

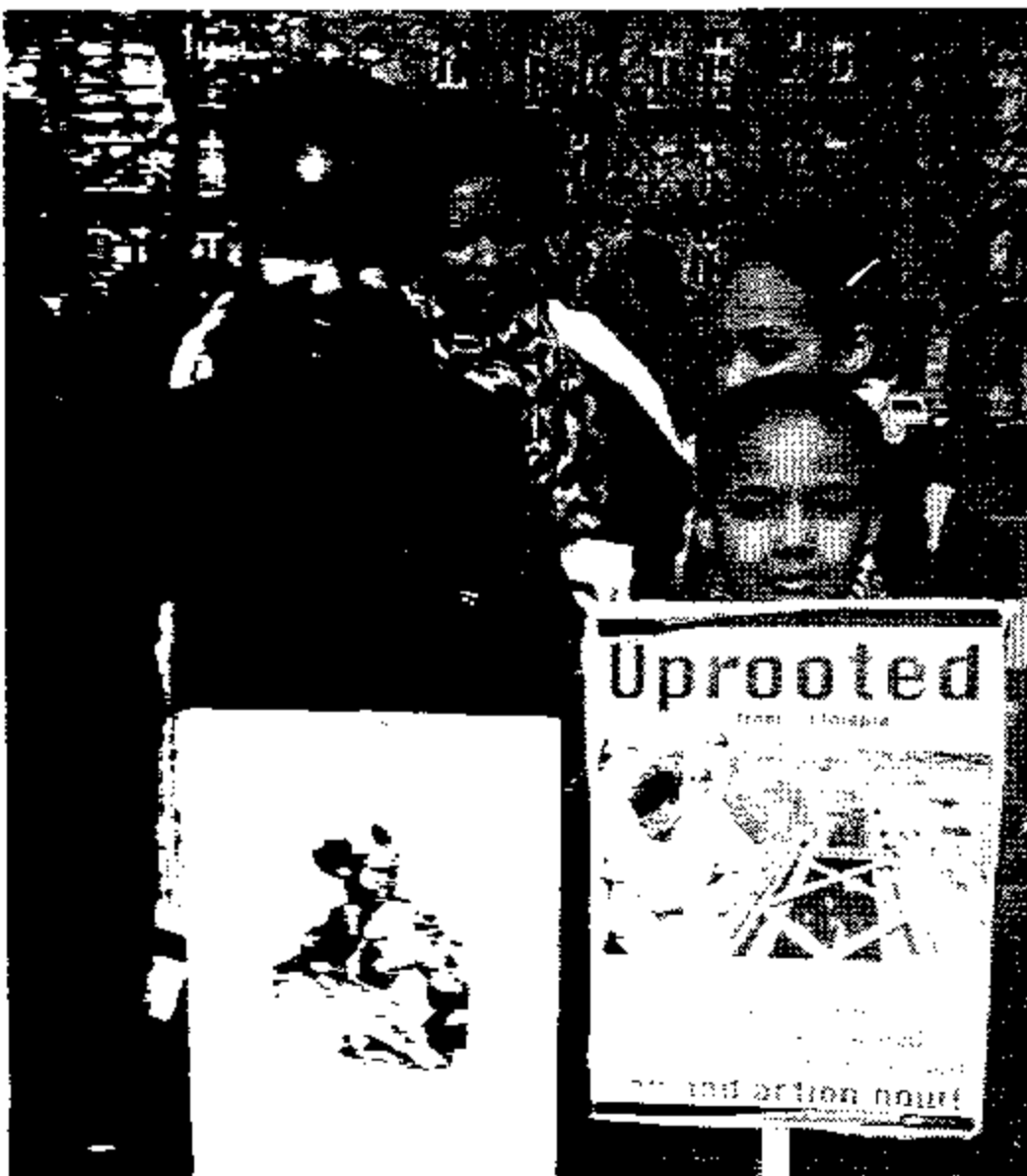
The true nature of New Labour is revealed by its desperate attempts to stop Ken Livingstone from entering the race to become mayor of London. New Labour is simply frightened of even the mildest alternative to the official view that partnership with big business is good for you. No wonder Tony Blair actually believes the creation of the Labour Party was a "mistake".

Livingstone's commitment to Old Labour, and his successful leadership of the Greater London Council, is enough reason for the Blairites to try and block him from the short list of candidates for mayor.

His campaign against the party machine has won him wide support. Comedian Jo Brand said: "I'm backing Ken Livingstone because he is the best candidate for the job. He has more integrity than all the other candidates put together." Leading Transport & General Workers Union official Barry Camfield warned against a short-list of candidates which did not reflect the will of party members:

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SUPPORT KEN FOR MAYOR



Young Eritreans protest in London against the continued onslaught against their country by the Ethiopian army, which has launched a new and bloody offensive in the Badme Triangle, a disputed area of land. The Ethiopian government aims to establish rights over the land by force, driving out Eritreans who have lived there for centuries. The demonstration was attended by virtually the whole Eritrean refugee population of the UK.

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Why you should join the



Do you want a real and workable alternative society? If your answer is "yes", the Movement for a Socialist Future could be for you. We are a rapidly-expanding movement.

Our key aims are to:

- democratise the ownership and control of major corporations
- reorganise society on a not-for-profit basis
- open up political and social life to mass participation
- encourage creativity, diversity and full use of people's talents
- use technology to improve people's lives.

Who is in the MSF?

It has won many new members in last two months, and more are joining up each week. They include: school and university students, workers from a wide range of professions, including the building trade, musicians, artists and scientists, teachers, sales assistants and managers, people working in information technology, those

campaigning against the injustice of the state and the police.

Who can join the Movement?

Anyone who supports its aims and draft policies can join and help the MSF grow.

What is the MSF?

The Movement for a Socialist Future was launched on October 1. It unites all those who support the plan to launch a new Party in 1999 to take away the power and privileges of the minority who control our lives.

The founding document says: *"We have reached a turning point in global history which brings with it grave dangers for humanity as well as great opportunities to take control of our lives and create a new future for society."*

It describes the global economic crisis and the collapse of the "free market economy", and demonstrates how production could be reorganised for need and not profit.

What does MSF membership entitle me to?

- The chance to make YOUR contribution to achieve the aims outlined above.
- The chance to take part directly in the founding of the new Party this year. In the meantime, members meet locally and elect committees to take charge of building up support for the Movement in their area.
- Each area sends a representative to a national Steering Committee, which has overall responsibility for the project. The Steering Committee will help you set up local branches.

What do I do?

- Pay a monthly subscription based on what you can afford.
- Discuss what kind of party should be launched, its aims, constitution and programme.

A national conference of the Movement for a Socialist Future will take place later this

movement for a socialist future

year to make final decisions about the creation of the new Party.

