normal times of malnutrition-related diseases. Official doctors' reports noted that in the best of times only 22 per cent of the population of Bengal was 'well nourished', while 31 per cent were 'very badly nourished' (comparable all-India figures were 39 per cent and 26 per cent).[1] Crop failures in 1940 and 1942 left drastic internal shortages of supply, but it was the war which made the situation desperate. Shipments from other areas of the world were made impossible by Churchill's wartime edict of January 1943 which ordered a reduction of sailings in the Indian ocean by 60 per cent; Indians and the British military in the area, he said, 'must live on their stocks'.[2] Then in 1942 the

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Japanese conquest of Burma cut off the major outside source of rice for Bengal and all of India. In the face of this grim challenge, the British rulers of India did nothing. Within India itself autarchy developed and each province imposed barriers against movements of food: Bengal was starved of food from within and without. Prices were allowed to rise, and did so – from slightly over 3 rupees a maund* in 1938 to 7 rupees in 1941-2 and then to over 30 rupees by 17 May 1943. And these were minimum prices in Calcutta; higher prices were reported in many districts. By the middle of 1943, rice was becoming absolutely unavailable to the poor.

People began to die in the districts, perishing at the edge of villages, by the sides of roads. Millions poured into Calcutta to die homeless and helpless on the streets, their emaciated bodies often devoured by ravenous dogs before the life had even gone out of them. They fell from acute starvation, from dysentery caused by starvation, and from severe epidemics of malaria, smallpox and cholera associated with the famine. The official government report estimated that one and a half million deaths had resulted from famine by 1944, a concurrent and independent Indian estimate from the University of Calcutta Anthropology Department gave three and a half million dead.[3]

Who was responsible for the Bengal famine? No one, according to one of the most well-known US agricultural experts, Lester Brown. In a book co-authored with Gail Finsterbush, Brown described the Bengal famine as specifically *not* a man-made disaster:

> The last great famine due to vicissitudes of weather occurred in West Bengal in 1943 when flooding destroyed the rice crop costing some 2 to 4 million lives. Relief measures were not introduced until several weeks after the famine had begun because of the difficulty of wartime supply and communication.[4]

But this was a whitewash: 'vicissitudes of weather' was not something which even the official British inquiry commission had dared to cite as the major cause of the famine, and 'difficulty of wartime supply' was a strange way to look at the wartime actions of the colonial government. Contrary to the glib dismissal of such contemporary 'experts', the 1943 famine in Bengal was 'man-made' from beginning to end – made through the political and economic effects of imperialism.

*1 maund (Indian) = 82 $^{2}/_{7}$ lbs

The major underlying factor was the long-term stagnation of Indian agricultural production under colonialism, a stagnation resulting from the failure of the British government to make significant investments in agriculture (for instance, in irrigation) and from their maintenance in power of a parasitic class of landlord money-lenders who were concerned about increasing rents from tenants rather than developing the land. By the 1930s, about 1½ to 2 million tons of rice were being imported yearly into India (equivalent to 6-7 per cent of the total production), and of this an average of 1½ million tons per year between 1931 and 1939 came from Burma.[5]

The second major cause of the Bengal famine was that in the face of this obvious dependence on Burmese rice — a dependence which had existed for two decades — the British government did nothing to avert disaster when Japanese conquest cut off this source of food. The colonial government — which had dragged the Indian people into the war without any major concessions to the national movement, and which had made major demands on wheat stocks to feed the Indians drafted into the British army — made no preparations for food shortages and did little to alleviate the famine that came. In fact, in the face of the 1942 crop failure and the cutting off of Burmese supplies, rice was allowed to flow *out* of Bengal itself: in the first seven months of 1941 there had been net imports of rice into Bengal of 296,00 tons, while in the first seven months of 1942 a net 185,000 tons had been exported from Bengal.[6] This indifference of the government was itself a fact of imperialism, not simply an inevitable aspect of wartime 'difficulty of supply' — as an Indian member of the famine commission wrote:

> On looking back, one is astonished at the unpreparedness of India to meet the food situation during an emergency. In England a complete food scheme had been worked out before the war started. It has not been possible to ascertain whether His Majesty's Government had, at any stage, suggested a similar study of the food problem in India in case of war.[7]

The long-term cause of the famine was the cumulative effect of imperialism on the agricultural system which made India as a whole and Bengal in particular food-deficit areas. The short-term cause was the callous — and racist — indifference of an alien government in the face of wartime turmoil and weather failures. The lessons of Bengal, 1943, are important to remember

because both of these aspects of the political economy of imperialism — long-term failures of production short-term unwillingness to insure supply — are still with us. And also with us are the voluminous writings of food and population experts like Lester Brown who continue to treat 'population' as the primary villain of the coming world food crisis in an effort to avoid analysis of the economic system which determines the production and distribution of food.

FOOD CRISIS, 1975

The major form of the world food crisis today is the growing dependency of the subsistence population of Third World countries upon the affluent imperialist nations, primarily the United States, for their basic food supply.[8]

In 1971 the United States controlled 13 per cent of the world's production and 36.8 per cent of its exports of wheat; 41.5 per cent of the production and 50.5 per cent of the exports of corn for grain; 73 per cent of the production and 93.5 per cent of the exports of soya beans; and 1.3 per cent of the production but 23.8 per cent of the exports of rice. Strikingly, even in that pre-eminently Asian crop, rice, the US is the major seller on the world market. By 1972-3 the US share in world food exports had risen to 43.9 per cent of wheat, 57.1 per cent of animal feed grain, 58.1 per cent of oilseeds, and 26 per cent of rice. About half of these exports go to Third World countries: grain imports by non-oil producing developing countries jumped from $2,800 million in 1972 to about $7 billion in 1973, to an estimated $8-9 billion in 1974, most of the imports being from the US and Canada.[9]

In other words, the old image of the 'colonial division of labour' as one in which colonized countries provided agricultural supplies and raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods has to be modified: the Third World is still exporting primarily raw materials (including agricultural raw materials, i.e., cash crops such as coffee, tea, bananas) but is importing basic agricultural foodgrains as well as manufactured goods. The US today has a bigger stranglehold over the world's food market than the Arabs do of oil, and this situation is expected by the experts to continue:

Two points of overwhelming importance emerge in the projections of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. First, the role of the U.S. as the major

supplier of food in the international markets is expected to expand. Second, the dependence of the lower-income countries on food imports is expected, by 1985, to be nearly double the 1970 level. The two points add up to a heavy dependence of the developing countries on the United States as a supplier of food.[10]

This is the basic fact that has to inform our understanding of coming famines. Just as Bengal in 1943 was an established deficit area for foodgrains, so the Third World as a whole has now become a major deficit region. Localized 'vicissitudes of weather' — floods, monsoon failures, whatever — will only produce more urgent needs for imported supplies to make up the deficit, and control of these supplies (when they are available) will rest in the hands of governments as unresponsive to the needs of Third World countries as the British government was to the Bengalis under its rule. The failure to respond or the unavailability of supplies (with food stocks at an all-time low, this is also a real possibility) will result, once again, in millions of famine deaths.

The food crisis, then, takes the shape of imperialist relations between nations, and the problem of impending famine reduces itself to the question: why have Third World countries become deficit areas in foodgrain production?

'FOOD IS POWER'

The American economy in its present form is absolutely dependent on agricultural exports. Not steel, nor transistor radios, nor even old armaments, but wheat, corn, rice and soya beans are the major products it has to sell the world. In 1973 agricultural exports of $17.7 billion overcame a trade deficit of $7.6 billion in other areas, and estimated agricultural exports for 1974 of $19 billion will contribute about $10 billion to the US balance of payments.[11] As Agricultural Secretary Earl Butz has crudely put it: 'food is power', or in the words of Hubert Humphrey:

> before people can do anything they have got to eat. And if you are looking for a way to get people to lean on you and to be dependent on you, in terms of their cooperation with you, it seems to me that food dependence would be terrific. . . .[12]

The primary fear about the United States' own economic needs, highlighted by the oil crisis and OPEC, is the problem of raw materials. Increasing US economic power has not removed the need for, nor the growing dependence on imports of, raw

materials. Experts stress that the US already has to import more than 90 per cent of eight basic raw materials; and Lester Brown himself notes that by the end of the century the US 'will be dependent primarily on foreign sources' for twelve of the thirteen raw materials 'required by a modern economy'.[13]

The tie-up, then, is between US need for raw materials, and Third World countries' need for food, and this equation – and consequently, the value of food dependence in the eyes of the policy-makers – has been present in ruling class thinking from the beginning of recent discussion of the 'food crisis'. Humphrey's own proposals for a 'world food action' programme (which would include the US offering to sell at least $1 billion annually of food at below-market prices) argued that this 'new program of expanded food aid should be matched immediately' by a lowering of oil prices by oil-exporting nations.[14] Thus, Ford's speech to the United Nations (on 18 September 1974), which explicitly linked food and oil, was built on very clear groundwork and was only a forecast of the kind of food/raw materials 'bargain' the US will seek to enforce in the years ahead. It was because there was a failure to enforce this 'bargain' that the US withheld additional commitments of food aid at the World Food Conference in Rome – and the effort will continue to be made. Indeed 'food blackmail' has been used in the past – in 1967 when the US held up shipments of relief wheat until the Indian government signed agreements favourable to US fertilizer companies; in 1973 when the US refused to sell wheat to the Allende government[15] – and it will be used in the future.

Food, in fact, may be the biggest weapon in the economic arsenal of American imperialism in the famine years to come. And those food and population experts who serve the agencies of this imperialism have no motive to look for any solutions that will really end food dependence.

POPULATION AND CONSUMPTION MYTHS

For over two decades 'population' has been the major villain in discussions of the food crisis, and it remains so. Here Lester Brown is typical:

> At the global level, population growth is still the dominant cause of an increasing demand for food. Expanding at about 2% per year, world population will double in little more than a generation. . . . Fully four-fifths of the annual increment in world population of an estimated 70 million occurs in

the poor countries.[16]

But population adds not only to the mouths that consume food, but to the hands, muscles and brains that produce food and other products. Population growth by itself will lead to higher output; unless we assume that land is some inherently limiting factor in agricultural development (and that these limits have been reached in a particular case), increased numbers of workers will produce more food. The real question remains one of productivity: per capita agricultural development.

In addition, the experts are now pointing to a 'consumption factor': the rising demand for meat and dairy products in advanced countries. Here we come to the 'conversion factor' familiar to readers of such books as *Diet for a Small Planet*: beef requires seven pounds of grain in feed to produce one pound of meat; pork requires about three and a half; chicken two. Thus in the US and Canada, per capita grain utilization is approaching one ton a year, with only about 150 pounds consumed directly as bread, pastries and cereals, and the rest consumed indirectly in the form of meat, milk and eggs. In Third World countries in contrast, people consume on an average 400 pounds of grain per year, almost all directly.[17] Thus, the rising demands for wheat and dairy products in the US, western Europe, Japan and the Soviet Union lead increasing amounts of land, water and fertilizer to be used for livestock feedgrains, while grain that could be consumed either by humans or animals is sold for animal feed to the wealthier nations with substantive purchasing power, with the result that food prices become prohibitive for Third World countries. A primary example of this, of course, was the Soviet wheat purchase of 1972.[18]

What has to be pointed out is that such 'consumption patterns' are not an automatic result of rising living standards or insatiable consumption needs of the masses in imperialist countries. The crucial questions that have to be asked are: what agribusiness interests promote the production and sale of such resource-demanding food? and what underlying processes determine the miserably low purchasing power and low effective demand of the masses of Third World countries? Is land an inherent limiting factor? Most agricultural economists, by now, seem to have given up this Malthusian notion. Some of them will even argue that throughout history, it has been an increase in population that has provided the major stimulus for changes in agricultural technique leading to rising production, rather than the other way around.[19]

Certainly the case of Africa – a continent which is not suffering from 'overpopulation' or limited land by any definition and which has yet had the greatest continuing declines of per capita food production and accelerating dependence on food imports[20] – would seem to indicate that population pressure on the land is not the primary factor in present Third World food dependency.*

But the same point can be made looking at an 'overcrowded' country such as India. If we compare India to the US in Table 1 we get a sense of peasants hopelessly toiling on ever-decreasing plots of exhausted earth, with only 1.9 hectares per worker as compared to 142.6 hectares per worker in agriculture in the US. But compare India to Japan – where available land per worker is about the same – and these 'land limits' dissolve and the real factors of technological inputs leap into prominence. Give India seventy times its present fertilizer input and 300 times its present tractor horsepower, and its land could yield six to seven times its present output, and it could presumably do so by either maintaining present numbers of workers on the land or releasing them for industrial employment.

The question, of course, is not whether India could jump all at once to Japanese levels of technological input and production. The question rather is why the gradually increasing Indian labour force cannot find available to it the concurrent increase in technological inputs that would allow it to achieve increasing *productivity* in agriculture. The issue is not one of limits of land, but of the limits of a social organization that fails to generate investment in agriculture leading to growth. And the real question, to repeat, is not the growth of total output, but the growth of per capita production.[21] Any analysis of the problem of food dependency in Third World countries must focus not on the patterns of *consumption*, but on the much more basic and determining factor of *production*, on the historically developing changes in the forces and relations of production.

In the remainder of this paper I propose to give such a survey. It will be tentative because there is not as yet much Marxist literature dealing with the issue of agriculture in both capitalist and colonized countries. But it seems crucial to provide at least some beginning

Note on Population: This section does not intend to assert that population growth is no problem at all, either on a world scale or for individual countries. Limiting population *is* a goal that even socialist countries such as China are concerned about. Rather we want to stress that (a) population is not the major *cause* of food crises and famines; and (b) that taken as a 'problem', overpopulation can probably only be solved, for Third World nations, in a socialist system.[22]

TABLE 1

	Land (000s hectares)	*Male Workers in Agriculture (in 000s)*	*Fertilizer (000s of metric tons)*	*Tractor Horsepower*
India	177,200	91,339	599	1,587
Japan	7,700	4,405	1,780	29,431
US	439,800	3,088	9,380	195,625

	Fertilizer per hectare	*Horsepower per Worker*	*Horsepower per hectare*	*Hectares per worker*
India	.003	.02	.01	1.9
Japan	.220	6.68	3.82	1.7
US	.021	63.35	.44	142.6

PRODUCTIVITY

	Yield per hectare (in wheat units)	*Yield per male worker (in wheat units)*
India	1.13	2.2
Japan	7.54	13.1
US	0.87	123.5

(Figures computed from Hayami and Ruttan, *Agricultural Development: An International Perspective*, pp. 308-323 for 1965)

hypotheses and a framework for further discussion. Therefore, the development of agricultural production as an aspect of imperialism, with a focus on India, will be discussed.

CAPITALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND FEUDALISM IN AGRICULTURE

Most of the gains in production in pre-industrial agriculture (and Hayami and Ruttan estimate feasible sustained rates of growth at 1.0 per cent a year[23]) came about through increased application of labour-power to the land, and have resulted in expanding the area under cultivation or, more precisely, changing cultivation techniques for more intensive use of existing land. Thus, historically, communities shifted cultivation techniques from long-fallow methods (burning down forest areas for a season or two, then

moving on while they grew back) to short-fallow techniques (clearing bush or grass areas) to settled annual-cropping or, later, multiannual cropping agriculture. As they did so more inputs were required in the form of draught animals, ploughs and irrigation; but perhaps more importantly there was an intensified application of labour-power, both in the form of expanding populations of workers and increased labour hours required per worker. Thus while larger surpluses became available and could be used to support various non-producing classes of the feudal and bureaucratic societies, they depended on the larger populations and growing intensity of work on the land.

The 'agricultural revolution' of eighteenth-century England that preceded and made possible the industrial revolution was of this nature. The new system made possible the provision of food by existing numbers of agricultural workers for a rapidly rising population of industrial workers.

However, the Industrial Revolution itself made possible a very different kind of revolution in agricultural production by increasing capital inputs available to agriculture rather than simply new techniques using more labour. Industrial invention, science and technology brought with them two new types of inputs: (1) mechanization (the development of farm machinery), and (2) biological and chemical technology (the development of new varieties of plants, fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides). Some agricultural economists have argued that these two types of inputs are related to two 'alternative paths of technological development': mechanization tends to be *labour-saving,* making possible cultivation of larger areas of land by fewer workers and thus leading to a higher output per worker, while biological and chemical technology is *land-saving,* making possible more intensive use of land and leading to higher outputs per acre.[24]

While these distinctions may not be absolute (both mechanization and biological-chemical technology can be either land or labour saving depending on specific needs), it is striking that existing imperialist countries have followed widely diverse paths to 'agricultural modernization'. At one extreme stands the US, with extremely high productivity per worker but very unimpressive per-hectare productivity; at the other stands Japan, with much lower productivity per worker but very high productivity per hectare. In between are the major European countries.

These differences are related to the historical development of world capitalism. The US is the paradigm of the 'white settler

colony' in agriculture as in other areas. White settlers in North America, Australia and New Zealand found vast stretches of conquered land available to them with little pressure to respect the land-use patterns of previous inhabitants. With capital flows also preceding, by and large, from Third World colonies to Europe and the white dominions, the benefits of industrialization made possible technical inventions and mechanization that allowed farmers to increase their acreage beyond the wildest dreams of Asian or European peasants. The patterns of relatively low output per acre but extremely high output per worker continue to characterize these regions; not until the 1950s did the US achieve what Lester Brown calls the 'area-to-yield' transition or a 'yield take-off' primarily by increasing productivity of corn.[25]

Scientific developments and governmental programmes that aimed at increasing productivity through biological and chemical technology began not in England or the new continents, but in Europe, and they passed from there to Japan, which began its industrialization with much more limited supplies of land. As a result Japan pioneered new varieties of seeds, fertilizer and irrigation; with the help of government programmes and enterprising farmers released from the constraints of feudalism, it achieved its 'yield per acre' take-off in the late 1890s. Japan and its former colony Taiwan (developed consciously to provide food for Japanese urban workers) remain today leaders in productivity per acre, and mechanization is used in Japan not to expand acreage but to make possible multiple cropping.[26] Most European countries have followed paths to development somewhat between Japan and the 'white settler' colonies.

The crucial point is that with the rise of capitalism, the countries that industrialized also modernized their agriculture and increased productivity along one path or another, and perhaps for the first time in history ended the fear of famine:

> Only in the course of the last 200 years since the Industrial Revolution has an adequate diet come to be assured to most of that third of mankind living in the rich countries of North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Japan and Australia.[27]

Quite the opposite happened in the Third World. Not only did capitalist expansion under imperialism *not* lead to a world-wide development of agriculture, it seems to have resulted in an intensification of famines in the colonized areas of the world.[28] The figures are grim. India, the longest fully-colonized society, had the

worst record even before the Bengal famine of 1943: 10 million deaths (a third of the population) in Bengal in 1769-70, only a decade after the initial conquest and plunder of that region; 1 million dead in 1866 again in the east; 1½ million dead in 1869 in Rajasthan; 5 million in 1876-8; 1 million in 1899-1900 – the population of colonial India was literally ravaged by death and disease. China too had major famines beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century (identified as the beginning of the 'semi-colonial' period), with 9-13 million dead in northern China in 1876-9 and 2 million dead in Hunan in 1929. Famines also occurred in Africa and Latin America and, strikingly enough, the only major famine in Europe in this period was in its well-known 'white' colony, with 2-3 million dying in the potato famine in Ireland in 1846-7.

The deadly count of the famines was an index of the stagnation of agricultural production under colonial rule. However, it has to be emphasized that this was a stagnation of foodgrain production alone, the other side of which was a development of the production of cash crops, luxury crops, plantation crops by European governments and European entrepreneurs. As the Royal Institute of International Affairs so eloquently put it in 1932:

> Two generations ago, the banana was a luxury; oranges were a seasonal fruit only; the use of tobacco was far less; a century ago tea and coffee were luxuries for the rich alone, and cocoa unknown. Today, bananas, oranges all the year around, tea, coffee and cocoa figure in the humblest domestic budget in North America and Great Britain. Forty years ago butter, olive oil, beef fat and lard were practically the only edible fats available in western Europe; today the oil from cotton-seed, ground-nuts, sesame, palm kernels, the coconut, soybean etc. provide margarine, cooking and salad oils. . . soap, candles and lubricating oils. . . . Man and beast are fed increasingly from tropical countries. Industry demands rubber in quantities undreamed of 30 years ago, and other 'colonial' raw materials are increasingly in great demand.[29]

Diversification of diets for the population of the imperialist centres; famine for the peoples of Asia and Africa: colonial agriculture was thus a prime example of what has come to be called the 'development' of underdevelopment'. In addition, the Third World suffers from 'unequal exchange', with prices for their traditional exports falling behind prices for the goods they import.

But basically the stagnation of foodgrain production was due to a failure of investments of capital and technological inputs into agriculture. And that failure was two-pronged: a failure by the

colonial governments to sponsor agricultural production; and an inability or unwillingness of the classes on the land (landlords, peasants) to make such investments.

In the first instance, colonial governments were interested not in development, agricultural or otherwise, but in the extraction of capital by European entrepreneurs. In addition the colonial social formation served to *block* the development of productive forces in agricultural foodgrain production as a result of the kind of political alliances that were necessary for imperialist governments to maintain themselves.

In Africa, for instance, where there were white settler colonies, as in Zimbabwe, the colonial government intervened to prevent African farmers from competing with the settlers.[30] More generally, the 'labour migration system' involved a pattern whereby African males were forced through taxation to seek seasonal employment in mines and farms at subsistence wages, while their wives and older relatives maintained themselves on ever-decreasing areas of land by traditional subsistence farming.

In most of the colonial world, however, and particularly in Asia, the blockage of productive forces occurred as a result of the imperialist alliances with traditional 'feudal' elites who had controlled the land. In societies such as India, imperialism established private property in land and a system of courts to back it up, and brought agricultural production into contact with a world market; but within the framework of this 'commodity production' the land continued to be owned or controlled by a class of parasitic landlords — an amalgam of landlords, merchants, and money-lenders, whose interests lay in screwing up rents on the tenants rather than in entrepreneurial investment in production. The majority of actual cultivators were impoverished; many were forced into landlessness and a large percentage became wage-labourers of some form or another; but most retained some claim to the land and even landless labourers did not become a true proletariat since debt bondage to landlords and money-lenders tended to replace legal forms of bondage in maintaining them in semi-serf positions. Landlords had little incentive to invest in the land; tenants and poor peasants lacked the resources; production techniques stagnated.

For the peoples of Asia and Africa, therefore, development in agriculture as well as industry depended on not only breaking the ties of colonialism but also destroying the power of the landlord/money-lender/merchant classes maintained by colonialism, a

process that only began to be attempted — with varying degrees of seriousness and success — after the end of the Second World War. By that time, however, the patterns of 'colonial agriculture' had taken their toll.

The newly 'independent' governments of Asia and Africa did show concern about the situation of food dependency; the most important step that was taken was undoubtedly the institution of limited land reforms — often impelled by the popular demands expressed even in bourgeois-controlled liberation movements — to check, if not abolish, the power of feudal landlords. This did have results. To take India as an example, where agriculture had been stagnant per capita during the period of colonial rule, foodgrain production grew at the rate of 2.9 per cent between 1950 and 1965. This was an increase that reflected the jump in production in the world as whole during this period, and it was undoubtedly due to the land reforms which deprived absentee landlords of much of their power and gave increased control to sections of the rich peasantry genuinely interested in investment and production.[31]

But just as the land reforms themselves were limited — limited not only because they gave nothing to the poorest peasants and agricultural labourers, but also because they left a significant degree of parasitic landlordism and tenancy — so the gains in productivity were limited: 2.9 per cent (total, not per capita) a year was simply not enough. Only China, North Korea and North Vietnam thoroughly destroyed the old landlord classes and pioneered collective forms of production, and only China and North Korea showed dramatic transformations of the pre-war situation. For India, as for the rest of the Third World, the agrarian class structure had been modified but not transformed, production growth began to fall to the level of population growth, class tensions increased in the countryside, the economy proved too fragile to withstand years of bad weather, and the impoverishment of the majority increased. 1967, the year of drought and famine in Bihar, was also, for India, the year of the Naxalbari rebellion — the mark of a new explosion of revolutionary anger and a growing popular consciousness that independence had not transformed Indian society.

There had been no overriding concern among US policy-makers or agricultural experts about Third World food dependency in the 1950s, largely because the US had come out of the war with large surplus stocks of grain, and the PL 480-Food for Peace programme proved to be a very profitable way to dispose of them.

By the middle 1960s, however – when US food surpluses were withering away, when revolutionary turmoil against 'national bourgeois' governments in the Third World was growing, when famine and rural poverty seemed to threaten the world status quo – concern developed and a campaign was begun by the big US foundations and agricultural advisers and experts to increase the food production of Third World countries themselves: this was the context of the 'green revolution'.

