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Why Did Marx and Engels Concern Themselves with Natural Science?

Anneliese Griese and Gerd Pawelzig

*Discussion theses**

1. The extent to which Marx and Engels dealt with natural science has become clear only recently, during preparatory work on the second edition of their complete original writings (*Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, or *MEGA*). Their studies were especially intensive during the 1870s and 1880s, when Engels worked on *Dialectics of Nature* and used the results of his natural-science studies in *Anti-Dühring*. Marx wrote most of his comments on natural science during the same period.

2. Since Marx and Engels certainly did not strive for academic positions as teachers or researchers of natural science or philosophy, nor plan to write textbooks or handbooks on natural science, history of science, scientific methodology, philosophy of natural philosophy, or dialectics of nature, the grounds for their intensive studies in natural science are rooted in the importance of their sociotheoretical work as a whole for the working-class movement.

3. With the turn toward materialism—stimulated by Ludwig Feuerbach—both were necessarily compelled to consider developments in natural science as they elaborated their world outlook. We consequently find in writings and manuscripts from 1843 to 1846 numerous critical statements to the effect that historians and philosophers had ignored or underestimated the importance of natural sciences in the historical process. This is true of changes in the material life of society through their effect

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on the productive forces as well as of changes in the spiritual life of society stemming from the knowledge of nature and the world, that is, the effect of the natural sciences as a moment of a world outlook (in Kant's meaning).

4. As Engels saw it, looking back in 1885, "a knowledge of mathematics and natural science is essential to a conception of nature which is dialectical and at the same time materialist" (1987a, 11). This did not mean, for either Marx or Engels, superficial knowledge. The aim of Engels's studies on the dialectics of nature was to establish in detail that the laws of dialectics discovered by Hegel were also valid in nature and to discover to what extent natural science has become aware of this dialectic, above all in the area of development of theory.

5. To no less a degree did Marx and Engels see the natural sciences as an important model for scientific work. Evidence of this is found in Marx's recurring comparisons of epistemological methods and tools for research in the natural sciences with those of political economy, in his efforts to give economic laws and interrelationships a mathematical form—analogue to the laws of physics, especially mechanics—and also in Engels's various theoretical and critical works and manuscripts.

6. Finally there is much evidence that Marx and Engels, while examining economic and social theoretical problems, generally considered it necessary to be informed of the specific foundations of natural science, that is, to look for interdisciplinary solutions in accordance with today's scientific methodological understanding.

7. A discussion of the motives that guided Marx and Engels in their studies of natural science would be unsatisfactory without the elaboration of the existing differences between both thinkers along with the commonalities. Ever since the beginning of this century it has been debated whether and to what extent Engels had an independent scientific importance for the theoretical direction associated with the name of Marx, and how in this connection his work on dialectics and specifically his ties to modern science are to be evaluated (see Adler 1972).

8. Engels paid attention to the natural sciences and their history even before beginning his cooperation with Marx. He had

an independent understanding of natural science as a significant moment in the development of social productive forces. In the debate with Malthus he emphasized that the progress of science is “unlimited and at least as rapid as that of population” and offered as evidence the effect that chemistry had on nineteenth-century agriculture. Under existing conditions, however, science was directed against labor (see 1975a, 418–43; 1975b, 469–88).

The antagonistic character of social progress also concerned Engels after 1870. Certainly both he and Marx had great illusions about an impending social revolution. Nevertheless his ideas about the possibility of human mastery of nature, insofar as the laws of nature could be known and applied correctly, should not be interpreted to mean that he believed in a total rule over nature (1987c, 1987a, 88–110, 254–71).

9. It is sometimes argued today, based on certain formulations in *Anti-Dühring*, that Engels's understanding of dialectics is incompatible with that of Marx, that Engels never really recognized that Marx's dialectical method aimed at an adequate picture of the “life of matter,” and that for him the dialectic was important because it constituted the “germ of a more inclusive world outlook” (Backhaus and Reichelt 1995, 115–16).

Our investigations in connection with *Dialectics of Nature*, as well as previously unpublished natural-science texts of Marx and Engels, do not confirm this interpretation. A sounder conclusion is that Engels in his manuscripts on philosophy of nature developed a conceptual starting point that is very close to Marx's understanding of dialectics. He already emphasized in the 1873/1874 notes on the forms of motion of matter and the interconnections of the sciences that the “transitions must make themselves, they must be natural. Just as one form of motion arises out of another, so their reflections, the various sciences, must arise necessarily out of one another” (1987b, 529). And in 1880 he began systematic work on the dialectical content of natural science by analyzing the theories of mechanics, physics, and chemistry in the lengthy chapters that begin with “Basic Forms of Motion” (1987b, 362). This was preceded by a thorough study of Hegelian logic, above all the Doctrine of Essence. With the development of the idea that dialectics is a form of theoretical

thinking about nature also, Engels undoubtedly goes further than Marx. Yet he was not able to carry out his plan completely; *Dialectics of Nature* remains a fragment (see 1987b, 313–17; see also the editorial texts in the *MEGA* [1/26, 17–58, 569–607]).

10. There are fragments on natural science written by Marx, as well as fragments and small notes by Engels, the purpose of which has not been determined. That indicates, in our opinion, that both had in mind, in different ways, research programs that were far beyond their powers and possibilities. This is a reason to begin with Marx and Engels, but also to go beyond them and not remain restricted by their insights.

Commentaries on the theses

It is a common experience that the simplest questions are the hardest to answer, if they can be answered at all. Nevertheless we have undertaken this effort and presented our results in several theses. We shall not develop all these theses. Instead we shall begin our commentary with a self-critical remark that will clarify an important point in our theses.