The Movement seeks allies in other countries to form an international organisation to campaign for global socialist change.

Capitalism deliberately fosters doubts about the possibility of social change, with its emphasis on the individual and the permanence of the system.

The Movement challenges this scepticism by developing its own ideas and theories. By encouraging independent ideas and policies, it will win the support of the vast majority to take power into their own hands. ■

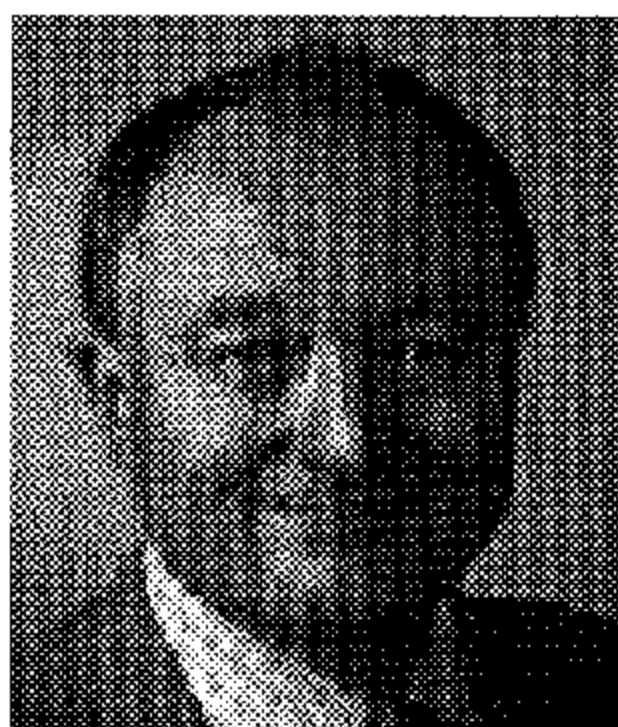
For an information pack write to: MSF, P.O. Box 942, London, SW1V 2AR or email: msf@sfuture.demon.co.uk. or visit our website at www.sfuture.demon.co.uk.

Support Ken for mayor

Continued from page one

"Whilst it can produce a balanced field in equality terms, it could exclude those who might not be popular with the leadership or, at the least, create that damaging impression."

Livingstone said: "The situation is now very straightforward – it is whether the final short-list of Labour hopefuls will reflect Londoners' wishes. This is a principle which goes further than simply my candidature – it is about the democratic will of the Labour and trade union movement."



Ken Livingstone MP

It seems likely, however, that the only way Livingstone could stand is as an independent candidate. If this happened, it would raise the issue of creating an alternative to New Labour. This government is far down the road of replacing the Tories as the party which speaks for and represents big business. That is why it singles out the unemployed, the disabled, the refugee and the young

homeless for attack.

Only New Labour could create a prison for 14-year olds run by Group Four. The Tories couldn't privatise the Tube – New Labour will. Want to make money out of running schools or building hospitals? Just phone Downing Street. Need planning permission for a new supermarket? Don't worry, it's in the bag. Concerned about getting a licence for genetically-modified food? No problem, because the GM corporations have the government in their pocket.

In the Labour Party itself, members have few rights left. The conference is now a convention, the national executive stripped of power and anyone who speaks out faces discipline. Socialists should support Ken Livingstone's campaign to stand as a candidate. At the same time, they must recognise that an alternative to New Labour is needed now. ■

The Lawrence inquiry and the state

The inquiry into how the police dealt with Stephen Lawrence's murder raises the most fundamental questions about the nature of the British state.

Publication of the report and its aftermath have revealed a serious crisis at the heart of the state, with the New Labour government already a mere pawn in the process.

It is not Britain as a whole which is racist, as the *Guardian* newspaper has stupidly claimed. Racism finds its organised form principally in the state and its institutions.

These are under the control of the British ruling class, which owes its position to centuries of colonial and imperialist oppression of other peoples.

The police and the legal system are foundation stones of the state. Their function is to enforce the "rule of law", which in practice means the status quo of capitalist rule. Racism, institutional and overt, is a mechanism used by the state to maintain that rule.

The state is assisted day in and day out by the capitalist media, which in turn takes its cue from racist legislation and anti-immigrant statements from both the Tories and New Labour.

While the Home Secretary Jack Straw offers sympathy and an inquiry to the Lawrence family, he is pushing through racist anti-asylum legislation. This scapegoats a vulnerable group, deprives them of benefits and forces them to live away from their communities.

Under the Tories and now



A demonstration against New Labour's Asylum & Immigration Bill

under New Labour, councils are refused the money they need to cope with the demand on housing and other services, inflaming tensions in areas where resources are short.

People who have sought refuge from war and ethnic cleansing were and are treated as criminals, locked up in inhumane detention centres, with almost no legal rights.

No wonder then that the police effectively turned a blind eye to catching the racist killers of Stephen Lawrence.

If the police force in South-east London were totally inept and uninterested in tracking down killers it was because catching criminals is not

actually the centre of police "work".

In general, the police seek to get away with as little real crime detection as possible. Finding criminals is a hit or miss affair, with thousands of innocent people being framed and locked up in Britain's jails.

Close connections between the police and organised criminals are, to anyone who thinks for a moment, clearly a key factor in the failure of the Lawrence case.

None of these issues were addressed by the Macpherson report. In fact, it totally cleared the police of corrupt relationships.

The courageous and

agonising struggle of Doreen and Neville Lawrence to pin down those responsible for their son's death has gone a long way to exposing the nature of the police force.

Macpherson's report, despite its continued cover-up, has also brought out serious divisions within the state.

The *Daily Mail* and *Daily Telegraph* reacted to the report by denouncing Macpherson for daring to criticise the police, and followed up with openly racist and inflammatory cartoons and editorials.

These newspapers speak for the most reactionary forces within the state. They are allies of the sinister elements who deliberately allowed the names of the 80 people who had come forward to help the police, to be published.

The recent arrest of élite Parachute and King's regiment soldiers on suspicion of illegal neo-Nazi activities is another sign that the state is at war within itself. Meanwhile, New Labour blithely lives on in a world of public relations and image, where the "British Nation" is united, and we are all said to be middle class now.

Concentrating on the demand for the resignation of Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, reinforces the illusion that the state and its institutions can be reformed. This, as we have shown, is not the case.

The tremors in the state we are now seeing foreshadow a tremendous social crisis. Better to get ready for that challenge rather than waste time working out how to make the system function better. ■

FAKING IT ON TV



Chloe Harter looks at how chat shows like *Vanessa Feltz* (above) help mask reality

Television's ability to present us with a fake reality has become more stark now that we know that talk shows such as *Vanessa* and *Trisha* were stuffed with "guests" who were actually actors.

