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VIEWPOINT



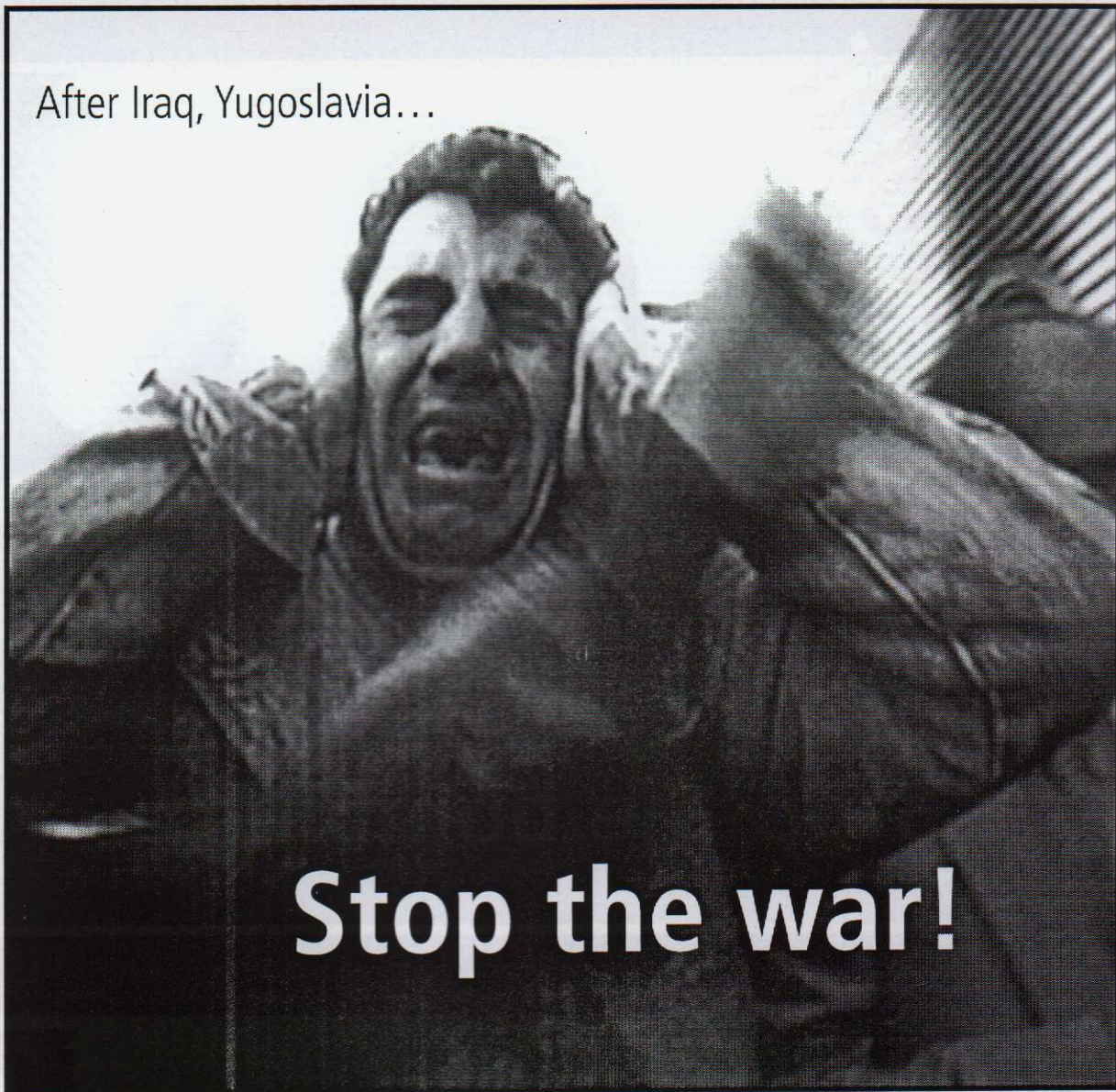
Serbia
Stop the bombing!



Kosovo
Self-determination!

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After Iraq, Yugoslavia...



Stop the war!

Editorial

Here we go again. The imperialist powers use their massive military superiority against a peripheral country, and the "liberal" media join the propaganda machine that tries to justify that aggression, and prevent discussion of the real issues.

As we go to press, the towns and villages of Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo are suffering waves of bombardment. Only a liar could pretend that the targets are exclusively military.

The impotence of the United Nations has been demonstrated once again. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees scolded those countries that opened their borders, because Bill Clinton and Tony Blair know that suffering refugees trapped at the border are an essential weapon in the propaganda war.

The social democrats and greens who run all the European Union governments except Spain and

Ireland are so proud of their new common currency. But when war breaks out in their own continent, they meekly tail-end the US superpower.

Italy has become an enormous aircraft carrier for NATO aircraft, some of them carrying depleted uranium shells that will devastate Yugoslavia and Kosovo for years to come.

The First World War was justified as the great war for civilisation. Very similar to the current calls for "humanitarian intervention". But we know all too well that "humanitarian" interventions are very selective.

No NATO member state has ever considered intervening in any other country which persecutes its national minorities or uses authoritarian measures against the population.

And it is already clear that the NATO intervention in Kosovo will have tragic consequences for the very people it is claimed to support. NATO bombs may even accelerate the partition of Kosovo which Milosevic seems to be preparing by

the expulsion of a new wave of refugees.

Over the last ten years, *International Viewpoint*, and our sister publications in French, Spanish and German, have documented Slobodan Milosevic's nationalist degeneration, and his criminal campaigns for a "greater Serbia." In 1989 we were among the first to condemn his suppression of Kosovo's autonomy within the Yugoslav federation. We reported on his repression of mass popular movements in Serbia itself, and opened our pages to Serbian oppositionists.

Our opposition to NATO intervention is no "knee-jerk" reaction, and we have no illusions in Slobodan Milosevic. But unlike some of yesterday's peace activists who have learned to love NATO, we understood the Gulf War

Milosevic's refusal to solve the Kosovo problem by recognising the will of the great majority of Kosovo's population has made any political solution much more difficult. His violence has given his enemies an

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alibi, and pulled the Serbian people into a war which will ruin their country, disrupting an economy which is already in a miserable state, and provoke a social regression greater than anything Europe has seen since the Second World War.

The crisis in Kosovo may have repercussions in other parts of former Yugoslavia. It may reopen the fragile Dayton settlement between leaders of neighbouring Bosnia's Muslim, Croat and Serbian populations.

As we have long argued, the only long term solution to the Balkan crisis is a solution that englobes the whole region. Despite the immense difficulties this implies, it is the only way to prevent more wars, more ethnic clashes, and more imperialist interventions.

The fundamental right of self-determination of every people is the essential, democratic cornerstone of this regional solution.

This is an immediate question for the people of Kosovo. Some may think that independence is the best solution. Others prefer the integration of Kosovo with Albania. Others favour a return to Kosovo's pre-1989 autonomy within Yugoslavia (what-

ever that means in a Yugoslavia reduced to Serbia and Montenegro, and dominated by Milosevic).

Given the current balance of forces, one could also understand why many Kosovars might prefer to avoid a prolonged war with no guarantee of victory, and accept some transitional solution, delaying the decision on their future status until some later date.

But we must reaffirm, without the slightest ambiguity or hesitation, that this is a choice for the Kosovars to take. No-one has the right to impose a solution upon them, or to decide in their place. No international institution or foreign-sponsored conference has the right to ignore or avoid the centrality of this question.

That is why we reject the Rambouillet negotiations, where the Western Powers tried to bully the Kosovars into acceptance of their own "solution."

We urge our readers to oppose all NATO adventures in ex-Yugoslavia. Serbian police and troops should leave Kosovo immediately. NATO should be dissolved. The west should open its borders to refugees. Let the Kosovars decide their own fate. ★

Western banks destroyed Yugoslavia The money keeps rolling in...

Michel Chossudovsky

Drowned in the barrage of images and self-serving analyses are the economic and social causes of the conflict. The deep-seated economic crisis which preceded the civil war has long been forgotten.

In the eyes of the global media, Western powers bear no responsibility for the impoverishment of Yugoslavia's 24 million people and the division of that country by war.

In fact, through their domination of the global financial system, the Western powers, from the beginning of the 1980s, brought the Yugoslav economy to its knees, contributing to stirring simmering ethnic and social conflicts.

Far from "helping Yugoslavia's war-ravaged successor states", creditors and international financial institutions are busy at work collecting former Yugoslavia's external debt, and transforming the Balkans into a safe-haven for free enterprise [...]

The economic reforms now being imposed on the "successor states"

are a natural extension and continuation of those previously implemented in federal Yugoslavia. In the tragic aftermath of a brutal and destructive War, the prospects for rebuilding the newly independent republics appear bleak.

Despite a virtual press blackout on the subject, debt rescheduling is an integral part of the peace process. The former Yugoslavia has been carved up under the close scrutiny of its external creditors, its foreign debt has been carefully divided and allocated to the republics.

The privatisation programmes implemented under the supervision of the donors, have contributed to a further stage of economic dislocation and impoverishment of the population. Across ex-Yugoslavia, GDP declined by 50% in just four years (1990-93).

The decline into ethnic conflict was a tragic response to the regime's dead-end. Much of the blood is on the hands of the Western bankers who profited from the destruction of Yugoslavia. ★

Source: extract from "Dismantling former Yugoslavia, recolonising Bosnia," 1996

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Inside the Rambouillet talks The breakdown of negotiations

Now that the European Union has its common currency, the key states want to prove that they can have a common foreign policy. Kosovo is their experiment.

Catherine Samary

Clinton took the lead in the western "solution" of the Bosnian conflict, but the Europeans were determined to play the central role in the Kosovo crisis.

They certainly didn't want to see an independent Kosovo, and they made this clear at the beginning of the Rambouillet negotiations.

Serbia accepted the political proposals of the "Contact Group" (USA, France, Germany, Britain, Italy and Russia), which called for "substantial autonomy" for Kosovo, within Yugoslavia. The Contact Group plan rejected any popular consultation in Kosovo, by referendum, now or at any future point. To make matters perfectly clear, the Contact Group demanded that the Kosovo resistance surrender all their weapons.

The western governments were worried that independence for Kosovo would stimulate similar demands by Macedonia's Albanian minority (25-35% of the 2m. population) or even by the ethnic Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Kosovar determination

But they failed to "dominate" the Kosovo delegation. The main western contact in Kosovo had traditionally been the writer Ibrahim Rugova, leader of the LDK (Kosovo Democratic League). In March 1998 Rugova was re-elected as "President of the Republic of Kosovo" in an informal, illegal (for Serbia) consultation. Several opposition parties, including the little-known Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) had unsuccessfully called for a boycott of these elections.

For ten years, Rugova led a massive, peaceful resistance to Serbia, through a network of parallel schools, health centres and an underground parliament. He is still very popular. But he was increasingly criticised for his authoritarianism, and a strategy that depended too much on the goodwill of the western "community."

The military option

After the Dayton agreements for Bosnia-Herzegovina, some Kosovars concluded that the peaceful road led to the perpetuation of apartheid, and a dead end. More and more young people concluded that Albanians would only be heard by the "international community" when they took up arms. The marginal UCK grew quickly, winning new recruits after each wave of repression by Serb paramilitary groups.

Until recently, Rugova condemned the UCK as a tool of Milosevic's manipulation. But it has become a major actor in its own right.

The origins of the UCK are a very small network of former "Marxist-Leninists," in Kosovo and among Albanian emigrants in Western Europe.

But the organisation has become a much more nebulous group. It has begun to fight a classic guerrilla struggle, with solid roots in a number of villages (currently under attack from the Serbs). The UCK has also absorbed a number of recruits from the emigrant communities.

Rugova is still the most popular leader of Kosovo Albanians, but he no longer has the unchallenged power to

guarantee the implementation of any settlement he signs without the agreement of the radical opposition.

So an alliance was made: Rugova and the main political parties needed to integrate the UCK and the radical youth into their strategy, and the UCK needed access to Rugova's international contacts.

Pressure at Rambouillet...

The Kosovo delegation to the Rambouillet talks included a range of political factions. Since the Serb authorities refused to negotiate with "terrorists", the Albanian parties had worked hard to ensure that the UCK was present in the delegation, with five representatives. Rugova led a six-member group from the LDK, and there were six representatives of smaller currents of the Kosovo opposition.

Despite their dislike of the Contact Group's plan, the Kosovars came to Rambouillet in search of international recognition. But what the West wanted was to force the Kosovars to reduce their demand from independence to some kind of autonomy within Serbia.

It seems, though, that the presence of UCK representatives solidified the Kosovar delegation on a common programme of intransigence. After a first round of negotiations with the Contact Group, the Kosovar delegation refused to sign, and returned to Kosovo "to consult with the population."

This placed the European and US governments in a very embarrassing situation. They had threatened Milosevic with NATO air strikes if he did not sign. But no-one had expected that the Kosovo Albanians would dare resist the "International Community." This was the absolute worst-case scenario. Milosevic was the designated enemy, but the Albanians wouldn't "behave."

... and afterwards

Kosovo leader Adem Demaci (who spend 20 years in Tito's prisons) did not come to Rambouillet. He called it a "trap"—because the negotiations specifically excluded the possibility of independence.

The Western powers, particularly the US, put huge pressure on the Kosovars. Even the Albanian writer Ismail Kadaré was recruited to condemn the Kosovo press for "launching a real anti-western campaign before and during the negotiations, particularly attacking the USA and NATO."

Kadaré explicitly denounced those Rambouillet delegates "who demanded NATO help to punish Serbian barbarity but, at the same time, in an immoral and shameful way, began to oppose the Atlantic Alliance." For Kadaré, the most important thing was for Albanians in Kosovo to win western respect as a people worthy of "European civilisation", as defined and defended by NATO.

Leaving the ideology aside, Kadaré

raised a real dilemma for the Kosovars. To "avoid the drama of isolation of Kosovo" they would have to accept the western plan.

An agreement on paper only

For a period, he seemed to have won the argument. Adem Demaci was "removed" from his position of leadership, and the Kosovo delegation signed an agreement to surrender their arms, on two conditions: the presence of a NATO peacekeeping force, and a referendum on Kosovo's future in 2002.

No-one in Kosovo thought that the Serbs would accept this agreement, so signing was relatively painless.

The real surprise is the *naïveté* of the western governments, who seriously

thought that Milosevic would cede to their pressure.

The West is always right

Servile journalists began to "remind" us that Milosevic had ceded to NATO pressure in Bosnia. This is a bizarre version of what the Bosnian Serbs won at the Dayton negotiations: their separatists "Republika srpska" was recognised as a constituent part of a confederal Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Dayton agreement also marginalised Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, leaving Slobodan Milosevic as the undisputed leader of all the Serbs! Rather than retreating, Milosevic emerged from the Dayton negotiations strengthened in Bosnia and in Serbia.

The threat of Gulf War syndrome
NATO's radioactive shells

Depleted uranium shells pose a long term threat to the people and environment of the entire Balkans.

The A-10 "Warthog" jets in action over Kosovo and Yugoslavia were the anti-tank weapon of choice in the 1991 war against Iraq. The Warthog carries a GAU-8/A Avenger 30 millimetre seven-barrel cannon capable of firing 4,200 rounds per minute. During the gulf war it fired 30 mm rounds reinforced with depleted uranium, a radioactive weapon.

There is solid scientific evidence that the depleted uranium residue left in Iraq is responsible for a large increase in stillbirths, children born with defects, and childhood leukemia and other cancers in the area of southern Iraq near Basra, where most of these shells were fired.

Many U.S. veterans groups also say that DU residues contributed to the condition called "Gulf War Syndrome" that has affected close to 100,000 service people in the U.S. and Britain with chronic sickness.

John Catalinotto, a spokesperson from the Depleted Uranium Education Project of the US International Action Centre, a group that campaigns against the use of depleted-uranium weapon, and an editor of the 1997 book *Metal of Dishonour: Depleted Uranium*, said the use of DU weapons in Yugoslavia "adds a new dimension to the crime NATO is perpetrating against the Yugoslav people—including the Kosovars."

Depleted Uranium is a waste product of the uranium enrichment process used for making atomic bombs and nuclear fuel. Because it is extremely dense—1.7 times as dense as lead, "DU is used in alloy form in shells to make them penetrate targets better," explains Catalinotto.

As the shell hits its target, it burns and releases uranium oxide into the air. The poisonous and radioactive uranium is most dangerous when inhaled into the body, where it will release radiation during the life of the person who inhaled it," said Catalinotto.

Sara Flounders, a contributing author of *Metal of Dishonour: Depleted Uranium* and the Co-Director of the International Action Centre, said, "Warthogs fired roughly 940,000 rounds of DU shells during the Gulf War. More than 600,000 pounds (273,000 kg) of radioactive waste was left in the Gulf Region after the war.

"DU weapons in smaller number were already used by NATO troops during the bombing of Serbian areas of Bosnia in 1995.

"The use of Warthogs with DU shells threatens to make a nuclear wasteland of Kosovo," Flounders said. "The pentagon is laying waste to the very people they claim to be saving." ★

Source: International Action Centre, 39 West 14th Street, #206, New York, NY 10011, USA. Tel +1-212-633-6646 fax: 633-2889 E-mail: <iacenter@iacenter.org> web site: www.iacenter.org
Metal of Dishonour: Depleted Uranium has also been published in Arabic and Japanese. A second English edition will be published soon.

★ Kosovo

NATO bombs will make the Serbian population even more loyal to Milosevic. Opposition leader Vuk Draskovic and ultranationalist Vojislav Seselj have already rallied to Milosevic in the name of national unity.

And most of the population sees Milosevic's Socialist Party, and his wife Mira Markovic's Yugoslav Left, as more likely to solve their terrible social problems than the more pro-capitalist opposition parties. "National self-defence" has been invoked to justify a new wave of media censorship.

Tension in Montenegro

The only dissident voice in Yugoslav politics comes from Montenegrin president Milo Djukanovic. His clique of former Communist aparatchiks is seeking US financial and political support for a "democratic" pro-western and modernist project that might mean splitting Montenegro from the Yugoslav federation—thus depriving Serbia of its only sea access and most of its tourist industry.

Djukanovic has not offered to support the Kosovars, though he has opposed the use of Montenegro as a base for Serb attacks into Kosovo.

Until the NATO attacks started, his strategy was to exploit Milosevic's distraction so as to increase the rate of privatisation in Montenegro, and pass legislation that would keep tourism earnings in Montenegro. But now that NATO bombs are falling on Montenegro, he will find it hard to oppose Milosevic's nationalist calls for unity and discipline. If he is not careful, Milosevic will be able to exploit the crisis to replace him with his own "man in Montenegro", ex-premier Bulatovic.

Serbia intensifies attacks

Since bombs are already falling, Serbia seems to be seizing the opportunity to implement a radical plan that was already circulating in the corridors of power: expel as many Kosovars as possible, in preparation of a partition of the province, with Serbia keeping some of the mines, and the orthodox monasteries that are such powerful symbols of Serbian nationalism.

In Serbia and the NATO countries, the media have become servants of the generals. All western and independent journalists have been expelled from Kosovo, making it impossible to confirm the refugee reports of Serb violence. But these are plausible accounts.

Things are likely to get worse. The Serb mercenary leader Arkan is again recruiting "dogs of war" for the butchery that made him famous in Bosnia and Croatia.

NATO escalates the conflict

As the NATO attack intensifies, the west will seek more difficult targets, including those located in populated zones. If there is no quick solution,

NATO will have to introduce ground troops, or admit stalemate.

But no NATO government is yet ready to risk the death of its own "boys" They are striking Serbia in the name of Kosovo, but refuse to recognise the Kosovars' right to self-determination.

Their "concern" for Kosovars contrasts sharply with their indifference to the plight of the Kurds, butchered and repressed by NATO member Turkey, using the latest technology from its democratic partners Britain, France, Germany and the USA.