What the term referred to was the use of new varieties of seeds (the so-called HYVs, or high-yielding varieties) which made possible intensive use of fertilizer and thus, with appropriate irrigation, much higher production levels – in other words, the same kind of biological and chemical technology in agriculture which the Japanese had pioneered decades before. But the 'Green Revolution' did not simply mean the use of technology applied to agriculture: it meant the belief that technologies could be developed at large foundation-sponsored centres, spread on a massive scale and adopted by Asian and African peasants *without any basic change in agrarian class relations.* Gone was the idea that 'traditional' peasant values and social institutions had to be changed to achieve development; gone was the idea that land reform – promoted in limited ways by the US after the war as a counter to revolutionary mobilization – was necessary to change agriculture. Now there was a 'new orthodoxy' among agricultural experts that technological inputs alone were the key and that these could be adopted by the richest farmers and then spread to the poorer ones.[31] The 'Green Revolution', with so-called 'miracle seeds' developed by Ford and Rockefeller foundation research, proposed to reverse the trend to 'disequilibrium' in world agriculture and make Third World countries self-sufficient in basic food needs without the need for prior social changes.

What appears amazing today is how it was taken for granted, by the late 1960s and early 1970s that the 'Green Revolution' was achieving the goal of self-sufficiency. Major spokesmen for the phenomenon – such as Lester Brown – wrote of 'seeds of change' and made glowing predictions. Even radical critics like Henry Cleaver and Hari Sharma – who pointed out the severe socio-economic problems inherent in the 'new technology', such as the growing class tensions in the countryside due to its failure to better the life of the poor majority in any significant way, and the increased dependency for fertilizer and other inputs that it led to – continued to believe that it was at least achieving its professed

goal of agricultural self-sufficiency. Many of the radicals and Marxists, in fact, tended to analyse it as a part of the development of capitalism in agriculture in Third World countries and to see its problems as linked with the development of capitalist, as opposed to the maintenance of 'semi-feudal', relations of production.[33]

Now of course these hopes have vanished. India has had to import grain again after monsoon failures and famine in 1971 and 1972. The Philippines' export years (both of them?) have vanished and 'the food crisis looks likely to remain a semi-permanent feature'.[34] Burma, once the world's largest exporter of rice, is able to export only insignificant amounts, and only Thailand remains a net food exporter in Asia and, along with China, the only major Asian exporter of rice.

What is the problem? There have been some very specific failures in irrigation projects; there has been the fact that the new varieties have not proved to be the 'miracle seeds' they were touted as, often liable to disease and in many respects not as good as 'local improved varieties'. There was the drastic monsoon failure of 1972-3 and, more recently, the drastic rise in oil and thus fertilizer prices which threatens to destroy whatever gains increasingly fertilizer-dependent peasants in countries like India have made. It is these more recent occurrences — weather and the rising prices of fertilizer — that are now being publicly blamed for the failure of the 'Green Revolution' to keep up with population growth.

But the truth goes deeper: the 'Green Revolution' was never achieving what it was supposed to achieve: self-sufficiency and a reversal of the food dependency of the Third World. Production trend charts of Brown and Schertz[35] show no differences in output trends between 'developed' and 'developing' countries before or after 1965 (roughly the first year of the Green Revolution). Charts showing the increasing acreage spread of the new varieties would appear to be inflated since large numbers of peasants adopted them only partially, used fertilizers only partially. The 'Green Revolution' has not 'faltered' or 'struck a snag'![36] — it never really got off the ground.

To take India again as a paradigm example, many have argued that the 'Green Revolution' was only an exalted name for a '5% growth rate in wheat production', and astute observers have been quick to note that overall growth rates were higher in the 1950s:

Growth in all-India food-grain output from 1967/68 to 1971/72, during the years of the High Yielding Variety Program and after the calamitous

drought of 1965/66 and 1966/67, has averaged 2.5% per year, somewhat less than the overall growth rates during 1949/50 to 1964/65 and only about equal to the population growth rate.[37]

The most well-known proponents of the new technology have been forced to admit and try to explain away its failure. Wolf Ladejinsky, for instance, claims that too much was expected of it, that the new technology should not have been called a 'revolution' in the first place – and notes that it could not fairly be said to be responsible even for the high-yield year of 1971-2 in India.[38] Even the best years of the new technologies, the HYVs, fertilizer and irrigation had at most led to the creation of 'enclaves' of development in countries like India and Mexico (Ladejinsky, for example, admitting this, estimated the India enclave as extending to 15 per cent of the cultivated area).[39]

It is important to be clear about the situation. First, to admit that the 'Green Revolution' has failed – failed not just because it has led to increasing impoverishment of poor peasants or increasing dependence for fertilizer imports, but failed in increasing production or transforming the relations of production in agriculture.

Second, the reasons for the failure must be stressed. Here we can rely on the (reluctant) testimony even of bourgeois scholars and journalists. Where experts once stressed the ability of technological inputs to achieve transformations in productivity without prior social changes, such as land reform or social revolution, now Ladejinsky (to take one example) apologises for its failure by arguing that the technology itself is positive – 'the *only* mechanism capable of raising the rate of productivity and income'[40] – but failed to spread because of prior social-class factors:

> Even in Punjab and Haryana, with all their advantages, not every farmer practices the new technology. Here this is due not to environmental conditions but because of the well known fact that the many lack resources, or are institutionally precluded from taking advantage of new agricultural trends. . . . The green revolution has only inherited an all-too-familiar state of affairs and it surely did not create it.[41]

In other words, the failure of the new technology to spread beyond an 'enclave' – an enclave both in terms of area and in terms of the fact that even in a particular region only the richer peasants could practise the new technology on a sufficient level – is due to pre-existing class differences: to the poverty of the majority of the peasants, their lack of access to credit and government services and so forth.

In an important agricultural review edition of *Commerce*, a journal of the Indian bourgeoisie, the editor makes the point even more strongly. Criticizing the idea that development could be generated by focusing developmental funds on the rich with the belief that gains would percolate to the poor, he concludes that 'it is the nonparticipation of the vast majority of the agricultural labor force which lies at the root of our failure in agriculture'.[42] Why the nonparticipation? The editor notes that 'motivation' to adopt improved techniques is confined to only a few peasants, then qualifies this apparently psychological category by defining it in terms of very material factors: (1) the 'cobweb of exploitation' which leaves peasants at the mercy of landlords, merchants, money-lenders, petty officials and politicians; (2) the 'lack of adequate financial resources or inability to run about from one place to another, get technical guidance, seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, etc.', in other words, the failure of governmental bureaucracies and programmes to provide needed resources; and (3) the 'age-old combination of apathy and fatalism'. There is a stress on the need for 'the organizational effort of the type which China has made with spectacular results'[43] and one is indeed tempted to say that capitalist problems point to socialist solutions — that the major barriers to development outlined by the editor of *Commerce* require something like agrarian revolution to rid the peasant of exploiting classes; a 'cultural revolution' to force the bureaucracy to serve the people; and an 'anti-confucian campaign' to deal with the survivals of traditionalism!

In fact, while technological inputs are crucial to agricultural development, they can only become inputs, and investment in agriculture can only be generated, as part of an overall socio-economic process of change and growth: no 'revolution' in agricultural production is possible, in the end, without a revolution in the relations of production. This is clear in the case of China. Those who refer to China's imports of wheat in the last few years generally neglect to mention that China, a rice-deficit area before the Second World War, is now being looked to as a major source of rice for the rest of Asia.[44] More important perhaps are total production figures: by official count China has produced between 240 and 250 million tons of food grain per year in the last few years, even in the same drought-struck years that ravaged India. This may be compared to 94-110 million tons a year for India in the same period, and a projected 208 million tons in 1974 for the United States.[45] This achievement has been

made possible by the local development of improved seed varieties; by an expansion in the use of chemical fertilizers (China is now the third largest user of nitrogen fertilizer in the world, partly provided by 'backyard fertilizer factories'); and by a massive increase in irrigated acreage of over 100 million acres in the 1950s. China today has more irrigated land than any other country on earth, 40 per cent of the world's total.[46] But what has made this rise in technological inputs and production possible is precisely the social revolution that transformed agrarian class structures: liberation, the abolition of feudalism, the building of socialism.

In the final analysis, it is imperialism and feudalism, the class relations that lie behind the failures of technology, and not the price of a barrel of oil or the need for more condoms that are responsible for the 'food crisis'.

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PETER GIBBON

Colonialism and the Great Starvation in Ireland 1845-9

'England made the Famine by a rigid application of the economic principles that lie at the base of capitalist society'

James Connolly (1910)

One hundred and thirty years ago Irish society presented a sight which would be familiar to those who know the Third World today. Two-thirds of the population of 8.25 million* lived on the land. Of these only a third lived on farms of over 15 acres, that is, farms from which a surplus could be produced. Half the rural population were landless labourers and their families. Most of the remainder were cottiers, or bonded labourers.

Ireland was no stranger to famine. That of 1739-41 had killed a sixth of its population, while fourteen others took place between 1816 and 1842 alone. Between 1845 and 1849 a new series occurred, the most serious in the history of European agriculture. Together with the accompanying plagues, it became known as the Great Famine – to the British at any rate. The Irish middle classes called it the Great Hunger, and it was left to the Irish peasantry to call it by its right name: the Great Starvation. In the six years before 1851 official records reported 21,770 deaths from starvation and almost 0.75 million from typhus, relapsing fever, dysentry, scurvy and cholera. In these years a further million emigrated, many dying from fever and privation on the journey. By 1851 the Irish population had fallen by a fifth to 6.5 million. The hardest hit classes were labourers and

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*Note: a British statistic – as are the others.

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cottiers, the hardest hit regions the south and west.

Relief operations served as a model for future ventures. They made no impression on starvation, contributed to the spread of disease, and enriched many engaged in trading. The British decided to provide emergency food depots in 1846, but forbade them to be opened while food could still be obtained from private dealers. Where they were allowed to open there were instructions to sell food only at prices which would allow prospective private dealers to compete. The depots were supplemented by centres supplying Indian meal, but none was allowed to be sold until the private supplies had been exhausted. The people of Massachusetts sent a hired warship loaded with grain; the British placed the cargo in storage, claiming that to put it on the market would disturb trade. Relief works set up in 1847, on which 3 million persons depended, were explicitly designated as 'entirely unproductive', so that they would not anticipate any private plans. Further, no one who had more than a quarter of an acre of land was allowed employment on them. This induced tens of thousands to give up their holdings. Finally, in 1848, British capital declared the cost of maintaining these operations too high. Public works gave way to workhouses and soup kitchens. The burden of supporting these fell upon local ratepayers, chiefly Irish landlords, who were responsible for paying the rates of the tenants with less than £4 valuations. The former responded with a programme of eviction, thereby passing on responsibility to their gratefully 'consolidated' larger tenants.

The occasion for all this is well known — successive failures of the potato crop, the staple diet of half the population. Less well known are the circumstances in which this situation arose, and their relation to British colonialism.

THE COLONIAL CONTEXT

In 1698, when William of Orange was reaffirming British authority in Ireland, almost 90 per cent of Britain's population were engaged in agriculture. By the Starvation the figure was something like 20 per cent, and by 1881 it was 10 per cent. This context of concurrence with British capitalist industrialization gave colonialism in Ireland its particular form.

British industrialization prior to the twentieth century proceeded through three main phases. The first, prior to 1750, was dominated by the accumulation of capital from agriculture,

commerce and colonial plunder. The second, from 1750 to 1850, was characterized by the constitution of home and overseas markets, the development of machine industry and the accumulation of capital from native surplus-value. The third, from 1850 to 1900, was dominated by the triumph of Free Trade, massive investment in transportation, the consolidation of old and conquest of new foreign markets and the beginnings of concentration and centralization of capital.

As a coherent British capitalist class and class interest emerged during the seventeenth century, Ireland became subordinated to it. The British capitalist class interest, in the first phase, the formation of industrial capitalism, was reflected in the policy of *mercantilism*. This meant the establishment and maintenance by force of metropolitan monopolies in industry and commerce — a policy which realized the capitalist class interest in two ways: it prevented competition in a context where size of operation did not guarantee advantage, and led to an inflow of capital from the colonies, where indigenous investment in commerce was prohibited.

In this period, the form of exploitation of particular colonies was determined by the effects of mercantilism on prevailing colon and native economies. Except for the north-east province of Ireland (Ulster), these economies were characterized by the construction of huge, dispersed but relatively capitalized settler-units from a native economy featuring elements of semi-nomadic pastoralism, large estates, small fixed property and manorialism. Mercantilism, available livestock supplies, and local shortages of labour power directed investment towards commercial livestock rearing for the ships' provisioning trade. The pre-existing population were transformed by land reorganization into a 'substantial tenantry' paying money-rent on the one hand, and large numbers of landless and subsistence farmers working on the margins of the new estates on the other.

Although livestock products were exported in some volume, their value tended to be balanced by the import of small quantities of luxury goods. Inequality of exchange, together with political instability, created conditions where some colons abandoned productive activities, removed to Britain and lived off the extraction of money-rents. As early as 1700 absentee rents accounted for almost a quarter of the total rent roll, and between 1698 and 1720 yearly rent export rose from an equivalent of 10 per cent to an equivalent of 36 per cent of the annual value of

Irish exports – £300,000 in cash. This was no small contribution to British capitalization.[1] (The yearly *turnover* of the infamous East India Company at that time was only six times higher.)

By the second half of the eighteenth century absentee rents rose to at least £750,000 per annum. But this increase was considerably smaller than the increase of the rent roll as a whole, and by the 1770s directly exported rents had fallen to an eighth of the total. This change corresponded to transitions spanning the rhythm of British industrialization, British colonial policy and the Irish economic structure.

In the second phase, the period of the industrial revolution and the rise of competitive capitalism, British capitalist class interest respecting the colonies no longer reflected the need to plunder disposable liquid capital, but that of appropriating primary products and, wherever possible, exchanging them for manufactured goods. In this phase began what is exploited above all in the colonies – the low cost of the reproduction of labour power. Commercial extraction or production of various commodities was undertaken at very low rates, since wage costs were almost eliminated by employing workers whose subsistence needs were met largely from their own labour on pre-existing or specially-created dwarf-holdings. What Ireland had to offer at this period, and what the Irish economy rapidly came to reflect, was the provision of foodstuffs for the British industrial classes at cheaper rates than at home. The structure appropriate for this represented not one in which pre-capitalist modes of production were dissolved, but one in which they were simultaneously *dissolved and reproduced*. The 'colonial mode of production' meant in Ireland the preservation within commercial agriculture of a subsistence sector, and thereby a retardation of the development of capitalist agriculture.

Meanwhile, in Britain contradictions remained within the capitalist class. The agrarian bourgeoisie, whose position was weakening, sought to protect their interests through the Corn Laws, which placed high tariffs on all imports of foodstuffs except from Ireland. Thus while industrial capital's general dominance of the British economy led to the constitution in Ireland of a 'colonial mode of production', the toehold of British agrarian capital in trading policy allowed a relative diversification of agricultural production there (a balance of tillage and livestock).

In 1846 the agrarian bourgeoisie's interest was displaced and the third phase commenced. The Corn Laws were repealed and

Free Trade was established as the guiding principle of British foreign policy. This translated the industrial bourgeoisie's world manufacturing supremacy into a trading, shipping and financial one by securing unrestricted access of British goods to overseas markets, and overseas goods to British ones. Irish agriculture became exposed to severe competition from every other economy British colonialism exploited, forcing more substantial constraints on specialization than had previously existed.

Had this development been isolated, response to these constraints would have been gradual. As it was, this phase witnessed an internal development in Irish agriculture with effects which accelerated and amplified the consistency of this response with the requirements of British colonialism. This development was an indigenous process of capital accumulation, side by side with the process of dissolution/reproduction of pre-capitalist economic relations.

Capital accumulation not only works to increase the sum of disposable value (in this case land) in the hands of the capitalist, but through concentrating and rationalizing production it absorbs into the production process only a part of those previously employed. This creates a reserve of labour (Marx's 'industrial reserve army') which allows productive capacity to be increased rapidly in periods of boom, and wages to be held down in periods of slump. In consequence, the low cost of reproduction of labour power in Ireland remained exploited in trade by Britain, while she and other capitalist nations absorbed the industrial reserve army created by Irish capital accumulation. Marx's interest in Ireland centred around the demonstration of the correspondence of this phenomenon to the British capitalist class interest, both economically (a general lowering of wages) and politically (creation of coincident ethnic and craft divisions within the proletariat).

THE IRISH CONTEXT

The cause of the Starvation can now be stated: the conjunction of the maintenance of the 'colonial mode of production' with the indigenous process of capital accumulation. The first specified the dependence of huge sections of the population on subsistence agriculture and on out-moded agronomy (Lord Blessington: 'Irish agriculture is a century behind British in technique'; a French observer: 'Irish agriculture is three centuries behind

British in technique'). The second determined a shift from labour-intensive to more profitable forms of production, and a diminution of the subsistence sector. This conjuncture was overdetermined by the repeal of the Corn Laws, which increased the incentive, to commercial elements, of transition from tillage to capital-intensive livestock rearing.

The serious collapse of the subsistence sector in 1845-9 was therefore accompanied by attempts to clear peasants from the more prosperous areas, and to force those fleeing from famine into urban areas and institutions. There they became vulnerable to the principal famine diseases, which were carried by the common human louse. The Irish context of the later stages of the entire process can now be examined in more detail.

Phase 2: The 'colonial mode of production' had been constituted during the eighteenth century by the incorporation of the great mass of subsistence cultivators into commodity production, which invariably meant the preparation, growing and harvesting of corn. This development was led both by landlords and by tenants already engaged in petty-commodity production. The former utilized the labour-service of minor tenants, the latter the services of under-tenants and drew landless labourers into labour-service in exchange for conacre plots.*

The system's existence was premised on the combination of Ireland's increasing market involvement and its heavy drainage of capital during phase 1. It allowed undercapitalized landholders to enrich themselves with little or no expenditure on wages. And, in consequence, it forced a substantial increase in the magnitude of the subsistence sector.

The potato serves both as an ideal preparation for tillage crops and as an extremely intensive subsistence crop. In the nineteenth century, together with the turnip, it had the highest nutritional yield per acre of any crop. Irish landholders expanded tillage production in the 'colonial mode' by promoting a twin movement: the extension of cultivated land and its subdivision into cash-crop (export) and subsistence zones. A dual economy existed within single holdings. Former minor tenants and labourers were, in return for labour-service, granted temporary dwarf-holdings on which they built cabins and grew potatos. These in time were

*Conacre was a form of exploitation of labour power involving elements of sharecropping and bonded hire. Landlords supplied fertilized land and seed for one crop of some subsistence food. In exchange, the labourer was obliged to work off its rent. On occasion, he additionally had to provide some money-rent.

turned over to tillage and new subsistence zones created. Capital was accumulated, and to this extent pre-capitalist relations dissolved by the extension of cultivated lands, but these same relations were preserved by the necessity to provide subsistence for those needed to cultivate them. This created both a greater magnitude of unfree labour and a retreat from more to less progressive forms of ground-rent.

The process was exacerbated by the fact that the further cultivation was extended, the more recourse was made to inferior land. The more such land came under the plough, the greater was the increase in labour power necessary to farm it and the greater was the proportion of it that therefore had to be allocated to subsistence. This not only blocked the development of economic relations, but increased the chances and dangers of famine: more and more subsistence farmers occupied poorer and poorer land.

This process was naturally most widespread in remoter areas where many landlords were impoverished and where 'substantial tenants' were beggars on horseback. It was in these areas that the system continued unabated after the Great Starvation. The cultivated areas of the western seaboard continued to expand for thirty years after and in some areas (e.g., Mayo) population began increasing once more after 1871. The potato remained immensely important in the diet, and in some districts continued to account for over half the tillage acreage.

The period after the famine witnessed the increasing isolation of such regions. In most of the country a process of indigenous capital formation became dominant, although at a faltering rhythm which allowed for the preservation of pre-capitalist economic relations at the margins of Irish society.

Phase 3: The process of capital accumulation was under way at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Ireland's most fertile regions. Here (particularly in the Pale) settled populations had existed before conquest, and desmesne farming and a differentiated peasantry had already existed for a substantial period. These regions responded most rapidly to the market favourability of tillage from around 1770. Yet prospective capitalists among them were aware also of the dangers of the suffocation of their capital by subsistence farmers. As soon as was feasible, desmesne landlords and substantial tenants made the transition to capital-intensive operations. In this, their form of accumulation coincided with the class interests of the British bourgeoisie: clearance of estates, creation of a home market and augmentation

of the industrial reserve army. The bourgeoisie in Britian faithfully supported them. Eviction was made easier by legislation in 1818 and 1820. In 1826 and act was passed stipulating that landlords had to be party to any subletting on their estates. Most notable of all, a free market in land was temporarily created by the Encumbered Estates Act of 1848, which was effectively a bill for the eviction of insolvent landlords. Decline of the wheat area (ultimately by 90 per cent), immense increases in commercial cattle and sheap rearing, the institutionalization of large-scale emigration; the famine, its decimation of pre-capitalist social classes and disruption of the colonial sector — all accelerated these tendencies.

International economic development (e.g., the rapid decline of the terms of trade of agricultural products from 1870 onwards) did not favour the permanence of this acceleration — nor did the increasing resistance to landlords of peasants from all strata, and the increasing class struggle within the peasantry itself. The outcome of these struggles was a series of acts restricting landlord power and investment opportunities and incentives. In any event, the dominance of *active* capital accumulation (i.e., through exploitation of labour power in the context of improved commercial organization) never triumphed over that of the more passive kind Marx describes in his chapter in *Capital* — 'spontaneous' centralization of holdings through mass emigration. This process spanned both subsistence and commercial zones.[2]

* * * *

What have traditionally been assigned as the social consequences of the Great Starvation (a shrunken and conservative peasantry, increased celibacy, later and 'arranged' marriage, reduced human fertility and the increased power of the Catholic Church) can better be regarded as the outcome of these processes and the faltering nature of their rhythm. The enduring consequences of the famine itself were ideological.

The famine left an indelible mark on the consciousness of the popular masses. Ernie O'Malley, one of the leaders of the original IRA, remarked of the 1916 Rising: 'In the evening I was in a whirl; my mind jumped from a snatch of song to a remembered page of economic history.' The fight over the interpretation of the famine was and remains a potent ideological issue: the struggle to assign responsibility for it at times became identical with that for hegemony over the minds of the masses.

The British, in true Malthusian fashion, maintained it had been due to 'population growth'. The nationalists and republicans ascribed it to British irresponsibility. James Connolly, the representative of Irish marxism, put it down to the implementation of Free Trade and *laissez-faire* within capitalism. Unfortunately, as Connolly expressed this view in terms of the effects of legislation in the British parliament, the distinctness of his argument was diminished. It, and his supporters, became absorbed by the ideology of separatism, which prescribed legislative independence without disturbing social relations.

Today, as the Irish bourgeoisie completes its retreat from even this position, it is rewriting the history of the famine from a Malthusian viewpoint. In these circumstances, the necessity to state the proletarian position with clarity is redoubled. Starvation stalked Ireland, and today stalks the Third World, through the creation in colonial regions by capitalism of wretched working conditions, massive un- and under-employment, and slave-like social relations.

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2. The slackening of active capital accumulation in the nineteenth century is indirectly illustrated in the increasing proportion of exported rent during this period. Once the total rent roll reached about £2 million per annum in 1815, the exported proportion moved from one-eighth to one-fifth and later rose even higher.

Forthcoming meetings to be held by the Institute of Race Relations at 247 Pentonville Road, London N1:

Thursday, 16 October at 6.30pm **Bussing and Boston: The logistics of racism.**
Louis Kushnick, lecturer in the Department of American Studies, Manchester University, will discuss recent events.

Thursday, 6 November at 6.30pm begins a new series of discussion meetings on **The state today.**
The first meeting in the series on this date is **The repressive apparatus of the state in Britain.** Tony Bunyan, author of *The Political Police in Britain* (forthcoming), will lead the discussion.