Most people take the more shocking, sensational tales of the tabloids with a pinch of salt. We know they are prone to lying, but we didn't know that chat shows were in on the fiction too.

Chat shows are watched and enjoyed by millions. Is it the "guests"/actors and their sensational tales that pull us in, or do our egos get a soft stroke as we tell ourselves we are not like those "freaks" on the TV?

Either way, we are intentionally being distracted from the bigger issues of the world. A blanket of mostly casual and superficial entertainment helps obscure the injustices around us.

People often seem to pour their hearts out on live chat shows. The hosts, no doubt pressured by their bosses, prod guests to expose more and more of themselves. There is some evidence that such treatment actually damages people, and that problems which should be receiving professional help, are made worse by the talk show experience.

This kind of tabloid treatment toward serious behavioural and emotional problems may encourage viewers to take a

sensationalist approach to solving personal issues and grievances. Most viewers of chat shows tend to believe that what they are watching is real, that the scenarios and the reactions of the "guests" are genuine.

By talking about problems that affect individuals in a personal way, the chat shows have gone further than tabloids in the deception game. The tabloids give us news, real or not, good or bad, and because of the medium are forced to report rather than "chat".

This crucial difference may affect us more personally and powerfully than we assume. The fact that chat shows turn serious personal/social problems into entertainment must stain our perception of other people. Our view of the reality that we live in could seem a lot better, safer and more honestly lived and run than it really is. A false sense of "normality" arises from witnessing the problems or warped lives of others.

It becomes ever more clear that television/tabloids are a kind of double act to throw a mask over reality: bread and circuses for the masses. Meanwhile bombs drop, nurses struggle, food

becomes less and less natural and society tumbles toward a growing social crisis.

The Mirror, which was responsible for exposing the fakes on her show, gave Vanessa Feltz two pages to rehabilitate herself. It even supported her with lines such as "Well done, Vanessa. Knowing when and how to say 'sorry' deserves respect." So the tabloid which dwells on the lives of soap characters as if they were real, feels it necessary to revive people's faith in a discredited TV show. That double act again.

And it also gave the BBC, which has reduced the quality of programmes year on year, a chance to express surprise at the whole affair. A BBC production chief told *The Mirror*: "Our reputation for honesty and integrity is highly valued by us. It's the most important thing we have." It then sacked four production staff from the Vanessa show, after cutting it by 25 minutes and demanding that guests sign a truth pledge.

This is all cosmetics, however. The public were misled and the sooner we realise the purpose behind media manipulation the sooner we can take control of our own lives. ■

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'Terminator' engineering – a threat to humanity



**Report by Paul Feldman
Pictures courtesy of
Greenpeace**

A handful of global corporations are on the verge of controlling the future of humanity by replacing naturally-grown food with genetically modified (GM) products.

They are dabbling in an experimental way with the building blocks of life itself, taking genes from one organism and grafting them on to another to produce unnatural plants and food. In effect, industry is taking control of evolution.

Corporations like Monsanto, a chemicals company that now dominates GM products, are so powerful that they virtually own the Clinton government.

Monsanto funded Bill Clinton's election campaign and finances social security programmes. In return they have a green light to conduct a vast experiment on nature and people. They have even developed "terminator" seeds, which self-destruct after a crop is gathered to ensure that farmers have to buy afresh.

Experimental trials of GM crops are going on in more than 100 locations in Britain. Monsanto and other GM companies are right at the heart of the New Labour government too. Tony Blair says GM food is safe, and that opponents are irrational.

Lord Sainsbury, the science minister, has had connections with GM patents and

companies. We are told that there is no "conflict of interest" even though he sits on a Cabinet committee looking into GM.



**"In effect,
industry is
taking control
of evolution..."**

Scientists who cannot get the funds to do research unless they can demonstrate its commercial worth are brought under great pressure to back GM. Many of them work for Monsanto.

Yet many eminent scientists have stated publicly that GM is in its infancy, and no one is certain of what engineering different organisms together will produce.

Dr Vanana Shiva, director of the Institute of Science, Technology and Ecology in Delhi, says: "The problems with the genetic revolution developed right from the start. Twenty-five years ago, molecular biologists evolved the tools of genetic engineering in labs, working with organisms designed not to survive in an open environment.

"Today, long before the science of molecular biology has matured, global corporations have rushed to the market, applying the tools of genetic engineering to whole systems of agriculture and food production."

Gene transfers lead to unpredictable outcomes because plants and organisms are continuously changing, he adds.

The next step is that the genetic engineering industry wants to patent the genes used in their manufacture of new organisms. By claiming ownership of genes they are gradually taking control of life itself.

All living things could become profit making products, and multi-national companies – many of them chemical giants – will rule the very foundations of

continued on next page



society – agriculture, food production, and the content of the very foods we eat.

What the GM issue shows is that the multi-nationals are a law unto themselves. They cannot be brought under control because the corporations are more powerful than governments.

Their first consideration is to their shareholders, not the environment. Calls for a moratorium on GM food or for supermarkets to resist miss this essential point. Even eminent academics who once backed Thatcher, realise this. John Gray, professor of political thought at the London School of Economics, says by signing up to global treaties on free trade, the British government cannot interfere with GM trade.

“These treaties have had the effect of putting issues such as the import of genetically modified foods beyond the reach of democratically elected national governments,” says Gray.

“In the best of circumstances, the problems surrounding new genetic technologies would be difficult. Under the current regime of global laissez-faire, they are practically insoluble.”

If governments are powerless in the face of the multi-nationals, as they are, then the whole social structure is rotten and needs replacing. Any other approach is self-defeating.

We are talking about a transfer of power from the multi-nationals to the people who work in them and consume their products. We are advocating a new state based on popular democracy to replace the useless parliamentary talking-shop.

The Movement for a Socialist Future argues, therefore, for the reorganisation of production for need not profit and the planned use of science in the interests of humanity. This is not a pipedream but a practical necessity, for in the hands of profit-greedy companies, genetic engineering has the potential to wipe out humanity. ■

What is genetic modification?

All organisms, from viruses to humans, contain a unique set of instructions which set down how they develop, grow and live. These instructions are found inside cells on a long molecule called DNA. It is divided into sections which control different aspects of the organism's growth, called genes.

Traditional breeders are restricted by natural barriers that stop unrelated organisms (such as a rat and a cotton plant) from breeding with each other. Genetic engineering is entirely different. It allows genes to be crossed between organisms that could never breed naturally. A gene from a fish, for example, has been put into a tomato.

To get the results they want, genetic engineers have had to create new genes, using bits and pieces of DNA from all sorts of different organisms and even making synthetic DNA.

Scientists do not fully understand what happens when they fuse genes into the DNA of another organism. More than one copy of the gene may be inserted, other

genes may get “switched off” or the genes vary in how they work.