The formulation underlying our characterization of Marx and Engels's work in the second thesis involves their "socio-theoretical work as a whole," into which their activities in the natural sciences must be fitted. This terminology, in common use today, was not employed by either Marx or Engels. In their time they would certainly have been horrified by the already very widespread separation and opposition of the natural sciences and social or intellectual science—a violation and disregard of the most elementary insights into the dialectic. And yet in the last century the dismembering and splitting of the sciences into areas, fields, disciplines, subdisciplines, and specialized disciplines were not nearly as widespread as in our century.

Since neither Marx nor Engels had to defend or represent any area of a scientific discipline, their thinking was free from the limitations of that discipline so that they could make use of its results. Marx and Engels cannot be faulted for the fact that most of those who have used their work in our century have not drawn attention to this. The blame falls on the dominant thinking of

specializations that grow narrower with each successive school generation, with almost unimaginable results.

Marx and Engels elaborated their position in earlier years in different ways and independently of one another. As is known, in his "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" Engels criticized Malthusianism among the national economists (mentioned in thesis 8) for not paying attention to science. Science, according to Engels, grew at least as fast as the population, and two men alone, Justus von Liebig and Humphry Davy, did more for humanity than all the economists. Almost simultaneously, Marx, while still in the questioning mode and terminology of the Young Hegelians, attempted to get to the root of the alienation problem. In his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* Marx wrote about the three aspects of human alienation—from other people, from oneself, and from nature. Incidentally, in the entire literature on the alienation problem, as far as we have followed it, not one author has said a single word on the alienation of the human being from nature. Can it be that everyone has simply missed it? Marx demands of communism that it bring about the "reintegration of man with nature." He remarks critically that

historiography itself pays regard to natural science only occasionally, as a factor of enlightenment, utility, and of some special great discoveries. But natural science has invaded and transformed human life all the more *practically* through the medium of industry; and has prepared human emancipation, although its immediate effect had to be the furthering of the dehumanisation of man. (1975, 303)

In their joint works in 1845/46, especially in the *German Ideology* (1976), Marx and Engels developed this further. They not only maintained that the famous unity of nature and spirit, about which so many high-flown words have been written, had long been achieved—in industry (that is, material production) and in every stage of development in other ways. But they also sharply criticized the entire body of historical writing, which had only occasionally taken notice of natural science even though

natural science had played a decisive role in the transformation of society.

So it is completely a part of their way of working, their “style of thought,” as it has often been called in the recent period, that Engels, as cited in thesis 4, states in that a dialectical and materialist conception of nature required him to refresh his knowledge of “mathematics and natural science.” He further states that they could only attain this knowledge sporadically, a piece at a time. From what we know about the breadth and intensity of their natural science studies particularly in the 1870s and early 1880s, that is an extremely modest formulation. Without repeating what we have already stated elsewhere (Griese and Pawelzig 1990 and 1995, Griese 1995, and Pawelzig 1995), we stress the model character of their natural-science studies, something that is beyond debate for all social scientists who see themselves as students of Marx and Engels.

We should like to direct attention to the way natural scientific knowledge was worked out in different ways by examining questions that for most today seem to have little to do with natural science. Marx polemicized in the “London Notebooks” (*MEGA* 4/9) with a wide range of economic sources in connection with the Malthus debate. Included there are not only statistics on agricultural production and trade, but also extensive passages from the works of two authors, Justus von Liebig and James Finley Weir Johnston, the leading agricultural chemists of Germany and England. From the latter Marx excerpted, among other things, extensive materials about geological soil-building processes, that is, the basic foundations of agricultural production that might well still be today a complete mystery for specialists such as agricultural economists.

In the late 1850s, when, solely to support Marx financially, Engels wrote entries on military theory and history and other topics for an American encyclopedia, he collected not only the appropriate physical-geographical maps, but also more fundamental ecological descriptive literature. His contributions on weapons technology indicate how deeply he penetrated into the physical foundations of the individual weapons technologies (Marx and Engels 1956–1990, vol. 14). The latter can be seen in

the technical study tour of weapons in the chapter “The Measure of Motion–Work” in the manuscript for *Dialectics of Nature* 1987b, 385–87) or in his manuscript prepared in connection with *Anti-Dühring* entitled “Infantry Tactics, Derived from Material Causes” (1987d, 623–29).

During the Crimean War Engels authored many of the articles that appeared under Marx's name in the *New-York Daily Tribune* as commentaries on the military events. He frequently prepared maps that made it possible to follow the military events precisely. These and numerous other works on other wars and military matters of the 1850s and 1860s show how solidly Engels absorbed the necessary natural-science and technical foundations, although no specific preparatory materials for this have been preserved (see vols. 12–19 of *MECW*). The same applies to his articles on the Franco-Prussian war (1986).

At the end of 1869 Engels began an extensive collection of material for a thorough presentation of the history of Ireland that was to consist of four chapters, of which only the first two were finished during the first half of 1870 (1985). The events of the day, above all the Franco-Prussian war, resulted in the interruption of this work, which he was never able to resume. The first of these chapters, notable for its historical content, is entitled “Natural Conditions,” and is based in large part on the facts from “*The Student's Manual of Geology*” by J. Beete Jukes, the best available geological handbook of the time. Some years later, Marx copied so many excerpts from this manual that these excerpts constitute the bulk of a *MEGA* volume. Engels goes back in geological history to carbon formation and shows that the natural conditions developed since this time, different from the neighboring British Isles, have had a decisive influence on the course of Irish history. With the aid of much meteorological data he is able, for example, to arrive at the specific features of agricultural production and the social relationships that rest on them. We do not know of any historical work that uses in a similar way geological and meteorological literature to understand historical processes.