ALL ARE WELCOME

KEN JORDAAN

The Bushmen of Southern Africa: anthropology and historical materialism

THE MYTH OF STONE AGE POVERTY

The study of hunting societies is like their hunting grounds. It abounds in pitfalls. The field is one which the wary anthropologist fears to tread or treads with fear. This article deliberately chooses a simple primitive society in an attempt partly to save the writer from too many pitfalls. In particular, it tries to apply the methodology of historical materialism to a concrete primitive social formation, relying on the pathfinding works of two anthropologists.[1]

The modern survivors of the Stone Age live as displaced people in the interstices of colonial society. They were initially pushed into the less fertile regions by the march of the neolithic revolution, then largely stripped of their abundant game and natural resources by the European invasion. Many were finally 'colonised, baptised and culturally traumatised'. A sociologist politely called this process 'acculturation'. Anthropology depicts these extant remains as models of their pristine state. Such an anachronistic study, wrote an explorer and administrator, is an inquest into the corpse of one society presided over by members of another.[2]

Received wisdom has it that hunting-gathering societies were not enterprising and industrious enough to participate in the great leap of the neolithic revolution which, according to popular belief, ushered in the economically superior, because more affluent, era of cultivation and pastoralism. This failure condemned them to permanent Stone Age backwardness, to an incessant struggle for survival. The picture conventional anthropology paints of them is a gloomy one with which contemporary European Marxist theory is

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sometimes in accord. Permanent food shortages, inadequate means to secure a livelihood, the failure to produce an economic surplus, the absence of leisure, meagre and unreliable resources — such is the verdict on the Stone Age survivors. It also includes a reproach: the incapacity to produce enough food forced them to practise infanticide and senilicide; and to consume all types of small reptiles and insects.[3]

From the vantage point of the neolithic revolution, so warmly backed by anthropology, the condition of Stone Age man looks bad enough. Through the distorting prism of bourgeois ethnocentrism, it is pretty hopeless. For the performance of the hunters and food gatherers is discussed in the context of business economics which invests them with capitalist impulses even as they remain equipped with primitive tools. Modern capitalism is dedicated to the proposition of scarcity in a world of great wealth. The needs of man in our consumer society are great and infinite, but his means limited, although modern technology produces crises of overabundant goods. He suffers from scarcity in a world of plenty, from unfulfilled needs, from deprivation and alienation. Consumer society, with its private and material incentives, is a prisoner of 'the invisible hand of the market'. What chance then has the hunter with his bow and arrow if he has the same needs, is driven by the same material values?

Recent research into the Bushmen of Southern Africa,[4] as well as other Stone Age survivors, has disembowelled the myth of their paleolithic poverty. Though they live outside capitalism, or rather, precisely because they have not been drawn into its orbit, the hunters enjoy a secure economic life, free from want, with plenty of leisure — at least according to their own lights. Their human condition compares favourably with African pastoral and agricultural communities who suffer increasingly from famine and hunger, the result of underdevelopment, the stepping up, that is, of imperialist exploitation.

A few anthropologists now cogently argue that these hunters compose the original affluent society in which people's wants are easily satisfied, because these are few and modest, the means to gratify them quite adequate. It is affluence without abundance, predicated on an objectively low standard of living. The error of conventional wisdom is to equate poverty with the absence of material wealth. 'Constantly under pressure of want', says a writer of the Australian Aborigines, 'and yet by travelling, easily able to supply their wants, their lives lack neither excitement nor pleasure'.

Sahlins notes that the hunters are in business for their health, not to amass wealth. Their wants are minimal and finite. Still, we fall into a trap when speaking of their 'affluence' and 'poverty'. For the hunter-gatherers, in their original state, had no notion of property and possessions, of wealth and poverty, terms which imply rank and social status.

Far from having failed to make the great leap of the neolithic revolution, there are to this day hunger-gatherers who reject the revolution, even though they are in touch with cultivators and pastoralists. The Hadza hunters, for example, refuse to turn to farming because it would involve too much work. 'Agriculture', it has been noted, 'is in fact the first example of servile labour in the history of man.'[5] The !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, surprisingly enough, consider it unnecessary to grow plants as the earth provides them with abundant natural foods. Which brings us to a few important ethnographic studies of the Bushmen, made in recent years. These show that they do live a life of economic security and ease.

The first concerns the !Kung Bushmen, in the Nyae Nyae region, on the borders of Namibia and Botswana. In the precolonial era they had occupied some of the most fertile regions of South Africa. European expansion drove them to this arid zone. From the neolithic perspective, one would expect them to live in dire poverty and distress. Not so. As the !Kung are gradually coming into contact with Europeans, they have new needs, like clothing. Yet the ethnographer reports:

> in their own life and with their own artifacts they were comparatively free from material pressures. Except for food and water (important exceptions!) of which the Nyae Nyae !Kung have a sufficiency — but barely so, judging from the fact that all are thin though not emaciated — they had what they needed, for every man can and does make the things that men make and every woman the things that women make . . . They lived in a kind of material plenty because they adapted the tools of their living to materials which lay in abundance around them and which are free for anyone to take (wood, reeds, bone for weapons and implements, fibres for cordage, grass for shelters) or to materials which were sufficient for the needs of the population . . . The !Kung could always use more ostrich egg shells for beads to wear or trade with, but, as it is, enough are found for every woman to have a dozen or more shells for water containers — all she can carry — and a goodly number of bead ornaments. In their nomadic hunting-gathering life, travelling from one source of food to another through the seasons, always going back and forth between food and water, they carry their young children and their belongings. With plenty of most materials at hand to replace

artifacts as required, the !Kung have not developed means of permanent storage and have not needed or wanted to encumber themselves with surpluses or duplicates. They do not want to carry one of everything. They borrow what they do not own. With this ease, they have not hoarded, and the accumulation of objects has not become associated with status.[6]

In terms of their own values, therefore, the !Kung have enough food and water, plenty of tools and goods to live comfortably. They do not make a fetish of material objects, especially as accumulation impedes mobility. From our perspective these Bushmen apparently have a bare subsistence. All the same, this is not at odds with affluence and abundance, in terms, that is, of their own values. Another survey of the !Kung, in the Dobe region of the northern Kalahari Desert, underlines the point. Made in the 1960s, food output, it discloses, exceeded energy requirement by about 165 calories per person per day. 'The basic food staple', says the ethnographer, 'is the mongongo (mangetti) nut . . . alone it accounted for one-half to two-thirds of the total vegetable diet by weight. This species was so abundant that millions of the nuts rotted on the ground each year for want of picking.'[7]

The Dobe !Kung live in a region which receives from six to ten inches of rain annually. It is all the more remarkable that the survey coincided with the second and third years of one of the most severe droughts in Southern Africa. The field worker concludes: 'Since the northern Kalahari Desert is by any account a marginal habitat for human occupation, it is likely that hunters in the past would have had an even more substantial subsistence base.' The !Kung could maintain themselves in a fairly nourished state on food gathering, without meat, because the vegetable foods, especially the energy-rich mongongo nuts, provided 60 to 80 per cent of the diet by weight. Meat is a special treat to vary the vegetable diet. Hunting expeditions, which combine work, play and excitement, break the monotony of daily food gathering.

Another notable finding is that only 60 per cent of the band were effective food producers. The rest were too young or old to labour. Each adult worker laboured about two and a half days per week. Twelve to nineteen hours a week were devoted to food collecting. This figure excludes cooking and the preparation of food. A woman gathered on one day enough food to feed the family for three days and spent the rest of the time sleeping, entertaining, doing embroidery and maintaining the camp. Kitchen routines took up three hours a day. 'It is not unusual for a man to hunt avidly for a week and then to do no hunting at all for two or

three weeks.'[8] The contrast with modern man's incessant daily labour and fatigue is striking.

A feature of economic life is that adolescents start work late in life because they are not expected to provide food regularly until they are married – girls when they are between fifteen and twenty years, boys five years later. Before the assumption of such responsibility, they are seen in a healthy state, visiting camps and playing, while their older relatives provide food for them. 'This allocation of work to young (married men and women) and middle-aged adults allows for a relatively carefree childhood and adolescence and a relatively unstrenuous old age.' Although one ethnographer says that the Bushmen's time-energies are almost wholly devoted to survival, the question is how much actual time is devoted to the search for food – an empirical question. Not surprisingly, when the Dobe Bushmen were asked why they did not plant, they answered: 'Why should we plant when there are so many mongongo nuts in the world?' The Dobe !Kung, contrary to popular fallacy, despise animals such as rodents, snakes, lizards, termites and grasshoppers. They also live longer than the average life expectancy of the Bushmen (forty-five years), for many are over sixty years old.

Finally, Laurens van der Post, the South African writer, also draws attention to the Bushmen's modest needs which they satisfy so easily. He was about to bid farewell to a band, when he felt the dilemma:

> This matter of presents gave us many anxious moments. We were humiliated by the realization of how little there was we could give the Bushmen. Almost everything seemed likely to make life more difficult for them by adding to the litter and weight of their daily round. They themselves had practically no possessions: a loin strap, a skin blanket and a leather satchel. There was nothing that they could not assemble in one minute, wrap up in their blankets and carry on their shoulders for a journey of a thousand miles. *They had no sense of possessions.*[9]

PRODUCTION FOR USE

Tribal livelihood is often vaguely called a subsistence economy. It is elementary, as in the case of the Bushmen, when the relation between the production and the consumption of food is immediate in space and time. The economic base had the following characteristics: minimal surplus accumulation; minimal production of capital goods; the absence of agriculture and domestic animals; continuous

food-getting activities by able-bodied men and women throughout the year; self-sufficiency in foodstuffs; generalized reciprocity within the local group; consumption of the food inside the boundaries of the band within forty-eight hours of its collection.[10]

Production for use in the Bushman band means production for the producers, for what they need. It is production of use values even if exchange sometimes takes place. But it is opposed to the quest for exchange values. So even with exchange, people still produce for a livelihood. This object of production is related to Marx's 'simple circulation of commodities', that is, C-M-C': the manufacture of commodities (C) for sale in the market to obtain money (M) for the purchase of other specific commodities (C'). True, this formula is more germane to peasant societies than to hunting groups who do not use money. Yet the object in both cases is the production of use values with an interest in consumption. It is opposed to the bourgeois entrepeneur with an interest in exchange values. For under capitalism a sum of money is transformed into more money by means of the commodity. Thus in the formula M-C-M', labour power is employed for the manufacture of commodities whose sale realizes the highest possible return (M') on the original capital (M). The object of production is exchange, not for goods in particular, but abstract wealth, the opposite of production for a livelihood.[11] 'Thus the old view', says Marx, 'in which the human being appears as the aim of production . . . seems to be very lofty when contrasted to the modern world, where production appears as the aim of mankind and wealth as the aim of production.'[12]

Production for use means that it tends to stop when enough food for subsistence has been obtained. Work is discontinuous, irregular, as the economic goals are short term and limited. Work is often interrupted for non-economic activities like rituals, dancing, leisure and cultural life. Inherent in production for use, says Sahlins, is an anti-surplus system.

It is therefore incorrect to say that the Bushmen cannot produce an economic surplus because of the low level of the productive forces. Having set themselves limited economic objectives, they accommodate to their arid environment. In the dry season of scarcity the Bushmen band divides up into smaller families and disperses over a large region to search for food and water. They come together again in the rainy season of plenty. Demographic constraints, a palpable fact of Bushman life, are an adaptation to the environment, to a nomadic way of life. A

woman rarely has more than three children whose births are widely spaced, because many infants impede the band's mobility. Besides birth control and abortions, infanticide and senilicide are sometimes practised, but not on account of food shortages, as is commonly supposed. These controls spring from the harsh fact that, when a band has to move quickly over long distances to reach new food and water supplies, newly-born infants, the old and the sick cannot all be carried, are an obstacle to the very survival of the band as a whole. Goods, property and hoarding are 'grievously oppressive' to a mobile life, to greater enjoyment, to a carefree existence.

Much has been written of the 'prodigality', 'gluttony', and 'improvidence' of hunter-gatherers when they hold feasts as long as they have abundant food. Some writers ascribe this to their long periods of going hungry and the knowledge that they would in any case have to go hungry again. Others argue that social obligations of sharing quickly deplete a surplus. The Montagnais Indians, however, gave part of the answer when a European pleaded with them to think of 'tomorrow' while they were feasting rather too extravagantly for his liking. They replied: 'Tomorrow we shall make another feast with what we shall capture.'[13] In other words, they had no fear of the future, were confident that nature would provide again.

The other part of the answer lies in the inbuilt resistance of the hunting-gathering economy to hoarding, to producing and storing a surplus. Storage and hoarding are, to begin with, a contradiction between wealth and mobility. The band, at all events, knows that nature has stored food for them in another place. Storage would cause people in the camp to stop work and live off the surplus, quite in accord with the moral principle of sharing everything among themselves. The opposite of general reciprocity is hoarding, therefore anti-social. Accumulation by a few gets in the way of and distorts egalitarian human relations, causing friction and rupture. To withhold food is a crime. Lee notes that hoarding is another word for 'surplus accumulation'; that the act of setting aside a portion of one's own production for consumption or distribution at a future date is the essence of bourgeois economics. Western man calls it 'savings'. Since everyone in the hunting camp must be fed from all the food supplies available, since no one can be refused, the constancy of demand tends to keep food inventories at a minimum. It helps to keep wealth differences between people at a very low level. Only if all are economically equal can the social equilibrium be maintained.[14]

THE MODE OF PRODUCTION

Hunting bands are held together by personal relations and their government is conducted through such relations. A band varies from about twenty-five to over two hundred members, at least before the colonial occupation. It consists of families related by blood or marriage.[15] Because the Bushmen practise polygyny, the so-called nuclear family consists of a man and his wife or wives – he rarely has more than two – augmented by the children born to them. Yet this family has to live with the husband's in-laws for ten years or so during which period he is under obligation to hunt and work for his wife's parents. Orthodox anthropology says this elementary family becomes the extended family when the man, his wife or wives and their children return to his father's place. Here he lives with his married brothers and their children and the families of his brothers-in-law who are rendering bride service.

What have we here? The use of the term 'extended family' implies the priority of the nuclear family – the isolated institution derived from private property in the means of production. Primitive society knows no such distinction between two types of families. Nor does kinship refer only to persons connected by blood and marriage. In her book *Woman's Evolution* Evelyn Reed says that biological and marital ties were irrelevant to the communal life of primitive society. Kinship was a social category.[16] All men were brothers. Especially is this the case in a simple, strictly egalitarian society like that of the Bushmen who live intimately together and share everything. We should conceive of kinship in terms of the classificatory system: not only is the term 'father' extended to his brother, but to all people of his generation. People of the same age group are brothers and sisters. Such broad kinship knows of no genealogical distinctions.[17] Although a man has certain primary obligations to his biological family and those related to him by marriage, he renders service to all in the band.

In advancing his theory of the domestic mode of production (DMP), Sahlins argues that the family unit is the most important unit of production in band and tribal society. It plays the same part in the economy as the manor in feudalism, the industrial corporation in modern capitalism. Each has a special way of producing, with its own peculiar division of labour, technology, certain property relations, definite objectives of production. The domestic group is not simply a consumption unit as it is under capitalism. Human labour is not detached from the family, working for an

alien body, because domestic production is for domestic consumption. The division of labour on sex lines serves family needs, is the fundamental economic division in society. The DMP comprises a small labour force, differentiated by sex, a simple technology, finite production objectives. In Bushman society the division of labour by sex is the only economic specialization. Men and older boys hunt; make tools, implements and clothing for the family; manufacture wooden vessels; catch fish; and sometimes help the women with food gathering. Women and older girls collect food, prepare it; manufacture ornaments; fetch wood and water; make and maintain the huts. (The Bushmen's aversion to trade among themselves and with the outside world partly accounts for the absence of specialization.)

The relations between husband and wife, parent and child, are the principal relations of production in society. Marriage and bride service, boys' and girls' puberty ceremonies — these set in motion the process of reproducing the social fabric. Sahlins' argument appears to be borne out by the well-known statement of Engels:

> According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a two-fold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the requisite tools; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. The social institutions under which men of a definite historical epoch and of a definite country live are conditioned by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour, on the one hand, and the family, on the other. The less the development of labour, and the more limited its volume of production and therefore the wealth of society, the more predominantly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex.[18]

The household is fully equipped with the instruments of labour for the productive process. It has access to raw materials, possesses the rudimentary skills to manufacture all implements and utensils, and is in control of them. The family, moreover, holds the products of its labour. Sahlins, however, rejects the concept of domestic autarky, as he does the family as a self-contained work group. It has to cooperate with other households, especially in tasks calling for large-scale collective efforts. Even so, the issue at stake, he says, 'is the regulation of production, its orientation and purpose. Production is mainly organised by and for families even if it is not carried out at a domestic level.'[19]

Sahlins discusses the DMP in the context of primitive societies

generally. His notion of a mode of production leans heavily on the side of production. A full treatment of distribution relations in Bushmen society would show how these are determined by the ethic of social solidarity, of the communal spirit. True, members of a Bushman band disperse along family lines during the dry season. There is, to be sure, a conflict between the needs of a man's close relatives and the larger interests of the band. The contradiction is, in the main, resolved, though not eliminated, by the system of pooling products of labour, based on regular communal work by all families. It is buttressed by the ideology of social solidarity, of strict equality. A watch is kept on the most isolated and distant family to ensure parity in consumption.

In his work *Marxism and 'Primitive' Societies* Terray includes under the rubric, mode of production, not only the economic base, but the legal-political superstructure, and the ideological superstructure. The economic base, in his view, is dominant, determining elements of the superstructure. It consists of a system of productive forces and a system of relations of production. Productive forces refer to the material conditions of life — raw materials, tools, weapons, etc. The relations of production involve the relations the producers establish in the course of their work. First, the system of productive forces refers to the relations labour power and the means of production establish for the material appropriation of nature, for the technical process of producing goods. Secondly, the relations of production refer to the way in which the agents and means of production are allocated for the social appropriation of the finished product, for the distribution of goods. The labour process and the relations of production comprise the process of production.[20] Terray notes that, while the economic base and superstructural elements are relatively autonomous in capitalist society, they are relatively integrated in primitive communities.

In tribal society, especially in a simple band, one cannot speak of an economic structure inasmuch as there is no distinct economic organization. There are, rather, scattered family units which carry on productive activities and cooperate for various ends. Central to the notion of productive forces is the fact that the most important thing a person ever produces is himself, as a special kind of labour; or in broader historical terms, men produce themselves and their history. In primitive society where man is the only source of energy for producing food and goods, this conception of the term, productive forces, needs special emphasis.

Institutions based on marriage, kinship, age-sex groups combine in themselves different functions of which the economic is only one aspect. In other words, economic, social, moral and cultural activities are integrated. In modern class society changes in the economic base finally determine and shape elements of the superstructure. To the extent that one speaks of a superstructure in primitive society, this process is reversed in tribal and band communities. Certain 'non-economic' elements like social solidarity, kinship and marriage are the basis for the production of goods and food. Levi-Strauss says that in primitive societies the rules of kinship and marriage 'have an operational value equal to that of economic phenomena in our own society'. One is inclined to speak of Bushmen society as a moral economy. More correctly, the social and moral fabric sets economic activity in motion, determining the range and objects of such activity. Again, such activity cannot be regarded as purely economic in the modern sense of the term. It is, as we have seen, often abruptly broken off for other activities. Tribal man is not Economic Man.

Bushman society has no superstructural institutions. The only offices are those of headman and magician. The former is a leader rather than a chief. He has no special economic and social privileges, does the same work as an ordinary member of the band, wears no distinctive dress. His position derives from his skill as a hunter or the moral authority gained in war. He leads the band in its movements and coordinates the food gathering activities of the group. His position is based on the dictum of 'the first among equals'. That he has no political powers stems in part from the absence of an economic surplus. Chiefly power emerges where there is such a surplus or, more accurately, the chief uses his political powers to increase the surplus of the tribe.

An ethnographer made the following comment on a Bushman headman: 'No Bushman wants prominence, but *Toma* went further than most in avoiding prominence; he had almost no possessions and gave away everything that came into his hands. He was diplomatic, for in exchange for his self-imposed poverty [?] he won the respect and following of all the people . . . ' [21]

The magician plays an important role in the unpredictable business of hunting big game with bow and arrow. This does not entitle him to any privileges, save for the occasional present. He decides when the omens are propitious for a successful hunt. Various taboos and observances are associated with hunting, breaches of which, it is firmly held, lead to failure, such as the loss

of a wounded animal. Magic rules are practised to relieve the apprehensions of the hunter and give him confidence. Sanctions of this sort are legal mechanisms designed to maintain the observances of accepted usages and customs. They direct and inspire the important economic activity of hunting.

Strife between individuals is composed by the collective efforts of all adults. They act on the ideological principle that friction between brothers is monstrous, repugnant to social solidarity. Legal and ideological elements form an inextricable part of the Bushmen's daily life.

THE MAN-TOOL RELATIONSHIP AND LABOUR COOPERATION

The mode of production in primitive society is conditioned by the relationship between man and his tool. The history of ancient society, it has been observed, is a record of its instruments. Tribal societies were great inventors of wonderful tools. The instrument was really a prolongation of the hand, an extension of the person using it. Man made, possessed and controlled the use of the tool. The Bushmen use the digging stick, spear, throwing stick, bow and poisoned arrow. Human intelligence, skill and energy are transmitted to the tool whose function is to perform minor end operations such as cutting, piercing and digging for which the body is not well suited. 'The entire history of labour until very recently', writes Sahlins, 'has been the history of skilled labour.' With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the man-tool relationship was reversed. In modern machine production the operative worker is an assistant helping where the machine process is incomplete, supplementing it in a way that the machine process makes use of him. 'Every kind of capitalist production, in so far as it is not only a labour process, but also a process of creating surplus-value, has this in common, that it is not the workman that employs the instruments of labour, but the instruments of labour that employ the workman.'[22]

The relations of men to the instruments of labour in tribal society are in sharp contrast to those in modern society. The Bushman, for example, is in control of both his tool and the product it yields. Under capitalism the worker is alienated from both. The labour of the Bushman is not detached from his social being, is not depersonalized because he is producing for himself and a community of brothers. Work, living and leisure are part of his social existence. He does not feel hired by some impersonal institution. His leisure

hours are not given to him to use vicariously. There is no job to go to, no place where he spends time being a 'worker'. Further, his labour is voluntary, and not used incessantly. Work is intermittent, sporadic, discontinuous, ceasing when enough is produced for a livelihood. His labour belongs to himself. So 'it is not a loss of his self'.

Primitive man is the sole agent of production, the axis of all social and economic life. As the dominant element in the labour process, the producer, Terray notes, 'interposes only his instruments which have been made with few prior operations between himself and the object of his labour (the earth in the general sense of the term)'. A socio-economic formation is distinguished, not by the articles made but how they are made and by what instruments.

Labour cooperation among the Bushmen overcomes, in the main, the centrifugal forces inherent in familial production. Simple labour cooperation is of two types: restricted simple cooperation and extended simple cooperation. In the former a small team co-operates for a relatively lengthy period, such as in food gathering, maintaining huts, cleaning and domestic activities. From a technical point of view, a team could be replaced by an individual who would however take longer but produce the same product. Hunting a large animal, for example, is more effectively done by a team than a man. In extended simple cooperation a larger unit, called a group or production community, is involved. It is larger than a team but operates intermittently. An instance is the digging of pitfalls for large animals. Pits are about four feet deep, a yard wide, made with digging sticks. Often they have pointed stakes in the middle. The trapped animal is killed with spears. Huts are constructed by extended simple cooperation, the men breaking large branches, the women providing the twigs, grass and reeds. The work of a production community cannot be done by one person.

One form of fishing involves extended simple cooperation, when small stone walls are built from each bank of a river so as to run in a slanting direction, but leaving a narrow opening in which a reed trap is placed. The fish are swept into the trap by the force of the current or driven there by a group.

Complex cooperation embraces a larger group than a production community, usually a Bushman camp or whole band. Along the Orange river, fish were at one time caught with funnel shaped traps of closely woven reeds, about three feet long and eighteen inches to two feet wide, narrowing towards the mouth. These traps were

placed across the stream in a shallow part; while some men stood waiting behind them, others waded down stream and drove the fish before them to the reed traps where they were caught and thrown on shore. The operation involved a division of the men into three groups and demanded coordination and leadership.

Collective hunting also entails complex cooperation. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, when game was plentiful, the Bushmen built stone and brushwood fences, or posts or cairns, the height of a hunter, surmounted by feathers, to form converging lanes through which the game was driven. A traveller, witnessing this operation in the Kalahari in 1851, wrote:

> We passed a magnificient set of pitfalls which the Bushmen who live about these hills had made. The whole breadth of the valley was staked and bushed across. At intervals the fence was broken, and where broken deep pitfalls were made. The strength and size of timber that was used gave me a great idea of the Bushman industry, for every tree had to be burnt down and carried away from the hills, and yet the scale of the undertaking would have excited astonishment in far more advanced nations. When a herd of animals was seen among the hills, the Bushmen drove them through the valley up to the fence; this was too high for them to jump, so that they were obliged to make for the gaps, and there tumbled into the pitfalls.

Such complex cooperation demanded coordination between many people and gave the band social cohesion.

War itself is not an economic activity though it has economic consequences. It had an economic function in ancient societies where land was the object and means of labour. In Bushman society man is the only source of energy and retains control of economic activity and goods. For him, therefore, war is of great economic moment. Bands went to war with one another over land which for hunting communities is the object of production. The eighteenth and early nineteenth century were punctuated by protracted guerrilla wars which the Bushmen waged against colonial expansion that threatened their possession of the land.