By inserting genes from organisms which have never been eaten as food, new proteins are introduced into the human and animal food chains. There is concern that these could cause allergic reactions or other health effects.

Genetic engineering of food crops is under the control of big companies that started out selling chemicals, like Monsanto which produced Agent Orange. This was dropped on Vietnam, defoliating large parts of the country and leading to the birth of many deformed children.

Companies such as Monsanto are buying up genetic engineering companies, seed suppliers and grain merchants. They use patent laws to “own” every GM plant grown from their seed. To avoid a potentially ruinous lawsuit, more than 100 North American farmers have been obliged to destroy their crops, pay compensation and allow Monsanto agents to inspect their accounts and their farms for years to ☉

Monsanto's man in the White House

Monsanto is the prime example of the merger of interests between giant corporations and governments. This phenomenon is the product of the accelerated globalisation process, which has produced near monopolies in each sector and companies whose wealth exceeds that of many national economies.

The United States is the home of the \$50-billion-a-year biotechnology industry. There Monsanto spends considerable sums to ensure that it is seen as innovative, successful and even responsible. It employs 25,000 people, including 1,900 scientists, is a large charity donor and funds science theme parks.

Four years ago Monsanto launched its GM products on the world market. Now it is said to be worth \$26 billion and is

the darling of Wall Street.

The company was a major donor to Clinton's 1996 presidential campaign. A Monsanto board member chaired Clinton's presidential campaign. Soon after the election, a key Clinton aide joined Monsanto to co-ordinate its UK strategy. Clinton praised Monsanto in his State of the Union speech last January, while he was facing impeachment. The company is one of three big funders of Clinton's welfare-to-work programme and has paid the American Medical Association and others to promote positive information about GM food.

Betty Martini, of consumer group, Mission Possible, which monitors Monsanto in the US, said: “The Food and Drug Administration, which regulates the US food industry, is so closely linked to the biotech industry now that it could be described as their Washington branch office.” ■

SF Special Report on

GM FOOD

The New Labour connection

come. Some companies even produce contracts for farmers which force them to pay a "technology" fee, require the farmer to use the company's own chemicals, prevent them from saving seed and even allow the company to inspect the farm.

Tight controls like these enable the companies to make profits all along the food chain. Genetic engineers have recently found a way to stop seed saved from one harvest from growing the next year. This "terminator technology" directly threatens the ancient farming practice of saving a part of the harvest to grow as next year's crop.

Over one billion of the world's poorest people rely on farm-saved seed for their food. Terminator seeds would end this practice. This will force farmers to spend money each year on new seeds from the genetic engineering companies. ■

Much information for this article came from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace - see www.foe.co.uk and www.greenpeace.org

Photos: p5 - a US protester in a GM maze field, p7 - Greenpeace dumps GM grain outside No. 10 Downing Street, p8 - a GM protest in Germany.

There is a complex web of connections between New Labour and the genetic engineering industry. The majority of members of the government's advisory committee which regulates the release of GM crops in the environment, are from the very industry it seeks to control!

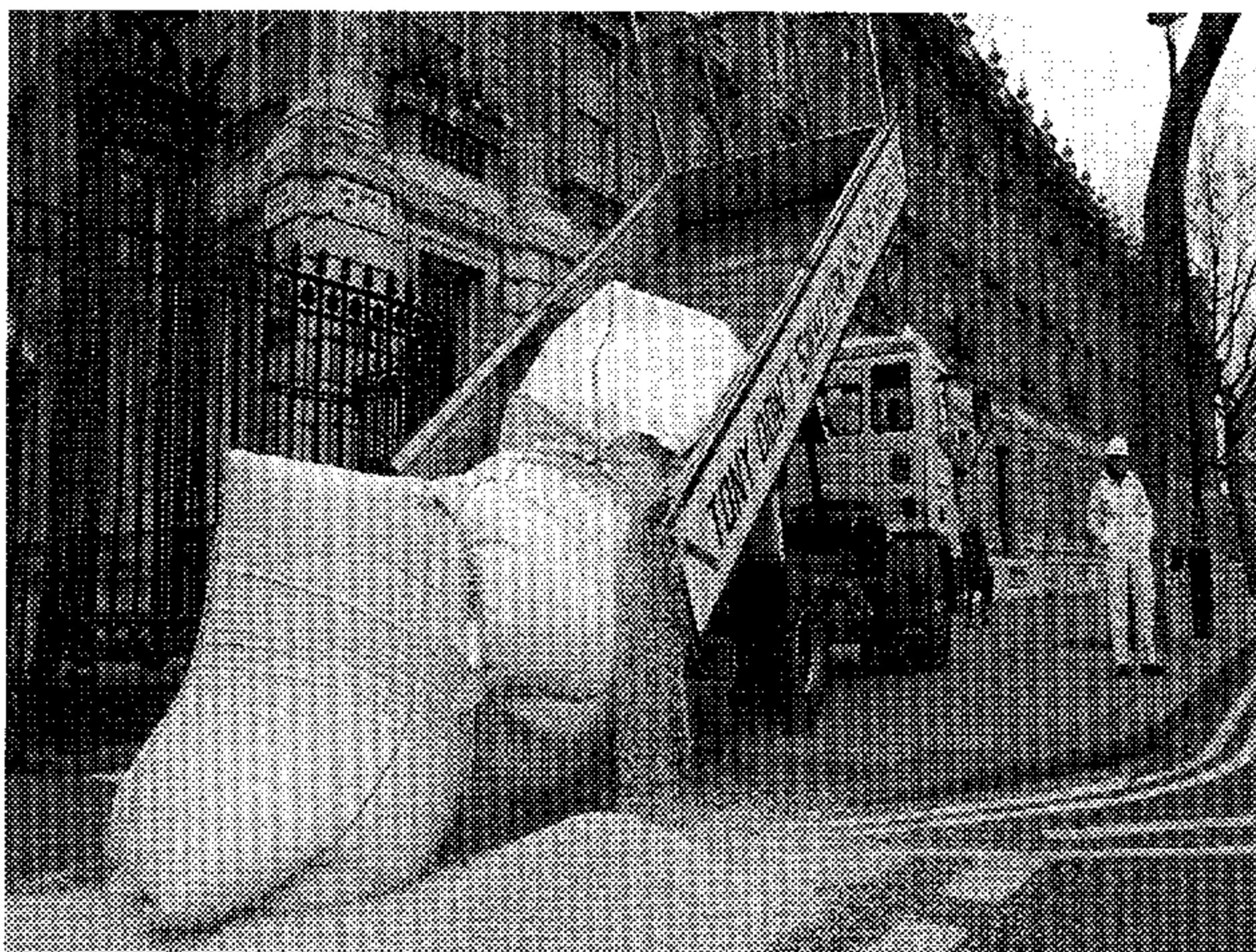
They include vice-chairman David Onions, who is a consultant to a small biotech firm and Nigel Poole, from the GM firm Zeneca. On the advisory committee which deals with GM food safety is Philip Dale, involved in GM tests on oil seed rape and Janet Bainbridge, a well-known GM supporter. Labour backbencher Nick Palmer, a consultant to GM firm Novartis, is on three GM policy committees.