As NATO enters its 51st year of operations, it is forging a new role of repression and intervention. Britain's Tony Blair has already authorised more

British air strikes than all British post-war leaders together. France's Socialist-Communist-Green government is the first French government to authorise a NATO war.

There is a third way

Europe's social democratic leaders know what kind of NATO they want. The best way to stop them getting what they want is to build a peace movement calling for an end to Serbian aggression against the Kosovars, an end to NATO bombs, and recognition of the Kosovars' right to self determination. ★

The author teaches at Paris University. She writes regularly on former Yugoslavia and E. Europe for the French weekly *Rouge* and *Le Monde Diplomatique*

Letter from Yugoslavia (1) Belgrade under fire

From democratic activists...

"We have heard that the TV pictures of the Kosovo civilian exodus are horrible, encouraging people abroad to support NATO intervention "to stop ethnic cleansing"

As people in Yugoslavia do not see these pictures, conditions are very hostile for those of us who consider ourselves the "democratic forces" of Serbia.

The nationalistic, xenophobic homogenization of street life is increasing. It has reached an early stage of militancy, with "spontaneous masses" smashing the windows of foreign cultural centers, embassies, offices of western airlines, and Macdonalds restaurants.

Suspicious neighbors are looking for "spies" — a wartime psychology is at work. Anyone who tries to develop an alternative scenario has no chance to say even a word against the leader and the clique who actually produced all this.

The spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, commenting last night bombing, said "In Serbia now, we have 11 million Milosevics!"

A state of war has been proclaimed. All free media are censored and harassed. The rest are engaged in vulgar propaganda. The Internet news sites and short wave radio stations like Radio Free Europe and the BBC are just a drop of information in a sea of ignorance, irrationality and disorientation.

Rationing has reinforced the non-market food distribution system, at the expense of small private shopkeepers.

When citizens seize the chance for a walk and some fresh air, they discover "patriotic" pop-folk concerts on the main squares. The casual stroller is suddenly caught up in a homogenized mass of people roaring against the western powers.

Russian pop-groups and even some Russian MPs exercise their singing abilities with Serbian patriotic songs.

Meanwhile, Russian monks carry icons of Mother Mary over the Danube bridge, in a parody of religious symbolism.

Democrats are isolated

If it was just a video-game one could laugh. But it is an increasingly sad and dangerous reality. The human suffering in Kosovo is coupled with a growing frustration of the democratic forces in Belgrade. We are helpless. Any meaningful sign of resistance would place us in great danger.

The opposition newspaper **Republika** has just been printed. This "newspaper for civic self-liberation" cannot be sold in the streets or kiosks. If we are lucky, the postal service will agree to deliver it to subscribers. Only a few people have Internet access to the electronic version of **Republika**.

The only way out is an immediate ceasefire on all sides, followed by an international conference hosted by the European Union or the United Nations. ★

* The authors are democratic activists in the anti-Milosevic Civic Alliance, and supporters of **Republika**, one of the main opposition magazines. They have asked not to be named for security reasons.



Open letter of French intellectuals Stop the bombings!

The following text forms the basis of a pan-European platform of intellectuals opposed to NATO aggression against Yugoslavia

We do not accept the false dilemma according to which we must either support the NATO intervention or support the reactionary policies of the Serb authorities in Kosovo.

The NATO bombing raids, which made necessary the withdrawal of OSCE personnel from Kosovo, created more favourable conditions for a ground offensive by Serb paramilitary forces, rather than preventing it; they encourage the worst forms of ultra-nationalist Serb desire for revenge against the Kosovar population; they consolidate the dictatorial power of Slobodan Milosevic which has muzzled the independent media and succeeded in uniting round it a national consensus which must, on the contrary, be broken if a path to peaceful and political negotiations on Kosovo is to be opened up.

Nor do we accept that Serbia deserves bombing unless it accepts—as the sole possible basis for negotiation—the “peace plan” drawn up by the governments of the United States.

No long-term solution to a major internal political conflict can be imposed from outside by force. It is not true that “every attempt was made” to find a solution and an acceptable framework for negotiations.

The Kosovar negotiators were forced to sign a plan which they had initially rejected after they were given reason to believe that NATO would become involved on the ground in defence of their cause. This is a lie which fosters a total illusion: not one of the governments

which have supported the NATO air strikes are willing to wage war against the Serb regime to impose independence for Kosovo. The strikes will perhaps weaken part of the Serbian military machine, but they will not weaken the mortars which are being used to destroy Albanian houses, nor the paramilitary forces which are executing UCK (Kosovo Liberation Army) fighters.

NATO is not the only, and certainly not the best, foundation on which to base an agreement. It would have been possible to find the conditions for a multinational police force (including Serbs and Albanians) within the framework of the OSCE which would oversee the application of a transitional agreement. It would above all have been possible to enlarge the framework of the negotiations by including the Balkan states destabilised by this conflict: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania...

One could have defended the Kosovars' right to self-government of the province and at the same time protected the Serb minority in Kosovo; one could have sought to respond to the aspirations and fears of the different peoples concerned through links of cooperation and agreements between neighbouring states, with Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania... No such attempt was made.

We do not accept the arguments used to justify NATO intervention:

- It is not true that the NATO air strikes will prevent the spreading of the conflict to the region, to Macedonia or Bosnia-Herzegovina: they will on the contrary encourage this. They will further destabilise Bosnia-Herzegovina and no doubt endanger the multinational forces responsible for enforcing the fragile Dayton Agreement. They have already

fanned the flames of conflict in Macedonia.

- It is not true that NATO is protecting the Kosovar population or their rights.

- It is not true that the bombing of Serbia is opening the way to a democratic government there.

The governments of the European Union and of the United States perhaps hoped that this demonstration of force would force Slobodan Milosevic to sign their plan. Does this reveal on their part naïveté or hypocrisy? Whatever the case, this policy is leading not only to a political impasse, but also a legitimisation of the role of NATO outside any framework of international control.

For this reason, we demand:

- an immediate end to these bombings;

- the organisation of a Balkans conference in which representatives of the states and all the national communities in these states would participate;

- the defence of the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, on the sole condition that this right is not obtained to the detriment of another people and through the ethnic cleansing of territory;

- a debate in parliament on our country's future participation in NATO. ★

Pierre Bourdieu • Pauline Boutron
• Suzanne de Brunhoff • Noëlle Burgi-Golub • Jean-Christophe Chaumeron • Thomas Coutrot • Daniel Bensaid • Daniel Durant • Robin Foot • Ana-Maria Galano • Philip Golub • Michel Husson • Paul Jacquin • Marcel-Francis Kahn • Bernard Langlois • Ariane Lantz • Pierre Lantz • Florence Lefresne • Catherine Lévy • Jean-Philippe Milésy • Patrick Mony • Aline Pailler • Catherine Samary • Rolande Trempé • Pierre Vidal-Naquet

This text and signatures first published in *Le Monde*, 31 March



The rules of the game

Noam Chomsky discusses the "rules of world order"? as they apply to Kosovo

There is a regime of international law and international order, binding on all states, based on the UN Charter and subsequent resolutions and World Court decisions. In brief, the threat or use of force is banned unless explicitly authorised by the Security Council after it has determined that peaceful means have failed, or in self-defence against "armed attack" (a narrow concept) until the Security Council acts.

There is, of course, more to say. Thus there is at least a tension, if not an outright contradiction, between the rules of world order laid down in the UN Charter and the rights articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UD), a second pillar of the world order established under US initiative after World War II. The Charter bans force violating state sovereignty; the UD guarantees the rights of individuals against oppressive states.

The issue of "humanitarian intervention" arises from this tension. It is the right of "humanitarian intervention" that is claimed by the US/NATO in Kosovo, and that is generally supported by editorial opinion and news reports.

The question is addressed in a news report in the *New York Times* (March 27), headlined "Legal Scholars Support Case for Using Force" in Kosovo. One example is offered: Allen Gerson, former counsel to the US mission to the UN. Two other legal scholars are cited. One, Ted Galen Carpenter, "scoffed at the Administration argument" and dismissed the alleged right of intervention. The third is Jack Goldsmith, a specialist on international law at Chicago Law school. He says that critics of the NATO bombing "have a pretty good legal

argument," but "many people think [an exception for humanitarian intervention] does exist as a matter of custom and practice." That summarises the evidence offered to justify the favoured conclusion stated in the headline.

Goldsmith's observation is reasonable, at least if we agree that facts are relevant to the determination of "custom and practice." We may also bear in mind a truism: the right of humanitarian intervention, if it exists, is premised on the "good faith" of those intervening, and that assumption is based not on their rhetoric but on their record, in particular their record of adherence to the principles of international law, World Court decisions, and so on.

That is indeed a truism, at least with regard to others. Consider, for example, Iranian offers to intervene in Bosnia to prevent massacres at a time when the West would not do so. These were dismissed with ridicule (in fact, ignored); if there was a reason beyond subordination to power, it was because Iranian "good faith" could not be assumed.

A rational person then asks obvious questions: is the Iranian record of intervention and terror worse than that of the US? And other questions, for example: How should we assess the "good faith" of the only country to have vetoed a Security Council resolution calling on all states to obey international law? What about its historical record?

How do these or other considerations apply in the case of Kosovo? There has been a humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo in the past year, overwhelmingly attributable to Yugoslav military forces. The main victims have been ethnic Albanian Kosovars, some 90% of the population of this Yugoslav territory. The standard estimate is 2000 deaths and hundreds of thousands of refugees.

In such cases, outsiders have three choices:

(I) try to escalate the catastrophe

(II) do nothing

(III) try to mitigate the catastrophe

The choices are illustrated by other contemporary cases. Let's keep to a few of approximately the same scale, and ask where Kosovo fits into the pattern.

Colombia

In Colombia, according to State Department estimates, the annual level of political killing by the government and its paramilitary associates is about at the level of Kosovo, and refugee flight primarily from their atrocities is well over a million.

Colombia has been the leading Western hemisphere recipient of US arms and training as violence increased through the '90s, and that assistance is now increasing, under a "drug war" pretext dismissed by almost all serious observers. The Clinton administration was particularly enthusiastic in its praise for President Gaviria, whose tenure in office was responsible for "appalling levels of violence," according to human rights organisations, even surpassing his predecessors.

In this case, the US reaction is (I): escalate the atrocities.

Turkey

By a very conservative estimate, Turkish repression of Kurds falls in the category of Kosovo. It peaked in the early '90s. Over a million Kurds fled from the countryside between 1990 and 1994, as the Turkish army was devastating their villages.

1994 marked two records: it was "the year of the worst repression in the Kurdish provinces" of Turkey, Jonathan Randal reported from the scene, and the year when Turkey became "the biggest single importer of American military hardware and thus the world's largest arms purchaser."

When human rights groups exposed Turkey's use of US jets to bomb villages, the Clinton Administration found ways to evade laws requiring suspension of arms deliveries, much as it was doing in Indonesia and elsewhere.

Colombia and Turkey explain their (US-supported) atrocities on grounds that they are defending their countries from

the threat of terrorist guerrillas. As does the government of Yugoslavia.

Again, the example illustrates (I): try to escalate the atrocities.

Laos

Every year thousands of people, mostly children and poor farmers, are killed in the Plain of Jars in Northern Laos, the scene of the heaviest bombing of civilian targets in history, and arguably the most cruel: Washington's furious assault on a poor peasant society had little to do with its wars in the region. The worst period was from 1968, when Washington was compelled to undertake negotiations (under popular and business pressure), ending the regular bombardment of North Vietnam. Kissinger-Nixon then decided to shift the planes to bombardment of Laos and Cambodia.

The deaths are from "bombies," tiny anti-personnel weapons, far worse than land-mines: they are designed specifically to kill and maim, and have no effect on trucks, buildings, etc. The Plain was saturated with hundreds of millions of these criminal devices, which have a failure-to-explode rate of 20%-30% according to the manufacturer, Honeywell. The numbers suggest either remarkably poor quality control or a rational policy of murdering civilians by delayed action.

These were only a fraction of the technology deployed, including advanced missiles to penetrate caves where families sought shelter. Current annual casualties from "bombies" are estimated from hundreds a year to "an annual nationwide casualty rate of 20,000," more than half of them deaths, according to the veteran Asia reporter Barry Wain of the *Wall Street Journal Asia*.

A conservative estimate, then, is that the crisis this year is approximately comparable to Kosovo, though deaths are far more highly concentrated among children—over half, according to analyses reported by the Mennonite Central Committee, which has been working there since 1977 to alleviate the continuing atrocities.

There have been efforts to publicise and deal with the humanitarian catastrophe. A British-based Mine Advisory Group (MAG) is trying to remove the lethal objects, but the US is "conspicuously missing from the handful of Western organisations that have followed MAG," the British press reports, though it has finally agreed to train some Laotian civilians.

The British press also reports, with some anger, the allegation of MAG specialists that the US refuses to provide them with "render harmless procedures" that would make their work "a lot quicker and a lot safer." These remain a state secret, as does the whole affair in the United States.

The Bangkok press reports a very similar situation in Cambodia,

particularly the Eastern region where US bombardment from early 1969 was most intense.

In this case, the US reaction is (II): do nothing.

And the reaction of the media and commentators is to keep silent, following the norms under which the war against Laos was designated a "secret war"—meaning well-known, but suppressed, as also in the case of Cambodia from March 1969.

The level of self-censorship was extraordinary then, as is the current phase. The relevance of this shocking example should be obvious without further comment.

I will skip other examples of (I) and (II), which abound, and also much more serious contemporary atrocities, such as the huge slaughter of Iraqi civilians by means of a particularly vicious form of biological warfare—starvation and denial of medication. "A very hard choice," Madeleine Albright commented on national TV in 1996 when asked for her reaction to the killing of half a million Iraqi children in 5 years, but "we think the price is worth it." Current estimates remain about 5,000 children killed a month. The price is still "worth it." These and other examples might also be kept in mind when we read awed rhetoric about how the "moral compass" of the Clinton Administration is at last functioning properly, as the Kosovo example illustrates.

Just what does the example illustrate? The threat of NATO bombing, predictably, led to a sharp escalation of atrocities by the Serbian Army and paramilitaries, and to the departure of international observers, which of course had the same effect.

Commanding General Wesley Clark declared that it was "entirely predictable" that Serbian terror and violence would intensify after the NATO bombing, exactly as happened.

The terror for the first time reached the capital city of Pristina, and there are credible reports of large-scale destruction of villages, assassinations, generation of an enormous refugee flow, perhaps an effort to expel a good part of the Albanian population—all an "entirely predictable" consequence of the threat and then the use of force, as General Clark rightly observes.

Kosovo is therefore another illustration of (I): try to escalate the violence, with exactly that expectation.

To find examples illustrating (III) is all too easy, at least if we keep to official rhetoric. The major recent academic study of "humanitarian intervention," by Sean Murphy, reviews the record after the Kellogg-Briand pact of 1928 which outlawed war, and then since the UN Charter, which strengthened and articulated these provisions.

In the first phase, he writes, the most prominent examples of "humanitarian

intervention" were Japan's attack on Manchuria, Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia, and Hitler's occupation of parts of Czechoslovakia.

All were accompanied by highly uplifting humanitarian rhetoric, and factual justifications as well. Japan was going to establish an "earthly paradise" as it defended Manchurians from "Chinese bandits," with the support of a leading Chinese nationalist, a far more credible figure than anyone the US was able to conjure up during its attack on South Vietnam. Mussolini was liberating thousands of slaves as he carried forth the Western "civilising mission." Hitler announced Germany's intention to end ethnic tensions and violence, and "safeguard the national individuality of the German and Czech peoples," in an operation "filled with earnest desire to serve the true interests of the peoples dwelling in the area," in accordance with their will; after all, the Slovakian President asked Hitler to declare Slovakia a protectorate.

Another useful intellectual exercise is to compare those obscene justifications with those offered for interventions, including "humanitarian interventions," in the post-UN Charter period.

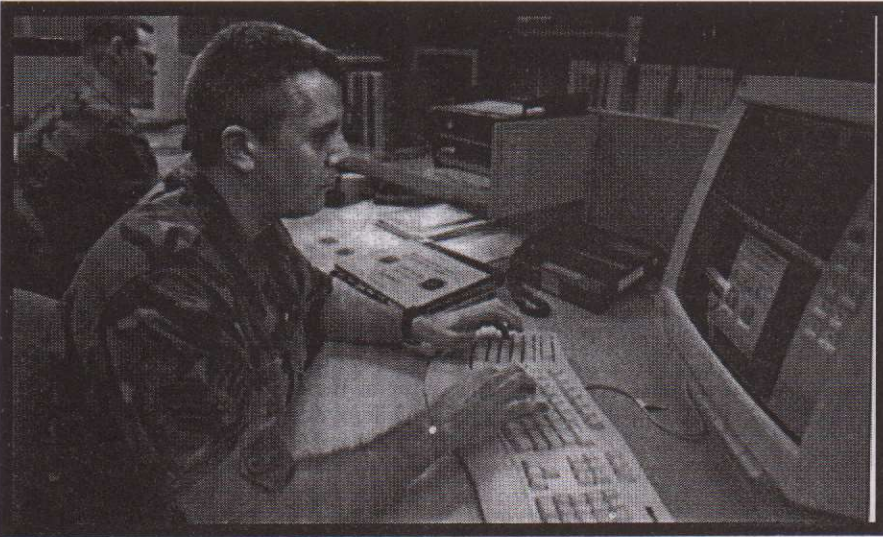
In that period, perhaps the most compelling example of (III) is the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in December 1978, terminating Pol Pot's atrocities, which were then peaking. Vietnam pleaded the right of self-defence against armed attack, one of the few post-Charter examples when the plea is plausible: the Khmer Rouge regime was carrying out murderous attacks against Vietnam in border areas.

The US reaction is instructive. The press condemned the "Prussians" of Asia for their outrageous violation of international law. They were harshly punished for the crime of having terminated Pol Pot's slaughters, first by a (US-backed) Chinese invasion, then by US imposition of extremely harsh sanctions. The US recognised the expelled Khmer Rouge as the official government of Cambodia, because of their "continuity" with the regime that existed before the Vietnamese invasion. The US supported the Khmer Rouge in its continuing attacks in Cambodia.

This example tells us more about the "custom and practice" that underlies "the emerging legal norms of humanitarian intervention."

Despite the desperate efforts of ideologues to prove that circles are square, there is no serious doubt that the NATO bombings further undermine what remains of the fragile structure of international law.

The US made that entirely clear in the discussions leading to the NATO decision. Apart from the UK (by now, about as much of an independent actor as the Ukraine was in the pre-Gorbachev years), NATO countries were skeptical of



Finland More of the same

There were few surprises in the March parliamentary election. **Juhani Lohikoski** reports.

The Social democrats are still the largest party, though down 5% to 23% of the vote. The conservative Coalition party got one of the best results of its history by gaining 21% of the vote, and winning several new seats in the capital, Helsinki. The opposition Centre party increased its share of the vote by 2.6% to 22.4%, failing to capitalise on its opposition role and overtake the Social Democrats.

Voters failed to punish the Left league and the Greens for their unprincipled participation in the Social Democratic government. The Left League received 11% of the vote, down only 0.3%. Half their new MPs are former "left" communists and other opponents of the League's moderate line (like MEP Seppanen). Voters failed to reelect LL minister Terttu Huttu-Juntunen. Expect growing tension as the LL comes to terms with its results.

The Green share of the vote was 7.3%, up 0.8%. Cabinet member Pekka Haavisto was not returned to parliament.

The alternative left block Muutos 99 (Change) got less than 1% of the vote, and no seats. Most of these votes went to the Communist Party, (0.8%, or 20,519 votes). Party leaders had expected several times more support, and up to six seats in parliament.

The Socialist League presented four candidates as independents on the CP list. They gained about 500 votes, which the SL considers "satisfactory" for its first electoral campaign.

One reason for the poor results of the left was the low turnout—68%, the lowest since the 1930s. Since the Left League maintained its score, it seems that protest voters either stayed home or voted for those Left League candidates who have criticised the government. Muutos 99 and the CP were not seen as a serious alternative.