> However great the obstacles the land may put in the way of those who till it and really appropriate it, it is not difficult to establish a relationship with it as the inorganic nature of the living individual, as his workshop, his means of labour, the object of his labour and the means of subsistence of the subject. The difficulties encountered by the organised community can arise only from other communities which have either already occupied the land or disturb the community in its occupation of it. War is therefore the great all-embracing task, the great communal labour, and it is required either for the occupation of the objective conditions for living existence or for the protection and perpetuation of such occupation.[23]

Hunting was one of the first forms of cooperation and man-hunting one of the earliest forms of hunting. The Bushmen put men to death in war but not women who were distributed as wives among the victors. Since in their society the human being is the sole means of reproducing the social structure, a woman is treated as 'the producer of producers' and seldom put to death.

DISTRIBUTION RELATIONS AND RECIPROCITY

The system of distribution relations is partly determined by the band's collective ownership of the land, the game, wild foods and waterholes. The most significant feature of distribution is that each produces for a common pool and consumes from a common pool. The pooling of goods takes place irrespective of the sexual division of labour or the amount of work any member has contributed to the product. The aged, the sick, the very young are all given what they require. This pooling has been called 'communism in living', because it is the highest form of economic sociability and expresses the dictum: 'from each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs'. Hence adults produce those things with which they have been charged by the division of labour; the elders, the sick, the children are given those things which they need regardless of their labour contributions.[24]

Two types of production are brought into play: the tools and the land. Weapons, implements, domestic utensils can be made by all individuals because the technology is rudimentary which people above a certain age group can acquire. They are made quickly, abound in all camps, last a long time. The producers are therefore on an equal footing. Though the tools are made to meet the demands of an individual, they are not his exclusive possessions and may be better described as goods for collective use which are freely lent, borrowed or given away as gifts. The Bushmen have no instinct of private property, of exclusive posession or control. The egalitarian ideology is conducive to a system of sharing and circulating all manner of goods.

In the system of distribution relations the unspecified labour of each is returned in a common product. All have mixed their labour and participate in the use of the labour of all the others. Differences in individual productive skills are not reflected in distribution. Skills as such do not confer a right to the product of individual work; the same applies to diligence, initiative, enterprise. The society puts the accent on the quality of social

solidarity, regarding as immoral an attitude of economic competition, of ambition for personal enrichment. Control of the goods and food rests on the control of the producer, not on the means of production, which are elementary and easily accessible to all when it comes to tools; abundant when it comes to land. Moral, ethical and ideological factors always shape and direct the productive process.

Where leadership is necessary, as in various forms of complex co-operation, the more skilled and experienced hunters and warriors can distinguish themselves. Still, they are not thereby entitled to a greater share of the game or spoils of war. A great deal of moral credit is the most they acquire. There are no formal institutions before and after such operations to sanction such moral authority and leadership. Hence the 'political' relations are profoundly equal. Meat is distributed immediately after a hunt. There is no centralization of the product, as in agricultural society, followed by a redistribution deferred through time.

Pooling includes not only the distribution of goods among the households, but a system of reciprocity or gift giving.

> Not only do families pool the day's production, but the entire camp — residents and visitors alike — shares equally in the total quantity of food available. The evening meal of any one family is made up of portions of food from the supplies of each of the other families resident. Foodstuffs are distributed raw or are prepared by the collector and then distributed. There is a constant flow of nuts, berries, roots, and melons from one family fireplace to another until each person has an equitable portion. The following morning a different combination of forages moves out of camp and, when they return later in the day, the distribution is repeated.[25]

When a hunting party kills a large animal, its members have the prerogative of eating the liver on the spot and more of the meat until their hunger is satisfied. The hunter in charge of cutting up and distributing the animal is the holder of the first arrow to be effectively shot into the animal so that it penetrates enough for its poison to work. Arrows are however freely lent and borrowed or given as presents. Thus the distributor of the animal may be one who has not participated in the hunt. 'The status of the arrow', says an observer, 'plays its part in the distribution of the animal killed with it. There is much giving and lending of arrows. The society seems to want to extinguish in every way possible the concept of the meat belonging to the hunter.'

The first distribution of the animals is made in large portions, usually among five or six people. They are the holder or lender

of the arrow and the other members of the hunting party. In the second distribution the several persons who got meat portions in the first distribution cut up their shares and divide them further. The meat portions at this point are still uncooked. The amounts shared out depend on the number of persons involved, but should be as much as the giver can manage.

In the second distribution close kinship is the factor which sets the pattern of giving. A man's first obligation at this point is to give his wife's parents and still fulfill other primary obligations, which are to his own parents, wife and children. He keeps a portion for himself and from it gives to other kin and friends who are present, possibly only in small quantities by then. Everyone who receives meat gives again in another wave of sharing, to his close relatives and friends. The meat is cooked after the second distribution. In the later wave of sharing the giving of meat from one's own portion has the quality of gift giving, is the expression of social solidarity, which will be reciprocated by the donee some time in the future.

The Bushmen stress the importance of giving one another presents. These are instruments to establish or renew social solidarity, to create a moral and spiritual bond between people. The motive is not a material one, though the giving of presents calls for reciprocity if and when the donee can do so. Such generalized reciprocity serves to keep peace in a society where there are no law enforcement agencies, where each man can pursue his private justice, be a law unto himself, with his deadly poisoned arrows. Where people live in close contact, forging intimate personal relations, jealousy and envy can quickly flare up. Living in a state of nature, they are without 'a common Power to keep them all in awe', in the lapidary phrase of Hobbes. The nature of the State in class society, by contrast, confers power on a special body to exercise a monopoly of force over all men, to protect the exploitative system, to reconcile oppressed classes to their lot. The gift in primitive society is a kind of substitute for the State. It expresses alliance, solidarity, communion. It serves peace. 'The force of attraction in things . . . dominates the attraction of force among men.' To refuse a present or to refuse to give one, amounts to a declaration of war. The gift gives the donor a mystic and dangerous hold over the donee who is in no moral position to disturb the peace between them. Upon repayment, the recipient assumes power in turn over the donor. Just as there is the alienation of human social labour in commodity

production, so there is the mystic alienation of the donor in primitive reciprocity.[26]

A certain Bushman expressed the purpose of a gift in this way:

> The worst thing is not giving presents. If people do not like each other but one gives a gift and the other must accept, [this] brings a peace between them. We give to one another always. We give what we have. This is the way we live together.

Bushmen will go to great lengths to avoid making one another jealous and for this reason they circulate their possessions freely.

> No one cares to keep a particularly good knife too long, even though he may want it desperately, because he will become the object of envy; as he sits polishing a fine edge on the blade he will hear the soft voices of the other men in the band saying: 'Look at him there, admiring his knife while we have nothing.' Soon somebody will ask him for the knife, for everybody would like to have it, and he will give it away.[27]

Common artifacts and materials of everyday life are given as presents, not special objects. The acquisition *per se* of the object is not important, and no one is dependent on acquiring objects by gift giving. One kind of present, which Malinowski calls a 'pure gift', is assistance freely given as a token of friendship, of kinship and neighbourliness. It would be improper and unsociable for the giver to expect reciprocation in such a case, although it is unseemly if the donee does not bestow a similar favour in return, if and when it is possible. Even so, it would be indecent if he reciprocated immediately for this makes the exchange appear to be trading which the Bushmen loathe. In certain cases there is a sustained one way flow of gifts for which the donor wants nothing in return. These involve obligations to the widowed, the old and impaired who are incapable of helping themselves.

Asking for something is also a means of creating a social and spiritual bond. It is a way of testing friendship. 'Asking', say the Bushmen, 'forms a love' between people. It means 'he still loves me, that is why he is asking'. It forms 'a something between people'. One person asks another for a pot and the latter might answer: 'I am not refusing, but it is the only pot I have. If I get another you may come for this one. I am sorry but this is the only pot I have.' The response is enough to assure the person that he is still considered as a friend.

Another type of exchange, less common among the Bushmen, is balanced reciprocity which involves a *quid pro quo*. Less common than generalized reciprocity, its material aspect is as important as

the social. A case in point is the custom of *IKamheri* whereby two men agree to exchange wives temporarily provided their partners consent to the arrangement. The agreement is the concern of the couples themselves rather than the band as a whole. One man said: 'If you want to sleep with someone's wife, you get him to sleep with yours, then neither of you goes after the other with poisoned arrows.'

By 1957 the number of Bushmen in Southern Africa had dwindled to 51,331. Most were killed in the bitter guerrilla wars against the European settlers. A fair proportion was absorbed by neighbouring African tribes. The rest retreated to the arid zones. They refused to be reduced to Christianity or take service as chained workers on European farms. In the Kalahari the Bushmen still retain something of their primordial glory, and can sing:

> Thus I am Lord of my Desert Land,
> And I will not leave my bounds,
> To crouch beneath the Christian's hand,
> And kennel with his hounds.

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ANDREW MACK

Sharpening the contradictions: guerrilla strategy in imperialist wars

One key characteristic of the imperialist wars that have been waged against Third World liberation movements since the Second World War has been the enormous superiority of the imperialists *vis à vis* the latter in conventional military capability. A second is that the military superiority of imperialism has signally failed to prevent humiliating defeats in Indonesia (1946), Indo-China (1954), Algeria, Portuguese Africa and Vietnam, to name only the most obvious examples.

In this type of war conventional military superiority is ultimately irrelevant. Revolutionaries can even be crushed militarily and still win politically – the Battle of Algiers being the classic example. Why should this be the case? In part the answer lies in the evolution of guerrilla warfare as a strategic rather than merely a tactical or ancillary form of warfare. Of critical importance is the revolutionary conception of 'protracted warfare' which presupposes the ability to mobilize the masses and to sustain resistance – yet this can clearly only be part of the answer. Political mobilization suggests how guerrillas may avoid defeat, it does not suggest how they can win against an opponent the physical integrity of whose territory is literally invulnerable.

Since the revolutionaries can pose no threat to the physical survival of their imperialist enemy the war is necessarily limited. As the struggle escalates the costs incurred by the metropolis – human, political and economic – also rise. Radical opposition in the metropolis may be catalysed by the costs of the war to the

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revolutionaries, but it is the costs of the war to imperialism itself which are ultimately decisive.

These wars by their very nature generate contradictions within the metropolis which ultimately shift the balance of political forces to a position which favours withdrawal. The gradual attrition of the political capability of the metropolis to wage war is inexorable. It does not arise, as many have a suggested, from a gradual across-the-board increment of 'war weariness' or 'lack of political will', but as a consequence of the acute conflicts which are the inevitable consequence of a failure to secure victory despite the – equally inevitable – escalation of military commitment. The war is fought on two fronts – one bloody and inconclusive, the other in the metropolis itself: non-violent but ultimately decisive.*

Guerrillas in imperialist (as against primarily civil) wars, have of necessity had to concentrate on destroying their opponent's *political* capability to wage war. In Vietnam, the direct targets of the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) strategy may have been military, but their indirect target was political. On the American side one witnessed precisely the opposite – a classic example of strategy moulding itself to the available level of technology. The result was an awesome effort to destroy the *physical* capability of the revolutionaries. This failed for two reasons. First, since the Americans were not assaulting another industrialized power but rather a highly decentralized economy, the effects of the military onslaught were less than would otherwise have been the case. Secondly, there were political limits to escalation: the Americans had the military capability to destroy North Vietnam totally, but they lacked the political capability. The more they escalated the war, the greater were the costs and the more intense the opposition to the war generated at home. The political constraints on further escalation precluded the option of totally 'bombing Vietnam into the Stone Age' – the dream of General Curtis LeMay – while offering no viable alternatives. It is in this sense that the North Vietnamese could have described the US military might as a 'paper tiger'.

Examining the voluminous literature on counter-insurgency one is immediately aware of the almost total absence of any discussion of the domestic impact of the type of war in question. I have argued elsewhere that in part this arises out of the division of research labour in this field.[2] For example, the job of the counter-

*The dialectics of this process are obviously infinitely more complex than this sketch suggests. For a more detailed exposition, see 'Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars'.[1]

insurgency theorist is to concentrate on how to win the war in the insurgents' homeland not on its impact in the metropolis. The same is also true for 'internal war' studies (which concentrate on the causes of wars rather than their evolution and outcomes) and various other sub-disciplines of academia. But the problem with counter-insurgency (and other western) studies also lies in the fact that the analysts have concentrated on the most popular works of revolutionary guerrilla strategists and have failed to understand that these works relate to specific conflicts in specific historical contexts. Actual strategies arise out of the application of certain strategic principles to concrete historical situations. Since situations change, so too must the strategies. Nothing could be more elementary, yet this apparently obvious truism is constantly ignored. A strategy which works brilliantly in one context (the *'foco'* in Cuba, for example) may fail disastrously in another (the *'foco'* in Bolivia). A shift from guerrilla to conventional warfare may be essential in one context and quite unnecessary in another. We can see this more clearly if we examine the thinking of the greatest guerrilla strategist, Mao Tse Tung.

MAO TSE TUNG AND GENERAL GIAP

Mao Tse Tung's revolutionary strategy is much more than a strategy for winning wars — it is a strategy for creating a revolution. However, we are concerned here primarily with Mao's contribution to guerrilla strategy *per se* and its implications for other revolutionary struggles.

The 'three stage' theory of revolutionary guerrilla warfare for which Mao is best known should be seen as primarily applicable to a *civil war* situation. It is derived from the application of basic strategic principles to the conditions of war which existed in China at the time. Mao was not arguing that guerrilla warfare was inherently superior to conventional warfare, but rather that — in China — the objective conditions of struggle made it a necessary first stage. Katzenbach argues convincingly that given the asymmetry of resources which existed between the Chinese and their opponents, Mao's theory showed how to maximize the utility of 'intangible' resources (time, space and will) against an opponent who had superiority in 'tangible' resources (weapons systems and logistics).[3] Mao's strategy directs the revolutionaries to use space in order to gain time, and time in order to forge 'will' — the political mobilization of the masses. Hence Mao's basic rules of guerrilla struggle:

select the tactic of seeming to come from the east and attacking from the west; avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw; deliver a lightning blow, seek a lightning decision. When guerrillas engage a stronger enemy, they withdraw when he advances; harass him when he stops; strike him when he is weary; pursue him when he withdraws.[4]

Retreat is seen here as an offensive rather than defensive tactic in terms of the overall strategy. As Mao notes, the guerrillas 'have retreated in space but advanced in time'. The aim is to force the enemy to over-extend his forces and stretch his supply lines which then become vulnerable to attack. Consolidation by the enemy requires concentration, concentration in one area necessitates withdrawal in another and thus the relinquishing of territory. Giap made exactly the same point when he talked about the main contradiction which the imperialist (US) enemy faced in Vietnam. By forcing the enemy to over-extend in space Mao avoids decisive battles. Military success increases political support and increased political support (particularly among the peasantry) is essential for more ambitious military operations. In contrast to the Latin American *foco* theorists like Debray, Mao does not see military success on its own leading to political support. Both are pursued simultaneously under the leadership of the Party, but advances along one dimension reinforce advances along the other.

Political mobilization, which generates the resolve needed to fight a *protracted* war, was the necessary and sufficient condition (in the objective conditions of the Chinese revolution) for avoiding defeat, and a necessary but not sufficient condition for gaining victory.

Thus the first stage for Mao is that of the *strategic defensive*. 'The will to defeat has been eradicated, the will to resist strengthened and the will to victory is beginning to dawn.' The second stage Mao sees as one of equilibrium. The revolutionaries cannot be defeated, but neither can their lightly-armed guerrilla units destroy the conventional army of the enemy.

In all of his writings Mao never loses sight of the fact that guerrilla action cannot win wars. . . . Only by combining units into larger units, by creating organisation, by inculcating discipline, in a word by turning groups into armies, can the necessary avalanche of military force be built.[5]

Thus the third stage is that of the *strategic offensive* — the switch to conventional warfare. This is necessary in a civil war because the enemy is an incumbent regime which faces a survival threat. If it cannot be defeated physically it will not give in for obvious

reasons. If it *knows* that its guerrilla opponents – given their limited resources – cannot defeat it physically, it is less likely to succumb to political disintegration. Hence the need for the guerrillas to shift to a form of warfare in which the enemy *can* be physically eliminated – a shift that will also contribute to the enemy's political disintegration.

However, if we turn our attention from a civil war situation to that of a war in which the enemy is an imperialist power it can be seen that although the principles of the 'strategic defensive' retain their necessary character, the overall strategic context has changed radically. In the civil war situation it is, at the very least, necessary to pose a credible *threat* of physical destruction against the incumbent regime; confronting an imperialist power which has the option of withdrawal, this is no longer true. In the former case, the destruction of the enemy's capability to wage war is contingent on the ability to destroy his army. In the latter, destroying the metropolitan invaders' physical capability to wage war is simply impossible. Some of the invading power's forces on the ground may be destroyed, but this leaves open the option of mobilizing more forces and dispatching them to the battlefront. In the civil war situation the various factions of the incumbent regime share a survival interest in the outcome of the conflict. In contrast, interests of much lower salience are at stake in the case of the imperialist power – where the survival interest is non-existent and where forms of non-military imperial control remain a possibility (i.e., neo-colonialism). The path to victory for the revolutionaries lies in weakening their opponent's political capability to wage war. The external enemy's physical attrition may be a means to that end, but there is no *necessity* for a shift to conventional warfare as there is in a civil war. The aim is not to defeat an army *per se* but to undermine the imperialist power's political will by sharpening the contradictions in the metropolis. Thus in both cases the strategic principles of protracted warfare remain the same; in both cases the 'strategic defensive' stage is essentially the same, but the *strategic* target of the *offensive* is radically different.

By examining the writings of the Vietnamese strategists a marked similarity is found between General Giap's theory of revolutionary warfare and Mao's. The three stages are there but differently labelled by Giap – contention, equilibrium and counter-offensive. However, it is not clear why Giap in his best-known writings is so insistent on the necessity for a 'final strategic offensive' in which the guerrilla units combine into 'mobile forces' to

engage and destroy the enemy forces in conventional main force warfare. Guerrilla warfare does not necessarily lead to a phase of *continual* stalemate when the opponent is an external power. Guerrillas may not be able to defeat the conventional army of an incumbent regime which has a survival interest at stake (except where the regime is totally rotten, e.g., Cuba), but they can impose relatively high cumulative costs (direct and indirect) on an external power by forcing it to escalate its commitment. It is these costs that sharpen the internal contradictions in the homeland of the metropolitan power, eventually destroying its *political* capability to continue the war. The FLN (National Liberation Front) in Algeria forced the French to withdraw without any 'Dien Bien Phu'-type 'final strategic offensive' – or indeed any recourse to conventional warfare.

Thus a policy of military attrition, which makes sense both politically and in its own terms in a civil war, makes sense in political terms only in an imperialist war. No matter how many American tanks, aeroplanes or even soldiers the Vietnamese revolutionaries might destroy or kill, they could make no real dent in the total US military capability. Indeed the total number of US troops killed in the whole of the Vietnam war amounted to less than one-fortieth of 1 per cent of the American population. But the losses generated political costs which far transcended, in their overall strategic impact, any *material* diminution of the US war-making capability. In a civil war situation the military costs assume a totally different complexion. We should note here that after the Americans had withdrawn from Vietnam the strategic nature of the war shifted completely. The key to forcing American withdrawal lay in the contradiction generated by the war in the metropolis. The key to defeating the Thieu regime which, in contrast to the Americans, had a survival stake in the outcome, lay in defeating the South Vietnamese *army*. In the absence of the Americans the 'final strategic offensive' became once again a matter of strategic necessity.

Confronting an imperialist power the *means* used to impose the costs which in turn sharpen the metropolis contradictions are not always the same. In Vietnam conventional warfare played a key role, in Portuguese Africa and Algeria it did not. In Cyprus neither guerrilla warfare nor conventional warfare was used, but terrorism was very effective. The key point remains the link between the war on the ground and its impact on the balance of political forces in the metropolis.

Western analysts, with a few exceptions, have not understood this or, if they have recognized the *process*, have not divined its true causes. But what of the revolutionary strategists themselves? Two questions must be answered. First, have the revolutionary strategists been aware of the process of political attrition in the metropolis which accompanies such wars? Secondly, have they formulated a strategic theory designed to amplify the 'contradictions in the enemy's camp' which form the basis of that 'war weariness' and 'lack of political will' which some western analysts have recognized as decisive without fully understanding.

The short answer to the first question is yes. There is no doubt at all that both Mao and Giap have been acutely aware of the importance of political divisions within the homeland of their opponents. This can be demonstrated by reference to numerous quotations which can be found in the works of both writers. Mao emphasized that the revolutionary war in China would pass through two phases – a nationalist war of liberation against imperialism (the principal enemy being Japan) and a class – i.e., civil – war. In *On Contradiction* he notes that, faced with occupation by a foreign power, various classes – except for a handful of 'traitors' – can unite and fight. In the fight against Japan, the principal 'contradiction' was between imperialism (Japan) and the Chinese nation. The secondary contradiction, to be dealt with after the first had been resolved, was between 'feudalism and the masses'. Mao is acutely aware of the critical difference between a war of liberation from foreign occupation and a civil war. In *Guerrilla Warfare,* written in 1937, Mao quotes, with evident approval, the Russian military writer S.I. Gusev, who noted in 1918 that:

> When a nation is invaded, the people become sympathetic to one another and all aid in organising guerrilla units. In civil war no matter to what extent guerrillas are developed, they do not produce the same results as when they are formed to resist invasion by foreigners.[6]

Mao makes a careful analysis of the social forces which can be united under the common cause of national liberation and those which, by the nature of the links they have with imperialism, must be seen as 'puppets'. It would be pointless to list them since they are of direct relevance only to the Chinese society of that epoch. (Cabral makes a similar analysis of 'progressive nationalist forces' in *Our People are Our Mountains* (see below).)

In the war with Japan, China lacked the capacity to invade her opponent's homeland. But from this it did not follow that in order

to gain victory the Chinese necessarily had to destroy the political capability of the Japanese to wage war, since this was not a simple two-nation struggle. In the 1940s the Japanese were fighting a war on several fronts – in particular, against the Allied powers. However, it is interesting that in his *Guerrilla Warfare* – written *before* Japan had become embroiled with the Allies – Mao showed himself well aware of possible 'internal contradictions' within Japan as well as external constraints which might have an impact on the outcome of the Sino-Japanese war.

> Japanese people of all classes oppose the politics of their government, as do vast international groups . . . we have sympathy in many foreign countries including Japan itself. This is perhaps the *most important reason* why Japan will lose and China will win [my italics].

Mao also noted that Japan, despite her great industrial strength and highly developed armed forces would lose because:

> Her manpower, her raw materials, and her financial reserves are all inadequate and insufficient to maintain her in *protracted* warfare or to meet the solution presented by a war prosecuted over a wide area. Added to this is the anti-war feeling now manifested by the Japanese people, a feeling that is shared by the junior officers . . . . Furthermore China is not Japan's only enemy. Japan is unable to employ her entire strength in the attack on China . . . . If we can hold out for three or more years it will be most difficult for Japan to bear up under the strain.[7]

But apart from these and other quotations, it is generally true to say that there is very little direct reference in Mao's writing to the process of political attrition referred to earlier, and still less about how such 'internal contradictions' might be sharpened by a strategy of what might be called indirect manipulation. The reason should again be obvious – except for the period of struggle against the Japanese in which the Chinese were only one of several (more powerful) adversaries – the revolutionary war in China was essentially a civil war in which the key strategic target was the destruction of Nationalist military capability.

Thus we can see there was an acute awareness of possible conflicts within Japanese society as a consequence of the war with China, but there was no analysis of anti-war forces in Japan which begins to approach the systematic analysis of the pro- and anti-Japanese forces *within* China which figured in Mao's other writings.