Since Engels promised Wilhelm Liebknecht in 1876 a series of articles on the oppression of workers, he decided to do

something more thorough for this than was usual for a short individual article. He wanted to present the three basic forms of oppression in their historical sequence. He never wrote this series, however, because the polemic with Eugen Dühring was more pressing. But he had written the introduction to this series of articles and he put the manuscript into one of the folders with the completed part of *Dialectics of Nature*. This introduction is best known under the title “The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man” (1987c). In this work, he not only relied on Darwin’s *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (barely five years after its publication), but went theoretically and methodologically far beyond it—and as almost all would say today, in a “purely sociotheoretical” manner.

The first paragraph of this manuscript refers without mentioning it to the first paragraphs of the Gotha Program and corrects the one-sided interpretation that Marx had already attacked in his marginal notes for the draft. “Labour is the source of all wealth” was the formulation presented there. Marx disliked it so much that he thundered that one can read that in every child’s fairy tale. He demanded from a party program that it include “nature, the primary source of all instruments and objects of labour,” only after which could further conclusions be drawn (1989a, 81–82).

Marx showed the connection of all labor activity to nature in the first volume of *Capital* in many ways, which cannot be detailed here. Marx’s critics were enraged that he had introduced the concept of exchange of matter into political economy. He was stimulated to do this in the early 1850s by Robert Daniels and Jacob Moleschott. He worked with this concept in the *Grundrisse* (1857/58), in all his economic manuscripts, and even in 1883 in his last economic comments, the “Marginal notes on Adolph Wagner’s *Lehrbuch der Politischen Ökonomie*” (1989, 553).

We intentionally used the word “introduced” because what is involved here is no picture, no metaphor for visualization, but rather a rich concept. The exchange of matter by living systems, according to the physiologists’ definition, remains for Marx what it is, neither watered down nor “generalized,” as is often done.

Exchange of matter is taking up, reshaping, storing, and giving up of matter with an exchange of energy taking place simultaneously. This same content applies—and here lies the discovery of Marx—not only to living but also to social systems, insofar as social life is also actually life in the physiological sense, arising out of social life and developing further its material basis. Logically Marx speaks therefore not only of the exchange of matter by humans with nature in the labor process independently of every form of society, but he also frequently refers to the exchange of goods as “social exchange of matter” and designates world trade as “exchange of matter between nations”; however he calls processes in inorganic nature “natural exchange of matter” that destroys the respective bodies.

Moreover, Marx, already aware of the circulation of matter in nature—in plants, animals, and microorganisms—considered how in material production such circulation of matter is not interrupted in human activity and discussed the “utilisation of the excretions of production and consumption” (1967, 3:101–3). We have not attempted seriously enough to use this methodological approach in our ecological theory.

But this is not the only natural-science concept that Marx and Engels brought into political economy, not allegorically as metaphor, but rather in exact understanding of its scientific content. It is known, for example, that the second volume of *Capital* was put together by Engels from manuscripts of various dates. In one place Marx wrote in his manuscript about “latent capital.” Engels felt that he could not justifiably interfere with the text. Therefore he wrote in a footnote: “the term ‘latent’ is borrowed from the idea of latent heat in physics, which has now been almost replaced by the theory of transformation of energy. Therefore Marx used in the third part (a later version) another term, borrowed from the idea of potential energy, that is, ‘potential,’ or, analogous to the virtual velocities of D’Alembert, ‘virtual capital’” (1967, 2:78).

An episode in 1893 may indicate that Engels remained true to this style of thinking through his old age. It is recounted by Charles Rappoport, a Russian then studying in Berlin, a supporter of *Narod i Volya*, who later became a socialist in France and after World War I a member of the Communist Party of

France. In connection with a coming visit of the successor to the Russian throne, he was expelled from Berlin and Germany to Paris, where he obtained a letter of recommendation addressed to Engels from his party friend Lawrow, with whom Engels had exchanged letters. He traveled to London to work in the British Museum and naturally to visit Engels. At this time on Sunday afternoons a great variety of persons came as a rule without announcement to discuss various questions. The twenty-seven-year old Rappoport took advantage of this opportunity and asked Engels, among other things, "How should one understand the relationship between basis and superstructure? Is it static or dynamic?" Engels stood up without a word and went to the bookcase, picked up a physics book by Kirchhoff, and with one motion had the place ready and showed him where Kirchhoff dealt with static as a special case of dynamic. To orient oneself on natural science when basic sociotheoretical questions were involved so deeply impressed the young revolutionary that he still remembered and reported it a quarter century later (Rappoport 1988, 96–100). Whether he made this style of work his own, we cannot verify.

Whoever is engaged with the natural sciences is necessarily occupied with their producers, the natural scientists. It is known that at various times—sometimes over decades—Marx and Engels, directly or by letter, maintained contact with natural scientists of various disciplines. Rather than discuss these contacts, we shall refer to statements about outstanding natural scientists made by Marx and Engels scattered about in their writings—letters, manuscripts, notes, and published works—a few of which are strong or sarcastic comments. If one were to come across these accidentally, one might conclude that Marx or Engels did not regard these scientists highly. In our view this is not justified. If one compares these statements about Newton, Helmholtz, Virchow, Darwin, and Wiedemann, for example, with what Marx and Engels excerpted from the works of these scientists and then reworked into their own thinking, one gets an entirely different picture. It appears that Marx and Engels assumed too easily that natural scientists of such caliber, whose achievements they so highly prized, would have the same high level outside their

narrow specialties as in their areas of competence. As soon as they found that this was not the case, they expressed their disappointment openly; we may reserve judgment on whether or not they did so in an appropriate way. But not only that. Engels's devilish enjoyment in catching Helmholtz or William Thompson (later Lord Kelvin) in a calculation error shows the unstated high respect that Engels must have had for them. This is seen not only in the text, but also in the handwriting.