The CP's campaign tactics were not the best. Instead of presenting the profile of a socialist alternative, the party represented itself as a normal smaller opposition party.

The neoliberal Young Finns lost both their seats in parliament, despite spending at least 1m Finnish Marks on their campaign. Money can't buy everything.

There were 20 candidates from an immigrant background, representing all the parties. Despite a good reception among young people, none were elected.

As we go to press, all the parties want to form a government. The Social Democrats and the Conservatives are close to agreement, but some Conservative leaders want a coalition with the Centre Party. The leadership of the Left League wants to continue their participation in government. But the left of the organisation is not happy about this. ★

* The author is the chairman of the Socialist League

US policy, and were particularly annoyed by Secretary of State Albright's "sabre-rattling" (Kevin Cullen, *Boston Globe*, Feb. 22).

Today, the more closely one approaches the conflicted region, the greater the opposition to Washington's insistence on force, even within NATO (Greece and Italy). France had called for a UN Security Council resolution to authorise deployment of NATO peacekeepers. The US flatly refused, insisting on "its stand that NATO should be able to act independently of the United Nations," State Department officials explained. The US refused to permit the "neuralgic word 'authorise'" to appear in the final NATO statement, unwilling to concede any authority to the UN Charter and international law; only the word "endorse" was permitted (Jane Perlez, *NYT*, Feb. 11).

Similarly the bombing of Iraq was a brazen expression of contempt for the UN, even the specific timing, and was so understood. And of course the same is true of the destruction of half the pharmaceutical production of Sudan, a small African country.

It could be argued, rather plausibly, that further demolition of the rules of world order is irrelevant, just as it had lost its meaning by the late 1930s. The contempt of the world's leading power for the framework of world order has become so extreme that there is nothing left to discuss.

A review of the internal documentary record demonstrates that the stance traces back to the earliest days, even to the first memorandum of the newly-formed National Security Council in 1947. During the Kennedy years, the stance began to gain overt expression.

The main innovation of the Reagan-Clinton years is that defiance of international law and the Charter has become entirely open. It has also been backed with interesting explanations, which would be on the front pages, and prominent in the school and university curriculum, if truth and honesty were considered significant values. The highest authorities explained with brutal clarity that the World Court, the UN, and other agencies had become irrelevant because they no longer follow US orders, as they did in the early postwar years.

One might then adopt the official position. That would be an honest stand, at least if it were accompanied by refusal to play the cynical game of self-righteous posturing and wielding of the despised principles of international law as a highly selective weapon against shifting enemies.

While the Reaganites broke new ground, under Clinton the defiance of world order has become so extreme as to be of concern even to hawkish policy analysts. In the current issue of the leading establishment journal, *Foreign Affairs*, Samuel Huntington warns that

Washington is treading a dangerous course. In the eyes of much of the world—probably most of the world, he suggests—the US is “becoming the rogue superpower,” considered “the single greatest external threat to their societies.”

Realist “international relations theory,” he argues, predicts that coalitions may arise to counterbalance the rogue superpower. On pragmatic grounds, then, the stance should be reconsidered. Americans who prefer a different image of their society might call for a reconsideration on other than pragmatic grounds.

Where does that leave the question of what to do in Kosovo? It leaves it unanswered. The US has chosen a course of action which, as it explicitly recognises, escalates atrocities and violence—“predictably”; a course of action that also strikes yet another blow against the regime of international order, which does offer the weak at least some limited protection from predatory states.

As for the longer term, consequences are unpredictable. One plausible observation is that “every bomb that falls on Serbia and every ethnic killing in Kosovo suggests that it will scarcely be possible for Serbs and Albanians to live beside each other in some sort of peace” (*Financial Times*, March 27). Some of the longer-term possible outcomes are extremely ugly, as has not gone without notice.

A standard argument is that we had to do something: we could not simply stand by as atrocities continue. That is never true. One choice, always, is to follow the Hippocratic principle: “First, do no harm.” If you can think of no way to adhere to that elementary principle, then do nothing. There are always ways that can be considered. Diplomacy and negotiations are never at an end.

The right of “humanitarian intervention” is likely to be more frequently invoked in coming years—maybe with justification, maybe not—now that Cold War pretexts have lost their efficacy. In such an era, it may be worthwhile to pay attention to the views of highly respected commentators—not to speak of the World Court, which explicitly ruled on this matter in a decision rejected by the United States, its essentials not even reported.

In the scholarly disciplines of international affairs and international law it would be hard to find more respected voices than Hedley Bull or Leon Henkin. Bull warned 15 years ago that “Particular states or groups of states that set themselves up as the authoritative judges of the world common good, in disregard of the views of others, are in fact a menace to international order, and thus to effective action in this field.” Henkin, in a standard work on world order, writes that the “pressures eroding the prohibition on the use of force are deplorable, and the arguments to

legitimise the use of force in those circumstances are unpersuasive and dangerous...

“Violations of human rights are indeed all too common, and if it were permissible to remedy them by external use of force, there would be no law to forbid the use of force by almost any state against almost any other. Human rights, I believe, will have to be

vindicated, and other injustices remedied, by other, peaceful means, not by opening the door to aggression and destroying the principle advance in international law, the outlawing of war and the prohibition of force.”

Recognised principles of international law and world order, solemn treaty obligations, decisions by the World Court, considered pronouncements by the

Letter from Yugoslavia (2) Serb democrats ignored

This text was written by “Voices of democratic Serbia”, a group of activists who participate in the pan-European Marches against Unemployment

Bombing will only strengthen the present disastrous regime. The military intervention will be misused by the regime's media to create a “stampede” of xenophobia and give additional impetus to the fast-growing extreme forms of nationalism.

The UN sanctions only helped the Milosevic clique to accumulate greater financial and property power over the rest of society. War criminals have not even been arrested, let alone brought to trial by the Hague tribunal, which is incredibly inefficient.

The West has done nothing to stop the Serbian elite's money laundering via banks in Cyprus and elsewhere, and other Mafia type of activities.

Human sufferings and disaster will continue. Evil cannot be opposed by a negative action of bombing and more sanctions. A better strategy would be positive engagement in improving communication and free media in Serbia, and by greater support to democratic forces and individuals inside the country—those groups which kept alive solidarity and support with similar groups in the other ex-Yugoslav republics, even during the most dramatic moments of the recent wars.

The only effective way towards a real democratisation is not through diplomacy “from above” with bombing and hi-tech action from a distance. Instead, there should be much more concrete, intensive support for democratic forces—

peace activists, and independent intellectuals who stood against the war crimes since the beginning of Yugoslavia's transformation; support for the NGOs lobbying for civil society issues; for the independent media, and the democratic political parties.

Bombing of military targets in Serbia will not produce stability and a true democratisation in ex-Yugoslavia and the Balkans. The real source of trouble are the militaristic nationalistic regimes in Belgrade, Zagreb and elsewhere, and the Albanian tradition of tribal intolerance. Across the region, post-communist “monarchs” have engaged on national-communist adventures.

The recent election results in Bosnia and Herzegovina are a sad reflection of the dominance of nationalistic forces, despite the terrible human sufferings during the civil war, and despite the considerable political, military and humanitarian involvement of the international community.

The socioeconomic and political transition in the Balkans (and elsewhere) took a disastrous route due to the complete failure of the way in which it was handled and managed by the centres of power. They did not support the regional integration of banking, market, cultural and institutional forces. Such an integration is the best way to improve the slim democratic standards, civic and social progress, and the remains of multicultural society which remain after the Yugoslav type of self-management socialism

Instead, as we know, the international community has always negotiated with (and thus recognised) the “governors” of war. ★

[The authors of this letter participated in the 1998 EuroMarch summer university in Greece. This text was written at the start of the NATO bombardment]

most respected commentators—these do not automatically solve particular problems. Each issue has to be considered on its merits.

For those who do not adopt the standards of Saddam Hussein, there is a heavy burden of proof to meet in undertaking the threat or use of force in violation of the principles of international order.

Perhaps the burden can be met, but that has to be shown, not merely proclaimed with passionate rhetoric. The consequences of such violations have to be assessed carefully—in particular, what we understand to be “predictable.” And for those who are minimally serious, the reasons for the actions also have to be assessed—again, not simply by adulation of our leaders and their “moral compass.” ★



*This article was contributed to the Z-net Internet discussion group in early April

Problems of the US peace movement Stop the US/NATO war!

The following leaflet was distributed by the US group Socialist Action

With characteristic ruthlessness and with extraordinary cynicism and hypocrisy, the United States and its capitalist allies have launched a murderous bombing campaign against the Yugoslav Federation.

This assault is designed to demonstrate the power of the imperialist war machine and its readiness to punish any state or people that does not accept its domination.

The United States and its allies are supremely indifferent not only to the fate of the masses of the Serbian people, who are not responsible for the policies of their rulers, but to the fate of the Kosovar Albanian people in whose name this campaign of blind destruction has been launched.

It is the duty of all Americans who respect democratic and humanitarian values to oppose the actions of the government that claims to speak in their name.

The military action launched by the United States and its allies against Yugoslavia represents a grave escalation of intervention by the Western capitalist powers into the conflicts created by the decay of

Stalinism and the process of capitalist restoration in the former Soviet bloc. It poses a real threat of a chain reaction of major wars.

It is clear that the capitalist powers are going to try to intervene in the growing chaos of the former Soviet bloc, given their historic stake in assuring that the process of capitalist restoration continues. This process itself is fuelling greater and greater conflicts, as it leads to the impoverishment of these countries and destroys their economic autonomy.

There is thus no way that Western intervention can mitigate these conflicts. By its attempts to impose the capitalist system, with its inequalities and competition, the West can only exacerbate the problems. It cannot promote democracy by fostering a system that defends exploitation and sets people to fighting each other for increasingly scarce goods.

The fight against the intervention of the capitalist powers in Eastern Europe is important for defending the coming workers' struggles against capitalist restoration that are the only hope for peace, democracy, and economic progress in that part of the world.

The revival of socialist perspectives in the non-capitalist countries

is also vital for the more and more desperate populations of the underdeveloped world and the workers of the advanced countries themselves, threatened by the lengthening shadow of world depression.

However, the kind of mass movement necessary to stop capitalist intervention cannot be built in association with decaying Stalinist forces and their various chauvinist, fascist-like allies, such as the Serbian tribalists and cheerleaders for genocide that have put their poisonous imprint on the first demonstrations in the United States against the bombing of Yugoslavia.

In San Francisco, some organisers of the first demonstration against the bombing led a chant from the platform, apparently in deference to their Serbian allies, of “Kosovo is Serbia.” The banner at the front of the crowd was the flag of the Yugoslav monarchy and the counterrevolutionary Chetnik forces of the World War II period.

This is scandalous. The movement against imperialist intervention is too important to let it be discredited and destroyed by sectarian hangovers of Stalinism.

We must build a mass, independent movement unconditionally opposed to the U.S. and NATO war effort and in solidarity with the right of self-determination of oppressed peoples—including the people of Kosovo. ★

Source: Socialist Action (USA) newspaper, April 1999.
www.socialistaction.org

The disintegration of Yugoslavia

The problem is social

Western powers present the Balkan conflicts as political and religious confrontations. Catherine Samary prefers a socioeconomic explanation of the regional crisis. A crisis of unequal development that the European Union has no intention of solving.

Catherine Samary

The explosion of the Yugoslav federation since 1991 is above all the result of socioeconomic conflicts. The country was always on the fringe of the capitalist world, and with a very uneven level of development. When the Communists took control after the second world war, the north of the country was massively industrialised, while Kosovo and other southern regions remained 80% rural. President Tito's main strategy to cement the different republics and ethnic groups together was to industrialise the south, and bring its standard of living up to the rest of the country. But although considerable progress was made, in 1989 the average salary in the northern republic of Slovenia was seven times higher than in the poorest region, Kosovo.

As Yugoslavia's recession deepened, the central government was blamed for bad management of the financial transfers from richer to poorer regions of the federation. Slovenia and Croatia refused to continue their solidarity payments. Even Serbia, which had salary levels close to the all-Yugoslav average, wanted to reduce its payments.

This was the background to the whole debate on the dissolution of the federation. The richest republics, Slovenia and Croatia, wanted a looser confederal arrangement, giving them virtual independence.

The poorer republics like Bosnia and Macedonia wanted to maintain a centralised federation, with even stronger income redistribution programmes.

Serbia, the largest republic, and home of the federal institutions, favoured this second option. Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic imagined Serbia as the centre of a

centralised, planned Yugoslav economy. He also wanted to increase Serbia's weight in the federation, chiefly by exploiting the Serbian minorities in other republics.

As the conflicts spread in 1992, Milosevic sought to protect these ethnic Serbs, by challenging the frontiers between the Yugoslav republics. He also wanted to increase the size of his own territory. In particular, to consolidate a corridor of land from landlocked Serbia through southern Bosnia to the Adriatic sea at the port of Dubrovnik.

The conflict with Kosovo is another opportunity for Milosevic to legitimate and consolidate his authority within Serbia. He can present himself as the victim of a plot between the "international community". The victim of NATO strikes, the victim of economic sanctions. This confrontation makes it easier for the population to accept the economic difficulties which have continued to grow over the years of conflict.

Despite the strong social tensions in Serbia, Milosevic still enjoys considerable possibility in the rural areas and among working class Serbs, who are the main supporters of the regime. Milosevic presents himself as the protector of private property in the countryside, and social property in the industrial sector — key elements of the "Titoist" system.

Each of the ex-Yugoslav republics has tried to reorient its economy towards the European Union, and become a privileged partner. Slovenia and Croatia have done relatively well, but the other regions seem condemned to a status of sub-developed and peripheral regions, not fully integrated into the European economy.

But the transition to the market economy has not fully erased the unique elements of Yugoslavia's self-managed system. Slovenia has the highest GDP in eastern Europe, but there is strong social resistance to the privatisation of the means of production, and to the expulsion of the workforce from workplace decision-making structures.

The Yugoslav federation is gone, and there is no alternative form of stability on the horizon. Even

Slovenia has not escaped: unemployment is now above 10% — it was virtually zero in the late 80s.

The social cost of the transformation is a factor blocking further reforms. Nationalists are in power everywhere, and their rejection of regional cooperation is another element of instability.

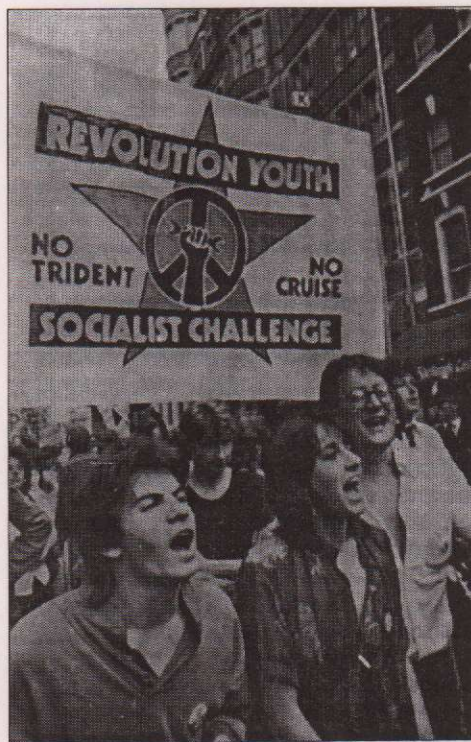
The struggle for land and wealth is not over. More splits and sessions can be expected. Montenegro is more and more explicit about its desire to separate from Serbia.

But the real solution is the exact opposite. The only way to avoid a Greater Serbia and a Greater Albania, destabilising their neighbours, is to find regional structures for cooperation, and common solutions to common problems.

Countries like Macedonia and Slovenia, with populations of about two million, aren't designed to exist completely independently. So there is actually a double process — disintegration and recomposition. Recomposition in the direction of the European Union. This is, however, a dangerous and inadequate recomposition, which will leave the Balkan countries weak and peripheral.

The countries of Central Europe are already overexposed to the economic cycles of their huge western neighbours. The region would be more stable if it had its own common market.

It is wrong to see the disintegration of Yugoslavia as the failure of an artificial construction. The real failure of the Yugoslav road was a lack of democracy in the decision-making procedure, and a lack of reflection on the socioeconomic mechanisms which would make it possible to reduce regional disparities. A failure which the European Union should think about, because the same problem is being recreated today. ★



Rebels for NATO

Former anti-war activists are supporting a liberal imperialist adventure, says Tariq Ali

Many despairing liberals and kind-hearted social democrats, understandably upset by the images of fleeing Kosovar refugees on television, have become keen warmongers. And so have many former anti-war activists. In a simplistic political culture dominated by life-politics, the shedding of tears for one set of victims is coupled with dropping bombs on their oppressors, and if the process means creating new victims, that's fine as long as we don't have to watch on our screens.

The Balkan conflict has divided left and right. Tony Benn is opposed to the bombing, Ken Livingstone and Vanessa Redgrave support the NATO offensive.

A few months hence some of the new militarists might have cause to regret their impatience. The American decision to violate the sovereignty of a European state by ordering NATO air strikes against Serbia—the first time a violation of this sort has happened since Brezhnev launched the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia more than three decades

ago—poses two basic questions: why? and what next?

The answer to the first seems obvious. The American President, his English factotum and various European politicians, not to mention the overwhelming majority of the liberal media, provide us with the reason every day. Milosevic is Hitler. In order to crush such a leader it is necessary to wage war.

That Milosevic is a brutal leader has never been in doubt. But is he alone? Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu is an equally brutish politician, who defies UN resolutions and regularly bombs targets in Lebanon.

And what of Milosevic's counterpart in Croatia, Franjo Tudjman? He has authorised the ethnic cleansing of Serbs and, on occasion, Bosnians. He presides over a regime which has rehabilitated wartime fascists who collaborated with the Nazi occupiers during the Second World War. But Netanyahu and Tudjman are on "our side", and that's all that counts.

"Our side" has practised atrocities on a large scale in the second half of the century. In the name of freedom and democracy the Anglo-Saxon powers have backed dictators much worse than Milosevic (who, we should remember, is an elected politician) and helped them to power on every continent.

The Indonesian dictator, Suharto, was being armed by Britain and America right till the day he was toppled by a popular uprising which received no support from either Washington or London. Indonesia, admittedly, is a far-away country, but what about Turkey? It can certainly be seen by any New Labour MP sunbathing on a Greek holiday island.

What successive governments in Ankara have inflicted on their Kurdish citizens is as bad as, if not worse than, the treatment meted out to the Kosovars. The argument used by the Turkish



authorities is exactly the same as that employed by the Serb leadership. In torturing, maiming, killing and denying autonomy to the Kurds they are simply defending the unity of the Turkish state.

How many TV viewers are aware of the fact that this is still taking place or that Turkey is an important member of NATO? The blatant double standard compels any critical observer to look for the deeper reasons to this conflict.

Are Milosevic and his policies the main reason rather than a pretext for NATO's war? During his recent visit to Britain, Mikhail Gorbachev repeatedly pointed out that agreement could have been reached if the West had been a bit more patient, as they had been in N. Ireland. He implied that the United States wanted a war. Is this pure fantasy?

The NATO assault on Serbia marks a watershed in European politics. It reflects a decision by the United States to sabotage all notions of a norm-based system of collective security in Europe.

This is something that the Russians have been demanding since Gorbachev came to power and it is a demand echoed by a number of EU states, including Helmut Kohl's Germany, ever since the end of the Cold War in 1989. The single, central reason why the NATO operation took place is Russian weakness.

With the exception of the British, all European governments have hitherto refused to sanction any act of unilateral aggression, whatever the provocation, unless it had prior UN sanction.

This was Germany's policy throughout the Nineties. At the beginning of the NATO offensive, Volker Ruhe, the former German defence minister, insisted that German soldiers in Macedonia had been sent as "peacekeepers" and "not to make war" and therefore should be immediately withdrawn.