A very similar pattern emerged in the Vietnamese war. There is not the slightest doubt that the NLF and the DRV (North Vietnamese) recognized that the repeated failure of their French and

American opponents to crush the revolutionary forces, and the steady accumulation of costs associated with these failures, would generate opposition which would ultimately shift the political balance of power in a direction favouring withdrawal. General Giap repeatedly refered to anti-war forces in the US, to squabbles within the US ruling clique, to the world-wide commitments which also constrained the US from pouring more men and material into Vietnam and so forth. Giap was equally aware that the French would be unable to sustain a war of political attrition:

> The enemy will pass slowly from the offensive to the defensive. The Blitzkrieg will transform itself into a war of duration. Thus, the enemy will be caught in a dilemma: he has to drag out the war in order to win it, and does not possess, on the other hand, the psychological and political means to fight a long drawn out war. . . .[8]

Giap's assessments were correct; those of the French military command fatally incorrect. With the departure of the French the Americans gradually assumed the role of an occupying power. But in 1964, before the massive American troop build-up, Giap already showed himself acutely aware of the domestic impact the war was having in America:

> after ten years of successive failures . . . their [US] optimism and confidence have vanished, they begin to squabble with one another – and the squabble is growing hotter – about the cause of their defeat and about the measures to restore the situation.[9]

A year and a half later Giap returned to this theme: 'The anti-war movement in the US is developing every passing day while the internal contradictions in the Washington ruling circles are mounting mounting.'[10] Or again in 1967 in the journal *Nhan Dan:*

> Our people truly appreciate the struggle carried on by the American people against the Johnson Administration's aggressive war in Vietnam, and we consider it a real sign of sympathy and support for our people's just resistance. Our people are well aware that the decisive factor . . . is their attempt to change the balance of power in our favour on the Vietnam battlefield.[11]

Examining these and other observations from Giap's writings (most of which are devoted to the war itself, the tasks of political mobilization and so forth), it can be seen that the North Vietnamese saw the key constraints acting on the US as follows: (a) the US global commitments which were seen as constituting a physical limit to the number of troops the US could send to Vietnam; (b) the new 'international political forces' – primarily the socialist countries;

and (c) the political constraints generated by the war in the US itself. If the US sent small numbers of reinforcements to bolster a sagging war effort in Vietnam this would have no effect. If large numbers were sent this would affect the 'political and economic life of the American people and the global strategy of the US'. Thus the classic double contradiction of imperialist warfare. As in a civil war situation the enemy is faced with a primary contradiction. To control territory means the thinning out and dispersal of forces. This leaves the enemy vulnerable to guerrilla attack. To reduce this vulnerability means concentration and consolidation. But this requires relinquishing territory in one area to secure it in another. The only way out of this contradiction is to deploy more men and *matériel*. For a foreign power this means mobilizing more troops at home and dispatching them to the battlefield — the classic escalation pattern. But this increases the costs of the war and thus domestic opposition in the metropolis. Thus, to attempt to resolve one contradiction is to sharpen another.

Earlier I posed two questions — first: were revolutionaries involved in imperialist wars aware of the process of political attrition in their metropolitan opponents' homeland, and secondly, had they formulated a strategic theory designed to amplify the 'contradictions in the enemy's camp' which form the basis of anti-war opposition in the metropolis? As we have seen the answer to the first question is an unequivocal yes. The second question poses more of a problem. It is certainly true that nothing approaching such a strategic theory has been *published*, but this of course does not mean that it does not exist. Indeed there are good reasons why such a policy should not be made public. The points noted below apply primarily to the Vietnam conflict but they obviously have a wider application.

Domestic opposition to the Vietnam war within the US was a crucial strategic resource for the revolutionaries. Crudely this meant that, regardless of their personal political views, any groups in the US — including Businessmen Against the War — acted objectively in this context as 'agents of Communism'. The fact that most groups which did oppose the war — and especially the more influential establishment groups — were not 'pro-Communist' in any subjective sense was totally immaterial. The accusations of successive administrations that such people were 'aiding and abetting the enemy', though denied, were correct. The Vietnamese would have had absolutely no reason to publicly confirm Administration accusations to this effect. To have done so, would have only served to

undermine the position of those who – despite the fact that they abhorred Communism – were aiding a Communist-led revolutionary struggle.

The second point to note is that, with the exception of interviews with western journalists, most of Giap's strategic writings on the war were meant for a *Vietnamese* audience. This is why, not unnaturally, they concentrate on the war on the ground, on political mobilization and so forth. The growth of opposition to the war in the metropolis may be of critical importance in the last analysis but it is contingent on the revolutionaries not being defeated and on being able to continue to impose military and other costs on their opponents. It was to this task that Giap addressed himself when writing for the Vietnamese.

Thirdly, while it is certain that the Vietnamese conducted a careful analysis of the different forces opposing the war in the US, as well as monitoring shifts in international public and diplomatic opposition to US war aims, and while it is equally certain that the major military campaigns in Vietnam itself were conducted in the light of these analyses, opposition to the war in the US was not something which could be directly manipulated in any obvious way. It arose, as I have already argued, out of the structure of the conflict.

Giap naturally concentrated his writings on the physical presence of the enemy and the need to sustain the political mobilization of the masses, which is the key to victory. But this in no sense means that he was unaware of the fact that the real strategic target was the political capability of his opponents. However, because the strategic writings of the guerrilla strategists *have* concentrated so much on the war on the ground, this has diverted the attention of the western theorists who have analysed guerrilla strategic theory to this area and – once again – away from the contradictions which manifest themselves in the metropolis.

PROTRACTED WARFARE IN AFRICA

If we now turn to another classic imperialist war – that waged by the former Portuguese ruling clique against the peoples of the so-called 'overseas territories' – we find a similar pattern emerges. The strategy employed by the guerrilla groups appears to owe a great deal to Chinese theory and experience – though of course modified to suit the conditions in the three territories.

Cabral's analysis of the contradiction facing the imperialist

enemy on the ground could have been written by Mao or Giap:

> dispersion of the enemy forces meant weakness, and our strategy was to concentrate specific forces to attack the Portuguese place by place. They suffered losses immediately, and made the fatal move of concentrating their forces in order to defend themselves. But this meant leaving large parts of the country outside their control. This was, and is, a dilemma that cannot be solved in a colonial war: when they disperse their forces so as to maintain control, we concentrate ours so as to attack them, thus forcing them to concentrate. But when their forces are concentrated, we organise, mobilise and develop new structures in the countryside, so that they can never come back. [12]

How did the Portuguese attempt to resolve this contradiction? There was only one way – to use more force, to mobilize more troops and send them to the battlefront. But what effect did this have in metropolitan Portugal? Cabral spells this out in detail in the same publication.

Liberation movements in other Portuguese colonies took a similar line. *Revolution in Angola,*[13] written by members of the MPLA, spells out in considerable detail the costs of the war to the Portuguese, showing how the rise in the military budget affected economic growth, generated inflation, and increased the national debt on the economic front, while also generating a human flight from the war in terms of soaring desertion rates and illegal emigration. Furthermore, in common with the other two major anti-Portuguese liberation movements, the MPLA placed special stress on the international constraints which affected Portugal's policy. In contrast to the US, the weak international position of Portugal (sometimes described as a sub-imperialist power) meant that international constraints were bound to play an important role in the outcome.

Awareness of the critical importance of the domestic costs of the war to the metropolis and their decisive strategic effect was made crystal clear in the analysis by FRELIMO (the leading liberation movement in Mozambique) of the first (unsuccessful) military coup in Portugal in March 1974. In an editorial in its official monthly journal it was noted that as a direct result of the war:

> [Portugal] is becoming depopulated: there are over 1,500,000 emigrants abroad, that is about one third of Portugal's labour force. More than 100,000 young deserters are scattered throughout Europe. More than 74,000 Portuguese soldiers have died or been disabled in the Colonial wars according to the regime's statistics.
>
> The cost of living is becoming unbearable – prices rose by 21% in 1973.

And in January, 1974 they increased by a further 15%.

It is obvious that such a crisis . . . is no accident. It has very clear causes, some long term and some very immediate. Among the long term causes are the colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea . . . which are gradually eroding the Portuguese system . . . the immediate cause appears to be the great victories the liberation movements have been achieving over the past few months.[14]

Since for Portugal the war was not one of survival against an external enemy it was not possible to mobilize the population for a protracted war. There was a point beyond which the costs of the war were not worth any current or future benefits. Thus the more the guerrillas could force the Portuguese into expanding their war effort, the greater would be the steady accumulation of costs to Portugal — and the sooner the breaking point would be reached. These costs would not of course be distributed evenly across the population — some groups would be adversely affected, others would have a vested interest — material or ideological — in continuing the struggle. But these differences were to generate the contradictions which facilitated the success of the Armed Forces Movement coup and the subsequent events. External constraints on the Portuguese war effort — not just the various Left solidarity movements in Europe, the campaigns against Caborra Bassa, etc., but also oppostion to Portuguese military policies from north European countries within NATO, and resistance to Portuguese links with the Common Market by EEC governments -- all acted to accentuate further the political divisions within Portugal itself.

In reviewing the strategic writings of the anti-Portuguese liberation movements one sees that the process of attrition is recognized. But although this is clearly linked to the evolution of the struggle in the territories themselves, there is no overall strategic theory articulated which would not only define the contradictions noted in a systematic way, but also show how these might be amplified in practice, both through international diplomatic pressures and — indirectly — by military operations. Again, the fact that such an analysis was not made publicly, does not mean that it was not undertaken within the inner councils of the liberation movements themselves.

I have suggested that with very few exceptions the process of political attrition has been ignored by western writers. In fact there is only one full-length study which deals in any depth — albeit impressionistically — with what I have called the strategy of political attrition. *The War of the Flea* was, perhaps significantly, not

written by an academic or military specialist, but by a journalist, Robert Taber, who fought with Castro's forces against the CIA-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion. The following quotation graphically summarizes the key characteristics of a guerrilla struggle waged against imperialism.

> Bombs and bullets are the physical weapons of the rural guerrilla and equally of the urban terrorist, but the real lever for both is politics. Divisions may be destroyed, as in Vietnam, but this is not the ultimate objective: cities may be terrorised, as in Cyprus, but again this is not the goal. The purpose of the war of national liberation, pitting the feeble resources of a small and primitive nation against the strength of a great, industrial power is not to conquer or to terrorise, but to *create an intolerable situation for the occupying power or its puppet government* . . .
>
> In the end, the oppressive power relinquishes its grasp not because its armies have been defeated in battle (although, as we have seen, this may occur) but because the satellite, the rebellious colony, through terrorism and guerrilla warfare, becomes (1) too great a political embarrassment to be sustained domestically or on the world stage (2) unprofitable, too expensive, or no longer prestigious.[15]

ONE, TWO . . . MANY VIETNAMS

It is not possible within the scope of this article to review the voluminous writings of Latin American revolutionaries on guerrilla strategy; neither is it necessary. A contemporary historical survey of the different movements is found in Richard Gott's *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America*, while *Towards Revolution* (Vol. II), edited by John Gerassi, contains reprints of various Latin American guerrilla strategists' writings, manifestos, documents and so forth.[16] In addition there are the well-known major works of Guevara, Debray, Marighela and the Tupamaros.[17] A key characteristic of all these works — and one which differentiates them from those of Cabral, Mondlane and the Chinese and Vietnamese strategists — is that they all deal with essentially civil wars. It is of course true that without massive US counter-insurgency backing — in terms of military aid, training and equipment, various economic and diplomatic sanctions and last, but not least, the clandestine operations of the CIA — a great many of the military regimes in South America would no longer be in power, and probably would not have been there in first place. But the key point to note is that for the guerrillas — whether urban or rural — the primary enemy was domestic — the ruling (US-supported) regime and its para-military forces. This precluded the formation of the broad class coalitions

which characterized the key phase of the Chinese revolution – that of the struggle against Japan – and of the Vietnamese and anti-Portuguese struggles. The second point to note is that in this type of war the *support* of the external power is more difficult to undermine since 'counter-insurgency by proxy', as practised by the US in Latin America, is relatively low cost and low profile. It may offend US liberals and infuriate radicals but it does not result in tens of thousands of deaths and injuries, huge expenditures which cut into social welfare budgets, inflation or conscription – as did the war in Vietnam. The third point to note is that – in contrast to an imperialist power involved in a national liberation struggle – the ruling regime in a civil war, whether facing urban or rural guerrillas, has a survival stake in the outcome. Thus – all other things being equal – it has a far greater incentive to endure whatever costs may be necessary to crush the revolutionary upsurge.

Guerrilla warfare, whether in the cities or in the countryside, has been remarkably unsuccessful thus far in Latin America (with the obvious exception of Cuba). In part, this is for the reason reasons noted above, in part, as a consequence of the adoption of so-called guerrilla *foco* theory which was applied disasterously in practice in the countryside of Bolivia by Guevara and (somewhat modified) equally disasterously in the cities of Brazil by Carlos Marighela. The *foco* theory, articulated most clearly by Regis Debray in his *Revolution in the Revolution*, broke decisively with the classic Maoist doctrine by placing primary emphasis on the role of a 'mobile strategic force' – a highly-dedicated band of guerrilla fighters who would catalyse the countryside by exemplary *military* actions, thus avoiding the long slow process of agitation/propaganda advocated by Mao. The reasons for the failure of this approach (some of which I have described elsewhere[18]) in both countryside and town are too involved to describe in depth here. Suffice it to say that the rejection of the *foco* and other guerrilla strategies by orthodox Communist parties was partly responsible. Not only could the guerrillas not make an alliance with the 'progressive bourgeoisie', as in national liberation struggles against occupying powers, but they could not even join with a key organization on the Left. New techniques of counter-insurgency, most particularly the use of torture, have also been remarkably successful – in the short run at least – in crushing the urban revolutionary groups – most of which comprised small conspiratorial bands of underground activists (e.g., the Tupamaros) without a solid base amongst the working classes.

However, there was another aspect of Guevara's strategy which deserves consideration. One of the primary objectives of Guevara's ill-fated Bolivian expedition was to create an American intervention. Ultimately Guevara hoped to spark off a continental war against the American-supported regimes – hence the call for 'one, two . . . many Vietnams'. Guevara was convinced – correctly – that the US would simply lack the physical military capability to fight anti-guerrilla campaigns on a large number of Third World fronts simultaneously. Like Lin Piao in his famous *Peoples' War* speech, Guevara was advocating the extension of the classic (civil war) principles of guerrilla warfare to the whole world. The 'world cities' (i.e., the imperialist nations of the west) would, claimed Lin Piao, fulfill the role of the cities which are held by reactionaries in a civil war situation, while the 'world village' (the nations of the Third World) would provide the guerrilla forces to confront the imperialists.

> In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also [like classic guerrilla strategy] presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by the rural areas. In the final analysis, the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American Population.[19]

We should note that this strategic approach, propounded by two of the leading Third World revolutionaries, is fundamentally different in conception from the strategy of political attrition outlined previously. In the latter the conventional military strength of the occupying power is irrelevant in the last analysis. The former approach, on the other hand, sees the military strength of the imperialists as *the* crucial obstacle to success and advocates as policy of global military confrontation to destroy it, since this strength cannot be destroyed by any one Third World nation on its own, no matter how tenaciously it fights. The 'world city-world village' strategic approach is logically coherent and indeed created frissons of horror throughout the industrialized west when it was first publicized. But the practical problems involved in its implementation – not least of which is the current and understandable reluctance of the US to become *directly* involved in further military intervention overseas – are too obvious to require explanation. Although in practice the impact of the Guevara/Lin Piao approach has been negligible, the doctrine created considerable interest among western strategic analysts and the fact that it also portrays the objectives of armed struggle in quintessentially military terms has once again diverted attention from the essentially political nature of the wars that in fact took place.

CONCLUSION

I have argued that in imperialist wars the guerrillas can only gain their objectives by destroying the political capability of their opponents to wage war – because the destruction of the enemy's military capability is impossible. It follows that such wars are wars of attrition – but of political and not military attrition. The aim of the revolutionaries must be to exploit the divisions in the homeland of the external power in order to shift the balance of political forces within the metropolis in a direction that favours withdrawal. Guerrilla strategists in such conflicts have been perfectly well aware of the importance of these divisions but have not presented *publicly* a carefully articulated strategy of political attrition. I argued that there may be very good reasons why they have not done so and, further, that the absence of such strategic writings in the public domain was one of several reasons why the evolution and outcome of these conflicts have been sytematically misunderstood by academic and military theorists in the west. What I have said also implies that the essentially civil nature of the guerrilla struggles in Latin America (this applies to Rhodesia, Israel, the Philippines and many other contemporary Third World wars too) requires a fundamentally different strategy – one in which the military capability of the incumbent regime *is* of critical importance. Finally, I have argued that the well-known 'world city-world village' strategy advocated by Lin Piao and Guevara (also noted by Giap) was also based on fundamentally different principles to those of assymetric warfare – the strategy prescribes that military strength should not be undermined politically but rather confronted on its own terms by widening the struggle to include the entire Third World.

The message should be obvious. Guerrilla warfare – like any other conflict – should be examined holistically if it is to be understood correctly. Guerrilla wars waged against incumbent regimes, and those waged against imperialist powers, despite superficial similarities, are fundamentally different in their structure and dynamics. In concentrating on their overt similarities, especially in tactics, western theorists, radical and reactionary, have consistently misunderstood the true nature of anti-imperialist warfare.

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ROD AYA

The present as 'jumbo history': a review article

Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism. By Perry Anderson (London, New Left Books, 1974). 293 pp. £5

Lineages of the Absolutist State. By Perry Anderson (London, New Left Books, 1974). 549 pp. £8.50

The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century. By Immanuel Wallerstein (New York and London, Academic Press. 1974). 386 pp. $16.50

Anderson's effort to trace the lifeline of the modern state and Wallerstein's treatise on the origins of transnational capitalism in the Age of Discovery have been described, derisively, as 'Jumbo History' – throwbacks to historical speculation in the grandiose manner of Toynbee and Spengler. Yet they are not speculative; nor, for that matter, are they history books, if by history one means analytic narrative of events. They are studies in political theory, disciplined by the test of fact. Anderson and Wallerstein are not out to write history, but to explain it; not to narrate details, but to make new and better sense of the details others have compiled. Hence they construct models of social change as history, viewed on a large scale and over a long term. Their stated goal is to bring the problems of the present into focus through study of their formation in the past; to see, in Paul Sweezy's excellent phrase, the present as history. Thus far, one main stream of social thought has followed this course: Marxism. Both Anderson

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and Wallerstein draw upon its method of posing questions and conjecturing answers. They look to the ways in which the organization of social production is bound up with the organization of power; how control over the means of production ties up with the exercise of domination in the state. Of necessity, they write works of synthesis. As both authors are quick to point out, synthesis is justified when it goes beyond other people's research to say something new. What do they come up with?

Anderson makes at least three interesting contributions. He gives a decent burial to the old sub-Marxist idea of 'universal history' (popular in the Stalin era) whereby all societies are seen to develop through a fixed set of evolutionary stages defined by modes of production – 'Slavery', 'Feudalism', 'Capitalism', etc. – each of which, its duty done, gives way to an appointed successor. He works up useful comparisons between historic modes of production (ways of working, ways of life) and forms of state across Eurasia, from Britain to Japan. And, in the process, he sharpens up some of the familiar Marxian conceptual tools – showing, among other things, that the '"superstructures" of kinship, religion, law or the state necessarily enter into the constitutive structure of the mode of production in pre-capitalist social formations' (*Lineages*, p.403). He thus provides a plausible, if tentative, solution to the 'basis-superstructure' problem which has plagued Marxist thought ever since Marx's self-proclaimed disciples succeeded in freezing these elementary distinctions into canons of secular theology. This is no small accomplishment. But because the interest and impact of Anderson's books are dulled by bad organization, needless displays of erudition, and a writing style so affectedly elegant that it often stumbles into bombast, it may help to scan some of the high points of his argument.

Reading his two volumes is like sitting through a long movie whose plot remains obscure because one missed the opening scene. Though his study opens with a whirlwind tour of classical antiquity, whose great empires are shown to rise and fall with their capacity to mobilize slave labour, it takes him another two millennia and 600 pages to make clear what he's been driving at. At that point we arrive in the streets of Petrograd, 1917. Why, he wonders, did the Bolshevik Revolution come off when all other workers' insurrections in the immediate aftermath of the First World War were beaten down? Taking his cue from Lenin's successive redefinitions of the agrarian question and an elliptical remark of Gramsci's that 'In Russia the State was everything, civil

society was primordial and gelatinous,' Anderson answers: 'The *Russian Revolution was not made against a capitalist state at all.* The Tsardom which fell in 1917 was a feudal apparatus; the Provisional Government never had time to replace it with a new or stable bourgeois apparatus.' Thus it was the Bolsheviks' good fortune that 'from beginning to end they never confronted the *central enemy* of the workers' movements in the West' *(Lineages,* pp.358-59, his emphasis). The autocracy was a political dinosaur whose counterparts had disappeared from England in the 1640s, from France in 1789, from Germany in 1871. It was a 'feudal' state ruling over what by 1917 had become 'a composite social formation dominated by the capitalist mode of production'. The rapid growth of industrial capitalism under state auspices had not brought the bourgeoisie to power; the dominant class remained an obsolescent aristocracy still dependent on 'a labyrinth of traditional forms of extra-economic surplus extraction, embodied in customary rights and dues', to milk a backward peasantry *(Lineages,* p.348). Teetering on a narrow basis of social support, the state toppled once its victims stirred in unison. Then the bourgeois revolution was nipped in the bud by the Bolsheviks. Where, on the other hand, bourgeois regimes had come to power, workers' movements were coopted or crushed. Anderson finds the key to the different outcomes in the class constitution and organizational characteristics of the states in question. This is hardly a startling conclusion. Still, it does provide a resting point for a long and tortuous argument.

For to 'situate' the Russian case, Anderson undertakes a comparative survey of political development in the absolute monarchies of West and East Europe, arguing that absolutism 'was the natural and normal form of noble class power after the late Middle Ages' and represented the rule 'of the feudal nobility in the epoch of transition to capitalism' *(Lineages,* pp.298, 42). This, too, is familiar stuff. Anderson then traces the variations of absolutism back to their roots in the different response of regional nobilities to the general crisis of feudalism in the fourteenth century (when economic depression was joined by wars, famines, Black Death, and agrarian revolt to chop down the population by two-fifths): 'The crisis of feudalism in the West produced an Absolutism which succeeded serfdom; the crisis of feudalism in the East produced an Absolutism that institutionalized serfdom' *(Lineages,* p.358). Again, a sense of *déjà vu.* The plot thickens, however, as Anderson considers the different course of feudalism in the two halves of

Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. His treatment of feudalism is the core of the work and, though space limitations prohibit even a bald summary of the argument, the major conclusions deserve mention. Feudalism happened as a synthesis of two anterior modes of production – primitive communalism and slavery – which 'collided', as it were, when the tribal federations of northern Europe conquered a decadent Roman Empire in the fifth century AD. As a mode of production, feudalism involved direct domination of enserfed peasants who turned over dues in labour or kind to military landlords in exchange (theoretically) for protection. Such was unimaginable, Anderson maintains, without the *parcellization* of sovereignty, which vested private power and public authority in the same person – quite different from bureaucratic empires where a central state apparatus enforced the upward transfer of surplus from peasant to landlord. Fragmented sovereignty also meant breathing space for towns, free of direct control by kings, landlords, or the Church. Hence the dynamic interplay of town and country which formed the seedbed of capitalism. The feudal configuration of parcellized sovereignty, dependent tenure, and autonomous towns happened in only one other place – Japan, which, as Anderson is quick to point out, was the only other 'social formation' hospitable to an indigenous capitalism.

But there are still wider ramifications. The union of 'basis' and 'superstructure' in pre-capitalist modes of production has already been mentioned. Another is that there is no automatic progression from one mode of production to another, however much one way of organizing social existence may condition what comes from its dissolution. European feudalism, again, took place as the *contingent* outcome of the historic 'collision and synthesis' of the ancient and primitive modes, just as capitalism emerged from a singular configuration of structural features and historical circumstances. Conversely, similar modes of production – European and Japanese feudalism – can come into being as part of quite different historical sequences.

With that, Anderson has finished off the old dogma of universal history, which generalized a stereotype impression of European developments to all humankind. To quote the Gospel according to St Iosef from the *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism:* 'All peoples travel what is basically the same path. . . The development of society proceeds through consecutive replacement, according to definite laws, of one socio-economic formation by another.' This alone would make Anderson's work worth reading.

There are problems with Anderson's method, however, and they stem from his skill at spinning clear definitions and at poking logical holes in defective concepts. (His concluding essay on 'the Asiatic Mode of Production', for example, is a fine piece of demolition work and in many ways the best chapter in the book.) Fondness for sharp definitions and typologies sometimes leads Anderson to confuse taxonomy with explanation ('naming it is taming it'). By contrast with his dynamic picture of feudalism and its metamorphoses in *Passages,* the comparisons of royal absolutism in *Lineages* are at once rigid and episodic — formal definition combined with narrative political history. Though he constantly reiterates that absolutism was government of, by, and for the landed nobility, he has no coherent explanation of how a territorial warrior aristocracy was transformed into a class of effete courtiers. The question of how dynastic states acquired a monopoly over the means of physical coercion — which, remember, had to be tugged out of the hands of military landlords — goes unasked and unanswered. Anderson's identification of absolutism with noble class rule may in some sense be true over the long run, but he gives little insight into how such nobles learned to swim with the tide and make the state their own. His implication that they finally found out what was good for them begs the key question.

One particularly regressive feature of Anderson's books is his tendency to invoke the term 'over-determination' whenever important but untidy facts imperil the neatness of argument. Althusser, from whom Anderson takes this expression, can get away with using it because as a forthright obscurantist he never explains anything and consequently remains immune to disproof. But for Anderson, obliged to account for empirical connections, say, between capitalism and absolutist regimes, 'over-determine' becomes simply a pretentious synonym for 'complicate' and 'exacerbate' — a cop-out from the task of explanation.