If one checks further what lies behind the criticism, it can be seen in most cases that reactionary political attitudes, explicit empirical limitations, or insufficient knowledge in other, often neighboring, scientific areas had aroused their resentment. We are again dealing with a synthetic, integrative approach to scientific work although these two adjectives do not exactly express what constituted the thinking of both. Naturally one could simply say "dialectical thinking"; that is certainly true. But today there are as many opinions as to what constitutes dialectics as there are authors. At least for present, nothing can be gained without the reinforcement from a substantial treatise on what one understands by dialectics.

Let us remain for a while with the term "integrative." Since the mid-60's there has been an overwhelming amount of literature about the integration of the sciences. This shows first of all the grasping of a social necessity. But what has been the reaction to this social necessity? What was really achieved? Naturally, the many scientific-historical and scientific-organizational reports indicate a larger public. But to find a clear statement of what integration actually is and in what way each integration process is necessarily tied to various disintegration processes is like searching the sunlit sky with a large searchlight. In the literature of the GDR and the USSR almost no author neglected to unearth a few quotes from Marx and Engels about the "unity of the sciences" or something similar. But the authors did not think of asking how Marx or Engels integrated into their work the findings and methods of the most varied sciences. What can we learn from the way they did that?

This kind of questioning about the work of Marx and Engels is necessary to deal seriously with the field of integration of the

sciences, which still must be regarded as underdeveloped. Naturally one must work through more than one article or a section or chapter of one work. One must also stop misusing the work of Marx and Engels as a card index for an appropriate quotation for one's own concept. It would be ideal if their general thought development and development of specific problem areas were both pursued in chronological order. For that both time and appropriate material are needed. Each of us must find the time for ourselves. The material must be made available to all those interested by the complete publication of their literary legacy. Further work on the second edition of the *MEGA* is thus indispensable in order to really learn from Marx and Engels.

Berlin, Germany

NOTES

*Preparatory materials by the authors for this discussion can be found in Griese and Pawelzig 1990 and 1995, Griese 1995, and Pawelzig 1995.

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**Lecture at the Dedication of the
W. E. B. Du Bois Library,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst**

David Levering Lewis

On 23 February 1996, the library at the University of Massachusetts was named the W. E. B. Du Bois Library. The twenty-eight-story library houses the W. E. B. Du Bois Papers, more than 130,000 items connected with the life and work of the great African American scholar, said to be the world's largest collection associated with a single individual. On the eve of the library dedication, David Levering Lewis, author of the Pulitzer-Prize-winning W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993), delivered the following commemorative lecture.

Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in the year of Andrew Johnson's impeachment and dying ninety-five years later in the year of Lyndon Johnson's installation (1868–1963), William Edward Burghardt Du Bois cut an amazing swath through four continents (he was a Lenin Peace Prize laureate and his birthday was once a national holiday in China), writing fourteen pioneering books of sociology, history, and politics, and in his eighties a second autobiography and three large historical novels, complementing the two large works of fiction he wrote in the first two decades of this century. The premier architect of the civil rights movement in the United States, Du Bois was among the first to grasp the international implications *Nature, Society, and Thought*, vol. 8, no. 2 (1995)

of the struggle for racial justice, memorably proclaiming, at the dawn of the century, that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the color line. He first uttered these prophetic words in London's Westminster Town Hall in the July 25th address that concluded the 1900 Pan African Conference. What he said precisely on that occasion (shortened and made prosier later in *The Souls of Black Folk*) was this:

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line, the question as to how far differences of race, which show themselves chiefly in the color of the skin and the texture of the hair, are going to be made, hereafter, the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization.

Always controversial, Du Bois espoused racial and political beliefs of such variety and seeming contradiction as often to bewilder and alienate as many of his countrymen and women, Black and white, as he inspired and converted. Yet, inconsistencies notwithstanding, with each passing decade, he became more radical until the day came when the civil rights maverick was supplanted by the full-blown Marxist. Over time, therefore, the color line of W.E.B. Du Bois evolved into a class line, an evolution in which the problem of the twentieth century became for him one in which the disabilities of race and color became enfolded by the even more exigent problems of the generation and distribution of global wealth. The inevitability of Du Boisian radicalism is, I would argue, not inherent in Du Bois, but inherent in the society in which he spent most of his life. It is this procrustean bed of race and racism that gives his centenary life collective meaning for us here now at the end of a century.

When Du Bois began his sociological researches at Atlanta University, he believed that he had a ready cure for racism in, as he said, "knowledge based on scientific investigation . . . carefully gathered scientific proof that neither color nor race determined the limits of a man's capacity or desert." But the creed of the late 1890s held that it had been a dangerous conceit to expose Black people to literature, history, philosophy, and dead languages, thereby "spoiling" them for the natural order of

Southern society in which their place was as voteless, industrious farm hands, primary school teachers, and occasional merchants. In the North this creed found more euphemistic expression than in the rhetoric of Southern governors like James Vardaman and Coleman Blease, but amounted to much the same. Booker T. Washington alone appeared to be capable of devising a formula for interracial cooperation that promised a modicum of Black economic advancement in exchange for surrender of civil rights. The task of the Wizard of Tuskegee, after all, was one of sanctioning what in any case he had absolutely no power to prevent, to put to white supremacy a gloss of practical wisdom and compensatory reciprocity, and to hold out seductive prospects of a distant but realizable racial parity based on the unifying dollar rather than the divisive ballot.