It has also now emerged that a major reason for the dramatic resignation of Oskar Lafontaine was his total opposition to the NATO



plan. He told the German cabinet that it was reckless to follow the Americans in Kosovo. One German minister informed the New York Times that "in the end, it was Kosovo that made him go".

A silent, behind-the-scenes war is being fought across Western Europe to determine the leadership of the EU. The US has used its old British Trojan Horse to lead a neoliberal drive in the EU.

Kosovo is a neat operation in Western European terms to promote a new Anglo-American-French alliance to lead world politics and replace Franco-German hegemony. American strategists, desperate to retain NATO as their battering-ram in the new Europe, manoeuvred Europe into a war in order to prove that NATO had a permanent function and was not a paper tiger.

If the US disengages from Kosovo and negotiations recommence with the Serbs accepting a NATO peace-keeping force, it will be hailed as a big victory and will strengthen the Anglo-America alliance in the EU. If NATO splits, the results would be catastrophic. What is important for NATO planners is not how many Kosovars die in the process, but how these deaths are perceived. If NATO is blamed for them, then they will have failed, and moves towards a European Security Council, including the non-NATO states, might be revived.

This is what the German and Russian states really want and they might yet succeed. Just before the bombing began the Kosovar and Serb leaderships had agreed a three-year period of autonomy, after which the issue could be rediscussed. The discussions broke down on the presence of a "peacekeeping force".

The Serbs, not unreasonably, regarded the composition of this force as NATO-in-disguise. The Russians could have persuaded them that this was not the case if NATO had agreed to a Russian complement, but before matters could proceed further, the United States said "enough". The Serbs left the table and the bombs began to fall.

Negotiations will have to begin again. It is unlikely that the Serbs will accept the presence of any NATO soldiers on their soil. The Kosovars, for their part, will refuse to tolerate Milosevic's special police units or soldiers. Both will be right and a solution might lie in a neutral UN peacekeeping force, which does not contain soldiers from armies that have attacked either side.

The break-up of Yugoslavia has already cost the EU and the USA billions of dollars. This war alone has, so far, been costed at \$2bn and the figure could rise. If half this amount of money had been spent on economic development, we might have been spared all the conflicts. ★

Source and © *The Independent*, March 28, 1999

Why the left says "No!"

By Tariq Ali

Western leaders assemble in Washington later this year to celebrate the 50th birthday of NATO. The aim of the summit is a new mission statement for NATO, transforming it from a defensive alliance into a zapping organisation which can hit a target state anywhere in the world to defend the interests of the United States, defined, of course, as 'human rights' and the 'free market'.

Tony Blair is committed to the transformation of NATO. New Labour is harnessed to the chariot-wheels of US military policy. Germany, Italy and France are skeptical. Oskar Lafontaine walked out of the German cabinet mainly because of Kosovo, arguing that it was reckless to follow the Americans. The Italian, Greek and Portuguese governments are divided.

What is taking place in the skies over Serbia is, therefore, of critical importance in determining who wins this argument.

In other words, the main concerns in this war are not the sufferings of the Kosovar Albanians. The USA's motives are much more sordid.

Even the most servile NATO apologists who fervently claimed that the bombing of Serbia was designed to help the Kosovars must, surely, be able to see the scale of the humanitarian disaster that this has unleashed. The bombing has been an abject failure.

The most sustained critique of the war has come from the rightwing commentators: Edward Luttwak, Andreas Whittam-Smith, William Rees-Mogg Alan Clark, Norman Stone, to name the most prominent. Most of Britain's traditional liberal and social-democratic anti-war left is, if anything, pro-NATO.

Since the bombing has failed, the liberal warmongers, who think nothing these days of violating national sovereignty (a crime for which Galtieri was crushed and Saddam is still being punished) will, no doubt, be calling for ground troops.

This option has so far been excluded. NATO soldiers prefer to kill rather than die, with one exception. The only NATO country whose leaders are not too worried about the body-bag problem is Turkey.

Perhaps a swap could be proposed. Serbia could join NATO. Serb troops could liberate the Kurds and the Turks could save the Kosovars.

NATO bombing was supposedly designed to halt the flow of refugees. It has increased it a hundredfold. Pre-bombing spin had also implied that Milosevic wanted his country bombed so that he could quickly capitulate and isolate more hard-line nationalists. This turned out to be pure fantasy. Another reason was to weaken political support for Milosevic within Serbia. Instead, it has strengthened him.

If the bombing moves into Phase Three and civilian and economic targets are targeted, the war might well spread to other regions. If ground troops are dispatched, the result would be a long and bitter conflict.

There are only two serious alternatives for this region. Either a series of NATO protectorates imposed by war and bloody battles, which would lead to the remilitarisation of Europe and a new cold war with Russia, or a serious attempt to create a new regional framework. The latter would require an immediate cessation of hostilities, the return of monitors to Kosovo and the stationing of a UN-sponsored peace-keeping force, which excludes both the NATO states that have waged war and the Serbians that have terrorised and driven out the population.

The long-term future of the region should be decided by a new Congress of Berlin, under the auspices of the UN Security Council and chaired by the Secretary-General. This could, if the EU and US are willing, establish a stable basis for the region by setting up a new programme for reconstruction for all those who sign a comprehensive peace treaty, including the Kosovars, who must, within the new framework, be permitted their independence. If even half the billions spent by the West after aiding in the break-up of Yugoslavia had been spent on economic aid, we might have been spared the traumas of the last decade. ★

Source: *The Guardian* (London and Manchester) 1 April 1999 <http://www.guardian.co.uk> © Copyright Guardian Media Group plc. 1999



Russian "resistance"

Russia's elite pays lip service to an outraged population, but has no intention of seriously opposing NATO aggression.

Renfrey Clarke

MOSCOW—With a shower of paint bombs, rocks, eggs and bottles, thousands of demonstrators outside the US embassy in Moscow on March 25 expressed their outrage at the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia.

Next morning it was the turn of the British embassy, with a demonstration by an estimated 5,000 people. The protesters included large numbers of students, and contingents of factory workers organised by the Moscow Federation of Trade Unions.

As the day wore on, the US embassy again became the target of protest. As many as 7,000 people gathered outside the yellow and white building on Moscow's inner ring road, chanting and flinging missiles. Press reports noted the unusual range of people taking part—from skinheads and teenage football fans, to office workers and pensioners.

Demonstrations took place across Russia. "Yesterday Iraq, Today Serbia, Tomorrow Russia," read a placard in St Petersburg. Nationalist organisations signed up military veterans to defend Yugoslavia.

According to survey findings, 93% of Russians oppose NATO's action in bombing Serbia, which has cultural and religious ties to Russia. Russia's state leaders have tuned in to this popular mood—at least rhetorically.

As the first reports of the bombing came in, President Boris Yeltsin hinted that Russia might respond with measures "of a military character". In an interview on March 27, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov accused NATO of committing "genocide" against the Yugoslav people, and suggested that the alliance answer for its actions before the UN war crimes tribunal.

For anyone who remembers the mood of Russian leaders—and of a good part of the population—in the early 1990s, the scenes of the past days and weeks have been full of irony. Seven or eight years ago, as far as Yeltsin and many of his followers were concerned, the Western powers could do no wrong.

But faith in the West has slid steadily ever since. And now, as the bombs rain on Yugoslavia, the last shreds of belief in Western goodwill are being replaced by cynicism.

The mood of hostility to the West is especially marked in the Russian military. "Most Russian military personnel are expressing direct readiness for armed solidarity with the Serbs," the Moscow daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reported on March 27. "The US and NATO are now associated exclusively with the image of the enemy."

Russian media pour scorn on the rationalisations offered by Western leaders to explain the bombing campaign. "There is an unquestionable double standard..." the Moscow paper *Novye Izvestiya* observed on March 26. "If one recalls how harshly Turkey, a NATO member, deals with the Kurds..."

Why, Russians ask themselves, has the NATO alliance been preserved, now that the Cold War has ended?

For a decade, liberal ideologues have tried to suppress the instinct of many Russians to view political questions in terms of class, and of exploitation of the poor by the rich. But as the bombs and missiles have pounded Yugoslavia, even Russian liberals have admitted that NATO is essentially a military club of the rich, an armed alliance for enforcing the interests of the "haves" of North America and Europe against the "have-nots".

As citizens of what is now the great "have-not" of Europe, Russians have been quick to understand that the bombing of Yugoslavia also carries a powerful message for them. If Western leaders find something to their advantage, Russian objections will not deter them.

And if the Russian state should dare to pursue its interests in ways not to the West's liking, the message continues, the consequences for Russia could be devastating.

The Russian elite hurls epithets, the masses gather outside the US embassy and hurl beer bottles, even full ones. But after years of implementing Western economic prescriptions, the Russian government has little idea how to block NATO.

When news of the bombing broke, Russian representatives in the United Nations Security Council demanded an immediate halt to the air strikes. The resolution, predictably, was heavily defeated.

Russia has frozen military collaboration with NATO and postponed ratification of the START-II nuclear arms reduction treaty. The effect of these moves on the NATO governments, however, has been undetectable.

Lack of will

The failure of Russian leaders to make any impact on NATO is not simply a reflection of Russia's drastically

reduced influence in the world. The will is not really there either. Calls for military aid to Yugoslavia have been quietly pushed aside by the Russian authorities as impractical and dangerous.

Expressions of outrage at the bombing of Yugoslavia have been accompanied by assurances that no big changes in Moscow's orientation to the West are desired or contemplated.

In a dramatic gesture on March 23, Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov called off a trip to the US after being denied guarantees that air strikes would not begin while he was in America. Other members of his delegation, however, made their way to Washington, and while bombs fell on Belgrade, most of the meetings planned for Primakov's trip took place.

A meeting between Primakov and International Monetary Fund chief Michel Camdessus, scheduled to take place in the US, was quickly relocated to Moscow. The Russian government was seeking IMF credits of as much as US\$4.8 billion, needed to forestall a default on foreign debt payments. Nothing the NATO powers might do in the Balkans, it became clear, would be allowed to prejudice these negotiations.

Given the popular mood in Russia, Primakov and other members of the Russian elite were obliged to criticise NATO's attacks on Yugoslavia. But if their statements are analysed, it becomes clear that the Russian rulers have dealt with the imperialist bomb-throwers much more kindly than they might have done.

Whitewashing Belgrade

A striking feature of the rhetoric issuing from Moscow—both from official spokespeople, and from major newspapers—is its whitewash of the Yugoslav government and its refusal to address the real history and dynamics of the situation in Kosovo. According to *Novye Izvestiya* on March 26, Yugoslavia has been under attack for “solving strictly internal problems”.

According to Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, the Kosovo Liberation Army consists simply of “Albanian terrorists” and “Muslim extremists”. Only a few references to Serbian atrocities against the Kosovars survive the editing tables of the Russian media.

In reality, the Russian elite is quite happy to underline its various differences with the West by permitting and even encouraging chauvinist fervour. But promoting a serious understanding of national rights and popular self-determination—something which would really give NATO problems—is not its line at all. ★

* The author is the Russia specialist at *Green Left Weekly* newspaper

Norway

Youth leads regroupment

A new generation of activists have consolidated their position in the Red Electoral Alliance. **Bertil Videt*** reports

25-year old Aslak Sira Myhre was reelected as president of the Red Electoral Alliance (*Rød Valgallianse*—RV) at a conference where one in three delegates were younger than 30. This influx of young blood confirms the slowly declining influence of the Communist Workers Party/Marxist-Leninist (AKP-ML), the country's largest communist organisation.

The RV was created in 1973 as the AKP/ML's electoral front. In the late 1980s the organisation was expanded to welcome a number of smaller revolutionary groups. At its 1991 congress, the RV decided to become an autonomous party, without any formal relationship to the AKP/ML. Since then, the RV has tried to regroup all Norway's revolutionary groups and independent militants.

The first non-Maoist group to enter the RV was the Workers Power Group (AMG), a partially Trotskyist organisation. In 1995 the ex-Maoist Revolutionary League (*Revolusjonært Forbund*) and another Maoist group joined too.

This transformation of the RV makes it comparable to Italy's Refounded Communists or Denmark's Red-Green Alliance. RV's 1,200 members are well distributed across the country, and the party has a reasonably strong presence in municipal councils.

The party's electoral results have increased steadily. In 1993 the party elected Erling Folkvord to parliament. In 1997 the national vote increased to 1.7% (44,000 votes), but this 700 votes short of the level that would have allowed the reelection of an RV parliamentarian.

The party benefits enormously from the existence of the independent far left daily *Klassekampen* (Class Struggle). The ex-AKP/ML newspaper is well known and respected in a media landscape dominated by regional and local publications.

The January 1999 congress strongly criticised “actually existing socialism” of the East European type, and distanced itself from the “Stalin model.” True, the main resolutions reflect the equilibrium

between Stalinist and non-Stalinist currents. But the RV is clearly hardening its criticism of the “socialist” experience.

The Maoist heritage made itself felt during the debate on the nation state and the European Union. Delegates rejected a proposal to expand the section on resistance to the EU with a reference to the international struggle for socialism. Instead, a majority argued that, where the EU is concerned, the right of national self-determination is more important than the anti-capitalist critique.

The new generation also made itself felt in the debate on international co-operation. The RV suppressed its policy of “not participating in any congress of an International or World Party”—a reference to the Fourth International.

The RV will probably participate in future FI events as an observer. Though the organisation is still critical: “RV considers that, in the current situation, the Internationals play a divisive role. For this reason, we are opposed to the formation of or participation in an International, and opposed in principle to the establishment of Global Parties.”

Delegates agreed to begin the elaboration of a new programme, which will be discussed over the next two years and adopted at the next congress. This will clarify the ideological differences between the various currents in the RV.

The Fourth International current in RV rejects any kind of entrism strategy. It hopes to present the FIs experiences and theoretical work as useful tools for the RV as a whole.

The new programme should be based on common experiences, integrating all RV currents. The AKP/ML in particular has a rich experience in the women's struggle and the labour movement.

RV must also mobilise for municipal and district elections later this year. The goal is to present candidates in at least 100 communes, and all the districts. These elections will be a trampoline towards the 2001 parliamentary elections, in which RV hopes to return another rebel to the Norwegian parliament. ★

* The author attended the RV congress on behalf of Denmark's Red-Green Alliance. Within that organisation he is also a member of the SAP, Danish section of the Fourth International.

Zapatista referendum

Almost three million Mexicans participated in a March 21 makeshift referendum on indigenous rights called by the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN).

Peter Gellert

The turnout was more than twice as large as a previous referendum held in August 1996, reflecting better organization and a more balanced geographical distribution of support for the rebel cause. In 1996 the vast majority of votes were cast in the EZLN stronghold of Chiapas and Mexico City.

The referendum also introduced two new features in Mexican politics: allowing those over the age of 12 to participate and organizing voting in Mexican communities abroad, a keenly felt demand among the 12% of Mexican citizens who live in the United States. In this latter effort, polling stations for the referendum were installed in 156 foreign cities, with 30,000 Mexicans voting, mostly in the United States.

The referendum itself was a tactical gamble by the EZLN, conscious of the need to move the stalled peace process forward, given the Mexican governments strategy of wearing down the Zapatista communities and public opinion, with occasional military moves designed to reverse rebel gains and terrorize the civilian population.

Thousands Involved

In organizing the referendum, some 1,500 brigades or organizing committees were established, involving more than 20,000 activists. More than 60,000 were involved in activities on the day of the voting, mainly poll watching. This was a huge mobilization of active support for the Zapatista cause.

But the most impressive aspect of the referendum process was the EZLN's decision to send 5,000 of its members—50% of them women—from Chiapas to municipalities throughout Mexico. The presence of these Indian activists gave local activists the opportunity and responsibility to organize literally thousands of activities in the week preceding the vote, effectively putting the Chiapas issue back on the front burner in Mexican political life.

For example, in my district in Mexico City, in less than one week 40 different outreach activities were organized for the 10 visiting Zapatistas, ranging from meetings with neighborhood groups and

trade unionists, to dialogues with different sectors of civil society.

The presence of thousands of Chiapas Indians, with their native dress and sporting black ski masks, provided many comical moments and unique photo opportunities.

These included a rally on the U.S. border with Zapatistas having one foot in each country, a soccer match in Mexico City against former first-division pros, mixing with bikini glad sunbathers in Acapulco, sustaining a dialogue with punk youth or meeting with business leaders in the posh Industrialists Club in Mexico City. Of particular importance for the rebel cause were the contacts established with other indigenous communities, particularly in Oaxaca, Veracruz, Mexico City, and northern Mexico.

Zapatistas Join with Students, Workers

The Zapatista presence also coincided with struggles at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)—Mexico's largest institution of higher learning—against higher tuition fees, and the fight against the partial privatization of the country's electrical industry, led by the combative Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME). Masked Zapatista Indians took part in the 100,000 strong demonstration on March 18 and were enthusiastically received by the protesting trade unionists.

In response to this huge groundswell of activity over a four-month period and the open presence of masked Zapatista rebels throughout the country, the government and the mass media, and sectors of the Catholic church hierarchy, orchestrated a huge campaign against the EZLN in general and the referendum in particular.

The tone was set by Interior Minister Francisco Labastida, who attacked the initiative for being one sided and its results foregone conclusion. The government pressured TV and radio stations to downplay or ignore the referendum.

The campaign around the referendum had to contend with government surveillance and selective repression in seven states (and minor incidents in others), including intimidation from right-wing paramilitary groups, the army, and the local units of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) which forced voting to be cancelled in several rural municipalities.

Beyond the impressive turnout, the results of the four questions (on the place of the Indian peoples in Mexican society,

on including indigenous rights in the Constitution, on acceptance of the San Andres peace accords, and on demilitarization of Chiapas) were no surprise. The referendum was an official EZLN activity—although backed by civil society and left-of-center opposition parties such as Cuauhtemoc Cardenas Party of the Democratic Revolution—and attacked by the mainstream media and authorities. Those participating tended to be supporters of the rebel cause (only 2% voted no on the questions). But the high turnout was widely viewed as a barometer of Zapatista support and the EZLN's mobilizing ability.

EZLN leaders hailed the referendum as a call for peace in Chiapas, an advance for the rebel cause, and a success of civil society. ★

Source: Mexican Labor News and Analysis, April 2, 1999 Vol. IV, No. 6. MLNA can be viewed at the UE's international web site: www.igc.apc.org/unitedelect/. For information about direct subscriptions, submission of articles, and all queries contact editor Dan La Botz at <103144.2651@compuserve.com>

Split in the PRT

We regret to announce that a part of the Mexican forces which identify with the Fourth International have again split [*writes the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International*]. This only adds one more obstacle to the recomposition of the revolutionary movement in this country, and comes at a time when the democratic and popular struggles are gaining energy again, with the Zapatista referendum on 21 March, on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples.

This latest split in the Revolutionary Workers Party (*Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores*—PRT) is the result of political and methodological differences, which became public in the last months of 1998.

It represents a step backwards for our movement, above all because testifies to a lack of tolerance and insufficient determination to create a unitary framework within which political differences could be expressed, without the need for a split.

Faced with this situation, the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International has decided to make public its decision that none of the Mexican organisations which identify with the International represent it, neither "officially" nor unofficially. The IEC has also decided to prepare a discussion on the balance sheet of building the revolutionary party in Mexico.

Meanwhile, the IEC will maintain fraternal relations with the two currents which call themselves PRT, with the Socialist Unity League (LUS) and with all those individual comrades in Mexico who continue to identify with the Fourth International. [IEC] ★

FREEDOM FOR MUMIA



LIBERTÉ POUR MUMIA

USA

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal is the first class struggle prisoner to face execution in the United States of America since the Rosenbergs, more than 45 years ago.

His conviction in the 1981 slaying of a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania police officer was the result of a frame-up in which the police, prosecutors, and the judge at his trial all played a role.

As an award-winning Black journalist Mumia had gained the enmity of Philadelphia's ruling circles for his exposure of their racism, and for his consistent support to the struggles of the poor, the oppressed, and the dispossessed.