Last summer, two senior government ministers – Jack Cunningham and Jeff Rooker – held meetings with Monsanto. In the autumn, Cunningham's special adviser Cathy McGlynn, joined Monsanto's public relations consultants, Bell Pottinger. Employees already included Dave Hill, the former Labour spin doctor. He is paid £100,000 a year by Bell Pottinger and handles the Monsanto account. A recent advertising campaign was declared to be misleading by the industry watchdog.

A spokesman for Blair has said: "The Prime Minister is of the view that this product (GM food) is safe. He has no hesitation in saying this." Blair said he would feed his children GM products. The last minister to force feed his offspring was John Gummer, the Tory agriculture minister during the BSE crisis to prove that beef was safe!

Monsanto is extremely active in the UK and the rest of Europe. Ann Foster, former director of the Scottish Consumer Council is one of their lobbyists in the UK. She sits on several UK advisory committees. The company was also fined for failing to control GM trials, a small setback for a company which had seen in advance confidential European Union documents on GM food.

Meanwhile, there are the connections of Lord Sainsbury, the science minister. For 11 years, the supermarket billionaire owned a key gene used in the GM process. Sainsbury sits on the Cabinet committee dealing with biotechnology. Shortly before he became a minister, he lent a seven-figure sum to a GM food firm. But Blair has ruled that there is no conflict of interest involved. ■ ↻



SF Special Report on

GM FOOD

It won't feed the world

Companies like Monsanto claim that GM crops will help to feed the world's growing population in the coming century by increasing yields and fighting crop diseases.

The truth is, however, that two billion people are suffering from malnutrition and hunger because they cannot afford to buy food, not because it is unavailable. In Europe, farmers are paid

subsidies not to produce food in order to keep up prices. In poorer countries, farmers don't have the resources for irrigation or machinery to produce sufficient food. In any case, most GM crops like soya and maize are used mainly for animal feed and for adding to processed food in rich countries. Such products will not help to feed the poor and hungry of the world. Two thirds of GM crops being grown around the world at the moment are herbicide tolerant. These crops are designed for use in intensive farming systems. The GM process threatens to destroy the agriculture of the Third World. Tropical crops like sugar cane, coconut, vanilla and cocoa can be grown anywhere with genetic engineering. ■

THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF GM

US blocks global trade pact

The US has blocked a treaty which would have ensured safe trade in GM organisms. It has refused to allow commodities like soya beans and corn to be included in the negotiations. If they were included they would need to be clearly labelled when traded between countries.

"The US is willing to threaten biodiversity in the name of short-term profits. It wants a bio-trade, not a bio-safety protocol," said Greenpeace spokesperson Louise Gale. "Over the past two years, the US has flooded the world market with unregulated and unlabelled genetically-engineered grain. It wants to continue this practice and will sabotage any efforts to set international rules." ■

Scientists protest

Twenty international scientists have supported the findings of suppressed research which found that rats fed on genetically modified potatoes suffered a weakened immune system and damage to vital organs.

The scientists from 13 countries also demanded the professional rehabilitation of British scientist, Dr Arpad Pusztai, who revealed these findings last year. He was forced to retire after speaking out about his concerns with the support of the director of the Aberdeen-based Rowett Institute, where the research was done.

No one has ever explained why the institute changed its mind overnight and disbanded the research team. Commercial and political pressures are suspected, as the institute received £140,000 from Monsanto.

Pusztai was exonerated by an internal inquiry, but the damage to his reputation, findings and health had already been done. He spoke out on ITV's *World In Action* last August, saying he would not eat GM potatoes and found it "very unfair to use our fellow citizens as guinea pigs". Dr Kenneth Lough, principal scientific officer at the Rowett Institute for 30 years until 1987, said: "The institute is at risk of sending out signals to scientists working in (this) field of research that any sign of apparent default will be treated with the utmost severity. The awareness will of course act as a strong deterrent to those who wish to conduct research in this vitally important field." ■

Health and environmental concerns

A soya bean containing genetic material from a Brazil nut causes allergies in individuals allergic to nuts. Austria and Luxembourg are currently resisting the import of genetically engineered maize which contains an antibiotic resistance gene left in from the laboratory stage. They are concerned that consumption will



lead to increased resistance to antibiotics in human and animal populations.

There are concerns about the transfer from genetically engineered crop plants to wild relatives, creating "superweeds" which could out-compete other plants and disrupt the biodiversity of an area.

The majority of genetically engineered crops have been designed to be grown using herbicides manufactured by the same companies selling the seed. To grow the crop you must also buy the chemicals. Since the introduction of GM seeds in the US, sales of these herbicides have increased.

Many "weeds" have been so successfully controlled by modern agriculture that they are now classed as endangered species, and there is a real threat that GM crops could wipe them out completely. Wild plants in fields are important as food and habitats for insects and birds. If all the wild plants are wiped out, many insects and birds will be unable to find enough food.

And finally, GM crops and ordinary crops can cross pollinate each other, so farmers not wanting to grow GM crops could find their crops contaminated anyway. ■

Anything for 'a result'

Byron Wood looks at the role of the police in the Cardiff 3 case

In the early hours of February 14, 1988 prostitute Lynette White was murdered in Cardiff. Ten months after this horrific murder five black men were arrested although none of the forensic evidence indicated their involvement.

The longest murder trial in British history ended with three men convicted. One was Lynette White's boyfriend, Steve Miller.

But four years later the Court of Appeal quashed the Cardiff 3's convictions on the basis that the DNA evidence was unsafe and witness statements unreliable.

Recent events highlighted by the Stephen Lawrence case have cast doubts about the reliability of the police. Although the circumstances of the Cardiff 3 case are different, it is still another example where a police investigation has been flawed.

The book *Fitted In* by Satish Sekar, illustrates the injustices which frequently happen in Britain. The book questions the objectives and the aims of the police. It raises questions like: "Are the police interested in who really killed Lynette White or are they just interested in getting a result?"

Sekar also questions the reliability of the four key witnesses. All the stories given by these witnesses seem to contradict each other and it is amazing that magistrates committed the case for trial.