The initial approval given by Du Bois and his associates to the racial politics of the Great Accommodator soon gave way to dismay, however, and, finally, to alienation. He and his peers might agree with Washington that a dollar in hand was worth far more to most of their people than a box seat at the opera, but they bridled when Dr. Washington suggested that higher degrees were a cover for distinguished indolence. To notables such as Harvard man Monroe Trotter, Princeton man Francis Grimke, Brown man John Hope, and crusading suffragist Ida Wells-Barnett, higher education was not merely a personal passport to social and professional standing, but the stepladder to political empowerment of the racial group. And from such *arrière-pensées* it was but a few steps to rejection of the politics of Tuskegee. Du Bois saw what was fundamental then as now to every bargain between contending parties—the power ultimately to make the parties to the bargain keep it. “The power of the ballot we need in sheer self-defense—else what shall save us from a second slavery,” he proclaimed in 1903. Thus, *The Souls of Black Folk*, his 1903 collection of fourteen essays, transformed race relations in the United States with what now seems instantaneous speed, and, by redefining the terms of a three-hundred-year-old interaction between Blacks and whites, reshaped the cultural and political psychology of peoples of African descent not only throughout the Western Hemisphere but

on the African continent as well. This remarkable book stole a march on those intellectuals of the so-called lyrical Left (Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Horace Kallen), who asserted, against the grain of Anglo-Saxon Protestant orthodoxy, that hyphenated Americans were not a cultural contradiction but the stuff of enriching diversity. Because *The Souls of Black Folk* described the tragic tension of the African American's sense of twoness—of “unreconciled strivings”—so poignantly, it has been easy to overlook that Du Bois—a good Hegelian—adumbrated a higher synthesis in which the divided self merges with other racial selves. “In this merging,” Du Bois writes, the African American “wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world.” Here was the concept of multiculturalism in embryo ninety years ago.

When faith in social science faltered after 1910, Du Bois sustained his struggle against white supremacy by writing books such as *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*, published in 1920, and *The Gift of Black Folk*, five years later, in which he described the pride, sensibility, and humanity of African Americans and exposed the intellectual fallacies and economic sources of racism here and abroad, thereby laying the foundations for what would come to be called the Black Aesthetic and Black Pride. But it was as a tribune of civil rights militancy that he became a household name. By 1910, the problem of the color line in America had become so acute that Du Bois gave up his Atlanta University lectern for the editor's desk at the NAACP in New York. For fourteen years, he spoke through *Crisis* magazine for the Association as it grew from a small operation to a corporate body increasingly staffed by lawyers and lobbyists, and run by accountants. Du Bois's magazine was entirely the editor's creature, its policies virtually independent of the NAACP's board of directors, and its extraordinary monthly circulation figures of more than forty thousand by 1915, and more than 100,000 by 1920, due almost entirely to Du Bois's

pen. Condemning racist mob violence in Chester County, Pennsylvania, a September 1911 *Crisis* editorial blazed characteristic defiance: "But let every black American gird up his loins. The great day is coming. We have crawled and pleaded for justice and we have been cheerfully spit upon and murdered and burned. We will not endure it forever. If we are to die, in God's name let us perish like men and not like bales of hay."

Du Bois demanded full civil rights and complete racial integration year after year. But in January and March of 1934, *Crisis* startled Black America and the officials of the integrationist NAACP with two Du Bois editorials bearing the titles, "Segregation" and "Separation and Self-Respect." Since American Negroes had to live with segregation Du Bois called on them to turn it to their advantage. "It is," Du Bois continued, "the race-conscious black man cooperating together in his own institutions and movements who will eventually emancipate the colored race." The debate over self-segregation was so fierce, in fact, that, rather than renounce his brand of segregation, Du Bois chose resignation from the NAACP over removal in summer 1934, devoting himself thenceforth to teaching and research in the South. Why did he do it? He tells us that "by 1930, I had become convinced that the basic policies and ideals of the Association [NAACP] must be modified and changed." At the controversial Amenia, New York, conference of 1933, where some forty of the nation's leading African American professionals gathered at his invitation, Du Bois tried in vain to have the NAACP adopt what he called a concept of "a planned program for using the racial segregation, which was inevitable, in order that the laboring masses might be able to have built beneath them a strong foundation for self-respect and social uplift." Despite support from the young proto-Marxist economist, Abram Harris, and the quasi-Marxist political scientist, Ralph Bunche, Du Bois conceded that Amenia completely failed to lay the foundations for a nonelitist, Marxist-influenced NAACP.

Having failed to reform the NAACP, Du Bois devoted the years after 1934 to reading Marx and supervising graduate students. The problem with Marxism was racism, he wrote. "This philosophy did not envisage a situation where instead of a

horizontal division of classes, there was a vertical fissure, a complete separation of classes by race, cutting square across the economic layers.” His considerable reservations notwithstanding, Du Bois’s radicalism deepened to the point that in early 1935 he told one of his protégés, “I believe in Karl Marx, I am an out and out opponent of modern capitalistic labor exploitation. I believe in the ultimate triumph of socialism in a reasonable time.” What he could not believe in, however, was the white working class in America, so his Marxism shared equal billing with his racialism, and sometimes second billing. Du Bois saw an iron link between democracy and racism in America, one in which citizenship and mobility have been defined and measured by white yeomanry and succeeding waves of European immigrants in terms of political and socioeconomic distance from Black people.