This is work he has pursued even while on Pennsylvania's death row for the last 17 years. It has earned Mumia the title, "Voice of the Voiceless."

Mumia's case focuses a clear spotlight on a number of troubling issues regarding the criminal justice system in the U.S.A. It is one of the few countries in the world which continues the barbaric tradition of the death penalty. Both the death penalty and the criminal justice system more broadly reflect the deep racism which permeates every aspect of life in that country. Four of every ten people on death row in the U.S. are Black, while they constitute only eleven percent of the general population.

In the last 30 years the prison population of the United States has expanded six-fold, and it is still rising. The U.S. now has a greater percentage of its population behind bars than South Africa did at the height of Apartheid. And that prison population consists dispro-

portionately of Blacks and other people of color.

In addition to Mumia there are scores of political prisoners in U.S. jails—people who have been imprisoned not primarily for any real or imagined criminal acts, but because they are committed to fighting for an end to oppression in the U.S.A., and to that country's role in the oppression of other peoples throughout the world.

Last October, ignoring overwhelming evidence of misconduct at his original trial and a large body of evidence which has since emerged to cast an even greater doubt about the legitimacy of its verdict, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court turned down Mumia's appeal for a new trial.

This creates an emergency situation in his case. Without a favorable intervention by the federal courts (something which is far from certain) Mumia could be executed within a year.

In truth, as Mumia, his legal team, and his supporters all state, his fate rests with our collective capacity to make the price of his political murder too high for the ruling powers to pay.

What happens to Mumia Abu-Jamal will have global repercussions. Already his case has generated substantial protests in the U.S. and around the world. Major mobilizations are scheduled to take place on April 24 in Philadelphia and San Francisco, as well as internationally.

We call on all members and supporters of the Fourth International, all supporters of liberation throughout the world, and all those who simply believe in elementary justice and human rights, to do everything possible to participate in and support these and all other protests demanding:

- **Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal!**
- **Mumia Must Receive a New Trial Now!**

This resolution was recently adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International.

For more information on the case, see the special report in the February issue of International Viewpoint. ★

- International Concerned Family and Friends to Free Mumia Abu Jamal +1 215 476 8812
- The Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu Jamal +1 415 821 0459 or Fax 415 821 0166.

Left unity conference

The left in Pakistan took an important step forward in achieving unity on March 23. More than 230 movement leaders and activists took part in a Left Unity Workers Conference in Lahore

Eva Cheng

The conference date marked the 70 anniversary of the execution of Bhagat Singh by British colonialists. His last words as he was about to be hanged were "Down, down the Union Jack; Up, up the Red flag".

This national gathering, unprecedented in its breadth and openness in forging left unity, was organised by the Labour Party Pakistan (LPP).

No less than 20 Pakistan organisations sent delegations, with a significant and uniquely broad representation from the forces in national liberation struggles from all over Pakistan. Key trade unions, political parties, women's rights and human rights groups also attended.¹

Glaringly absent were some leaders from the other left parties, i.e. the Awami Jamhoori Party, the Socialist Party, and the Communist Mazdoor Kisan Party, although some activists from these parties did attend.

The central question addressed was how and to what extent the left groups and individuals in Pakistan could step up their collaboration in order to shift the balance of class forces in their favour.

A sense of urgency for left unity

clearly emerged from most contributions, stressing the rise and increasing aggression of fundamentalist forces trying to pose as an alternative to the impotent and corrupt Pakistani ruling class. The latter's obedient execution of the imperialist countries' globalisation and anti-people agenda is imposing a crushing burden on the working class, peasantry and the unemployed.

Agreement on the basics

No definitive answer emerged on the precise forms and shapes of unity, but there was a keen and comradely discussion on the basis on which it should be built.

Some of the essential principles on which any future unity must be based were: a democratic and federal structure, respect for the rights for self-determination of various national groups that comprise Pakistan, as well as the common goal towards a socialist social order.

Few seemed to have the illusion of achieving a full agreement, let alone a concrete blue-print, in the one-day event. But the clear enthusiasm in kicking off the process and taking it further in the mass movements was recognised as a big gain.

One significant achievement of the conference lied in its ability to bring together all key forces in national struggles in Pakistan—Sind, Balochistan, Saraiki and Kashmir. Leaders from these struggles expressed their determination to step up their collaboration after the conference.

In concluding the conference, LPP leader Farooq Tariq acknowledged the absence of what he called "the senior comrades of the left", but affirmed there was a need to continue attempting to include them in the process.

While highlighting the need to be absolutely clear on the political limitations of the Non-Government Organisations, Tariq stressed the need to try and include some of the good activists from their ranks.

"We can't be reformist", said Tariq. "We're Marxist, socialist."

Tariq drew special attention to the clear consensus in involving trade union and other mass organisations on the ground as an integral part of the unity process. He contrasted it with previous attempts of left groups which involved primarily the top leaders, of which "workers never know much about and why they were taking place".

"We want a real unity in Pakistan, but it's impossible to achieve unless it's built on a strong democratic basis", said Tariq. "The concept of 'left unity' has long been misused by the 'left' leaders."

Commenting on the participation of a significant number of veterans as well as young militants, Tariq commented: "We hope that the senior comrades who have come have been inspired by a new ray of hope that the left is still alive".

Tariq continued: "The LPP is the youngest part of the left movement in Pakistan, but it's also the fastest growing party." The LPP has many young comrades among its ranks, active in various mass organisations.

No shame in India links

All this didn't please the Pakistan government. It splashed the media with fanciful smear accusations of LPP links with Indian spies only days before the conference. Just hours before the conference police beat up an activist who was putting up posters about the event.

They also destroyed many posters and red flags related to the conference. Two intelligence agents tried to observe the conference. They were kicked out.

They also refused to grant a visa to a representative of the CPI-ML (Liberation) who had been invited to attend the conference.

But the party's new general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya sent warm and inspiring greetings, stressing the importance of socialists in Pakistan and India joining hands in the struggle for socialism. A revolutionary spirit filled the air: the CPI-ML (Liberation)'s description of the conference as an important milestone for the left in Pakistan and India was impressively preempted by many participants before their message was read out.²

Afghanistan

The representatives of the Watan Party of Afghanistan were very warmly



welcomed by the participants who gave the party's delegation standing ovation twice. It was the first time in seven years that the Pakistani left had any direct contact with their Afghan counterparts.

Watan's leader Habib-Ullaha spoke of the barbarous atrocities that the fundamentalist forces have inflicted on the Afghan people since 1992, turning the country into virtually a desert.

He expressed great appreciation of this rare chance to meet up with the

Pakistani left and expressed keen interest to step up collaboration with them.

Participants kept responding to appreciated contributions with inspiring slogans such as: "Asia is red. Socialism will be victorious", "Speed up the struggle", "Down with privatisation-down with downsizing", greeted by loud responses from the rest of the audience, with their fists held high in the air. ★

*Eva Cheng is a journalist for Green Left Weekly. She attended the conference as part of the delegation from the Democratic Socialist Party of Australia. A longer version of this article appeared in *Green Left Weekly*.

Notes

1. Including the Saraiki National Party, Balochistan National Party, Jammu Kashmir National Awami Party, Kashmir Mutaahda Muhaz, Saraiki Inqalabi Council Pakistan, Saraikistan Party, Saraiki Party, Peoples Party Pakistan (Shaheed Bhutto Group), Pakistan Workers Confederation Sindh, Ittehad Labour Union, Railway Workers Union, Jammu Kashmir National Students Federation, Human Right Focus, ASR Resource Centre's Institute of Women's Studies, Democratic Women's Association and Women's Action Forum. 2. Greetings were also received from the Socialist Party (Netherlands) and from the British writer Tariq Ali.

Obsession, repression

The rock band **Junoon** (Obsession) has been accused of committing "treason" and spreading "subversive Indian propaganda" over its criticisms of nuclear testing on the sub-continent.

Arif Azad

The group has been at the receiving end of state intimidation since 1997 when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif banned all young musicians "in jeans and with long hair" from the country's air waves.

In the 1990s a number of pop groups emerged winning a huge and devoted following among youth suffocated by decades of religious zealotry and restraints on freedom of expression. These artists and their music are the offspring of a raw blend of globalised MTV music culture and localised sub-continental traditions.

A tradition of repression

Official displeasure at this trend can be explained by the innate conservatism of the political establishment which associates this new mood with 'western' lifestyle choices. The establishment is also outraged over the politically charged themes in the lyrics of some of these groups especially Junoon.

In clamping down on this kind of music, Nawaz Sharif, who leads the nominally secular Muslim League, was tailing the agenda of the Islamic fundamentalist *Jamaat-i-Islami* and following in the footsteps of his mentor, military dictator General Zia ul-Haq (1977-1988). Zia made strenuous efforts to control the musical agenda through promotion of religious and apolitical music—most of it of only limited

appeal to the public.

Junoon is a reaction against these efforts from a generation of middle class youth innocent of political convictions but cosmopolitan and secular in inclination.

Touching the taboos

So far the group's biography reads like a running battle with the high priests of censorship. In 1996 it achieved notoriety when its hit song *Ehtassab* (accountability) about corrupt politicians was ordered off the airwaves on the grounds that it could "destabilise" the country before elections.

The music video accompanying the track was daring in its inclusion of a scene featuring a horse dining at a five star hotel—a swipe at the polo-loving and multi-millionaire husband of then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The group's disfavour at the hands of the establishment has grown commensurably with popular adulation within Pakistan and diasporic communities abroad.

The band's eclectic mix of musical schools: *qawwali* which draws on Sufi poetry and mysticism, sub-continental folk traditions, western rhythms and instruments is anathema to the reactionary bloc at the centre of the Pakistani State.

Junoon's 1997 album *Azadi* (Freedom) boosted the appeal of the band across the border in neighbouring India. *Sayonee*, the leading track in the album topped the charts in India and Pakistan alike.

But then the group came under attack by religious leaders for shooting the music video against the backdrop of shrines in the historic city of Multan. Once again the band was accused of "belittling shrines" and "bringing mysticism into disrepute."

On Independence Day (14 August) 1997 the group's rendition of Iqbal's famous poem *Khudi* (self-awareness) was dubbed by the ruling *Muslim League* as an insult to the great poet. The political party that had appropriated Iqbal for its own miserable ends could not stand to see an anti-establishment rock group recuperating his radicalism.

Both sides of the frontier

In March 1998, **Junoon** was invited to India to sing at the Zee-TV Cine award ceremony. Its visit was a great success and the print and broadcast media in India lionised the group. This set off alarm bells in the overheated imagination of Pakistan's misnamed Ministry of Information, which prefers to censor news, and disseminate anti-Indian propaganda.

The group was touring India in May 1998, when India followed by Pakistan detonated several nuclear devices. To the delight of the huge crowds of young people at their concerts, the band made clear its opposition to the tests and the arms race it would encourage. Many fans chanted "cultural fusion—not nuclear fusion!"

In September **Junoon** was summoned to the Ministry of Culture where they were charged with disagreeing with "national opinion regarding the nuclear explosion" and of "hoping for the reunification of India and Pakistan."

Lead singer and guitarist Salman Ahmad pointed out that the group also denounced the Indian tests and that they went to India as "ambassadors of peace, not as subversive traitors to our motherland." Ahmad refuses to buckle under the pressure to recant. "In Pakistan we do not have clean water, health or employment. How can we afford a nuclear race?" ★

* A slightly different version of this article appears in the forthcoming "Index On Censorship" 2/99. 33 Islington High Street, London N1 9BR, Great Britain. tel: [+44 171] 278 2313; fax: [171] 278 1878; e-mail <contact@indexoncensorship.org>



The tyranny of economic globalism

The collapse of the Soviet bloc, the end of the cold war, the emergence of the uni-polar world, marginalised role of the UN system and the victory of the neoliberal economic and political agenda have affected India's domestic economy and political structures and policies.

Ajit Muricken*

MUMBAI—In the emerging global situation the international position of the South has considerably weakened. The North has intensified its neoliberal offensive to integrate the economies of the South, by profound changes in trade, finance and technology. The result is the so-called "process of Globalisation". This has been buttressed and enhanced by the Structural Adjustment Programme undertaken at the instance of World Bank and International Monetary Fund—themselves handmaidens of global capital, international private banks and giant corporations.

The immediate compulsion for India adopting SAP was the balance of payment crisis which forced the government to initiate a series of economic reforms from July 1991. The whole policy package makes a significant departure from the past. The long cherished principles of growth with justice, social responsibility and accountability, equity and self-reliance have been rendered obsolete with the new slogans of "liberalisation", "privatisation", "globalisation", "efficiency" and "competitiveness".

Economic policy paradox

The basic argument of this policy is fairly logical within the neoliberal paradigm but adversely affects real peoples lives. It depends on the following propositions:

- Economic growth is central to the reduction of poverty

This growth is best brought about by the kind of economic policies, which have focussed on liberalisation of internal and external markets and incentives for private capital rather than active state intervention;

- Converting exports into the main source of economic growth

Give absolute precedence to the preservation of macro-economic objectives and policies, while neglecting the social cost to people in their everyday life.

But behind the promises of "good life" for all, there is the grim realities of increased inequality, deprivation, threat

to livelihood, disintegration of social order, displacement and landlessness, alienation and violence as well as a growing fear of the future. Poverty and exclusion form an integral part in the development model.

The developmental model based on the neoliberal paradigm has not only widened the social and economic disparity but also forced new groups of people into poverty and dislocated local communities and traditional support systems.

Marginalisation and exclusion are inherent in the very structure of economic globalism and economic growth which in its present construct cannot solve the problem of poverty for various reasons:

- economic growth is predicated on a labour saving technological paradigm.
- science and technology has been controlled by the West to suit their resource endowments and interests.
- labour saving technology is the best way to beat labour and trade unions.
- market responds to the needs of the rich only. By its own logic it excludes those who have no entitlements to participate in the market exchanges and the production pattern is naturally geared to meet the choices of the rich.

Debt crisis—a vicious cycle

Between 1980 and 1991, India's external debt increased 547% to Rs.1,004.25 bn. This excludes the defence debt and short-term debt of less than six months duration. After the adoption of the SAP, debt rose rapidly to Rs.1,990bn in March 1992 and Rs.2,440bn (\$87 bn) in September 1992 (*Economic and Political Weekly* 6 March 1993 and 5 June 1993).

According to the 1993 Annual Report of the Reserve Bank of India, between March 1990 and March 1993, the foreign debt increased from \$61.5bn to \$89.5bn, (Rs.1059.04bn to Rs.2800.76bn).

In 1998-99 the external debt is \$95.2 bn. This means the repayment problem is more intractable today than it was in 1991. The ratio of debt service payments to export of goods and services is 30.8% or about Rs.250 bn. India is now the third

most indebted country in the world, and every Indian family has to pay Rs.1,400 p.a. (\$38) to foreign powers for serving the debt alone. In 1993, the debt servicing was about \$8.2 bn, including \$3.3 bn in interest payments.

Notwithstanding several initiatives taken by the Government to liberalise external trade, India's trade deficit has touched a record high.

The trade deficit widened to \$5.8 billion during April-October 1998—double the level during the same period of 1997.

The total trade deficit in the current fiscal year is expected to be around \$9 billion. Exports fell 5.1% to \$18.87 during April-October 1998. Imports rose 9.4% to \$24.67 billion.

Growth, disparity and injustice

The New Economic Policy has already shown spectacular results. Foreign investment is increasing by leaps and bounds. Multinational corporations are entering almost every sector of the economy. The share markets are showing a great activity and vibrancy.

The availability of consumer goods—particularly luxuries—has increased. Consumer choice has multiplied. At the higher levels salaries have shot up. A new affluence is in evidence everywhere.

Economic principles and policies are oriented to meet the demands of the 250 million member middle class while neglecting the survival demands of the poor through employment generation. This process is basically the inversion of the Keynesian principle.

Income-poverty

Much academic debate on poverty and deprivation in India focuses on income-poverty. Current evidence suggests that income-poverty worsened in India between 1991 and 1994.

The proportion of poor households declined from 39.3% in 1987-88 to 34.3% in 1989-90 and then rose to 40.7% in 1992-93. In absolute terms, there were 310m. persons living below the poverty line in 1987-88. By 1992-93 the number of poor had risen to 355m.

At least 291 million adults are still illiterate. Most are women, whose capabilities are the key to transforming society. And 45 million children were outside the Primary Schools in 1995.

Nearly one third of children under 16 are forced into child labour. 135 million people are denied access to primary health care, 226 million are without safe drinking water, 640 million lack basic sanitation. (Mahbub ul Haq (1997)).

In short, 350 million people "live" below a poverty line which views people only as a statistical or biological entity and not as a social individual with self-respect. Ironically, the same India which houses the largest number of world's poor is the largest arms importer among the developing countries.



Urban sector

With the globalising of the Indian economy there is a radical reorganisation of manufacturing activity. The manufacturing process is trans-nationalised fragmented and dispersed across the country. It is becoming extremely capital-intensive and increasingly replaces labour with machinery. The thrust of contemporary capitalism is more on dead labour than on living labour, on transfer of new values rather than creation of values. Similarly it is seen that it is not industrial but finance capital which dominates the economic scene. Speculation becomes more important than manufacturing.

The majority of the workforce—both men and women—are employed in the rapidly swelling unorganised sector. This sector is characterised by uncertain wages and job insecurity. With virtually no legal protection or unionisation, workers in this sector are vulnerable to exploitation. In Mumbai (Bombay), the unorganised sector employs around 85% of the city's working women.

As the SAP unfolded, industries retrenched regular employees in favour of contract and casual workers. In order to reduce product prices to improve global competitiveness, companies shut down divisions and started sub-contracting work to casual workers.

The reforms also led to spiralling inflation as the lowering of trade barriers affected domestic prices. Trapped in the vortex of growing retrenchment, shrinking household incomes and skyrocketing food prices, more and more women were forced to enter the labour market with weakened bargaining powers.

The SAP's deregulation of the labour market has also worsened conditions for workers.

Even within the informal sector, women tend to be found in the more exploitative jobs: home-based workers in those employed in shrimp-sorting or garment factories are mainly women. "Since their jobs are insecure, women in the unorganised sector are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation," says Mariam Dhawle of the All-India Democratic Women's Association.

The link between the economic reforms and the push towards the informal sector is illustrated by data from the national sample survey. The proportion of casual labourers in the country's female work force rose from 41% in 1990-91 when the reforms were introduced to 45.3% in 1993-94. The proportion of regular salaried workers fell from 4.5% to 3.4% during the same period.

Agrarian sector & globalisation

The logic of liberalisation prevalent in the industrial sector holds true also for the agricultural sector. In the name of efficiency small farmers are gradually driven out of agriculture by big farmers

and agri-businesses. This has become a major area of concern especially in relation to the question of food security—critical in a country where a third of the population lives below the poverty line.

The export-drive has led to further inequalities in land ownership. Small land-owners, without the means to shift production to more profitable export-crops will have no option than but to sell off their lands and become landless labourers. Employment opportunities are minimum in the export-crops, the sector being highly capital intensive. This has resulted in massive unemployment, mass migration, disruption of family and family life, child labour and intensified exploitation of women. Thus, the globalisation of agriculture leads to the demise of rural life and society.

Food security

The food security of Indians, especially the poor, is under threat by liberalised economic policies.

Indian agriculture is heading for a crisis of food production, food security and rising prices. The export driven policies of successive governments committed to liberalisation, have led to diversion of vast areas of agricultural land for horticulture, aquaculture, orchards among others. Government policy has deliberately encouraged production of commercial crops through increases in subsidies and loans.

According to figures compiled by the Foundation for Science Technology and Ecology (RFSTE), production of food grains like millet, consumed mainly by the poor, declined from 1.9 million tonnes in 1971 to 821,000 tonnes in 1995-96. The area of coarse cereals also declined from 45.95 million hectares to 31.49 million hectares. Paddy fields are giving way to factories and traditional crops like rice are being replaced by commercial crops. As a result, there is little employment for local farm hands. Women have been reduced to prostitution to feed their families.