> *Wo Begriffe fehlen,*
> *Da stellt zur rechten Zeit ein Wort sich ein.*
> (Where concepts are lacking/At the right moment a word slips into place)

About Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System* there is less to say because it is one of those rare books that really must be read rather than reviewed. Which is not to say that it is perfect; far from it. But Wallerstein's is, quite simply, the most daring yet realistic work of American social thought since Barrington Moore threatened to inaugurate a new sociology almost a decade ago with *Social*

Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. Its aim is no less than to outline the contours of the capitalist world-economy, as it took shape in the 'long' sixteenth century from 1450 to 1640, and then to *re*analyse in relation to it the critical turning points of European social history – a tall order. And, as almost every page contributes to the overall picture, we must be content to mention only the most prominent features.

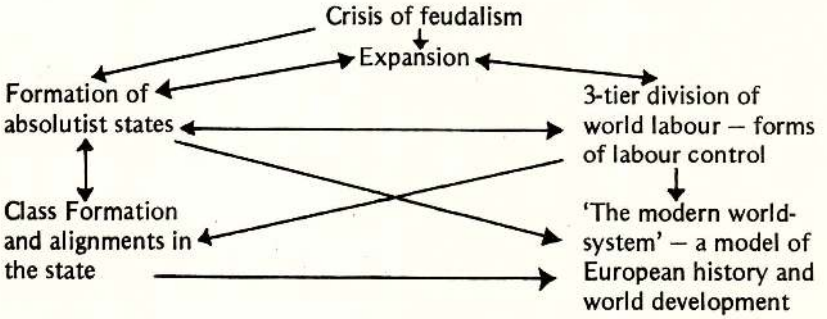
Basically, Wallerstein takes up the well-worn problem of 'the transition from feudalism to capitalism'. Yet what he proposes by way of a solution is new – or at least more sustained and comprehensive than previous plays of the same hunch. For the general crisis of feudalism was not resolved within continental Europe alone As European landlords, city merchants and emergent dynasts each improvised parochial solutions to the terrible contraction of population, production, and – hence – revenues, the unplanned outcome of their disparate gropings was the creation of a capitalist world-economy. To bring this about, three things were required:

> an expansion of the geographical size of the world in question, the development of variegated methods of labor control for different products and different zones of the world-economy, and the creation of relatively strong state machineries in what would become the core-states of this capitalist world-economy (p.38).

The emergent world-economy – radiating from north-west Europe to incorporate the Americas, the west coast of Africa, the Mediterranean, and East Europe – was differentiated into three main zones of productive activity, each of which spawned characteristic forms of labour exploitation and control. In the core area (north-west Europe), the primary extractive mechanism came to be wage labour; in the periphery – East Europe and the Americas – it was 'coerced cash-crop labor' (serfdom and slavery); and in the semi-periphery of central and southern Europe, sharecropping fell into place as an intermediate form. Different modes of labour control, in turn, shaped the identity of the dominant classes, which in different zones of the world-economy had quite different orientations toward the strengthening of central authority. In the core areas, capitalist landlords and mercantile interests drifted together and found strong states to their advantage; in the periphery, however, where landlords themselves repressed the peasantry and cornered the export market in collaboration with foreign merchants, both central authority and native bourgeoisie were squeezed out. Put another way, *dependencia* meshed the vested interests of

western manufacturer and eastern magnate in the sixteenth century. Thus, argues Wallerstein, the simultaneous rise of free labour in the West and coerced labour in the East were not simply divergent outgrowths from the regional histories of feudalism, but integral aspects of the same enveloping social process: the creation of a capitalist world.

Even in grossly oversimplified paraphrase, shorn of convincing detail, Wallerstein's argument is not easy to follow. Hence the following diagram of its main elements and lines of interconnection may serve the prospective reader as a kind of road map:



By viewing the social history of primitive accumulation in world perspective, Wallerstein is able to show connections between events that more conventional approaches – Anderson's included – cannot but miss. Take for instance what happened to Poland and Russia. Reading Anderson, who groups them under the rubric of Eastern feudalism cum absolutism, one wonders why they should both see the rise of serf agriculture yet have such different patterns of state-formation. In the sixteenth century, when Polish aristocrats held the would-be sovereign at bay, Ivan the Terrible was building a police state. How so? Here Wallerstein's explanation is interesting. For, he argues, Russia remained outside the orbit of the European world-economy and would not, in fact, be drawn into it for some time yet. Meanwhile, the Tsars could set about consolidating rule over their own central Asian world-economy. Russian serfdom itself grew up, not to feed cash crops into the European market, but to assure state servitors a steady income. The very policies of Ivan IV that Anderson writes off as the nihilistic thrashings of a lunatic appear in Wallerstein's account as the costly but necessary means of preserving Russian independence.

Such unexpected shifts in perspective make up but one of the many interesting aspects of Wallerstein's book. Another is the new

light his model of the world-economy sheds on the social meaning of the Reformation, the Revolt of the Netherlands, the English Revolution, the rise of political anti-semitism, the decline of Spain, and many more. But perhaps his most lasting contribution is negative: by organizing and interpreting a huge bloc of social history, Wallerstein has driven a handful of nails into the coffin in which theories of 'modernization' are about to be buried.

Though stylistic criticism of serious books may seem like petty carping, radicals who would communicate must remember that the medium is much the message in literary scholarship. Hence it is particularly regrettable that Wallerstein and Anderson choose to present their material in such a way as to make learning from them a chore. More's the pity because on occasion they each give ample evidence of being able and interesting writers. Wallerstein's scholarly apparatus weighs heavy. Mercilessly overloaded with quotations and footnotes (which together take up half the book), his prose stumbles from point to point like a tortured beast of burden. Nevertheless, because his arguments are intellectually exciting, one can get into the right head and play his text (as one clever friend put it) like the bead-game in *Magister Ludi.* Anderson succumbs to the tempations of a different vice. His books make simpler reading than *The Modern World-System,* in good measure because he took trouble to distil and paraphrase where Wallerstein preferred to quote en bloc. But he squanders his literary gifts by showing off erudition as if it were jewelry. At times, his sentences turn into parodies of academic chatter at its worst. Let one bad example suffice:

> the complex *imbrication* of economic exploitation with extra-economic institutions and ideologies creates a much wider gamut of possible modes of production prior to capitalism than could be deduced from the relatively simple and massive generality of the capitalist mode of production itself, which came to be their common and involuntary *terminus ad quem* in the epoch of industrial imperialism *(Lineage,* p.404, his emphasis).

Thankfully, this is not Anderson at his best.

This is not to say that critical theory ought to be domesticated and turned into the handmaiden of propaganda, as philosophy was once bent to serve theology. That would obscure and cripple both, for incompetent theory can only be boiled down into worse agitational pamphlets. There is no substitute for rigorous analysis. But all social investigators, and radicals in particular, owe their readers — not all of whom have the leisure to spend hours decoding

oblique arguments – clear, concise summations of their principal findings. What is simple must be left simple; what is complex must be clarified. Here it is to Wallerstein's credit that he sandwiches a lengthy and difficult exposition between an introduction and conclusion that are clear, forceful, and intelligible to any literate adult. All the more unfortunate that what falls between should be so rough to swallow, much less digest – not because the 'meat' is especially tough or sinewy, but because it is left raw and unseasoned.

Lamentably, the insights of the present volumes may well remain privy to a restricted circle of initiates. *The Modern World-System* makes ideal reading for advanced graduate students who can test their intellectual agility against its verbal obstacle course. Anderson's books are more likely to be studied by individuals (alas not many) who are willing to put up with a show-off as the price of viewing his interesting fossil collection of extinct political forms. Ordinary and activist readers, on the other hand, if they trouble to begin these studies, are unlikely to finish them. Worse, they may find themselves alienated from the analysis of collective history rather than attuned to it. Faced with a murderous world that demands action now, they may well conclude that all such inquiries waste precious time better devoted to immediate, practical involvements. For them, history remains a nightmare from which they struggle to awake. But creative commitment requires clear insight into real possibilities and limitations; one must interpret the world – see how it has come to work – in order to change it. Here there is a place for studies that dare to ask and attempt to answer really important questions about society as history. For such insight depends on knowledge of how long-range historical developments – the creation of a capitalist world-economy, the formation of national states, and the connections between the two – laid the tracks for the locomotive of modern politics. 'That kind of knowledge', writes Wallerstein, 'would be power. . . a power that would be most useful to those groups which represent the interests of the larger and more oppressed parts of the world's population' (p. 10).

Half a thousand years ago, north-west Europe was a marginal outpost of human habitation. World history since that time has been mainly the history of North Atlantic capitalism's reorganization of social existence on a global scale – and of resistance to it. Now, when high officials blithely describe and use food and fuel as political weapons, when millions starve as multinational agribusiness thrives, when growing numbers of state-managers dispose over nuclear devices whose use would spell the end of planetary

life, there is sufficient reason to inquire how this state of affairs could come into being. For the process is still in motion, and the present remains history – Jumbo History.

The following analysis in 'Notes and Documents' provides a backdrop to the Portuguese struggle. This note (received as we go to press) refers to Audrey Wise's account of the contemporary situation. *

The overthrow of the fascist regime in Portugal in 1974 and the country's progress towards socialism is one of the very few European events of the past 30 years to threaten the great freeze which settled over the continent in the wake of Yalta and Potsdam. In its origins it was not of course a 'European' event, for it was the liberation movements of Portuguese Africa which destroyed this last empire and infected the colonial armies with democratic aspirations. About the collapse of the empire there had been a certain bloody inevitability; great sacrifices would be needed, but the eventual outcome was scarcely in doubt. In Europe, however, the outcome is quite uncertain. Can a nation so securely locked into a global sphere of influence and the market pull itself out? The memory of Chile is painfully fresh.

As Kissinger goes his way, orchestrating the 'destabilization' of Portugal, putting the capitalist media to work, destroying the tourist industry and undermining the economy, it is alarming how little reliable, first-hand information is circulating in western Europe and north America about the transition to socialism.

This summer Audrey Wise spent several weeks travelling in Portugal, and this is her report. She visited political parties and newly nationalized enterprises, attended meetings of grass-roots democracy, found out exactly what happened at the newspaper *Republica* and investigated the violence of the conservative north. Her strength is that she fronts for no politician and allows her readers to make informed political judgements. When she attends a village council meeting, she reports several contributions verbatim. Here are farm labourers who have never been permitted to make an important decision in their lives, who have never been able to afford milk for their children (that's the Free World NATO is defending) and suddenly they've taken control. When we read what they decide and how they debate, we get a genuine feel of the revolutionary process.

This booklet is instant history. The manuscript was received and published in 11 days. Judith Hart, MP, who was also in Portugal this summer, provides a preface. Both writers are convinced that the real threat is from the right, not the left. And as Mario Soares of the Socialist Party tours Europe, trading on the commitment of social democratic leaders to NATO, his role in the denouement takes shape. The outcome is unlikely to remain long in the balance.

CHRIS FARLEY

**Eyewitness in Revolutionary Portugal* (Nottingham, Spokesman Books, 1975). 64pp. 50p.

Notes and documents

The class struggle in Portugal

To those of our readers who have been submitted to the lies, calumnies, and deliberate misinterpretations of the media on Portugal, we make available below the views and interpretations of people in the struggle.

One year ago, soon after the coup of the 25 April 1974, the families living in the shanty town of Bairro da Boavista in the outskirts of Lisbon took over a housing estate that had stood empty for three years. This housing estate, like many other new estates in the outskirts of Lisbon, was part of a speculator's plan to rehouse families living in the centre of the town in properties of high speculative value which would then be demolished and give place to high rise blocks that would house the posh headquarters of some bank or a first class hotel.

An army company, fresh from the events of 25 April, was deployed to force the families back to the corrugated iron lean-tos of the shanty town. The officer in charge, a member of the young Armed Forces Movement, faced with determined opposition from the whole community, followed the routine practice of any operation in the colonial wars of Africa and went straight to what he thought was the weakest link, an old widow who had just moved with her six sons to a two-bedroom flat with electricity, water and toilet. She replied: 'You better shoot me right here. All my life I have had for a floor the earth of a misenhut. At least I will die on a proper floor.' The officer stood there for a moment. Outside the men, women and children that had assembled to resist any eviction were speaking with the soldiers: 'This could be your shanty town! Remember that you too are the people! Turn the guns to the speculators and not to your brothers and sisters!' The officer understood and taking the company with him left the estate. The occupation had been 'legalized' by the AFM.

Reprinted from *Our Common Struggle*, No. 7, April 1975, and No. 8 June 1975 (Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee, 18 Fleet Road, London NW3).

Race & Class, XVII, 2 (1975)

Since the first days of the overthrow of fascism in Portugal, the continued struggle of the working class for better living conditions and against fascism, which has expressed itself in a thousand confrontations like the occupation of the new housing estate in Bairro da Boavista, has been the determining factor of the economic, social, and political evolution of the new democratic order in Portugal. The government crisis, the two attempted coups, the disagreements in the provisional government are the external signs of that evolution, but the historically determinant factor has been the sharpening of the struggle carried on by workers and peasants all over the country.

Under fascism

The economic development of Portugal under fascism was characterized by an attack on the living standard of the workers, by the use of brutal repression to protect the accumulation of capital in the hands of a few families. The monopolies and the organization of the whole industry were based not on an advanced capitalist system of production but on direct intervention of the state in ensuring the ruthless exploitation of labour. The fascist public image that gave Portugal a facade of industrial growth and economic stability disguised on one hand the ruthless oppression of the working class and on the other the inefficiency and corruption of management, the low level of production and technical knowledge, and the bleeding of the country's resources in the name of a national economy that only concerned stock exchange speculators and the interests of the capitalist class.

For the working class in Portugal the struggle for better conditions was not new. For a whole year before 25 April workers had taken industrial action and in most cases had succeeded in winning their demands. These struggles were necessarily political struggles. To give a cohesive body to the workers' discontent, to formulate demands and organize any action amidst a network of agents and informers needed necessarily the discipline of political organizations. For every worker an industrial struggle meant the riot police at the factory gate and often being shot by the storm troops inside the factory – every industrial struggle was by necessity a struggle against the repressive forces of the state.

The crisis in the capitalist world, and the number and frequency of strikes, occupations and go-slows in the first quarter of 1974 increased the contradictions between the monolithic state machinery and the stronger section of the capitalist class – the monopolies, who saw their interests better protected by the system of production and exchange of the advanced capitalist countries and not restricted by cumbersome state intervention.

The 25 April coup

Brig. Otelo de Carvalho, the recognized strategist of the Armed Forces Movement, declared recently in an interview to a Lisbon weekly that the coup was originally scheduled for the 1st of May, but when the army officers heard the call for a 'red may day' by underground political parties, they decided to bring it forwards to 25 April to avert any popular mobilization that could

jeopardize the success of the military operation.

So the military operation was carried out successfully and the popular movement was out to ensure that it wouldn't stop with some token gesture of sending Caetano off. Despite the talk of a bloodless coup, we must always remember that four people were murdered by agents of the PIDE/DGS during the siege of the headquarters, and only then did the army follow the initiative of the masses, storm the headquarters, and jail the whole organization. No workers' committee asked the permission or consent of the armed forces to take their rights, fight the fascists within their industry, or organize and struggle for just living and working conditions.

State intervention

Faced with a militant workforce, the less profitable parts of the industry which had survived on the savage exploitation of the workers started crumbling and the state was forced to intervene. Multinationals that used Portugal as an outpost for the production of labour-intensive industrial components, which were then exported abroad to the mother company, just moved out, leaving behind thousands of unemployed workers unable to carry on manufacturing the components for lack of a market which was entirely controlled by the international enterprises. The state again had to intervene.

This massive take-over by the state was not accompanied by the restructuring of the economy, which remained firmly based on the private ownership of the means of production and dominated by a small number of monopolies and the remaining foreign interests, whose economic power increased as the lesser parts of the industry became a burden to the state. In answer to the outcries of the employers, the government and the Armed Forces Movement tried to enforce the Strike Law, a cooked-up version of the Industrial Relations Act — the same vicious attempt to comply with the Common Market ideal of labour relations. But in Portugal, as in Britain, the enforcement of the law was made impossible by the determined action of the workers.

The counter revolution is defeated

It was in September 1974, when an agreement was reached with FRELIMO to pave the way for an independent Mozambique under the conditions imposed by the liberation movement, that for the first time the right of private ownership of the means of production was put in question. For years, the industrial development in Portugal and the accumulation of capital had relied on importing raw materials from the colonies at deflated prices and exporting the manufactured products back to the colonies at exorbitant prices, all the operations being carried out by subsidiary companies, or those owned by foreign capital and banking houses, of the big industrial interests in Portugal.

A few days before the inauguration of the transitional government, a gang of puppet organizations tried to stage a white racialist coup in Mozambique; but despite the money and weapons that were poured into their hands by

big business and banks, they were forced to flee to South Africa after murdering hundreds of black people. Two weeks later, on 28 September, it was only the determined action of the working class in Portugal that stopped the counter-revolutionary forces led by Spinola, then the head of the military junta, from taking power.

Only the mobilization of the popular movement, which set up and manned barricades, organized mass demonstrations and called on the soldiers to join the struggle against the forces of reaction, averted a right-wing coup.

The workers recognized that behind the coup were the colonialist interests of the banks and monopolies and with the demands 'the bank belongs to the people' and 'an end to the monopolies', the struggle entered a new phase.

Demobilization

But as soon as the counter-revolutionary forces were disbanded, both the Armed Forces Movement and the Provisional Government, fearing the growing strength of the workers' movement and hoping to prevent the further articulation of any demands that would bring the class closer to the seat of power, proceeded speedily to demobilize the movement. Victory festivals were set up with free concerts by pop groups, the revolutionary fervour was diverted into washing down socialist slogans from the public buildings, and the Prime Minister put out a call for a day of voluntary work on a Sunday to prop up the 'national economy'. But the 'national economy' remained firmly in the hands of private interests and the capitalist production relations were untouched.

Once the workers' movement had lost its impetus the provisional government and the Armed Forces started a programme of reforms, and supported by the big banking houses, launched a campaign of austerity and national reconstruction whose centre piece was the involvement of the population in a scheme of small investments in state holdings. This attempt to mobilize workers to save the very system that oppresses them, by creating a false identity of interests between the ruling class and the working class, failed miserably. Paying lip service to the popular demand for the nationalization of finance capital and the bringing of big business under control, the measures taken were going to strengthen further the power of the monopolies.

The strengthening of existing production relations

Inevitably, the attack of the employers intensified in the next few months. By stopping investments and actively disorganizing the productive forces, both in industry and agriculture, they were able to absorb the wage increases with the resulting inflation and reduce the wage bill by contracting the industry. More and more often workers' committees were able to detect cases of economic sabotage within their industry. Plans to increase production were cut back. Administrators fled the country with the funds of the company. Orders from parent companies would be cancelled for no apparent reason, forcing contractions and closures. Lisnave Shipyard workers were

able to prove that the administration was diverting tankers due for repair to other shipyards abroad.

These cuts in production, the resulting rise of prices, the sharp increases of unemployment, can only be seen as a deliberate attempt to create artificially a crisis out of which only the economically strong sections would survive and in the process eliminate the political and industrial strength of the working class, asserting more and more the economic power of the big financial and industrial interests and their political domination over the state – now reduced to keeping the unprofitable parts of the economy going at the expense of the working class.

The right to work

In a country with no unemployment benefit, with thousands of men after the same job, unemployment is a savage attack on every man or woman. Workers were quick to realize that the struggle for the right to work should be fought in the factories, not outside the gates.

The demand for the right to work led to a great number of occupations, lock-outs of managements, and the active interference of workers in the plans to run down industry. If at the start these struggles remained somehow isolated and confined to each work place, by February 1975 the campaign had mobilized and brought together workers on a national scale.

The officers of the Armed Forces Movement were forced to take over the administration of bankrupt companies and were put in the position of either curing the ills of capitalism by attacking the working class, or turning their guns against the holders of economic power. When they started to administer the system they were faced with the boycott of credit and the difficulties of placing the manufactured goods on the market, thus clearly grinding to a standstill. These were the results of their policies of protecting the existing production relations at the expense of the working class and thus increasing the relative economic power of finance capital and the monopolies.

To fight this power is to fight the existing production relations and to ensure that the productive forces will be used to achieve a maximum of social unity.

But this was a political task which went beyond the programme of the Armed Forces Movement.

* * * *

The struggle for the right to work took a dramatic turn when the agricultural workers started to seize the land in Alentejo, the province of the big estates south of the river Tagus. After having appealed to the government and the Armed Forces Movement for measures that would stop the chronic unemployment and the deliberate waste of the productive resources, the workers decided to take action and occupied several estates that had been left uncultivated by the owners. Armed with shot guns for protection against the hired gangs of the absentee landlords, they started working, clearing and cultivating the land.

Under the slogan 'the land for those who work it', the movements spread through the whole southern part of Portugal, and a few days later in a mass demonstration in the town of Beja 30,000 workers demanded the collective ownership of the land left undercultivated by the owners. Cabinet ministers and AFM were left with no choice but to endorse the actions taken, and, making sure that the guns disappeared, they appointed 'responsible' technicians to supervise the work. The first steps of the agricultural reform were pushed through and promises were made that in the economic plan new measures would be taken to extend these reforms.

The economic plan

When after months of preparation, the economic plan came out, it further asserted the policies already followed by the government and the AFM. State intervention would support the small and medium industry, leaving the private interest to invest and control the most rentable sections. At the same time workers were asked to collaborate enthusiastically in the reconstruction of the economy. The interventionist role of the state was clearly designed to back up a powerful and independent private sector, and the popular demands for the nationalization and control of the finance capital and the monopolies had been forgotten altogether in the context of the unfolding struggle. This three-year plan was a vicious attack on the working class. It left untouched the existing production relations and as such guaranteed the continued hegemony of monopoly capital. Instead of looking for a solution that would serve the interests of the Portuguese people, the team of 'experts' responsible for the draughting of the economic plan had once again looked for integration in the Common Market, opting for the solution that would serve the interests of international capital. And international capital was pleased – a delegation sent from London by the City and the CBI, headed by a member of the McAlpine family, was in Lisbon before the plan was presented to the cabinet and expressed in a press conference their satisfaction with the policies put forward.

But if on the one hand workers were quick to realize that the economic plan was a vicious attack on their rights and conditions, on the other hand, with the sharpening of the industrial and political struggle, private capital felt threatened by the interventionist role of a state they couldn't entirely control.

The right-wing parties

As the elections for a constituent assembly came closer, it became clear that the programme and socialist policies of the parties on the left had not been broadly communicated and that all type of irrationalities were prevalent in the most backward regions of Portugal. The deep divisions of the parties on the left were slowly alienating great sections of the population that remained depoliticized and as such pawns to any manoeuvre from the reactionary forces. The parties on the right, which had been formed under the auspices of international capital and against the opposition of the popular movement,

were able to find a power base and under an illusive 'democratic' language they were advocating the same policies of the fascists under Caetano. Again it was the popular movement that came out in opposition to the growing power of the right-wing parties and determinedly fought against allowing a public platform to the old supporters of the Caetano regime.

This situation alarmed the AFM and the officers decided to carry the watch-dog powers of the armed forces beyond the elections through the 'institutionalization' of the Movement.

Despite the assurances given by the economic plan against nationalizations, despite the continued protection of the state, the financial interests could not be happy with such a solution. The permanence of the AFM in power and their reluctance to use the state apparatus directly against the workers went against the plans of big business to see elected to power their direct political representatives, the right-wing parties, who then would be able to curb effectively the power of the working class and create the conditions for an effective incorporation in the Common Market.

Mass action

The result was the 11 March 1975 frustrated right-wing coup when the most reactionary elements of the army, backed up by their masters, the big finance houses and instigated by the capitalist press in the world tried to gain the control of the armed forces. The final result reflected only the strength and will of the Portuguese people to continue the struggle for socialism. The officers were isolated by their own ranks and only a company of parachutists, the elitist troops of Caetano, came out to face the anger of soldiers and workers alike. In the airport, the workers that had called a strike for that day returned immediately to work in organizing brigades to check and prevent the heads of the coup leaving the country. Outside the barracks that were attacked by the parachutists the workers from the neighbouring industrial estates surrounded the rebel troops and forced them to surrender. The bank employees occupied the banks, stopped all banking activities to avert the transfer of capital abroad and were able to prove the involvement of their employers in the financing of the organization of the coup. All over Portugal mass demonstrations and the setting up of barricades manned by the people destroyed effectively any further possibility for the rallying of the counter-revolutionary forces.