Du Bois’s period of Talented Tenth Marxism—from 1935 to 1948—was distinguished by deepening radicalism, but also by relapses into bourgeois optimism. As late as 1948–49, a Marxist Du Bois would write orthodox civil rights pieces in *Phylon*, *Negro Digest*, and the *Sunday New York Times Magazine* foretelling social democracy in America “if,” as he wrote, “the progress in race relations and Negro advancement which has marked the last thirty years can be maintained for another generation.” In contrast, there was the book, *Black Reconstruction in America*, which appalled most professional historians by positing a general strike by the slaves during the Civil War and a proletarian bid for power in the South after the war. Flaws it certainly had, but Du Bois’s sprawling monograph would return the African American to the Reconstruction drama as a significant agent. In its final chapter, “The Propaganda of History,” Du Bois unfurled the manifesto that opened the final conflict with the long dominant Dunning School of American historiography. He declared, “I write then in a field devastated by passion and belief. . . . We shall never have a science of history until we have in our colleges men who regard the truth as more important than the defense of the white race, and who will not deliberately encourage students to gather thesis material in order to support prejudice or buttress a lie.” Both Howard K. Beale and the young

C. Vann Woodward wrote the author of their admiration for the work and of its influence upon them.

Du Bois still believed intensely in the power of knowledge to change society, and he believed that the great foundations were now, in the mid-1930s, far more disposed to support social science research conducted by African American scholars than in his early days. His project was a vast, multivolume *Encyclopedia of the Negro*, for which the Phelps Stokes Fund provided seed money. The Julius Rosenwald Fund remained skeptical. The Rockefellers' General Education Board was suspicious. Du Bois's preliminary correspondence had already generated endorsements and promises of collaboration from much of the international scholarly community. After his application for funds was denied by the General Education Board in 1935, he greatly revised and elaborated the proposal for resubmission. The subject outline worked up with the assistance of historian Rayford Logan and sociologists Robert E. Park and Guy Johnson was rapidly evolving into a comprehensive masterpiece. Even courtly Jackson Davis, the General Education Board's associate director, became an *Encyclopedia* convert, introducing Du Bois to the right New York notables, stroking his own trustees, and lobbying Frederick Keppel, the Carnegie Corporation president, for favorable action on its portion of the \$250,000 Du Bois grant application.

The seven-member executive committee, Raymond B. Fosdick presiding and John D. Rockefeller, 3d, participating, rejected the *Encyclopedia* at the beginning of May 1937. A Jackson Davis memo reveals: "Strong question raised by RBF on the adequacy of the proposed editorial committee and personal doubt of the point of view of Dr. Du Bois on questions involving racial attitudes." Even so, Jackson Davis rather inconsistently urged favorable consideration of the encyclopedia by the Carnegie Corporation. "Dr. Du Bois is the most influential Negro in the United States," Davis reminded Keppel. "This project would keep him busy for the rest of his life." Predictably, the Carnegie declined. Du Bois set about revising the encyclopedia proposal for yet another submission to the philanthropies. Then, virtually overnight, the study of the Negro

was alive again, under different auspices, and directed by a scholar then unknown in the field of race relations, one whose conceptualization of the dominant American race problem was to be distinctly more psychological than was Du Bois's. When Anson Phelps Stokes of the Phelps Stokes Fund wrote Du Bois, in 1944, that "there has been no one who has been quite so often quoted by [Gunnar] Myrdal than yourself," Du Bois must have savored the bitter irony. Then, that same year, just as he had achieved the near-impossible feat of corralling the bickering presidents of seventeen Black land-grant colleges into funding a new generation of Atlanta University Studies, the trustees voted his retirement. A year earlier, Jackson Davis had filed a memo stating that the new president of Atlanta University "complained that Du Bois was an individualist who made trouble. . . . He said that Du Bois's age was affecting him."

Pressured by several members of the NAACP Board, Walter White invited the septuagenarian back as an ornament. "They assumed that my days of work were over," Du Bois chortled. The NAACP badly miscalculated. *Color and Democracy*, Du Bois's anti-imperialist book, was at his publisher's in January 1945. That same month, his Chicago *Defender* column, under the heading "Reason and Reality," adumbrated a new tough-mindedness, the beginning of the end of Du Boisian intellectual idealism. "I had, I believed, launched a program which was destined to settle the Negro problem," Du Bois modestly reminded his readers. "It was no pat panacea. . . . In one respect alone was it vulnerable, and that was whether the world would allow it to be done." Clearly, the world of the General Education Board, the Carnegie Corporation, and slavish university trustees would not allow it to be done. He now set about to change that world through ideas in action. Collaborating with Paul Robeson, Max Yergan, and Alphaeus Hunton of the Council on African Affairs, he convened a conference at the New York Public's Schomburg Library in Harlem in April 1945. It was attended by Lincoln University student Kwame Nkrumah and anticipated the George Padmore-planned Pan-African Congress meeting in Manchester, England, in October, which Du Bois also attended as an active presiding officer.