His book is cleverly divided into four sections: the first

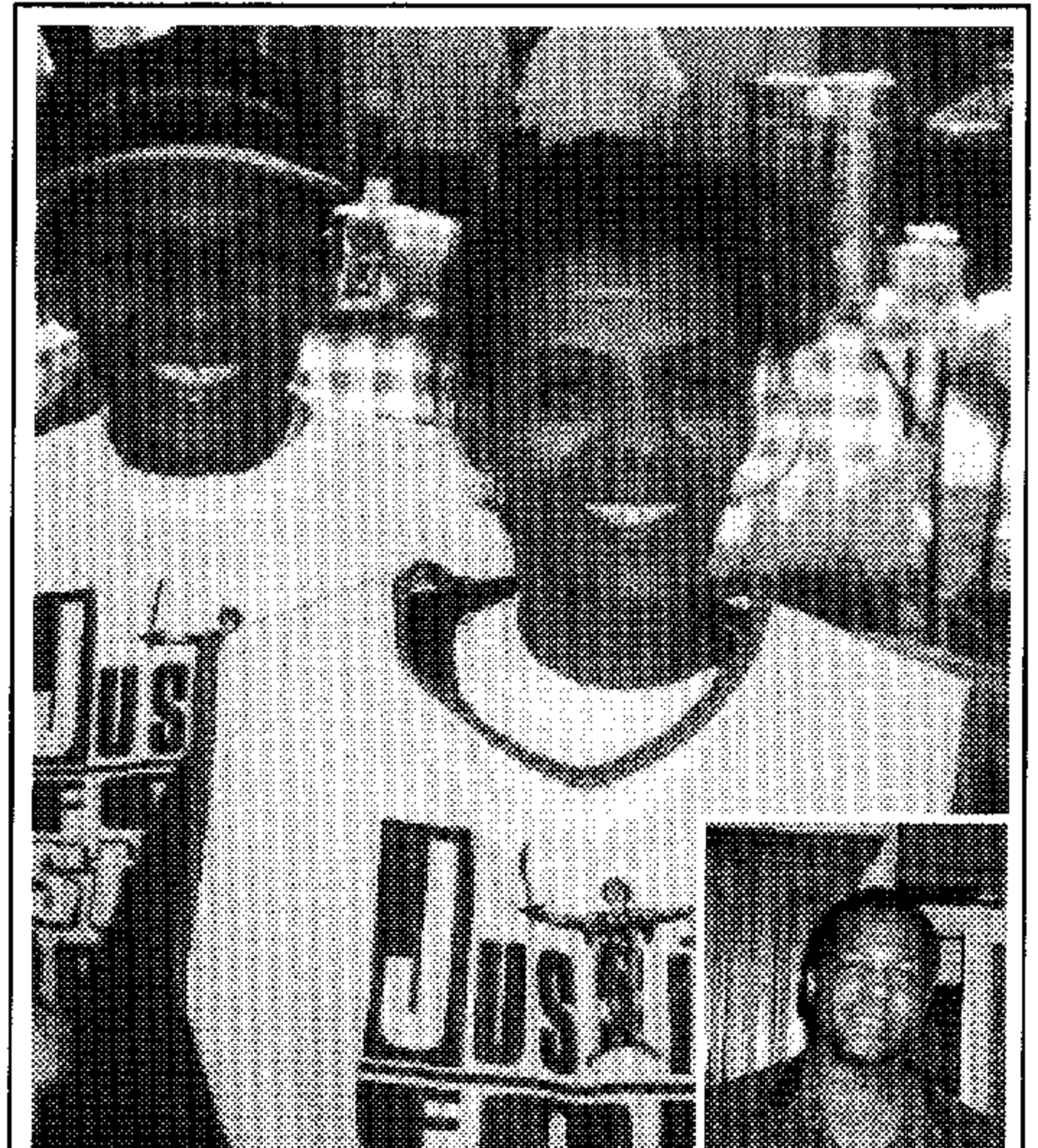
section is about the actual inquiry; the second is about the trials, the third section is about the appeals and the fourth section is the conclusion, which shows relevant letters and also the chronology of the whole case.

The author clearly wants an independent inquiry and he also wants the South Wales Police to be investigated by an independent group. This suggests that the structure of the whole institution of the police should be changed.

When police break the law they seem to easily escape punishment, but the laws which apply to the public should apply to them. The only way this could be achieved is if an independent group could investigate the evidence the police obtained and had the power to order a reinvestigation.

In the case of the Cardiff 3 there was a great controversy over the DNA technology used by the police. When using DNA as evidence the best equipment in the world should be used. If an internationally renowned DNA expert offers their services, their skills should be used.

When DNA is stored in the police/forensic lab, it should be stored under specific conditions. When blood which is going to be tested for evidence is transported, there should be regulations about how it is carried, how the blood is stored and what to do if there is any spillage. If these regulations are broken in any way, the blood should no



Mary Lewis, who is campaigning for the release of her husband Steve (inset)

Fighting a DNA injustice is Steve Lewis, who was jailed for 15 years after being convicted of two rape attacks he had nothing to do with. Despite what seemed like cast-iron alibis, and in the absence of any other evidence, Steve was convicted on the basis of DNA "evidence" alone. But when defence lawyers asked for samples taken from the victims, so that independent tests could be made, they were told that they had all been "used up" and were not available. Mary Lewis has launched a campaign for her husband's freedom. She can be contacted by e-mail at mary@lewis-campaign.demon.co.uk ■

longer be used for evidence.

People have to realise that the more advanced DNA, surveillance and forensic technology gets, the easier it becomes to abuse.

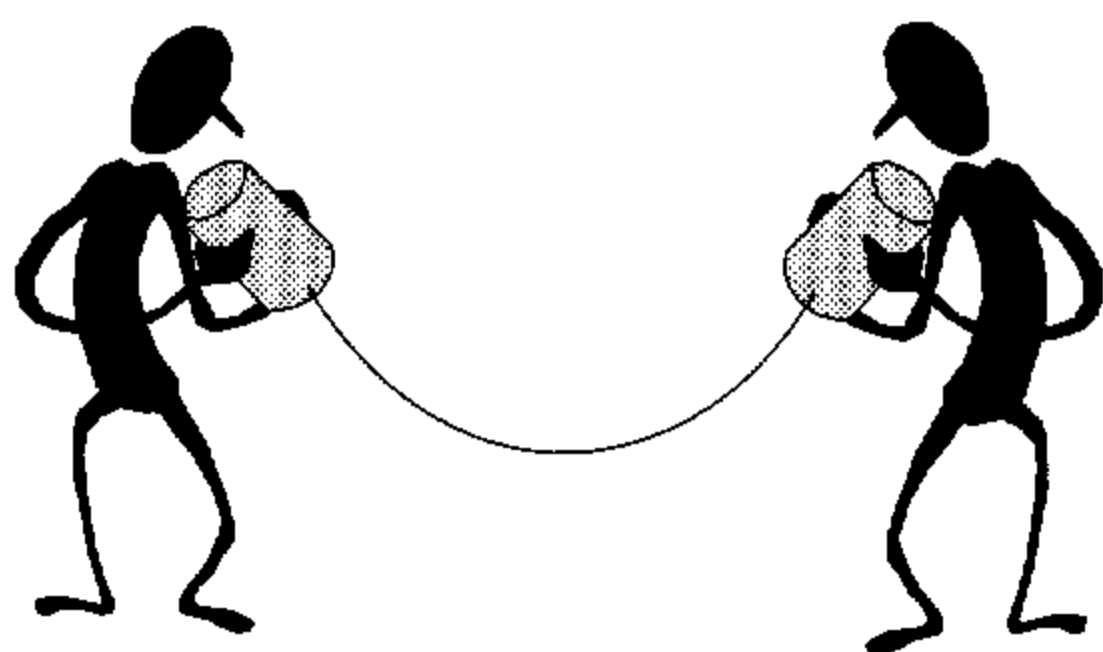
Sekar's book achieves three things - it makes the reader feel