Once again the prompt action of workers and soldiers had averted a right-wing coup. It had been an unnecessary risk to allow Spinola the freedom to try for a second time to reverse the advance of the democratic order and in the process risk a civil war, but the AFM was never a cohesive body able to purge completely the right-wing from its own ranks. Despite the fact that the rallying of counter-revolutionary forces around Spinola can no longer be a threat, the AFM is still looking for a political identity — forced in one direction by the advances and demands put forward by the working class, and pressurized in the opposite direction by the interests of an officer class too attached to tank and class privileges to accept the discipline of

committees democratically elected by soldiers and officers which could effectively control the army, in the interests of the people.

Nationalizations

Faced with the clear evidence that the banks had not only been instrumental in carrying out an economic boycott but had actively fostered the counter-revolutionary coup by pouring money into its organization, the AFM took a much overdue step with the nationalization of all banking houses. The economic plan was thrown out of the window and the further nationalization of the primary industries announced at a later date was a step forward, but still falling short of destroying the economic power of the ruling class. The principle remains the same. If that power is not destroyed the stronger sections, which will be politically more able, will survive the crisis, eliminate in the process the political and industrial strength of the working class and will then be able to control entirely the state apparatus. To destroy their power is to destroy the production relations of the existing system and that is a political task that only the working class can carry forwards.

The creation of the Revolutionary Council of the Armed Forces as the centre of political and military power above government and constituent assembly, pre-empted the importance of the elections. But despite the fears of a right-wing emergence the election results show clearly that the Portuguese people reject the right-wing parties. The vote was overwhelmingly a vote for socialism, but the Socialist Party, who got 40 per cent of the votes, despite its demagogic commitment to a utopian socialism, is more interested in cementing the eroded power of the ruling class. Since the main body of militants (the Popular Socialist Front, FSP) was forced out of the party by Mario Soares in January this year, the Socialist Party came increasingly under control of the capitalist class who see in Mario Soares and a number of other lawyers, leading figures in the party, the means to exercise their ideological control over the working class with well-known concepts such as a 'social contract for progress'.

The determinant force

To take the election results at their face value is to ignore the lessons of one year of struggle. The secret vote gave a voice to sections of the population which, because of their previous connections with fascism and because of their fears and economic interests, had remained otherwise isolated and powerless. They are not and never were an active force in the development of democratic order in Portugal. More important than the election results are the many instances when the working class have demonstrated their political maturity and shown that they are the most powerful economic and political force in the country, the only one that can move history.

Therefore if the election results are going to influence the decisions of the Revolutionary Council and give a new lease of life to those officers that still defend integration in the Western capitalist world, the AFM will be driven further away from the working class and repeat the same mistakes that in

previous occasions led to the two attempted right-wing coups. Over the question of nationalizations, which when announced were understood to be without compensation, the Revolutionary Council is again wavering. And as the decision remains unsettled, workers at Plessy in Portugal have exposed the company plans to 'offer itself' for nationalization at a price that is completely out of proportion to its productive capacity and totally unjustified when we remember the profits that have been made at the expense of the workers. So the capitalist class, not satisfied with the ruthless exploitation they imposed on the workers before the overthrow of fascism, not satisfied with the unemployment and economic chaos they have created since, are now trying to make a business out of nationalization. And again it is the workers that have exposed these manoeuvres.

If the democratic revolution in Portugal has followed a tortuous path, that path has persistently pointed to socialism. But it is not by decree of the Armed Forces Movement or by the ballot box that it will be achieved. On the contrary, when the Revolutionary Council makes concessionary bows, however small, in the direction of the ruling class, they are driven further and further away from the working class. The events of last year in Portugal have shown beyond doubt that the working class has taken giant steps in the struggle to seize power. The intense organizational and political work carried out within its ranks has made it possible for the Portuguese working class to take the offensive and become the historical determinant factor in the social, economic and political evolution of the new democratic order in Portugal. That role has to be continued.

Book reviews

A Seventh Man: A book of images and words about the experience of migrant workers in Europe*

By JOHN BERGER and JEAN MOHR with the collaboration of SVEN BLOMBERG (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1975). 238 pp. £1

A television programme in New York is called *Other People, Other Places.* One Saturday evening it begins: several dark men sit in a train compartment, singing in a strange language. The song's rhythms are simple, the mens' suits poor; the image is charming in a bright New York apartment. We are told the men are Turks, leaving families, culture, and their country's poverty, to seek 'a pot of gold' in northern Europe's factories. Perhaps they will also learn enough to improve life in the villages they return to. Hope is catching, the narrator concludes: the 'Guest Worker', a peasant – Turk, Greek, Yugoslav, Portuguese, Spaniard, Moroccan, southern Italian – is becoming 'a Twentieth Century man'.

These men, belatedly modern, walk down the streets of the big cities of northern Europe; they crowd the streets in red light districts, talking to the women, reading the magazines in the sex shops. It is appropriate – because pornography is a metaphor for what is modern. Pornography provides a variety of sexual acts which are performed without being claimed, either in innocence or consciousness. Its movements do not present possibilities; they are the shadow of sexual acts and carry the shell of sexual meanings, the occasional violence only an attempt to overcome what is missing. To be modern is to be deprived of the meaning and motive that experience has when each act carries on, and will be carried on by, millions of other acts; it is to be without a sense of things as they should be – of corroboration when they are, and violation when they are not (the very way a hand holds an

*Editor's Note: The review of Berger's book in the summer issue of *Race & Class* was one way of seeing; this is another.

object, where and how events take place, what can be said ...). To become modern is to have this sense of things challenged on all sides. Entering our societies, migrant workers confront the abnormal and hear it everywhere called normal.

A migrant working in an automated slaughterhouse begins to believe the cattle are multiplying, that the machines multiply them; the animals he killed yesterday are the same ones he is killing today. *A Seventh Man* documents (as in this story) the process of modernization. The photographs, facts, analysis, poetry, history, place the worker in his life. The fragments, each sharp and exact, are carefully set against each other to reconstruct and make accessible the whole, this life, with its specific conditions.

The need to migrate shapes the migrant's experience. In the usual analysis, poverty in 'backward' societies is inescapable and progress in the 'advanced' is inevitable; migration, the consequence, benefits the migrant despite the hardships. This picture of the world, Berger writes, is a lie; it disguises the human and economic arrangements which *create* growth or stagnation. In underdeveloped countries, alliances between local elites and international capitalist interests erode local economies and cause a superfluity of people; in the developed world, needs of capital lead to consumerism and technological overdevelopment, and result in shortages of workers for unskilled, low-paying, physically arduous jobs. The benefits to the host countries – savings on social costs of labour, security of an exportable labour pool and of division in the labour force – and the corresponding dangers and indignities for workers (e.g. an accident rate in France eight times that for indigenous workers) – are not incidental. Inequality and exploitation are the principles that govern relations between people and parts of the world, under capitalism.

'It is not men who immigrate but machine minders, sweepers, diggers, cement mixers, cleaners, drillers, etc.' A photograph ('Turkish migrants listening to instructions about their journey to Germany') is a whole page of men. What happens to these men, who exist *as* workers? The faces in the photographs answer, the eyes in which there is an accusation, of no one in particular; the Turkish girl who holds a tentative hand to her face. Berger writes, 'All photographs are a form of transport and an expression of absence.' The photo, a fixed moment in time, is used as a metaphor to describe what is taken from the migrant and what is left him. A picture of his family defines their absence and confirms the necessity of his migration – which that migration itself, in its daily details, denies. In the factories and on his time off, 'He lives only the present of things exterior to him.' The dimensions of his present intervene between himself and his life, and confine him to that fixed moment in time. Returning home, the migrant returns to his life: 'For the first time for a year he can choose to be silent.' But as the book makes clear, it is a return to underdevelopment; he is forced to leave again, believing always in a final return. It is a myth, Berger writes, 'There is no final return.'

In the US, in the 1930s, James Agee and Walker Evans collaborated on a book, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Its text and photographs (among the greatest of documentary photographs) describe the injuries to spirit sustained

in the lives of three families of Alabama tenant farmers. The book contains these lines: 'How was it we were caught? What, what is it has happened? What is it has been happening that we are living the way we do?' The stated theme of *A Seventh Man* is the 'unfreedom' of people *in their existence.* Berger locates the migrant's unfreedom in general objective truths and in particular subjective truths: in the economic use made of the migrant, *and* his experience of that use; in the 'historical necessities' producing migration, *and* the way these inhabit and form the texture of individual lives; and most important, in the fact that these have *one* meaning – the migrant's life. Migration, the effort to escape one trap, is a second trap, 'an event in a dream dreamt by another'.

Others are already there. Berger writes:

> What has happened within him is not distinct from what happens within millions of others who are not migrant workers. It is simply more extreme . . . He lives the content of our institutions. They transform him violently. They do not need to transform us. We are already within them.

A Seventh Man, which is 'about' migrant labourers, is, by extension, about us, about the experience of seeing from a window only rows of faceless windows that rise and extend in blocks; and in a small up and down moving box, tiny number lights flash and march above automatic sliding doors. In that space that surrounds our actions we invent meanings and come to depend on them to define ourselves. It seems I'm always dissatisfied. We accept this state of things as normal.

There are these two photographs, on opposite pages of *A Seventh Man*: on the left, a man with goggles and a mask over his nose and mouth ('migrant working in a soldering factory'); on the right, a smiling woman, next to a swaddled infant ('farm in Kosovo, Yugoslavia'). One is a human face, one the travesty of a face. Pornography, a metaphor for life withdrawn, is opposed by sexual love, acts which assert each person's proper self in loss to the other, and unite what is with what is possible. The reclaiming of experience begins with recognition. But the immediate and personal must be transformed to be understood as universal also. *A Seventh Man* is an act of knowing. It removes the television screen separating Turks from New Yorkers: the same journey must be made, the same effort is required.

New York JULIE DIAMOND

Nigerian Perspectives

By THOMAS HODGKIN, 2nd edition (London, Oxford University Press, 1975). 432 pp. £2.95

Thomas Hodgkin's anthology of extracts from sources on pre-colonial Nigeria was first published in 1960. Aptly so, for this was the year of Nigerian independence, and *Nigerian Perspectives* well illustrates the variety of cultures and

the great range of the historical experience of the societies which were originally lumped together as 'Nigeria' for colonial convenience. Historical material is presented in this collection on the majority of the states which make up the nation today. This ranges from their early myths of origin to documents on the end of the nineteenth century.

While containing much of the same material, this second edition benefits from an expanded introduction, evaluating sources, and outlining the events of each period, so providing an historical context for the extracts. Although this collection will continue to be of particular value to West African specialists, it also provides insights of general interest through the wide range of economic, political and social topics included: the development of trade, including that in slaves; government and law; political and diplomatic manoueverings; ecology and demography; agriculture and crafts; the development of currency and communications; the process, outcome and contemporary justification for war; descriptions of social and cultural life; sketches of the characters and idiosyncracies of leading historical figures – all this being set against the background of the rise and fall of states and empires. Also documented is the arrival of European missionaries and traders from the sixteenth century, which can be compared to sources on the nature of nineteenth-century colonialism.

Obvious shortcomings in the material (such as the fact that early African-European contact is largely described by whites) are largely unavoidable consequences of the nature of the sources rather than of bias in selection. The majority are taken from Arab scholars and European travellers. This means that external political contacts are more fully covered than internal social and economic developments, and methods and relations of distribution predominate over those of production.

This bias is partially redressed by the third type of source – the writings of African scholars from the fifteenth century onwards. As Hodgkin says:

> The West African contribution is of especial importance – partly because there has been a tendency for 'Westerners' to see African history principally through European eyes and to assume that Africans either had little or nothing that was significant to say about their own past or lacked the techniques to say it.

A major theme of this book is not only that West Africa has its own *historiography* but also its own complex *history*. So, for example, while stressing the profound changes connected with the colonial invasion, Hodgkin selects documents that deal with indigenous reaction and resistance rather than European exploitation.

Today all this may sound something like commonplace liberal pleading – but this is after the black struggles of the 1960s, and the spate of popular and scholarly historical works that have been produced by black writers on their own societies during the last decade. 'Imperialism' and 'colonialism' have now also been absorbed into respectable academic vocabulary in a way in which they were not in 1960. But here what Hodgkin has to say in his new edition warns us against over-reaction to the previous white-washing of imperialism. His emphasis throughout is on the dialectical interrelationships between

internally and externally generated change (such as in the case of the nineteenth-century Fulani expansion), rather than the crude 'effects' of the latter, even when accompanied by physical force.

> It would be wrong to . . . seem to suggest that it has been the empire-builders who have influenced most profoundly the course of 'Nigerian' history. The most significant changes that have occurred – the development of new crops, of crafts, of techniques, of wants, of art forms, of trading connections, of systems of communication, of towns, of political offices and forms of organization, of literacy, and education and research, of attitudes to nature and the supernatural, of ways of interpreting history and society – these have been the result of a variety of initiatives, of a complex interplay of forces, that have only occasionally and indirectly been associated with empire-building activities.

This alerts us to the trap, wide open to liberal white academics, of ascribing 'development' and 'disruption' to European intervention. To do so, involves a static view of history, a eurocentic view of change, which the material in this book belies.

London HERMIONE HARRIS

Racism and Black Resistance

By ROBERT MOORE (London, Pluto Press, 1975). 115 pp. 75p paper

The Race Concept

By MICHAEL BANTON and JONATHAN HARWOOD (Newton Abbot, David and Charles, 1975). 159 pp. £4.50 hardback

A sociology lecturer goes 'slumming' and finds sermons in stones; a sociology professor goes into cahoots with a biologist and hands down the word from the heights of learning. Robert Moore is able to throw off his sociological handicaps, look at the real world and make no apologies for what he finds. But Banton and Harwood are reasonable men who will let neither reality nor commitment come between them and their theories.

Banton and Harwood look at race from every abstract angle – the derivation of the word itself, the history of the study of race, Darwinism, race and I.Q., debates on genes, identical twins and so on. Their work is an anthology for the lay-reader, reflecting so many sides to a question that it avoids fundamental issues. For example, on the I.Q. debate they fall over backwards to show that Jensen and Co. are not explicitly racist, since studies do show that *some* blacks do score higher on tests than the average white. But they never question the society which demands I.Q. tests or the types of 'skills' it tests and the uses such skills are put to. And given the length they devote to the debate, it is amazing that they pay no attention to the way the tests are constructed and verified in the first place. They merely assert that: 'It is risky to assume that I.Q. tests measure exclusively intelligence in the technical sense of capacity for abstract reasoning and problem solving.'

Their's is also a confused book which never clearly distinguishes between

racism – which refers to 'an explicit and systematic ideology of racial superiority' (Sivanandan) and racialism – which refers to 'the unequal treatment of racial groups' (Rex).[1] And this lack of clarity leads them to write:

> It is sometimes suggested that the theories of racial inequality were produced because capitalists needed an ideological justification for exploiting black people overseas but this is not a persuasive argument with respect to the European writers . .... The theories preceded the conflicts of interest rather than following upon them.

In essence they confuse ideology with theory, which in turn is used as a synonym for idea – thereby equating idea with ideology. Of course ideas of racial superiority pre-existed the capitalist era, as Winthrop Jordan and David Brian Davis have shown, but these ideas became woven into an explicit systematic ideology only when capital turned to systematic exploitation of black people (overseas). Ideas may pre-exist ideology (racist ideology incorporated racialist ideas from christianity) but they do not pre-exist events, history – unless history itself is only an idea!

Sometimes the authors fail to follow the momentum of their own logic. They argue with Philip Mason that racial divisions overseas were no more than reflections of class divisions at home. 'Members of the lower orders were supposed to smell: they were kept at a distance and servants, for example, were not allowed to use the same lavatories as their employers' families. It looks as if there may have been an unconscious fear of social equality . . .' But what is the *raison d'être* of class divisions if not exploitation? The stereotype helps to discriminate and discrimination helps exploitation. And, following the logic of their own argument, what is the *raison d'être* of racial divisions if not exploitation? If the stereotype is visibly identifiable, discrimination and therefore exploitation is that much easier. But answers to such questions would lead them to question the political system which allows for such exploitation.

Why Messrs Banton and Harwood cannot do so is revealed in the final chapter, 'Race and Democracy'. 'For as modern democracies fall short of the ideal, it is difficult to discover any other political system which is not open to far more serious objections.' And in so far that democracy means that we all should have an equal say, prejudice against a group is bad for democracy. But the causes of prejudice are mainly psychological and can to a large extent be educated away. Whatever cannot be educated away must clearly be handled by the democratic system itself. No other system would do – preserve the *status quo* – make changes to stay in place – good bourgeois sociology!

Robert Moore's very short, readable paperback shows just how a sociologist can put his skills to positive use. Instead of documenting the incidence of racism in Britain (he takes that for granted), he looks at a topic of immediate relevance – institutional racism and the way that black resistance is beginning to break it down. He studies the state – government, laws, courts, police and employers, trades unions and the race relations industrialists themselves – through the experiences of black people. By using the material readily available in the files of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and back issues of *Race Today* he recounts the black people's struggles against for

example, Paki-bashing, police harassment (the Mangrove trial, the Oval Four cases), racist management and unsupportive unions (the numerous strkes by the Asian workforce). Through his selection and ordering of basic source material, he convincingly connects events, policies, theories and ideologies. In so doing, he presents an integrated picture of the reality of racism and black resistance, whereas previous writers have fragmented and distorted it. This is one of the most informative books on race in Britain to appear for many years. It has its weaknesses – very little on the larger economic factors of migration in late capitalism and no references to where the material was culled, but they are slight. Certainly it is this and not Banton and Harwood's book which should make the compulsory reading list, but I doubt that it will.

Institute of Race Relations JENNY BOURNE

REFERENCE

1. A. Sivanandan, 'Race, Class and Power: an Outline for Study', *Race* (Vol. XIV, no. 4, 1973); J. Rex, *Race Relations in Sociological Theory* (London, 1970).

Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans: Studies in History and Society

Edited by ADALBERTO LOPEZ and JAMES PETRAS (New York, London, Sidney and Toronto, Halsted Press, 1974). 499 pp.

In the 1950s and 1960s the governor, Luis Munoz Marin, declared that Puerto Rico's amazing economic growth and industrialization was a showcase for the 'underdeveloped' neighbours of 'those Latin American republics'. Especially in the 1960s the Unites States tried to use Puerto Rico as an anti-Cuba example. They wanted to show how under US 'protectorship' Latin America would be prosperous and democratic, and that Cuba – and therefore socialism – 'had nothing to offer but poverty'.

In the context of this political strategy, American social scientists as well as colonized Puerto Rican intellectuals came to manufacture their theories of 'development'. Studies such as those of Henry Wells (*The Modernization of Puerto Rico*), Tumin and Feldman (*Social Class and Social Change*) and Harvey S. Perloff (*Puerto Rico's Economic Future*) were among the dozens of studies that proclaimed 'the miracle' of prosperity. But from the late 1960s to the present, a new Puerto Rican intelligentsia has documented the failure of the miracle.

The book edited by Lopez and Petras is a refreshing example of the new interpretations of Puerto Rican historical development written from a different perspective from that of the functionalists above.

The first part covers the historical period from colonization to the US invasion of 1898. It contains three articles: two by Adalberto Lopez, and one by Angel Quintero. The articles by Lopez are descriptive of the socio-political development of the island. They constitute a very good survey of Puerto Rican history in that period and serve as a basis of understanding for the

brilliant analysis that Quintero makes about socio-economic and class formation in the nineteenth century and the impact of the North American invasion upon it. This can be considered as one of the first products of the attempt of young Puerto Rican intellectuals to use Marxist categories of analysis – and with remarkable results.

The second part is dedicated to the twentieth century. It is introduced by a general historical survey which gives a good account of the socio-political development in this century. The most important articles in this part are: 'The Development of Social Classes and Political Conflicts in Puerto Rico' by Quintero – giving continuity to his analysis of class formation and class conflict in the first part; 'Dependence and Development in Puerto Rico' by Morris Morley – a remarkable attempt to apply the categories of the theory of dependence to Puerto Rican economic development, revealing a lot of interesting facts of US investment and interests in Puerto Rico; and 'Puerto Rico: the National and Social Struggle during the Twentieth Century' by Manuel Maldonado-Denis – a survey and an analysis of the problems and prospects of the Puerto Rican movement for national liberation in the twentieth century and, in particular, the present.

The other articles in this part are good and in two cases pioneer incursions into aspects of Puerto Rican movements and institutions, for example, the study of student movements by Pico, and of tourism by Vaughan.

The third part, 'Puerto Ricans on the Mainland', mostly consists of documents or testimonies of Puerto Ricans in the US. Though not conclusive or exhaustive of their problems, it points to many of the fundamental aspects.

Concluding with two bibliographical essays of great use to the English reader, the book is invaluable for an understanding of new and valid perspectives in the analysis of Puerto Rican society.

University of Puerto Rico EMILIO PANTOJAS

Imperialism and the British Labour Movement 1914-1964

By PARTHA SARATHI GUPTA (London, MacMillan, 1975). 454 pp. £10

Here is a finely detailed, minutely researched and extensively footnoted introduction to the relationship between the upper echelons of the British Labour Party and the trade union movement on the one hand, and the British Empire on the other. Gupta, who is a professor of History at Delhi University, had part of his education at Oxford and did most of the research for this book in 1970-71 while on a Nuffield scholarship in Britain. So he is well-versed in a certain class view of the British working class and its organizations.

His project is to investigate Lenin's theory of imperialism, to see how it ties in with the development and decline of the British Empire. His research is immaculate. Not a detail of a party conference resolution here or a trade union minute there is missed.

There can be no quarrel with the author's thoroughness – and his zeal for burrowing is a lesson for radicals – but Gupta is no radical analyst. The traditional struggle within the Labour Party for Clause Four (that centre piece of the parliamentary road to socialism which still keeps so many good socialists in the party) is noted as a convenient rallying point for all the various interests which went to make up the early Labour Party. From this, Gupta notes the divergency of working-class interests and the feeling of the leadership that it should show itself 'responsible' for power – and including in that responsibility the need to persuade labour that what was good for capital in its imperial dealings was also good for them.

Fine, but from then on we have no idea of Gupta's own frame of reference. Instead we have a documentary history of statesmen and strategists moving across the imperial world making and unmaking history. There is no glimpse of the real struggles both in the metropolis and in the Empire of the men and women who made the labour movements and liberation movement, only to find themselves caught up more subtly and more deeply in capital's scheme of things. No explanation of this from Gupta – plenty of documentation but no stated theory of the international economy, the role of the state or the process of capital accumulation.

The author is at his best on India, while virtually ignoring the Caribbean. He is good on the peculiarly romantic relationship between the Labour idealists and the emerging national struggle. And his chapters on the immediate post-war period – when a government with an overwhelming mandate for radical social change at home tried desperately to hang on to the overseas colonies that the new world order would no longer tolerate – are required reading on the development of the British state and the place of Labour in it.

Interestingly, Gupta compares the woolly notions of the Fabians who wished to impose social democracy on subject peoples for their own good with the more brutal realpolitik of Ernest Bevin whose only concern was the good of British capital – and further, with the outright racism of Dalton: 'I had a horrid vision of pullulating, poverty-stricken, diseased nigger communities for whom one can do nothing in the short run and now, the more one tries to help them, are querulous and ungrateful.'

Lenin, of course, stands no chance before the dry-as-dust gaze of the historicist. Where Lenin had argued that modern monopoly capital needs to export constantly its surplus value to the imperial market, Gupta proposes that the successful reformist social democracy can not only force capital to take its social welfare obligations more seriously but also modernize and develop agriculture to raise the living standard of the masses and obviate the need to export capital.

Perhaps, perhaps, but later contributors to the Leninist view of imperialism would argue that he himself put it forward as an excessively economistic view of the subject. These theorists would probably pose not just the permanent arms economy, the creation of waste or the space programme as means of taking up the surplus value, but would also see the Labour Party as

a means of more efficiently organizing capitalism by persuading the working class to participate in its own exploitation. We hear nothing of this from the author.

Essentially, Gupta provides an invaluable source book which tells the story of the relationship between the social democratic movement in and out of power in Britain and its counterparts in the Third World – and how and why they served capital. But what is really needed is a radical critique of the manner in which the transition from imperialism to neo-colonialism was so ably assisted by numbers of social democratic reformers.

London DAVID CLARK

The New Assault on Equality: IQ and Social Stratification

Edited by A. GARTNER, C. GREER, and F. RIESSMAN (New York, Harper & Row, 1974). 225 pp. $1.95

Race and IQ

Edited by A. MONTAGU (London, Oxford University Press, 1975). 322 pp. £2.00

Race Differences in Intelligence

By J.C. LOEHLIN, G. LINDZER, and J.N. SPUHLER (San Francisco, 1975). 380 pp. $5.95

When Arthur Jensen published his notorious article in 1969 about the genetic inferiority of blacks the next issue of the *Harvard Educational Review* was devoted to replies by would-be critics whose confusion turned out to be almost as damaging as Jensen's certitude. After that those who followed Jensen, like Hernnstein, Shockley and Eysenck, had field days. The predicament of the liberal anti-Jensenists (who are often closer to the man than they like us to think) has been fully exhibited in the numerous books and articles which have since endeavoured 'to set the record straight'. These are the avowed aims of the present volumes and, to varying degrees, they fall into the same old traps.