Prices of these grains had become higher in India than comparative prices on the international market. In 1992-93,

the wholesale price of wheat per quintal in India was Rs.304 compared to Rs.190 in the US. The wholesale price of rice was Rs.481 compared to Rs.348 in the US. To make matters worse, from July 1997 to July 1998, the retail price of wheat and rice rose 12.5% and 22% respectively. As a result of trade liberalisation policies, cereal exports had increased from 12% to total agricultural exports in 1991-92 to 27% in 1995-96.

Globalisation and gender

At one level globalisation can be seen as compounding the class differentiated and gender-specific character of the failures of the post-independence period. Failures in agrarian reforms, egalitarian distribution of resources, development of infrastructure and provision of health and child-care facilities have taken gender-specific forms.

The New Economic Policy is reinforcing trends of the informalisation of the female workforce, subcontracting and piece-rate production by MNCs greater utilisation in the informal sector, and increasing the number of women in the reserve army of labour. Other consequences of the Structural Adjustment Programme for women are of course unemployment, retrenchment, marginalisation in the labour force, increase in girl-child labour, prostitution and relegation to the low-wage and unorganised sectors, increased drudgery for poor women in acquiring necessities such as fuel and water.

Livelihood resources for women have clearly dwindled and new ways of curtailment their consumption have emerged even as the commodity market expands and proliferates. At the same time women have become the objects of numerous development and micro-credit policies. This period has seen a feminisation of subsistence agriculture as men move into wage work.

The pattern of the global economy compels women to bear the brunt of the strategies of structural adjustments;

Market pressures pull women into exploitative relations in both the formal and informal sectors;

The informal sector is by no means a

panacea for women. It is far less secure than the formal sector in terms of security of work and generally pays less than the minimum wage. In many ways it is a disguised form of enslavement.

Political implications

There are serious political consequences inherent in the emerging nexus between new institutional arrangements, new values and new individual drives through which people are being 'marketised'. Quite apart from the decline in the role of the State in preserving spaces for the underprivileged and protecting peoples and cultures from globalising trends, there is the danger of the whole normative framework of democracy being undermined.

The assumption that the liberalisation of the economy would lead to more liberal polity and generate more liberties for individuals and groups is thoroughly unfounded. On the contrary it will reinforce the authoritarian tendencies of the ruling oligarchy which has already eroded the basic institutions of democracy and is making the State more and more repressive and vindictive towards the so-called 'weaker sections'.

The institutions will be further eroded once whatever little welfare orientation there was in the Indian State is discarded or considerably reduced. Already one notices that several of the IMF World Bank conditionalities are forcing the government towards anti-labour, anti-rural and anti-poor positions which may be to the liking of the business class or even the professional middle classes but will certainly not produce a more democratic ethos.

As the sense of insecurity among the people grows, alongside persisting poverty, unemployment and increasing injustice and discrimination, it pushes the poor and the unemployed into a culture of protest, anger and desperation.

Violent civil upsurges have also shown a remarkable tendency to occur, often at slight provocations or flimsy excuses. In certain areas, including the metropolis Mumbai, such mass violence threatens to become endemic.

More serious conflicts between diffe-



rent groups also break out periodically. These can be ethno-linguistic, inter-religious communities, inter-caste etc. The most serious challenge to the polity and to the democratic traditions is today posed by communalism—a mix of religion and politics, in a conflict between the majority Hindu and the minority Muslim population. Communalism has now become a principle of ideology, organisation, mobilisation and of violent action.

Conclusion

The New Economic Policy packaged has been an unmitigated disaster for the toilers unemployment is on the increase. Traditional occupation and petty enterprises face extinction. Mass consumption goods are scarce. Prices of essential commodities and services are climbing out of reach. These effects are now quite visible.

The globalisation programme needs to be criticised because it firstly reduces the controls over economic activity, including prices, supply, employment conditions, wages etc. that the government can have and secondly because it produces structural distortions in the economy, and thirdly because it increases the vulnerability of the economic activity to vagaries of international market and finance. All these effects are detrimental to the interests and welfare of the people. People's Movement and Resistance to Globalisation

The frightening fact is that the political parties in India were unable to offer any credible resistance to Globalisation and there now seems to be a consensus amongst these parties on the issues of Globalisation though the perception on the issue differ among themselves. The differences are on specific programmes, measures to be taken, sectors of investment, etc.

However organised trade unions related to different political parties offered resistance to the onslaught of Global capitalism by differing from their respective party positions.

These struggles by and large have been reactive and defensive in nature against unemployment, job security and rapidly worsening social conditions around public sector undertaking facing disinvestment and the insurance and banking sectors.

Defensive struggles while necessary in sustaining elementary living conditions against the onslaught of globalisation provide short term victories. The defence of these interests in the long run requires radical restructuring of the structures of world capitalism by uniting the toiling people with an internationalist programme and united struggle. This calls for not only the reorientation of strategies but more fundamentally the ideological and cultural education of toiling people in values of solidarity, co-operation and egalitarianism.

Various mass organisations in the country in recent past have risen against globalisation in whatever manner they could. These movements have made certain impact by offering resistance to invasion of Global Capitalism by highlighting and struggling on issues affect the everyday life of the people.

A major organisation at the forefront of the struggles against infiltration of Global capitalism was the *Karnataka Rytha Rajya Sangha (KRRS)*. It became famous in the early nineties by its agitation against Kentucky Fried Chicken and against the attempt at gaining monopoly rights on seed and plant material by Transnational companies like Cargill. The farmers were outraged by the prospect of buying seeds every season from multinational seed companies. Methods of seed preservation integral to the farming experience and knowledge system of farmers since the time immemorial will be destroyed by this process.

A. K. Ramakrishnan has explained how the farmers movement was able to raise major issues related to globalisation on a national scale and achieved limited success in resisting TNC operations in seeds and related fields and in obtaining assurance from the Indian government that farmers' rights to grow, exchange and reuse seeds will not be affected by signing the GATT treaty. Resistance also resulted in blocking, at least for the time being, the amendment of the Indian Patent Act of 1970 in the tune with GATT/WTO specifications."

The export-oriented policy of the Central Government in the fisheries sector has put severe pressure on traditional fisherfolk and small producers. Under the pressure of TNCs and National Monopoly houses, the waters of the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone have been opened to joint venture companies.

The survival of about 50 million traditional fisherfolk across the sea coast has been severely threatened by the new policy of allowing joint ventures for deep sea fishing. This new policy will lead to the indiscriminate destruction of marine ecosystem and erode livelihood of traditional fishing communities. It will have serious ecological consequences, through the generalisation of intensive mechanised fishing.

The National Fish Workers Forum (NFF) was in the forefront of the agitation taking on issues of survival of traditional fisherfolk, demanding the preservation of marine ecology for use in a sustainable manner, and banning fish trawling during the monsoon months—the breeding season.

The opening up of waters of the Indian Exclusive Zone (EEZ) to joint ventures which exploit marine wealth in a indiscriminate way forced the fishworkers to launch major struggles on these issues nation-wide. Protests, blockades, demonstration and hunger





strikes forced the central and state government to concede some of the demands. Notable among the gains were the cancellation of permits to foreign vessels under joint venture, denial of extension of existing licences and adopting of measures to preserve marine ecosystem.

Privatisation has become another 'mantra' in the globalised era. The ruling block has expropriated large tracts of fertile agricultural land for shrimp aquaculture by larger corporate interests.

Prompted by rapid returns, short gestation periods, and the immense demand abroad for shrimp, many corporate house undertook prawn farming in

massive way causing ecological, social and economic destruction due to high rate of water usage, introduction of chemical input, and salination of water.

The struggle by organisations like Grama Swaraj Movement against globalised aquaculture resulted in the Supreme Court of India giving a verdict to close down commercial shrimp farms along the Indian coast. But the government is now contemplating ways to dilute the judgment.

As in the case of the fishworkers' movement, movements against export-oriented aquaculture also have formed a national network, People's Alliance against Shrimp Industry (PAASI) and they have also initiated joint activities with similar struggles in the third world. Vandana Shiva has documented the attempts to generate awareness among shrimp consumers in the West.

The new politics of solidarity between Third World communities and northern consumers is part of an emerging citizen politics at the global level that is making visible the social and ecological costs of globalisation and creating new mechanisms for social control and regulation of commerce at the international level.

Globalisation has been very rapid in Indian infrastructure sectors like power. Transnational corporations have been able to make great inroads into the power sector as exemplified by the Enron project in Maharashtra and the Cogentrix project in Karnataka. These mega power projects are also centres of people's resistance; the struggle against Enron being able to catch wide national attention. Apart from these there have been other struggles against TNCs, including DuPont in Goa state.

The various social movements in the country have effectively challenged the neoliberal paradigm which more or less uniformly marginalised communities of people from resources and power. The neoliberal globalist vision of governance through "market" faces serious challenge and the reemergence of new politics that requires the construction of new kinds of social and political institutions which will create a real space for the articulation and mobilisation of the poor and the most socially oppressed sections of society.

This new politics is not an "end state" but the affirmation of the State as an instrument of peoples' power, peoples' democracy and peoples' empowerment. It also means reaffirming the States' obligation of justice for the people from where it supposedly derives its legitimacy and power according to the democratic traditions and challenging and altering the development paradigm that argues for the market as the only provider and the new answer to the problems of economic development.

Global capitalism is no longer identified with one country. It is a borderless global order with increasing de-nationalisation of the nation state. It is at work through the new liberalising disguise that has metamorphosed through the collusion of the ruling bloc and the agencies of global market. It cannot be resisted with isolated actions, confined to individual countries however militant the struggle may be.

There is a need for strategic thought as linkages are built among organisations and movements that might form part of a counter-hegemonic bloc. The beginnings of a new grassroots internationalism of social movements have to be affirmed, as a new stage of internationalism from below.

The immediate struggles will have to focus on the questions of survival and sustenance; on economic and social rights, on human rights including the right to self-determination. Along with protecting the sovereignty of the state against force of international capitalism and compel the state to fulfil its obligation to the people, to provide them with social security and welfare, and meet their minimum needs. Also prevent the state to fritter away our natural resources and our environment in the name of development to transnational or indigenous capital.

The content cannot be exhausted by these immediate needs. A goal of a new universal culture and a new internationalism will be necessary components of the vision.

Alliance building and people's solidarity is a focal point for promoting movement for justice concerns and build-up people's resistance against the forces of globalisation across nations.

This alliance should be based on



Transformation and regroupment

Regroupments of forces determined to learn the lessons of the historical abomination that was Stalinism and to continue, against the winds and the tides, to fight against capitalism are being realised in a number of countries.

In all the countries where such possibilities exist, the organisations of the Fourth International are ready to be part of the process—as an important step towards the recomposition of the anti-capitalist left on a world scale.

At the international level, the Fourth International is an active participant in regroupment, bringing with it the advantages of a long tradition of combat against capitalism and Stalinism. ★

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people-to-people contacts rooted in a culture of friendship and partnership that transcends borders and sectoral and organisational concerns.

This calls for an attitude to learn from each others struggles and strengthen the relationships and alliances already underway in our own societies. We are challenged to be open to other cultures and experiences in our efforts to link not just ideas but persons; to support and contribute rather than merely expect support; to give meaning to language and communication between peoples; and to be open to initiatives and alternatives coming from all levels. ★

* Mr. Ajit Muricken is the Director of Vikas Adhyayan Kendra. This NGO was set up in the year 1981. The area of its activities is Western India viz. Gujarat, Goa and Maharashtra. Western India has been held as a model of development and pinnacle of achievements. VAK therefore examines the existing development paradigms critically. It does not stop to criticise the existing models of development but also looks of alternative models and indigenous systems. Particular concerns of VAK are the dalits, adivasis and women's issues. Besides, subjects of special concern to VAK are, environment and ecology, religion and society; ideology and culture; and practice of social transformation. The activities of VAK in areas of its concerns have been study and research, consultations, education of the public on issues of concern, publication, documentation, campaigns and advocacy. VAK also publishes a bi-monthly called VIKALP (Alternatives). VAK did extensive campaign and advocacy through the print media against the SAP in Western India in local languages. Several activists could be reached out through the campaign to make them aware of the implications. Several publications were brought out for

the purpose. These addressed many misconceptions spread by the mainstream political forces representing the elite, including the ruling party and the parliamentary opposition. For example, the myths of health and health care and role of MNCs, the myths of Dunkel and GATT, World Bank, IMF and SAP, myths of free trade and markets. VAK is currently handling an ambitious project of conducting a mapping of the state to find out the resources of the people and alternatives available for the people.

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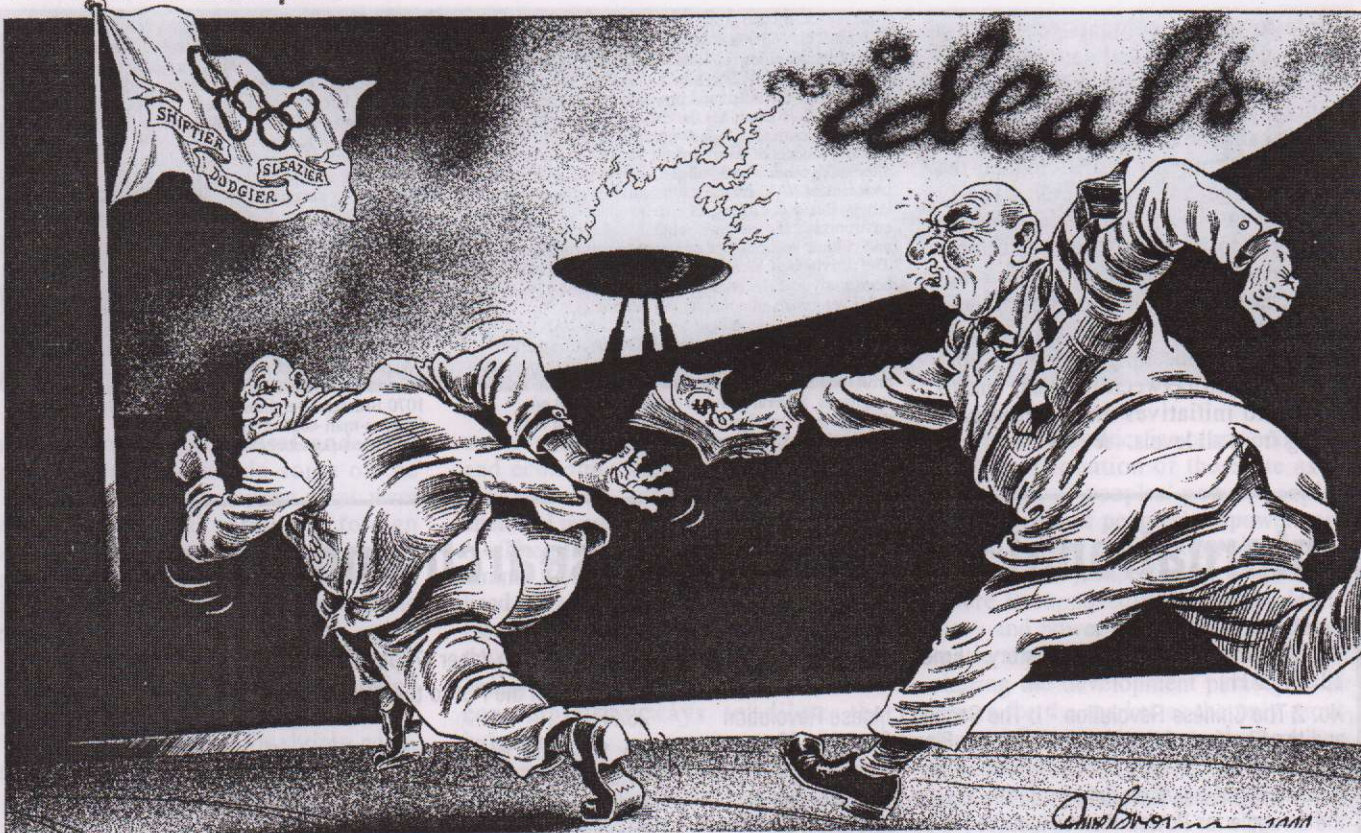
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It's a man's game

Sport is front-page news. But playing sport is still, clearly, "for the boys". And the violent euphoria of some male spectators is a coarse reminder of the darker aspects of the world we live in.

Meanwhile, women's magazines constantly encourage their readers to exercises. But only in order to lose weight, and sculpt our bodies so as to resemble the dream-world models which fill the media.

Isabelle Forest

The world of sports is gender-divided. Sport has traditionally been masculine. The sexism of the "founding fathers" of modern sport is illustrated by the convictions of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who re-established the Olympics in the modern world. He was convinced that: "female Olympics would be uninteresting: not aesthetic, and not correct."¹

Is this an outdated view? Are there still dinosaurs that think in such a crude way? After all, in 1999, television regularly shows high level sportswomen in action. But just show people around you a photo of a female weight thrower

and ask for their reactions...

Of course, the evolution of sport has meant a certain feminisation. This evolution is parallel to the evolution of leisure time itself: from an elitist practice of bourgeois women wishing to entertain themselves, it has become a mass phenomenon.

And traditional female gymnastics (based on female supports, such as the plank and the asymmetric bars — "to avoid shocks to the ovaries"), are giving way a little, now that it has become clear that high-status sports (like running) do not diminish the hips or lessen the breasts, in short that they "do not stop women from being women!"

But everyone can see that high-level sports destroy the bodies of the athletes: men as well as women. Some female athletes take male hormones to increase the level of testosterone, with visible and destructive effects. It is probable that Soviet trainers on several occasions asked their top gymnasts to conceive a child: once pregnant, your physical output is increased by a higher transport of oxygen. And you could always abort once the contest was over.²

It is clear that coaches play with bodies and manipulate them, trying to find the most powerful hormone cocktail for each athlete. This causes premature menstruation for some, delayed periods for others. This costly personalised treat-

ment is not carried out in the name of the athlete, but in the name of the sacred one-hundredth of a second, of the medal, of the glory, and of the money involved. Of course, this criticism of competitive sport is not specific to women.

Are competitive sports gender-specific at all as we enter the 21st century? Women have advanced in many areas; are they not going to become "equal" to men? According to sociologist Catherine Louveau, "sports has become, today more than yesterday, a place of real slide of women towards men. It is true that this is the direction of History, since women continually take over activities that initially were the domain of men.

"However, in competitive sports, the performance levels attained require work and physical preparation that modifies morphologies, making women's and men's bodies more similar."

At this point, an inevitable hypothesis arises: with equal physical training from early childhood on, women could attain equal performances to men in many sports. The question will probably not be answered, but doubt is justified.³ If this hypothesis of equality in sports may be considered, what is left for men in sports? Should (can) sports be co-ed? Should we call for equality or nurture our difference?

Some sportswomen speak of a "manly relationship to the body" when they are not cold, feel no pain, push their limits to reach a performance, in other words, when they do not listen to themselves. A "feminine relationship to the body" would presumably be characterised by grace, tenderness, harmony, feeling good and not causing stress. So

behaviour stereotypes can continue be respected by both women and men: only exceptional women, high-level sports-women, will have this "manly relationship to the body".

How does this relationship arise? From a social construction, of course. "But from hormones too," some feminists would probably add. After all, aggression is related to the presence of testosterone, the 'male' hormone. Men and women do not work with the same energies.

Must a feminist project seek to cast the concepts of femininity and masculinity into oblivion? Should behaviour no longer be gender-specific?

Though the media occasionally put the spotlights on exceptional sports-women, they usually present us with the picture of a masculine sports world.

Some sports remain "masculine fortresses", such as boxing or rugby, and above all soccer: prime male territory. The player must "put the ball in nice and deep". Soccer is violent, one must run fast, hit hard, and look frightening. Female soccer is never shown on television: it is not spectacular.