involved in the Cardiff 3 case; it makes us think beyond this case, to the question of justice in this country; and it also acts as a reminder that if somebody is found guilty in a court it does not mean that they committed the crime. ■

information technology

The value of information

Martin Wright examines the key role of communication in the modern economy



There are certain economic rules that have been around for as long as the concept of money itself. When trade takes place between two parties, one will profit. That profit will then be saved or invested to ensure security or further profits. No matter what currency or commodity being traded, these rules apply. Until you start exchanging data, that is. Then the economy gets thrown into spin and the old rules get thrown out of the window.

If you buy a bag of sugar, you can put it in your coffee or lend it to your neighbour. But once you've used it, it's gone.

If you buy a computer graphic, you can use it on your web site and send it a friend to use on their web site. The single graphic that you purchased can be reproduced many times. How does this affect the value of the original graphic or the n^{th} copy of the graphic?

As the information economy grows, we are seeing a change from the distribution of atoms to the transmission of bits. We are in a world where everything is connected to everything else.

As technologies become popular, they become more valuable. There was no point

in having a fax machine when only one existed, but now that there are millions, it is a vital piece of technology. Each additional unit sold, increases the value of your machine.

With satellite broadcasting, mobile phones, e-mail and the World Wide Web, we are communicating with each other more than ever. The methods of communication generate more reasons for communication and more outlets for information.

How can we put a value on the information available to us? There is no World Commodity Index for "bits about weather" or "pictures of cars". The general consensus is that only the person who receives the information can place a value on it. If I was to receive a hot share tip and my stockbroker friend was to receive details of a new medical report, we would both be sorely disappointed that we didn't know what to do with the information.

Prices from stock exchanges are now available online, subject to a 15-minute delay rather than daily closing prices in the press. The information that was once held sacred is now available to all.

And as this information has been freed, people are finding different uses for the

data. E-mail provides the opportunity to send unsolicited e-mail adverts, which in turn created a market for software that would block unwanted e-mails.

One innovative service spawns another, which increases the size of the community. As the community grows, further possibilities emerge.

Relationships are key in the information economy. Each time two parties invest time in dealing with each other they both derive benefit. By realising the value of a partnership you allow the possibility for further relationships.

The more parties you are involved with, the more communication flows towards you. As more people create partnerships with your partners, you also benefit from the additional information generated.

This human networking is why the Internet is popular. It brings geographically remote communities together in one space. As we grow to rely on these communities, so we will begin to rely on the flow of information and the dynamics of the information economy.

The ability to communicate will soon become more important than the information you are communicating. The next time you phone a friend, send an e-mail to a colleague or lend a cup of sugar to a neighbour, try and place a value on that communication. You probably can't. ■

Further reading on the information economy: *New Rules for the New Economy* Kevin Kelly; *Net Gain: Expanding Markets Through Virtual Communities* John Hagel III & Arthur G Armstrong.

A year of revolution

John Eden looks at the turbulent year of 1919



A Red Army machine-gun post in inner city Munich

This year marks the 80th anniversary of major events in the revolutionary struggle of the working class internationally to overthrow capitalist domination.

The year opened with the continuation of revolutionary struggles in Germany, Bavaria and Austria. They had started in November 1918, when the former monarchies had been overthrown by soldiers and workers, tired of the sacrifices of the first imperialist war and inspired by the Russian Revolution.

In January, the Spartacus League, led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht as a faction of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), was transformed into the Communist Party of Germany (KPD).

On March 2, the first congress of the Third (Communist) International had opened in Moscow in Soviet Russia, led by Lenin and the

Bolsheviks. Some 35 organisations from as many countries attended and vowed to build a new international leadership for the working class to replace the discredited Socialist International.

This became necessary after August 1914, when the leaders of social democracy had voted for war credits in their respective parliaments, thus sending millions to their deaths in the trenches.

March 22 saw the creation of a Soviet Republic in Hungary, when the Communists under Bella Kun overthrew the capitalist government of Count Károlyi.

But it was only in Soviet Russia that the working class and peasantry had firmly established its own power, led by the Bolshevik Party. Its long struggle against bourgeois influences in the workers' movement had created a party which could successfully challenge for power.

But this was not the case in

Germany or Austria where, though the workers had brought down the monarchies, they had not created a revolutionary party to take power.

The parties which filled the vacuum created by the 1918 revolutions were social democratic organisations which supported capitalism.

In November 1918 it was Ebert of the SPD who became president of the new German republic and set about rescuing capitalism as great strike waves rocked the country, particularly in Berlin.

The leaders of the SPD deliberately provoked a situation in Berlin where right-wing Freikorps troops could be brought in to smash the movement. Given the green light by SPD leaders, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were brutally murdered on January 15, 1919.

In November 1918 workers and soldiers had brought down the Wittelsbach monarchy, which had ruled Bavaria for eight centuries. A new Peoples' Republic had been declared, and independence from the German Reich.

Here the working class could not again immediately seize power and Kurt Eisner became

president. He was a member of the USPD, the Independents, who ruled in coalition with the SPD. In February 1919 Eisner was assassinated by a right-wing anti-Semite, and Johannes Hoffmann of the SPD succeeded him as president.

The Bavarian workers swung further to the left on news of the revolution in Hungary and successes of the Red Army under Trotsky in Russia. In early April, the Hoffmann government was overthrown and a Soviet government took charge in Bavaria. Hoffman set up a counter-revolutionary base in Bamberg and began recruiting Freikorps to overturn the Soviet government's stronghold in Munich. When the Bavarian Red Army troops had defeated the counter-revolutionary offensive, Hoffmann asked Ebert to send in troops from Germany.