As Consulting Delegate with Walter White and Mary McLeod Bethune to the founding of the United Nations, in May 1945, Du Bois began what would become ever-sharper public attacks upon the policies of an international body whose charter was ambiguous about the rights of colonial peoples. His 1947 United Nations petition, "An Appeal to the World: A Statement on the Denial of Human Rights to Minorities in the Case of Citizens of Negro Descent in the United States of America," was a bold initiative for the NAACP. Although the NAACP Board had unanimously endorsed the document the previous August, by June 1948, new Board member and UN Delegate Eleanor Roosevelt made it plain that international circulation of the petition and repeated attempts at General Assembly presentation "embarrassed" her and the nation. By then, Du Bois had virtually endorsed Henry Wallace's Progressive Party candidacy, denounced the Marshall Plan and NATO as building blocks in the aggressive American containment of the Soviet Union, and roiled the NAACP directorate by distributing a detailed memorandum for restructuring the national headquarters. Already shaken in 1947 by charges by historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in *Life* magazine of Communist infiltration, the NAACP chose Mrs. Roosevelt and fired Du Bois in September 1948.

Now begins what might be called Du Bois's Red Radical period, from 1948 to 1961. Thanks to Henry Wallace, Du Bois was kept afloat financially by a generous subsidy from Anita Blaine McCormick, the Chicago angel of progressive causes. It was now an article of faith for him that domestic anticommunism and the foreign policy of containment of the Soviet Union were camouflage for the military-industrial complex, of which racism was a central, necessary component. From then on, it was politics in earnest. With Harlowe Shapley, Linus Pauling, and Lillian Hellman, he plunged into the March 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, chairing the writers' subcommittee with Norman Mailer and A. A. Fadayev at the Waldorf-Astoria, and delivering an electric closing speech at Madison Square Garden. In April, he gripped the huge crowd attending the Paris World Peace Conference, flaying the Atlantic Pact, Truman, and imperialism.

In 1950, at eighty-two, he ran for the U.S. Senate from New York, on the American Labor Party ticket. Out of five million voters, 205,000 liked his campaign speeches enough to vote for him: "For the past fifty years I have been in touch with social currents in the U.S. Never before has organized reaction wielded the power it does today: By ownership of press and radio, by curtailment of free speech, by imprisonment of liberal thinkers and writers." He seemed to be proved right. Parallel with his Senate run, Du Bois also ran, with four others, the new Peace Information Center (PIC), which raised funds and provided speakers to garner 2.5 million signatures for the Stockholm Peace Petition for nuclear disarmament. On July 13th, Secretary of State Dean Acheson attacked the PIC in the *New York Times*. On February 9, 1951, Du Bois and the officers of the PIC were indicted under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938. Despite an expenditure of several hundred thousand taxpayer dollars searching for evidence in Europe, the Justice Department's case was so farcical that the judge threw it out in midtrial in Washington. But the experience was traumatizing for Du Bois. What wounded him deeply was that, with a few notable exceptions, the Talented Tenth ran for cover. However, large numbers of working-class Black and white folk attended Du Bois fund-raisers across the country.

In his 1952 book *In Battle for Peace*, Du Bois predicted what he saw as the co-optation of the rising social and economic tier of African Americans. "In the Negro group, we are going to develop, and indeed have developed, economic classes whose interests clash," he warned. This rising group of what Nell Painter has called "representative Negroes" found it politically expedient to exclude Du Bois from its inner councils, to shun him socially, and to deplore publicly his patriotic apostasy. He knew what price he would pay for his opposition to the Cold War, and he wrote with equanimity about the faintheartedness of many African American public figures who would run for cover as the ideological witch-hunt heated up. "Some Negro leaders with much to lose in property, credit, or reputation have yielded to panic," Du Bois wrote in the April 1953 issue of *Monthly Review*, and he cited the dismal case of Arna Bontemps and

Langston Hughes, who deleted both himself and Paul Robeson from their books, *Famous American Negroes* and *Famous Negro Music Makers* (Du Bois 1953; Lewis 1995, 625; see also Rampersad 1976, 258–59). “It was a bitter experience,” he admitted, “and I bowed before the storm. But I did not break” (1968, 395).

Instead, ably comforted and assisted by his new wife, the author and musicologist Shirley Graham, and new friends on the Left—Esther and James Jackson, Anna Louise Strong, Abbott Simon, Doxey Wilkerson, Herbert Aptheker, Howard Fast, Louis Burnham—Du Bois continued speaking, writing, scolding, and infuriating from his book-lined study at 30 Grace Court in Brooklyn and from his third-floor Manhattan office in 23rd Street. The appearance of Martin Luther King, Jr., was something of an enigma for Du Bois. Musing about the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, an agnostic and anticlerical Du Bois admitted that he had expected to live to see many things, but never a Baptist preacher in the role of civil rights militant. King’s courage he admired, but, even as schools and lunch counters were integrated and the first federal civil rights act since Reconstruction enacted (1957), Du Bois coldly discounted the long-term benefits of nonviolent passive resistance. He finally decided in late 1959 that King was not Gandhi: “Grandhi submitted,” Du Bois asserted, “but he also followed a positive program to offset his negative refusal to use violence.”

On October 1, 1961, Du Bois applied for membership in the Communist Party of the USA—at 93, five years after Khrushchev’s revelations of Stalin-Era crimes and three years after the court-ordered return of his own passport. What was the meaning of an act that imposed irrevocable self-exile to West Africa just as lunch-counter sit-ins and freedom bus rides foreshadowed the beginning of the end of the racial segregation in America Du Bois had spent his life fighting? Partly, it was an act of Homeric nose-thumbing. Nearing the end, he himself mischievously conceded, “I would have been hailed with approval if I had died at fifty. At seventy-five my death was practically requested.” The immediate stimulus was the Supreme Court’s June 1961 decision upholding the constitutionality of the Subversive

Activities Control Board instituted by the infamous McCarran Act of 1950. Under the terms of the Act all persons and organizations deemed by the Attorney General to be Communist or Communist-affiliated were required to register with the Subversive Activities Control Board under pain of enormous fines and cumulative prison sentences. Du Bois's broad-gauge explanation of his act was, he said, that "today, I have reached a firm conclusion. Capitalism cannot reform itself; it is doomed to self-destruction."