There will be no female soccer hero, no "Queen Pelé". Important football carries the honour of the city, the region, or the nation. It represents a stronghold of masculine identity: "And one cannot understand the popular and masculine taste for football encounters and the communicative capacity of the show if one does not place it in the context of a severe crisis of masculine identity (...) that men might find in the toughest, competitive, and violent sports the last strongholds of expression of their manliness. These are the last places where masculine values can still be revealed publicly, legitimately, and without shame..."⁴

Other sports appear to be more feminine: basketball was established in 1891, by James Naismith, professor at the YMCA University in Springfield, USA, who wanted to exclude all violence from baseball: "based on the Christian notion of love for one's neighbour ... this game takes into account the fact that some participants, by losing their self-control, can make it into a 'tool of the devil'. This is why basketball is conceived in a way so that the player always keep his reactions under control,"⁵ based on the respect of the other, no contact, and skill.

Furthermore, the evolution of the concept of physical activities away from the hygienic up-keep of the body and strength-building, called for by military doctors, towards a leisure activity freed from constraints, has allowed the development of co-ed sports. Schools have played and still play a decisive role in this change.

Mixed sports activities, and the heterogeneity that they impose, are difficult to

manage. But, in co-ed physical education classes, you can sometimes see a new game developing. There is more flow in the team than in male games, and more dynamism than in female games. Could mixed-gender sports be a source of emancipation, both for women and for men? ★

Notes

1. Quoted in *Quel corps*, no. 10-11, 1978, p.101.
2. *Le Monde*, November 29, 1994. Article by J.-J. Boyonnet
3. *Idem*, p.163.
4. Les défis de la légereté (les pratiques corporelles en mutation) [The challenges of lightness (physical activities in mutation)] by Christian Pociello, in *Esprit*, no. 196, November 1993, p. 53.
5. Quoted in A. Davisse and C. Louveau, (op. cit., p. 219).



Androgynous sport?

Androgynous sport is a utopia. That's the conclusion of sociologist Catherine Louveau. Pro-feminist teachers should instead "play the differences against the inequalities" to make sport more appropriate – and more fun – for girls (and boys).

- Is women's dislike of sports really a reflection of our alienation? If we do not wish to place ourselves on the field, where men have set the rules, does this imply that we are not sufficiently feminist?

Catherine Louveau: Feminist movements have focused on most questions

relating to women's bodies. But, at least here in France, we have curiously disregarded issues relating to sport: like morphological transformations, demands on the body, or uses of the body.

Also, though we have heavily insisted on the lack of representation of women in politics, in institutions, feminists have rarely questioned the role of women in the sports movement, where we are even less represented than elsewhere, both as sportswomen and as sports managers.

The situation is slightly different in the United States. There, the Women's Liberation movement calls for complete equality, even a erasure of differences. The principle seems to be "women and men, it's all the same", or "sport has no gender".

US writer Carole Oglesby even entitled one book *Sport, the laboratory of*



androgyny. Personally, I find this statement entirely utopian as a statement of principle. It has no relation to historical reality, nor to the reality of daily activities or the life-styles of men and women!

The few European works on the issue of women's relationship to sports are quite recent. In these analyses, the problems of access of women to sport is invariably posed in terms of emancipation: equality is doing the same thing, to "do sport like the boys do".

These works study the history of the presence of women in sport according to this analysis: "women have become more emancipated, they do more and more of things like sport". This seems to me to be an unilateral analyses. One cannot understand and explain what is going on for women if one does not simultaneously take men into account: feminine and masculine are inseparable.

When I began to think about women and their relationship to sport, in the sixties, I considered the issue, as a good Communist, in terms of barriers: if women do not participate in sports, it is because of their social conditions. One must lift these barriers, I thought, by lowering the prices and giving women more time.

I never asked myself the question of content: what were we trying to attain? It was clear, in my mind, that our goal was to gain access to universal activities, i.e. men's activities. I only pondered the means: how to liberate women from quantitative oppression?

It was only later, in the late seventies and early eighties, that I told myself: another reason women do not do sports is because they don't feel like it. They do not want to approach something that was made without them. There is no or little female history in sports.

We move from the question of the forbidden to that of appropriation. Rather like the question of the role of women in politics. When women say "it's not for me", it is not only because they internalise male domination. It is also because it is true that sport is not "for them", in that it was built without them.

This is where there is a debate: should one think that there is a feminine body-ness, a female relationship to the body?

It is clear that the feminine relationship to the body is a social construction. But in all that is socially constructed there is sexuality, which is something invariable. All efforts to separate the two

are, I believe, intellectual constructions.

What is the root of these differences? It is social, yes, but more than that, it is bodily defined: men are larger, stronger, heavier, etc. The body exists, it is given!

However, history shows that when girls practice, for generations, they end up by catching up with the men, or at least by coming close. The distance is closing in. We do not know yet what will come of it. The Americans are not afraid of extrapolating: within 50 years, they say, women will beat men in endurance sports.

But there are secondary sexual signs that could be easily changed... Although, when one considers the case of high level sports women, one may wonder: not only do they have bodies that change, but, for some of them, a physiology that is modifying as well: their menstrual cycles, for instance. But I am not at all saying that they are becoming masculine!

• But there are now women high-level sports stars Surely this gives a positive picture that encourages girls to get involved, and has an "emancipating" role?

Yes, this evolution is rather positive, it changes the models. Sports are feminising, it is true, but not nearly as fast as has been sometimes said. Today, there is a tendency to say that there is no problem. France has really famous sportswomen like Florence Arthaud and Jeannie Longo.

But after twenty or thirty years of girls cycling, boxing, and wrestling, they represent only 1.5% of regular participants. Sport is becoming feminine very slowly. It remains a masculine domain, a place for expression of manly values: courage, strength, resistance, violence, risk, effort in its hardest sense.

• If sport is such an awful, violent place, why should we want women to get involved?

I think that women have a whole world to win, and men too, in what I call the cross-gender spirit, which is something different than equality, a lot more: the cross-gender spirit is the recognition of values, the taking into consideration of particularities, of complementarity... In what men constructed, there is not only oppression, there is also positive value! Women have a lot to gain and to recapture in rebuilding their position in the world of physical activity.

This, it is true, also brings up the question of the relationship to time: not, as I believed in the sixties, the objective issue of the lack of time or lack of money - even though that does have an effect, it is not essential. What is essential is a very deep set problem of emancipation: that women dare take time for themselves.

For having experimented in low-income neighbourhoods, I know that it is

possible, but that it takes huge efforts on the level of social animation: for women to build new forms of "taking time off" in democratic conditions (not in the commercial sector), for them to access the world of physical activity, they must do it collectively, they cannot do it each separately, not in poorer areas, in any case. This brings up the problem of neighbourhoods, of social questions, of the competence of animators, etc. One must think of the issue of means in a different way, starting from the wishes of the persons, and not by projecting on them pre-established models.

I would add that one should not look at things only in a technical perspective: perfecting, perfect gestures, confrontation, rivalry, competition, etc. From the moment when the full range of activities and goals opened to women, feminisation took on an entirely new character.

• In your book, you propose "working differences against inequalities." What do you mean?

This is a question of the "true" and the "just". If one speaks in terms of socio-political objectives, I am, of course, on the side of the just; I am for something that has to do with equality, in the historical sense.

But I am for an equality that is based in reality, and not a mythical equality that means pretending that men and women are the same. To construct equality in reality implies starting from differences, because, in reality, what functions are the differences. The egalitarian discourse does not have any effect if it does not take into account the reality of differences. But, at the same time, one must avoid a relativist logic, as in "to each his culture", men with men, women with women, which kids translate in their own way: "dance for girls, fighting for boys".

In other words, one must try to construct on this basis a dialectical approach that does not forsake the ideal of emancipation, and thus is a tool for equality (even though this notion is ambiguous, as far as bodies are concerned), and that at the same time has its eyes wide open on reality, i.e. that does not disregard differences.

The first effort requires identifying the feminine, looking at what girls really do - not only Jeannie Longo or other high-level sports women. The existence of Jeannie Longo proves that girls can cycle, indeed, and that is not bad; but beyond that one must think about what can be done for this to generalise, and look at all the space that remains to be built: if one has this cross-gender spirit that involves saying that the feminine and the masculine exist, it requires identifying what social demand, what social transformation the feminine can bring.

In the example of the low-income neighbourhoods that I was speaking about, one can say that the feminine

carries a social demand that is not yet identified.

When the elected representatives think about the sports policy of their municipality, they go to see the clubs; I tell them: careful, if you go to see the clubs, you will only know the sports demand of the sporting people—i.e. a third of the people who do something in France—but you will not find out about the demand for sports activities of the population, and, in particular, of the women.

Here, there is a “revolutionary” potential: to identify, starting from differences, the necessity of reaching what exists—but also to construct new spaces, to take into consideration new methods of seeing. It’s not easy!

To say this, to say that women also have the right to build spaces of physical activity, is to think in terms of difference, but with an ideal of emancipation and equality. But, contrarily to the “essentialist” tendencies, I am in favour of fighting at the same time for all those that are “atypical”: for all the girls that want to play football, for instance, to find their place, which means fighting for the fields and the locker-rooms.

I am in favour of the abolition of all barriers in all types of physical activity. No federation leader should be able to declare, as the boxing leaders still do, that such a sport is not made for women. If it is true that it is not good for women, boxing, than it’s not good for men either! Besides, it’s the business of the girls that want to box, not the leaders...

• What is the role of schools in the training of sportspeople?

When I began to write on the subject towards 1967/68, things were simple: it was enough to put girls and boys together, we thought. I couldn’t see why they should be treated differently.

Remember that, in the sixties, physical education in France was not co-ed, and recruitment competitions were separate. In those days, there were still girls’ high schools and boys’ high schools. And even in the junior high schools (which became co-ed in the 1960s), tradition was maintained: male teachers for the boys, female teachers for the girls.

This lasted a long time, and still lasts. This is what made me think: there were many of us calling for co-education, but this did not change much. Or, more precisely, it changed in the lower grades, but not much in senior high: even when these became co-ed, the physical education courses have remained separated, boys on one side, girls on the other. And, above all, a tendency has been revealed for a re-separation along gender lines with adolescence.

This led me to ask a few questions: as a trade union representative, I did not think that all the teachers were reactionary; so why did they continue to

separate their pupils? I began to look closely at my girl pupils, and I realised that I did not take much care of them: I was working in the masculine gender: the boys—and the “atypical” girls, the “tomboys”—are so demanding in activities that one takes care only of them. This is a tendency one finds with the professors of all disciplines: to respond to those who are the most demanding. In physical education, this tendency is multiplied by ten: one works with those who are physically good, because they are very demanding.

The others are forgotten, by general consensus: the teachers forget the girls, and the girls do everything to be forgotten. Then one says: ah, they are not succeeding... Thus one arrives at a relative failure of girls in physical education, mainly in poorer environments, and particularly in technical schools.

One realises that co-education puts the girls at a disadvantage: when one is dealing with people who are different, and one pretends that they are the same, one worsens the differences.

The stronger “motivation” of the boys, their stronger demand, is also related to the types of activities that they are offered: when the activities are historically more masculine, the girls do not feel comfortable with them, or do not express themselves well, which reinforces the differences of attitude that you mentioned.

As far as I am concerned, physical activities are not “neutral”, there is no activity that is free from all gender marking: each has its history, its culture, its imaginary of use.

And one realises — Annick has seen it for volley-ball, and others have shown it in other sports, that girls and boys, in the same sport, are not playing the same thing. Where boys play “against”, girls play “with”.

In rugby, for instance, many coaches have realised that girls do not play forward, pushing—body contact, fighting—but they have a much more technical game, with more passing, and less contact.

Girls and boys do not play the same way and they do not play the same thing. Should one, then, put together people who are not playing the same thing? I don’t think that this question can be easily answered; I myself am divided between the wish for co-education, the desire to make different people live together, and feasibility, which tends to make me say that it is easier to separating them.

Why could one not (if the entire class stays together) have co-ed times and gender specific times, times by ability, and times by choice of activity? When one puts football on the programme, for instance, I dislike saying “it’s for boys”; it is better to put two activities on the programme and let the pupils choose. Otherwise, what will the “atypical” do?

One cannot stop sporty girls running about! And what about atypical boys? A little guy who doesn’t want to run fast? The problem is getting the pupils to identify what they feel like playing. Thinking female means organising alternatives.

Having said this, there are two problems. A material problem: teachers do not always have the room to do this in good conditions; and a training problem: currently, the historically feminine activities have a very insufficient place in the training of physical education teachers. Generally speaking, all the girls receive hand-ball training, but all boys are not trained in dancing (nor are all sporting women).

There is a third problem, and that is the family: before they come to their physical education class, the children have a body culture, through their games, the family activities and others. Boys and girls have different familiarity with certain activities. Take football: boys already have a whole culture by the time they come to the school field, whereas girls are behind.

I don’t say that it’s enough to bring the two together. There are activities where co-education is more difficult to introduce than in others: the question of struggle, of body-to-body fight. One cannot impose cross-gender duels straight away, it can only come after a didactic work that allows it. With colleagues that work well, this can be done: by the end of the course they have a few girls that ask to challenge boys on their own initiative. Though this is not a generalised attitude, it is important to reach this result. But it requires that one do not start off pretending that it’s the same, one cannot force them together, nothing is obtained that way.

I remain in favour of co-education, for people to live together. It would be very sad to have to re-separate girls and boys. But mixing genders must not be made into a dogma, in either direction. To declare that a hand-ball team must have three boys and three girls is not adequate if it leads to a game where the three boys play together and the girls stand back, which is what usually happens...

But this does not mean there should be only girls or only boys. One must find a system of grouping more appropriate to the goal one is seeking. I prefer to speak of co-education: the idea of identifying different values. To identify the feminine is to say: careful, the actors are women, they therefore have reasons for acting the way they do. I am strongly opposed to the idea of sex neutrality as a social position. ★

Author of *Sports, école, et société: la part des femmes*, (Ed. Actio, 1991), a study on the role of women in school and society, and *Talons aiguilles et crampons au, les femmes dans les sports de tradition masculine*, INSEP 1986.

国際シンポジウム

エルネスト・マンデル

—その人と思想—



Booknotes

The Marxism of Ernest Mandel

Pluto Press (1999)

Francis Sitel wrote the following review of the French edition for Rouge weekly.

Already published in Japanese, Turkish, French and English, *The Marxism of Ernest Mandel* will constitute a reference point for any future understanding of Mandel's indispensable work.

The book aims to reach a broader audience than just Mandel's companions and disciples. The audience is also expected to be interested in the strictly theoretical side of Mandel's work: what editor Gilbert Achcar calls Mandel's "intellectual portrait".

Challenges

The book's difficulties are not only pedagogical, or having to do with the need to take a certain distance from a man who was both comrade and "master"... From this point of view, the desire to write something that both honours and criticizes Mandel is legitimately present in each of the contributions. Behind the diversity of approaches, this gives a deep unity to the collective work.

The problem is more fundamental. It has to do with the need to tackle the rich diversity of the theoretical labours of

someone who was first and foremost a militant, and for a long period the Fourth International's main leader.

In Mandel's work, political intervention and speculative thought are intimately, dialectically interwoven. This explains the originality of many of Mandel's writings, which were neither academic publications nor reducible to the political goals that their author consistently gave them. Often they seem to situate themselves in the interstices between science and politics, nourished by a constant back-and-forth between analysis and action.

The great variety of Mandel's writings—reflected in the book by the multiplicity of fields and approaches of its various authors—is held together by a centripetal force: the forceful coherence of his intellectual personality.

This is thus a "profile" whose originality editor Achcar rightly stresses in its opening lines: Mandel "was one of those few men and women in the history of the socialist movement who were able to combine an untiring activity as revolutionary leaders with a body of intellectual work fulfilling the scholarly criteria for scientific research, to the point of compelling respect from academic circles".

Ernest Mandel thus escapes from the usual criteria of classification of both fields of study and fields of political intervention.

This made the project that led to this book an especially challenging one, since its goal was precisely to pick apart the unity of Mandel's work and personality, by separating the theory from the politics. "Mandel's theoretical production did not occur despite his involvement in militant revolutionary politics. It rather occurred because of this involvement, which shines through all his publications", writes Achcar. "It is possible, however, even necessary, to separate the appraisal of Mandel's theoretical achievement from the assessment of the militant endeavour that motivated it."

Electronic Viewpoint

Some of the articles for the next issue of *International Viewpoint* are already viewable at our web site. We are slowly adding a downloadable archive of articles published in previous issues

www.internationalen.se/sp/ivp.html

International Viewpoint is also distributed free by email. We also have lists in French, German and Spanish. Subscription is free.

To add your name, send a message to: <International_Viewpoint@compuserve.com>

The challenge has been responded to brilliantly. Across the plurality of approaches, witnesses and questionings echo through the book in a way that reproduces, in fact, "the Marxism of Ernest Mandel".



Contributions

Difficult as it is to deny the value and importance of Mandel's economic analyses, it is tempting simply to take them for granted. One of the book's most valuable aspects is that it shakes off habitual readings in order to rediscover the analyses' original power.

For decades, in face of a dominant ideology that incessantly repeated that capitalism had overcome its contradictions, Mandel was able to keep alive a rigorous, always alert Marxist analysis. Michel Husson's article on Late Capitalism and Francisco Louca's on long waves testify to the fecundity of the theoretical framework Mandel developed.

Mandel's analysis of the phenomenon of bureaucracy is also shown to be one of his decisive contributions, both theoretically and politically. Charles Post writes, "Mandel, working from the foundation provided by Luxemburg and Trotsky, has provided us with the most theoretically rigorous and empirically well-founded Marxian discussion of bureaucracy to date." Catherine Samary incorporates this problem into her overall study on problems of the transition, including the thorny issues around the concept of "degenerated workers' states".

Several authors, from their different points of view, converge in attributing some of Mandel's mistakes to excessive optimism.

The two texts by Mandel published for the first time in the book confirm that decisive issues are at stake here. His "Material, Social and Ideological Preconditions for the Nazi Genocide" (1988) illuminates considerably some remarks made by Michael Lowy in his article, as well as Norman Geras' article, "Marxists Before the Holocaust: Trotsky, Deutscher, Mandel". Mandel's second text, "Why I Am a Marxist", gives an extraordinary synthetic picture of his thought.

An iron generation

As we reevaluate the history of the twentieth century in an atmosphere of invasive melancholy, we need to take account of a paradox: the fact that the generation that lived through "midnight in the century" showed such resistance to the horror and such revolutionary energy.

It almost suggests that they underestimated catastrophes like Auschwitz and Hiroshima.

Ernest Mandel is representative of this generation. Instead of complaining about the past, he preferred warnings, often apocalyptic warnings, about the future. They ring out like so many appeals to vigilance, struggle and organization.

This book's principal merit is doubtless to remind us that starting from Mandel's work is an indispensable dimension in any perspective of refounding an emancipatory project. ★

Coming soon

Conference listing

EuroMediterranean homosexualities

Marseilles, France, 24-31 July

The 20th century is rich in lessons for lesbians and gay men in Europe and throughout the world. We have lived through brutal repression (fascism, Stalinism and other dictatorships), the rise of the women's movement, the spread of birth control and abortion rights, a (temporary?) decline in the power of religion, the AIDS epidemic, an explosion of global communication networks, lesbian and gay images on MTV and the Internet and much more.

Does this mean that there is no going back from the freedoms we have won? In fact no victory is necessarily forever: the forces fostering homophobia are still at work. We are there in the social landscape but have not really found our place in it. Many lesbians and gay men are ignorant of our history. In Europe and still more in the rest of the world our lives are not seen and treated on an equal footing. We are still favourite scapegoats: when things get worse in Europe and the Mediterranean, tensions increase, and racist crimes and violence multiply, then hypocrites and bigots are quick to attack us as well, and the police and courts are close behind.

The Euromediterranean Summer University will gather together the European experiences of recent decades, and express our solidarity with the other peoples of the Mediterranean. As well as enjoying the Mediterranean summer, our presence will be a challenge to the homophobic National Front municipal governments in Vitrolles, Magnane, Orange and Toulon.