The New Assault on Equality comes closest to being the exception to the rule. Indeed the chapter by Bowles and Gintis, 'IQ in the United States Class Structure', is the only account in all three books which can be called consistently radical, in the sense of getting to the root of the matter. First, they examine the assumption, taken for granted by 'hereditarians' and 'environmentalists' alike, that IQ is of basic importance to economic success. A statistical examination of available data shows that it is not; the IQ/success correlation is merely a by-product of two other factors, namely schooling and social class. This just means that doing well on the trivial puzzles of IQ tests is a superficial *expression* of work-role and cannot be said to *cause* it. Of course this can be predicted from the way IQ tests are constructed, but Bowles and

Gintis are just as efficient in a more laborious way. Secondly, they provide a thorough, well-documented, exposé of the ideological function of IQ, by tracing its connection through the education system to the needs of corporate industry for a disciplined, docile labour force. Indeed the IQ racket received its greatest impetus from the heavy financial backing of Carnegie, Rothschild and others in the face of a massive immigrant labour force in the early 1900s. With the legitimation of 'scientific' backing, men were more likely to believe in 'superiors' and the hierarchical division of labour could be put across as nothing less than a biological necessity. This is why genetic arguments are wheeled out whenever a section of the work-force begins to challenge the superiority myths.

The remaining contributions in this collection are anaemic in comparison and to some degree open to the general criticisms which I make below – with the exception of Chomsky, who efficiently destroys Richard Hernnstein's phoney logic about an impending genetic caste system, and David McClelland, who shows that, like IQ, school and college grades have no relation whatsoever with how well a person does his job (whatever it is) once the system has put him there.

Ashley Montagu's book, *Race and IQ*, is (like many of his previous books on the subject) maddeningly inconsistent, combining superb criticism with awful self-contradictions. Uri Bronfenbrenner, for instance, diligently takes apart the credibility of the Jensenists' 'genetic evidence' only to conclude that 'genetic factors play a substantial role in producing individual differences in mental ability'; and while Montagu himself descredits both the concept of race and the utility of heritability-estimates in the human context, one of his contributors argues that 'Eysenck deals . . . adequately with the concept of race, and places the hereditarian view in a scientific perspective'.

The approach of the book is to examine the various strands in the Jensenist thesis; while some are historical and philosophical, most accounts are of the 'evidence/counter evidence' sort. The resulting overlap and repetition makes for tedious reading. However it does include some crucial arguments including the following: Montagu's use of G.G. Simpson's thesis that since all mankind underwent virtually identical pressures for selection in the mental domain, group genetic differences for intelligence would not be expected and are extremely unlikely; Lieberman's history of the race concept under capitalism, showing its utility in the press-ganging of a sub-proletariat; and Layzer's rendering of the theoretical hollowness of IQ as a purported scientific measure. But the startling self-contradictions do not recommend the book to the uninitiated.

Race Differences in Intelligence is quite a different prospect from the other two. The authors in their preface forgive anyone for wondering 'why any behavioural scientist of good sense would willingly . . . become involved in the tangled morass of data, methods, ideologies and emotions that currently surrounds the question of . . . racial-ethnic IQ differences'. Nevertheless they wanted to 'keep the record straight' and attempt a systematic, scholarly, balanced review of the whole subject. Initial rebuffs from the National

Academy of Sciences led the authors to government bodies, specifically the Committee on Biological Bases of Behaviour, and, suitably equipped with funds and fellowships, they set about their task. The result is an impressive looking volume crammed with graphs, tables, references and academic paraphernalia. But what does it say, and what conclusions are reached?

Their opening is not very encouraging, being a wholly inadequate rendering of the history of the mental testing movement leading to Jensenism. This is followed by chapters on the key concepts of race, intelligence and heritability. The first of these is conventional and indicates the drift of their arguments. This is how it goes. First, they illustrate race formation in a species – the variation of colour and body size among house sparrows: implying that what goes for sparrows also goes for man (much as a Cambridge professor recently claimed to have illustrated the origins of the working class with an experiment on fruit-flies). This is followed with an intended racial classification of man. Only a small section is devoted to the crucial fact that known genetic differences between human groups are actually very tiny. For example, on the frequencies of eighteen sets of blood-groups and protein genes, 90 per cent of the total variance can be found within any one group. Now this fact ought to mean 'end of book', but the authors wriggle out of that one by insisting that a small minority of genes have large between-group variance – and suggest that *genes for intelligence are in that category.* But although they admit that this is extremely unlikely it is only on this premise that they can make a book.

Loehlin *et al* quickly follow-up (you might say cover-up) this side-stepping by a long-winded (and at times very funny) discussion of the possible mechanisms by which race differences in intelligence could have emerged. The next chapter is devoted to a fairly comprehensive, but superficial, account of intelligence testing. It is firmly based on the myth of 'the intelligent man' – you know, the one who 'walks into a situation in which others are floundering, appraises it, and selects an effective course of action'. The authors then review the evidence for the heritability of IQ in white populations, despite the fact that Leon Kamin, two years ago, showed conclusively that the body of data behind such 'evidence' was worthless. In the event, they reach the Jensenist conclusion about the substantial genetic influence on IQ.

The next, and largest section, called 'The Empirical Evidence', contains four chapters, the contents of which can be summarized as follows: a review of three recent twin studies in the USA which comes out to be reasonably critical (but then the defects are so obvious – for example, two collaborating authors of one study independently publishing opposite conclusions); age changes on IQ test performance; cross-cultural comparisons of mental measures (which is no dafter than most on this subject); and a review of the literature on undernutrition and IQ score.

Readers well outside of the IQ controversy will find most of this section informative, especially as the authors interpret the researchers directly instead of merely parroting the original conclusions. They are also perfectly candid in admitting that the evidence discussed is limited, conflicting and

methodologically unsatisfactory. 'The studies we have reviewed . . . provide no unequivocal answer to the question of whether the differences in ability-test performance among U.S. racial-ethnic sub populations do, or do not, have a substantial component reflecting genetic differences.' And yet in 'Conclusions and Implications for Social Policy' (*sic*) they state that 'Observed average differences in the scores of members of different U.S. racial-ethnic groups on intellectual ability tests probably reflect . . . in part genetic differences among the groups' and that '*it would be most unwise to base public policy on the assumption that no such genetic differences exist*' (emphasis added).

What all these books commonly reflect is the nature of the liberal dilemma with all its self-contradictions. Basically they stem from a sickening devotion to two quite false propositions: (i) IQ is a measure of human intelligence; (ii) all human behaviour is just like animal behaviour in terms of genetic control. And this in turn leads to the kind of intellectual dishonesty which recognizes that 'it would . . . be fairly easy to select deliberately items for intelligence tests that would be so distributed between cultures or other groups as to insure that any, desired group would repeatedly test inferior on one set of questions or superior on another set' without acknowledging at the same time that that is how all IQ tests *are* constructed.

In the final analysis the cause of the dilemma is the incapacity, even the refusal, of these IQ protagonists to distinguish fully between science and ideology: there is *nothing* scientific about the IQ controversy.

Milton Keynes K. RICHARDSON

Revolutionary Transformation in the Arab World: Habash and his Comrades from Nationalism to Marxism

By WALID KAZZIHA (London, Charles Knight, 1975). 118 pp. £2

Revolutionary Transformation in the Arab World is not the definitive analysis of the various radical and revolutionary currents in the Arab world as suggested by the title. It is, instead, a narrative survey of one of the less successful of these currents – the Arab National Movement. Within this more limited framework, Kazziha traces the internal development of the ANM from its founding by George Habash (then a student) in the Beirut of 1948 to its collapse in 1968 and the emergence of its most important successors: on the one hand, the Persian Gulf and South Arabian revolutionary movements, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the current regime in South Yemen; and on the other, the left-wing of the Palestine resistance movement, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP). Since Habash is best known as the head of the PFLP, the most interesting – and unfortunately short – section of the book is that which deals with the genesis of the PFLP.

During the early 1960s, the ANM was torn by severe ideological disputes between two dominant groups: the traditionally unreconstructed Arab nationalists, headed by George Habash and most of the movement's founders, who argued that the necessity for national cohesion on the political level overrode internal social and economic considerations; and the radicals, led by Nayef Hawatmeh and Mohsin Ibrahim, who argued that the social and economic oppression of the Arab masses was the most important factor inhibiting Arab national unity.

This dispute – finally won in May 1964 by Hawatmeh and the radicals – could have been fatal for the movement had it retained the original structure instituted by Habash: a centralized pan-Arab movement with branches in the different Arab states. But with the radicalization of various elements within the movement, different centres of power had grown up. Thus in 1965, the National Conference of the ANM, under the sway of the victorious Hawatmeh-Ibrahim group, formally ratified what had already become operational: the organizational principle of independent local commands governed by men elected from below.

About the same time as Habash's defeat, the Palestine Liberation Organization was formed by the constituted Arab regimes at the First Arab Summit of January 1964. It was also around this time that el-Fatah, with its ideology of a people's war of liberation waged independently by the Palestinians against Zionism, began to emerge as a serious contender to the ANM in the refugee camps.

Thus in May 1964, Habash, isolated and defeated in the movement he created, turned to found the Regional Command for Palestine within the umbrella of the ANM. Better known as the National Front for the Liberation of Palestine (NFLP) the Command served to draw to itself blatantly nationalist elements of the ANM who had fought with Habash.

With the shocking defeat of Nasserism in the 1967 war, a reconciliation of sorts was effected between the two factions. The radicals abandoned Nasser as the hope of the Arab future, characterizing Nasserism and the ideologies of the other so-called progressive Arab regimes as petty-bourgeois rather than socialist. Habash dropped his notion of the NFLP as a 'detonator' of the final conflict between Israel and the Arab states – who were clearly unable to wage a successful war against Zionism. As a consequence both accepted the Fatah line, and called for popular armed struggle on the pan-Arab level for the liberation of Palestine.

In December 1967, then, the PFLP was formed around the nucleus of Habash's NFLP. Shortly thereafter, Hawatmeh joined the Front. This precipitated a series of ideological quarrels over the commitment of Habash and his comrades to the Hawatmeh-oriented political programme formally accepted as the Front's charter – a programme infused with Communist rhetoric and reasoning. In February 1969 Hawatmeh finally broke away from the PDFLP – an alignment of forces that remains more or less unchanged today.

Three points stand out from this story. The first is the rather dismal failure of both elements in the ANM to realize before the 1967 defeat that any

successful Palestinian *revolution* – as opposed to the defeat of Zionism by any means – would require the active mass participation of the Palestinians themselves. Secondly, having been shocked into this realization by the 1967 defeat, they jumped to what should be the last stage of a revolutionary struggle – armed popular warfare – without consolidating the primary task of revolution: the delegitimization of the enemy – in this case, both Zionism and, more importantly from a political perspective, the reactionary and bourgeois nationalist Arab regimes which had denied the Palestinians an active role in their own liberation.

The final point is the misapplication of the term 'Marxist' to Habash and the PFLP. As the events themselves show, Habash had always represented the least democratic and progressive elements within the ANM – and, on the showing of this book, his later actions indicated no revolutionary transformation. Unfortunately, neither the ideology nor the *practice* of Habash and the PFLP reveals the mass character of genuine revolutionary struggle.

That the resistance movement is popular among the Palestinian masses cannot be denied – especially in contrast to their Zionist and Hashemite oppressors. But it is equally undeniable that the resistance movement has failed – with the notable exception of the Palestine National Front in the occupied territories – to engage in the hard, dogged political and ideological work necessary to transform the Palestinian people into conscious revolutionaries. That Zionism may be defeated without this transformation is entirely possible. But to equate the fall of Zionism with the success of the Palestinian revolution is delusion.

Transnational Institute, Amsterdam DAVID CAPLOE

The Corporations and the State

By JAMES O'CONNOR (New York, Harper & Row, 1974). 222pp. $4.95 Paper

In the era of advanced monopoly capitalism the questions raised by the relationship between capitalist industry and the state in western societies are urgently in need of an adequate Marxist analysis. This collection of essays written by James O'Connor between 1966 and 1974 is an important contribution to furthering such an analysis in some of the critical areas. The two introductory essays on the need for production and the theory of surplus value spell out the contemporary relevance of Marxian theory, while the two essays on big corporations are useful resumés of Baran and Sweezy's classic *Monopoly Capital* and more recent theories. Only the essays on economic imperialism and international corporations now appear dated.

Such is the underdeveloped condition of Marxian theory in drawing out the relationship between capitalism and the state that it is perhaps best to raise some of the questions posed by O'Connor's analysis rather than attempt to summarize his tentative conclusions.[1] First, there is the question of the

ownership and control of businesses. Without doubt monopolization has increased the concentration of capital in fewer and fewer companies, yet capital is no longer the preserve of a few wealthy families but is now inclusive of a large number of individuals investing either directly or via pension funds, banks, trusts, etc. This latter process, the socialization of capital, has been interpreted by bourgeois theorists either as heralding the passing of effective power to the managers of industry or as pointing to the irrelevance of a class analysis. But, as O'Connor demonstrates, this does not diminish the appropriation of surplus value or change the wage-labour relationship of the working class.

Secondly, it is clear that British and American capital has come increasingly to rely on state expenditure (that is, of taxes raised largely from the working class) to reproduce itself. This is particularly so in the financing of education, of industrial training and research; the provision or subsidization of transport, communications, and basic industries (like steel); and, in a wider sense, the financing of the social costs of production. This last aspect is well brought out by O'Connor and includes the ecological effects of industry together with the provision of a stable environment in which to expand: a well-policed society.

Thirdly, the corporate nature of contemporary capitalist societies is raised. As O'Connor expresses it:

> In the twentieth century . . . corporate capital has combined with state capital to create a new organic whole. Corporate capital is not subordinated to state capital, or vice versa, but rather they are synthesized into a qualitatively new phenomenon, rooted in the development of the productive forces and the concentration and centralisation of capital.

Finally, there are the implications for a class analysis where workers come to be employed increasingly by the state sector of the economy.[2] O'Connor suggests quite rightly that wage demands by state employees create a division of interest between members of the working class — because increased wages for state employees can only come from increased taxes on the working class in the private sector. But does employment by the state necessarily change the class relations of those employed? In Britain, for example, does the state employment of mines, steel or aircraft workers make them any less working class because, according to the orthodox Marxist model, surplus value is only extracted in private industry? Moreover, this question is heightened if the central thesis of O'Connor's analysis is accepted, namely, that the interests of corporate capital are inextricably bound up in the workings of the capitalist state itself.

London TONY BUNYAN

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1. But see James O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (London, St. Martin's Press, 1973).
2. In Britain the percentage of the working population employed by the state has risen from 13.6 per cent in 1960 to 19 per cent in 1973, and to over 20 per cent if the armed forces are included.

Ghetto Revolts: The Politics of Violence in American Cities

By JOE R. FEAGIN and HARLAN HAHN (New York, The MacMillan Company, 1973). 338pp.

This book presents a lengthy critique of established social science theories of collective violence by way of a detailed analysis of the American black ghetto revolts of the 1960s. The authors argue that the 'riots' were not the aimless actions of psychologically, socially and politically marginal men and women, but rather a natural extension of black politics, closely related to the emerging demand for black self-determination and community control. This is by now the standard radical interpretation of the 'riots', and while no less valid for that, it hardly justifies another whole book on the subject.

To be generous, there may be some value in this book in that it does provide a concise summary of the vast literature which has accumulated in this field. On the other hand, it is also another example of the 'stagflation' into which the radical American social sciences have fallen – their ideas haven't changed for over half a decade, but that doesn't stop them from flooding our shelves with their books and articles. Readers may well ask whether it is not about time to impose a freeze on this situation.

University of Birmingham LEE BRIDGES

Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism

By COLIN LEYS (London, Heinemann, 1975). 278 pp., $16.50

Economic Underdevelopment: An Inside View

By C.C. ONYEMELUKWE (London, Longman, 1974). 123pp. £1 Paper

These are two books on political economy – attempts at highlighting the unfortunate consequence at the grass-root level of the economic drama at the top. For as Baran is reported to have said, 'the question of whether there will be meat in the kitchen is never decided in the kitchen'. The question that Colin Leys has attempted to answer can be put simply: what was the nature of the impact of capitalism on economic development in Kenya? Working within the emerging, but as yet uncrystallized, under-development theory, the author analyses the various processes whereby colonial exploitation of Kenya survived 'independence' in the 1960s. This neo-colonialism, he shows, has generated many contradictions and problems, including high unemployment and abject poverty even among those who have jobs.

The author has no good news for Kenya, for he sees post-independence years as 'exceptionally favourable for the consolidation of neo-colonialism'. Neo-colonialism continues to exist precisely because what the African leaders took over at independence was an economic structure that had been

designed to yield high incomes for the white minority. Worse still, that economic structure is sustained by the school system, the pattern of government spending, the fiscal and tax system and investment policy. One wonders if the situation has not now begun to change. Moreover, there are many decisions made in and out of the kitchen by ordinary folks which cumulate into significant demands on the government. That represents a major source of 'contradiction' in any developing society.

If Colin Leys is regarded as an outsider in Africa, Onyemelukwe attempts to provide 'An Inside View'. Like Leys, he too utilizes his first chapter to present a synopsis of the major contributions to the underdevelopment theory. In this he is more successful than Leys, presenting a more interesting and informative account, though not always rigorous in his analysis. Drawing from Nigerian and Indian experiences, his major complaint seems to be that underdevelopment theories have borrowed too much from the structural characteristics of advanced economies. One consequence of this is the reification of capital as a vehicle of economic development. Capital is the shadow; the substance, according to Onyemelukwe, is technology – not externally designed and imposed but one that is in context, i.e., one that seeks 'the full utilization of its factor endowments'.

A technology that does not do this, says the author, is 'irrelevant' and 'harmful to an economy'. He describes taxation and foreign aid as 'un-natural capital accumulation' which leads to an un-even development precisely because of the psychological gap it creates in the mass of the people – 'misery and low standard of living in the underdeveloped countries are not the result of *poverty per se*, but of a situation where the opportunity for improving one's lot seems too small, because the development process is beyond the comprehension of the mass of the population'.

These books will surely be useful to some future administrators, for the present ones will surely not read, let alone understand, them.

Exeter University JUSTIN LABINJOH

The Politics of Power: A Critical Introduction to American Government

By IRA KATZNELSON and MARK KESSELMAN (New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975). 513 pp. Paper

This book might just as well be subtitled 'Democracy Betrayed'. It sets out to expose American society as undemocratic, and necessarily so given the inequalities of wealth and power that characterize its capitalist economic order. In the process all the elements of American democratic mythology are carefully demolished: unions are shown to be unrepresentative of workers and their interests, foreign policy to be designed to prop up America's economic dominance in the world, Congress to be ineffective in the face of growing executive power, the courts to be unjust and class-biased, cities to be depen-

dent colonies and their governments to be instruments of welfare colonialism, and so on through the gamut of American institutions. All this is done in a simple, straightforward, almost elementary fashion.

Yet, there is something almost naive about Katznelson and Kesselman's so-called 'critical' approach. For one thing, there can hardly be anyone left in America who, after Vietnam, Chile and Watergate, still believes the myths which the authors so meticulously set out to examine from their critical stance. American students must know by now that their society is fundamentally undemocratic, and either they accept this situation and look to their education to provide rationalizations for it, or they reject it and demand of their teachers that they get down to the hard task of analysing society in order to change it.

It is in this latter respect that Katznelson and Kesselman totally fail their readers. At the end of the book they present a vision of a socialist America, one which is so far removed from reality that they can allow themselves to claim that:

> At the present time, there is no democratic socialist society in the world to serve as a model. It is necessary to choose selectively from other countries where successful experiments can be identified and to develop new theoretical possibilities appropriate to the unique conditions in the United States. Yet the fact that a prototype does not exist is no cause for despair. As the wealthiest, most powerful, and most technologically advanced society in history, the United States has a rare opportunity to help diminish suffering and domination in the world and to contribute to the liberation of mankind. At an earlier stage in history, the United States delivered a revolutionary message to the world. As the fulfilment of the democratic promise, socialism would represent a rebirth of this message.

And how is this socialist vision to be achieved? According to the authors, through the pursuit of the same democratic myths which they have held out previously as being negated by capitalism. And who are to be the agents of this change? Virtually everyone – blacks, chicanos, the white working class, students, women, even the newly-downtrodden middle classes (the 'we are all niggers now' fallacy runs throughout this book) – all putting forward demands for 'substantive democracy' in their workplaces, homes, schools, communities, government, etc.

To propose such a 'strategy for change' is not just naive; it represents a betrayal of socialism and socialist theory. One wonders what has happened to the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Katznelson and Kesselman's analysis. Put another way, if the authors are correct in arguing that capitalism in its pursuit of wealth, power and technological superiority has outstripped democracy, then can we really rely on democratic political practices to bring about the transformation to socialism? Is it not the case that achievement of socialism by any means necessary is in fact a prerequisite for real democracy? In refusing to accept the logic of their own analysis, Katznelson and Kesselman merely pay lip-service to socialist theory and, even worse, prepetuate the new myth of a 'democratic road to socialism'. And it is that myth, as events in Chile and now Portugal show, which is the most

potent weapon in the arsenal of those who seek to maintain the capitalist world order.

University of Birmingham LEE BRIDGES

Class, Culture and the Curriculum.

By DENIS LAWTON (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975). £1.50. Paper.

Those who have had to teach sociology of education on the post-graduate diploma course usually encounter one problem: the majority of the candidates (usually teachers) have no social science background. What introductory books should one recommend? Lawton's small book goes some way to solving that problem. It summarizes the important writings on the major issues of educability; discusses the nineteenth-century heritage and the implications of the thinking behind the 1944 Education Act; and examines curriculum construction in the light of the sociology of knowledge.

What is more significant about the book is the perspective that education is a part of culture and that, though there are sub-cultures within a society, the content of curriculum should be classless. Lawton accepts the anthropological definition of culture as everything created by man. That makes it possible for him to define curriculum as 'a selection of content made by educationists from the whole culture'.

But putting aside the larger question of whether there could be a classless culture, and meeting Lawton on his own ground, what 'whole culture' do 'immigrant' children belong to? If they are defined as belonging to the working class 'sub-culture', on the basis, often alleged, that they suffer from the same disabilities, where does their native culture come into it, and is there a sub-sub-culture which is specific to the black sub-proletariat?

By the way, Professor Lawton, the blacks in America define themselves as Afro-Americans or Black Americans, not as Negroes, and certainly not as negroes. The point is not trivial, for these subtle remnants of prejudice do not go unnoticed by the black child, and his response to a teacher who is insensitive to the child's history cannot be anything but negative. That educationalists should remain so obstinately in the past bodes ill for the teachers they help to turn out.

Exeter University JUSTIN LABINJOH

Race and Labour in London Transport

By DENNIS BROOKS (London, Oxford University Press, 1975). 389 pp. £7.00

Hopefully, Dennis Brooks' extremely boring book will become best known as the very last of a long line of empirical studies of black people in Britain. The Institute of Race Relations first proposed its infamous 'survey of race

relations in Britain' back in 1963. This study was prepared as a contribution to the survey, and like the other publications from the same stable, owes its methodology to the 'English empirical tradition' and is based on the analysis of a questionnaire, administered to employees of London Transport some ten years ago. When a book has a gestation period as long as this, one usually expects something pretty thorough. Brooks is indeed thorough in the most pedestrian fashion imaginable. He plods through the intricacies of London Transport's internal organization preparatory to dealing at great length with the simple marginal results from his questionnaire. Occasionally there is a bit of bivariate analysis of the data but the tables are presented in full, often with 64 categories, with no indication of statistical or substantive significance. One is left with the overwhelming impression that this book is an MA thesis that got entirely out of hand.

All the more ridiculous bits of the liberal approach to race relations are there for the asking. The statutory little piece about 'objectivity', the need for assimilation or absorption, even the adoption of Eisenstadt's indices (acculturation, satisfactory and integral personal adjustment of the immigrants, complete dispersion of the immigrants as a group).

Brooks admits that one of the reasons for undertaking the study was to see whether London Transport recruitment policy in Barbados could serve as a blueprint for future immigration policy. Nowhere does Brooks question the reasons for an immigration policy in an advanced capitalist society or the economic role that it plays. Instead he unquestioningly plays the role of subservient sociologist, trying to help the smooth running of existing society.

London ROBIN JENKINS

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This listing does not preclude subsequent publication of reviews.

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