On May 1, 1919 the Soviet government of Bavaria fell, as Freikorps troops took Munich. Many Red soldiers, sailors and workers were butchered, along with the KPD leaders of the Soviet. Despite these setbacks, the KPD grew rapidly as Germany's revolutionary crisis came to a head. ■

"When political memories are growing increasingly short, it is good that the effort has been made to record the life of Gerry Healy, a revolutionary Marxist who had a massive impact on the working class socialist movement, in Britain and internationally." Ken Livingstone, MP

Gerry Healy: A revolutionary life

by Corinna Lotz and Paul Feldman

Introduction by Ken Livingstone.

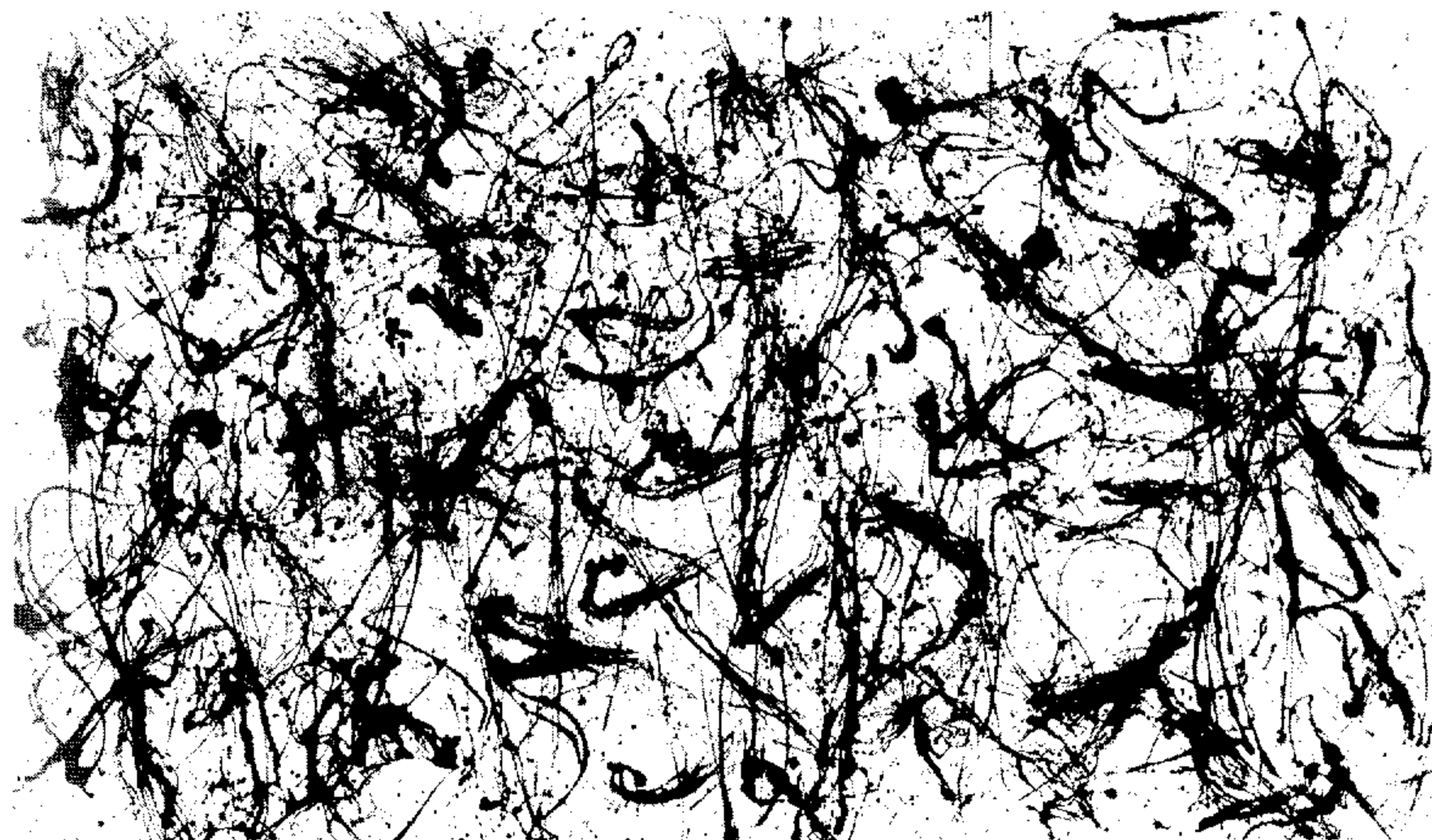
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art and artists



Jackson Pollock's Number 32, 1950. (1950) Kunstammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf. ©1999 Pollock-Krasner Foundation, ARS, NY and DACS, London 1999.

Rebel behind the American movement

by Corinna Lotz

The first big show of paintings by Jackson Pollock in this country for over 40 years, will allow many people to discover him for the first time. Pollock achieved iconic status after his tragic death in a car crash in 1956 when he became to painting what James Dean became to the cinema.

He was a key figure in the American movement which marked a crucial switch by which New York replaced Paris as the pivotal centre of artistic innovation.

The physical impact of his work must to be seen to be appreciated. The Tate's show is a unique chance to see some of Pollock's greatest works, such as *Lavender Mist*, and *Blue Poles*, and the *Mural* from 1943.

The harsh opposites in Pollock's life and work are an

elemental destructiveness combined with tremendous life and energy. He was a rebel from his early days at the Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles, proud of his Communist sympathies. The revolutionary Mexican mural movement – led by Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros – was a formative influence.

When the United States entered the war, Pollock was exempted from military service due to his drink problem. New York curator Kirk Varnedoe discusses the roots of Pollock's emotional and mental problems, which led to his eventually fatal alcoholism. He links the artist's pre-war crisis with disillusionment with the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939.

From the "external world" aesthetic found in the Mexican and North American mural

movement of the 1930s, Pollock moved towards a more "internal" world, seeking to express the great themes of humanity – life, death, procreation and birth. He found a way to do this at the end of 1943, at a moment when, as Varnedoe remarks, the future of modern art and culture appeared to be at an all-time low.

Pollock ranks as a 20th century artistic original. In his grand paintings of the late 1940s and early 1950s he pioneered a new concept of pictorial space, created by the action of dripping and swirling paint in rhythmic patterns and varying layers on his canvases.

He was hostile to the notion that his art was simply spontaneous or came easily. In fact, he was not a naturally gifted painter or draughtsman. He found it extremely difficult

to create images which would allow others to relate to his feelings.

He integrated what he learned from the Mexicans and from Picasso with his awareness of himself as a physical human being. The overwhelming message that comes across is a sense of infinite energy and vitality.

He felt an urgent need to express himself, to integrate the mental and emotional with the physical. He said he considered the painting itself to be indestructible, that he enabled it to come out of itself. "I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through," he said. ■

Jackson Pollock at the Tate Gallery, Millbank until 6 June. Admission £7.50/£5. Open daily 10–17.40. Saturday 10–19.40.