Workshops

Several parallel workshops will develop the Summer University's cycle of themes chosen by the programme committee, both on its own initiative and by outside proposal. Some workshops will continue every day throughout the Summer University, others may be more limited in time. The Euromediterranean dimension will be particularly visible. Workshops will be led by particular groups, media outlets, researchers and writers, and accompanied by a film

series.

- gays/knowledge — lesbian, gay, bi, transgender and transsexual forms of expression — popular culture from the '20s to today — history — memories — transmission — archives — lesbian and gay studies
- identities — genders — sexualities — portrayals of sexuality — practices — pornography
- oppressions — repressions — discriminations — racism — sexism — lesbophobia — homophobia
- subversions — integration — political stakes — grassroots organising — media — strategies — political and social demands — militant actions — individual and collective commitment — impact of recent struggles (AIDS & domestic partnership)
- daily life — economic issues — economic insecurity — citizenship — social life — lifestyles — consumption — health — urban and rural life

Last minute speaker proposals should be sent to: Comité scientifique UEEH Intech chemin des Fontaines F-84110 Vaison la Romaine, France Fax: 33-4-75 27 14 04 Email: intech.@wanadoo.fr

The forums

The forums will gathering all the participants to hear particular speakers. They will take the form of round tables on the above themes. All participants will be encouraged to speak (there will be travelling microphones and translation to and from several languages). Outside guests prominent in political and intellectual life will also play a role. The forums will all be recorded for publication.

The organisers

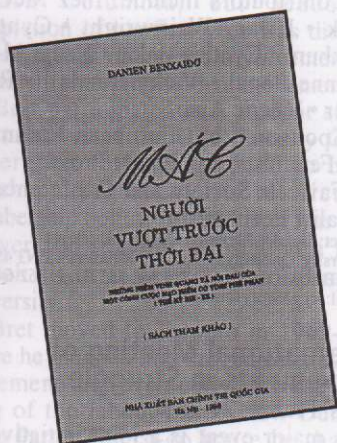
We are a coalition of women and men, lesbians and gays from various perspectives inspired by this project. Some of us took part in the past in the creation and five sessions of the Marseilles Gay and Lesbian Summer University (1979-1987), which brought together between 400 and 600 people for a week every two years.

We want to create "an open forum for discussion and gatherings where the various sensibilities of the gay and lesbian community can come together on a basis of mutual respect, pluralism of thought and behaviour, friendship among peoples, and a common commitment to anti-sexist and anti-racist demands... As a rule men and women will both be welcome... This will not be a place for decision-making." (Excerpt from article 4 of the bylaws)

Co-ordination is ensured by a members' council, with 50% women.

Registration

The fee for taking part in the Summer University is 850 FF. It is also possible to reserve a room and meals in the university restaurant for 900 FF. Reduced rates are available for students, unemployed and people with long-term illnesses.



Red pirates

Vietnam's publishing houses are notorious for their unauthorised translations of Western books. But we were surprised to come across this pirate edition of *Marx l'intempêtif* by French philosopher Daniel Bensaïd.

The author is a lifelong anti-Stalinist and leading member of the "Trotskyist" *Ligue communiste révolutionnaire*. His co-thinkers in Vietnam have faced imprisonment and execution.

It now seems that Bensaïd's articulation of a Marxism for the 21st century has caught the eye of critics within the Vietnamese Communist Party, frustrated with their autocratic regime and its pro-capitalist reforms. [JD] ★

★ events listing

Register early — fees will go up after April 1999!

Registrations and requests for information can be sent to: Université d'Été des Homosexualités Intech Chemin des Fontaines 84110 Vaison la Romaine, France Tel: 33-4-90 28 70 10 Fax: 33-4-90 36 19 63 Organizational contacts (tel/fax): 33-4-75 27 14 04 (Jacques Fortin) Artistic programming: 33-4-91 47 29 52 (Verte Fontaine)

Other events

Brussels-Cologne EuroMarch

24-28 May

Organisers hope to limit the march to 1,000 participants, to avoid logistical problems. Delegates will assemble in Brussels on 24 May, and hold a general meeting that evening. The march will leave the next morning, stopping to sleep in Louvain, Liege, Aachen and arriving in Cologne on 28 May.

As well as the March itself and the demonstrations in each town en route, a number of "spectacular" actions will be carried out under the responsibility of local Belgian and German associations. The federal structure of the Belgian EuroMarch group allows for joint initiatives between collectives linked to trade unions and autonomous groups.

Marchers must organise themselves as self-sufficient "villages" by geographical or organisational affinity before arrival. Contact your national EuroMarch representative before setting off! ★

The Belgian secretariat is at 103 rue Potagere 1210 Brussels. Tel: +322 223 35 33 Fax: +322 223 39 82

Indonesia/East Timor Student solidarity day

Saturday, May 22, one day after the Indonesian student movement forced the resignation of Suharto. Students are playing a vanguard role at the moment: it is extremely urgent to provide the maximum support for these two movements. Suggested themes include:

- Solidarity with Indonesian and East Timorese students!
- Free East Timor! Freedom in Indonesia!
- Release all imprisoned and disappeared students!
- Free Xanana, Budiman and Dita Sari!
- End all military ties with the Habibie-Wiranto regime!

Initiated by Resistance Socialist Youth Organisation, Australia. Supporters include Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN), Australia; Students in Solidarity for Democracy in Indonesia (SMID), Indonesia; Students and Peoples Committee for Democracy (KOMRAD), Jakarta, Indonesia; Student Solidarity for Indonesia (SSI), the Netherlands; Malang Student Committee (KMM), Indonesia, and; People's Struggle Committee for Change (KPRP), Indonesia.

German EuroMarches against unemployment

There will be three marches across Germany

- 11 May: Departure from Prague on bicycles following a route through Dresden, Leipzig, Hanover, Munster to Cologne.
- 18 May: Departure from Munich to Mannheim then Cologne.
- March across the Ruhr.

The German marches welcomes other European marchers, but numbers are limited—please contact the organisers before departure.

Bundesbuero Euromarsch c/o Bundnis Köln 99
Kornerstr.69 D 50823 Köln Tel +49 221 9 52 00 08 Fax
+49 221 9 52 00 77 E-mail <koeln99@gmx.net>

Pan-European demonstration against unemployment

29 May, Neumarktplatz, Cologne

The object of the Cologne demonstration is to focus public attention on the unemployed and those with insecure jobs throughout Europe. It will also be an important occasion to show the extent of international convergence of struggles.

Participation by groups of undocumented immigrants (*Sans Papiers*) and a large delegation of South American Indian marchers will help broadening the message of the demonstration.

European Parliament of the Jobless and Insecure Workers in Struggle.

30 May to 3 June, Cologne, Germany

This initiative of the European Marches network is an integral part of the Counter-summit. The objective is to create conditions for open and serious debates between grassroots activists and associations from different countries.

Major subjects to be debated include: income and all forms of social rights (including women's rights); work (the fight against precarisation; reduction in working time, etc.); and the struggles for the rights of populations with immigrant origins (including the question of free circulation of people), linked to the fight against unemployment.

This "Parliament" will add to and deepen the demands already adopted by the EuroMarch network. It should also generate momentum for future common struggles, ending the situation where the EuroMarch network remains in "suspended animation" between EU summits and other institutional dates.

Sleeping arrangements will probably be on a camping site. Inscriptions must be made beforehand and participation should be based on local level discussions.

Pre-inscriptions to "Parliament" c/o Bundesbuero Euromarsch c/o Bundnis Köln 99 Kornerstr.69 D 50823 Köln Tel +49 221 9 52 00 08 Fax +49 221 9 52 00 77 E-mail <koeln99@gmx.net>

Other European demonstrations

The European Marches network supports the 19 June Counter-summit demonstration in Cologne, as well as the 18 June Reclaim the Streets global day of protest against global neo-liberalism. A range of activities will be held in world capitals, including a "Bankquit" in London and carnivals in other financial centres.

The European Marches network also fully supports the "World March of Women To Eliminate Poverty and Violence Against Women, and initiatives such as the Intercontinental Caravan and the Brazil March of the Landless.

Women and Political Action

18-19 June, London, Great Britain

This conference will bring together feminist researchers, political activists and policy makers to discuss and evaluate experiences of feminist campaigning over a wide range of issues: Dealing with Difference • Single-issue campaigns • Women and the Law • Women in Conflict • Women in formal politics • Work and the Family • Poverty and Social Exclusion

Contributors include: Inez McCormack • Hilary Wainwright • Cynthia Cockburn • Cynthia Enloe • Nadjie Al-Ali • Lynne Segal • Vicky Randall • Ruth Lister • Valerie Amos

Sponsored by: European Forum of Left Feminists, Pay Equity Project,

Fawcett Society and Conference of Socialist Economists

Contact: Gender Research Centre, Middlesex University, Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex EN3 4SF, Great Britain. Tel: [+44 181] 362 5552. fax: 362 6404. E-mail: <j.gregory@mdx.ac.uk>

International Meeting of Movements in Struggle

Paris, France, 24-26 June

This major event is a joint initiative of the European Marches network, ATTAC, (International Movement for the Democratic Control of Financial Markets and their Financial Institutions), the Coordination against the Clones of IMA, World Forum Alternatives, and COCAD/CADTM. ★

For more information contact the EuroMarch secretariat, 104 rue des Couronnes, 75020 Paris, France. Fax: (+33) 01 44 62 63 45 <marches97@ras.eu.org>

London Anarchist Bookfair

16 October, London, Britain

Contact: <m.peacock@unl.ac.uk>
Tel. 0171 247 9249.

Participative democracy

10-13 November, Porto Alegre, Brazil
An International Seminar on Participative Democracy, based on Porto Alegre's pioneer "participatory budget process". Working languages Portuguese, Spanish and (maybe) English.

Contact the town hall, Praca Montevideo, 10, CEP 90010-170, Porto Alegre, Brazil. fax 051 228 8725, email <becker@gp.prefpoa.com.br>



Obituary

Bret Smiley (1950-99)

Canadian Trotskyist

by Barry Weisleder

Bret's father, Donald V. Smiley, was a much-published professor of political science. Bret enrolled at the University of British Columbia, but academic completion of his first year was discarded in favour of intense involvement in the newly emerging student movement.

Bret participated in a student sit-in and takeover of the UBC Faculty Club (where his father happened to be a member), protesting its restrictive membership policy. In 1967 Bret was one of over 100 students arrested at a free speech sit-in at nearby Simon Fraser University.

Bret moved to Toronto in 1969-70, where he plunged into the radical student movement and eventually into the left wing of the labour-based New Democratic Party. The co-op house he shared with close friends on Hepburne Street, in downtown Toronto's west end, became renowned as a meeting place and orga-

nizing centre for left wing NDP and labour activists.

It was here, according to a former house-mate, that Bret became an avid reader of *New Left Review*, and other Marxist, including specifically Trotskyist, literature. Ernest Mandel's classic essay, "The Leninist Concept of Organization", made a profound impression on him.

An extremely articulate speaker with a powerfully synthetic intellect, Bret moved into positions of leadership in the left-wing nationalist Waffle movement of the NDP. At the same time he played an important role as educator and organizer of a regroupment of mostly young radical socialists inside the Waffle, the NDP Youth and among activists at the University of Toronto campus.

In 1972 Bret joined the League for Socialist Action, section of the Fourth International in the Canadian state, and participated in the leadership of a minority tendency which was expelled from the LSA in 1973. Together with a core of student activists (*Old Mole* group) and Waffle veterans (the Red Circle), the ex-LSA militants founded the Revolutionary Marxist Group in the Summer of that year.

Bret served on the Political Committee of the RMG, and on the Editorial Board of its (nearly) monthly newspaper the *Old Mole*. He was an RMG candidate for federal Parliament in 1974, and helped to lead its international solidarity, anti-social cutbacks, strike support, and anti-racism campaigns.

Bret was a prolific and skilled polemicist, and wrote extensively on questions of socialist strategy, the nature of the Canadian state and society, the Quebec national question, the NDP, the Labour movement, the student movement, other social struggles, as well as on international politics and strategic issues.

The RMG, and its Quebec-based counterpart the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire, became sympathizing organi-

zations of the Fourth International in the mid-1970s. Bret represented the RMG at the World Congress of the F.I., and served on the International Executive Committee of the global movement.

In 1977, the LSA, RMG and GMR fused to form the Revolutionary Workers' League/Ligue Ouvriere Revolutionnaire. Within two years, the fusion was crisis over issues of work place orientation, NDP and governmental policy, and general strategy.

In 1981 Bret was part of an exodus of a number of veteran leaders and activists from the RWL. He moved from Toronto to Hamilton, 50 kilometers west, and worked for more than a year in the coke plant at Stelco's steel mill. He then transferred far north-west to Edmonton, Alberta, where he lived for the next 17 years in political and personal isolation from his comrades.

He launched a band that performed occasionally on weekends, until the equipment was stolen. His subsequent work as an unskilled labourer (mostly furniture moving, truck driving and roofing jobs), did not alleviate the downward spiral. Poverty, alcoholism, and physical decline proceeded to take a high toll on his health. In recent years he pulled himself together, but in 1988 was diagnosed with lung cancer.

In his final months he reestablished contact with his former comrades, disappointed to find that several had abandoned political activism. He said that he was "no longer a Marxist", but his keen interest in our analysis of the political situation and in our practical activity, particularly inside the labour movement, seemed to refute the claim.

He played a seminal role in rejuvenating Canadian Trotskyism, linking it to and drawing sustenance from the youth radicalization of the 1960s and 70s, and stimulating a wide range of debates on revolutionary strategy and programme. ★

Barry Weisleder is the Editor of *Socialist Action* newspaper, published in Toronto, Canada.

Al Majdal#1 (March 1999)

The new quarterly bulletin for the promotion of a just solution to Palestinian residency and refugee issues.

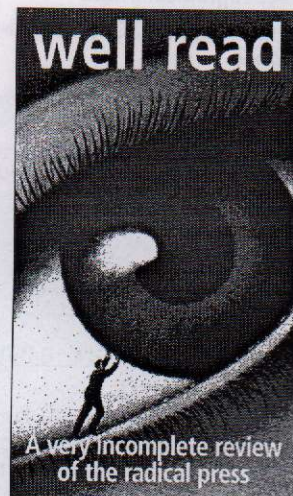
Al Majdal replaces the BADIL bulletin Article 74, the last issue of which (no. 26) was published in December 1998.

Al Majdal will serve as a platform of communication between Palestinian refugees and all those—internationals and Israelis—who, based on the painful lessons of the Oslo process, have taken up the challenge of working for Palestinian refugee rights and a just peace in the Middle East.

The first issue of the bulletin includes the following: Call for the Establishment of Palestinian Land Commission (Salman Abu Sitta) •

New Palestinian & International Initiative for Palestinian Refugee Rights—background materials and suggestions for action towards: Empowering Palestinian refugee initiatives and NGOs • Lobbying for UNRWA funding • Advocacy for the Palestinian Right to Restitution (including BADIL petition) • Update: Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon • "Our Visitors" • Poem from Palestinian Refugee Children in Lebanon • Call for Mobilization towards the Israeli High Court Decision on ID Card Confiscation on 22 April 1999 • Jerusalem ID Card Confiscation: Data for 1996-1998 • Update: Palestinian Residency Rights under the PA

Al Majdal#1 will be distributed to all subscribers to the previous bulletin Article 74. New subscribers please contact: badil@baraka.org or tel/fax. 02-2747346. (Annual subscription fee: US\$20 or equivalent).



The following websites provide useful background on the Kosovo crisis and related information

Kosovo sites

Kosovo Information

Agency

Includes documents of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK)
www.kosovapress.com/

Out There News

Reports from Kosovo's frontlines, interviews with Kosovar pacifist leaders, photos of the destruction and historical background.
www.megastories.com/kosovo/index.htm

Kosova Crisis Center

www.alb-net.com/

Kosova Humanitarian Aid Organization

www.khao.org/

Freedom for Kosova!

www.kosovainfo.com/

Serbian sites

Radio B92

The backbone of the independent news service in Yugoslavia. Although banned, Radio B92 is still live on the web, with breaking news in English.
www.b92.net

Against NATO attacks/ in Support of Yugoslavia

This Serb site provides an immediate responses to various Serbian and international news reports, a timetable of the day's air raids, photos of the destruction in Kosovo and a child's plea for peace.
www.beograd.com/nato

Other Serbian anti-NATO and anti-war sites include

www.crisisweb.org/

www.yutarget.com

A constantly updated webcam with pictures of Belgrade's bombed streets is at:

www.inet.co.yu/kamera/

Foreign sites

Institution for War and Peace Reporting

This is one of the few places to find dispatches, translated into English, from dissident journalists within Serbia and Kosovo, along with other good commentary.

www.iwpr.net

ZNet

A page of up-to-the-minute articles regarding the current bombings. The lead piece by Noam Chomsky puts the entire situation into context, and other pieces posted include Andre Gunder Frank, Dave McReynolds, Diane Johnstone, Stephen Zunes and Michael Albert.

www.zmag.org

Common Dreams News Center

Provides breaking news and views for progressive-thinking Americans, with ample information on the crisis in Kosovo, including maps and breaking updates from various news services.

www.commondreams.org/kosovo/kosovo.htm

Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting

FAIR's coverage of the war in Yugoslavia includes "Rescued from the Memory Hole: Background of Serb/Albanian Conflict."

www.fair.org

Help B92

This group has been founded to try to insure the distribution of relevant information. It is named in honor of one of Yugoslavia's most important media entities. Without immediate financial support, this last source of independent news for the inhabitants of this region is endangered. A fundraising campaign is underway, with the objective of sending money and equipment to B92 and other independent radio stations in Serbia and Kosovo.

<http://helpB92.xs4all.nl>

helpb92@xs4all.nl

BBC News Online

The BBC offers live audio coverage and many articles on Kosovo, as well as "Kosovo Conflict on the Web," with BBC News Online's guide to how the conflict is being represented on the Web.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1998/kosovo

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATO's site is occasionally unavailable, apparently because of a daily barrage by thousands of e-mails from hackers in Belgrade.

www.nato.int

Other subjects

Palestine

On the eve of the 51st anniversary of the Deir Yasin massacre, the Badil Resource Center's has uploaded the interviews conducted 1998 for its film

Net Working



about Jerusalem in 1948, *Yoom Ilak, Yoom Aleik*. Segments of the interview were used in the film. The entire interview, conducted at Deir Yasin and in Salfit, West Bank where Ahmad Hamidi and Na'meh Darwish, Palestinian survivors of Deir Yasin now live, is now on the website.

www.badil.org/History/deiryas.htm

Visitors to Badil's website will also find photos of refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza and the West Bank. The photos on the website represent the initial stages of Badil's project to create an online photo bank related to Jerusalem and refugees.

www.badil.org/History/photos.htm

New material has been added to the refugee page. It provide a brief description and email links to Palestinian Non-governmental Organizations working for refugee rights. These links will be updated as part of the campaign for the defense of refugee rights.

www.badil.org/Refugee/refugee.htm

Badil's new quarterly, *al Majdal*, will soon be available online. Issues will be archived on the website following the publication of the subsequent issue. The first issue (March 1999) will be available on-line in June. Badil's press releases are also archived on the website.

For more information contact: Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, PO Box 728, Bethlehem, Palestine.

tel/fax. 972-2-274-7346 or 277-7086

<badil@baraka.org>

www.badil.org

KCTU

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) is now updating its website regularly, including English translations of key articles from their weekly Korean language newspaper "Work and World". These articles are also distributed on an email list.

5th Fl. Daeyoung Bld., 139 Youngdeungpo-2-ga, Youngdeungpo-ku, Seoul 150-032 Korea Tel.: +82-2-636-0165 Fax: +82-2-635-1134

<inter@kctu.org>

<http://kctu.org>

Stagecoach

The mult-national bus operator is a determined union-buster. Following last year's dramatic strike, New Zealand drivers have created a website to build links with Stagecoach workers in other countries.

www.tradeshall.org.nz/stagecoach/