The inflexible truth he embraced was that, just as Africans in the United States "under the corporate rule of monopolized wealth . . . will be confined to the lowest wage group," so the peoples of the developing world faced subordination in the global scheme of things capitalist. Du Bois concluded that, for the sake of underdeveloped peoples everywhere, all tactics that contained American capitalism were fair. With Russia now a supplicant before the IMF, Du Bois's pronouncement rings oddly, yet his grim prophecy has long been meaningful for large numbers of people of color and has now begun to apply to galloping numbers of Euro-Americans as automation and outsourcing of production ravage the careers of the white-collar classes. By the end of the Second World War, Du Bois began to underscore what he saw as an especially cruel paradox. He presaged the rise of more talented tenths—that one-third of Black America that has benefitted from federal and state laws and policies, as well as affirmative-action policies in the private sector. This Talented Third may well be on its way to full color-blind membership in Mainstream America—people whose class status will increasingly mitigate their racial origins. But Du Bois was certain that such a color-blind America would also be poverty-blind. In this hypothetical scenario of class-over-race identities, with high wage-earning Blacks insulating themselves in protected city enclaves and distant suburbs, and the rise of Black Republicans, the prospects of the poor and the dark-skinned in deindustrializing America are likely to become ever more Malthusian as their potential leadership is creamed off and alienated from them.

It is unlikely, in an era of crumbling world socialist

experiments, that many of us would commend the ideological and geographical choices of Du Bois's last days. It is, I suggest, the significance of his protest and his gradual alienation, rather than the solutions he proposed, that are instructive. No doubt he was precipitous in totally writing off the market economy. Nurtured by a bracing New England Calvinism, Du Bois was much too inclined to take individual and collective initiative for granted, rather than as the fragile and vital mobilizing force it is. But he would insist that leaving the market exclusively to solve systemic social problems is an agenda guaranteeing obscene economic inequality in the short run and irresolvable political calamity in the long run. A belief-system in which government is the root of all evil and liberals agents of decadence must surely lead to a state of nature best described by Hobbes.

Although he had inveighed at the 1952 Progressive Party convention against a national politics of two-party collusion of Democrats and Republicans, not even Du Bois could have foreseen the present electoral *reductio ad absurdum* in which the reproach of tax-and-spend now threatens to abolish any active role by government in determining what our national priorities should be or how we will pay for them. In one of his most prescient essays, "Negroes and the Crisis of Capitalism in the United States," written ten years before his death, he left a diagnostic of our present national decline, admonishing us that "the organized effort of American industry to usurp government surpasses anything in modern history, even that of Adolf Hitler, from whom it was learned.

From the use of psychology to spread truth has come the use of organized gathering of news to guide public opinion then deliberately to mislead it by scientific advertising and propaganda. . . . Mass capitalistic control of books and periodicals, news gathering and distribution, radio, cinema, and television has made the throttling of democracy possible and the distortion of education and failure of justice widespread. (1953; Lewis 1995, 624)

Du Bois came to see with absolute prescience that color-coded disability would time and again legitimize evasion of major economic and social reforms in the United States, which

would in turn increase, compound, and rigidify poverty, social deformation, and disempowerment until nothing short of institutional and economic meltdown could overcome the electorate's refusal to face the stupendous cost of remediation. But racism was only half the cause of the short-circuitry of reform. By the time he wrote the book *Color and Democracy*, Du Bois's color-line had evolved beyond race to become a catholic conception referring to the world's disempowered and dispossessed. Indeed, as early as April 1925, he had written a major think piece in *Foreign Affairs* in which he meditated upon the full implications of his famous color-line prophecy. "It was a pert phrase which I then liked," he said, "and which I have often rehearsed to myself, asking how far was it prophecy and how far speculation" (1925; Aptheker 1982, 241). The problem of the twentieth century he now said was labor—"the problem of allocating work and income in the tremendous and increasingly intricate world-embracing industrial machine which we have built."

In opposition to such a society in which all are warring against all, Du Bois could well have written these prudent thoughts: "I am far from being a Communist; but I recognize in the theory of . . . Communism (in the theory, mind you, not the practice) [a] certain element which I think are probably really the ideas of the future. I hate to see us reject the good with the bad . . . and place ourselves in that way on the wrong side of history." But these are the autobiographical thoughts of George Kennan, chagrined architect of the National Security State. Sixteen years before Kennan's reflections, Du Bois preached in similar tones to converted *National Guardian* readers, writing that "the problem of economic justice to working men existed before the Russian revolution and would remain if Russia were swept from the face of the earth tomorrow."

From the first things he wrote until the end, Du Bois believed that principled conduct enabled men and women to solve even the most complex, intractable problems. With the intellectual's clarity and the moralist's certitude, he had sternly lectured the readers of his 1896 monograph, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States*, that "it behooves nations as well as men to do things at the very moment when they ought to

be done.” In the course of his long, turbulent career, W. E. B. Du Bois attempted virtually every possible solution to the problem of twentieth-century racism—scholarship, propaganda, integration, cultural and economic separatism, politics, international communism, expatriation, Third-World solidarity. First had come culture and education for the elites; then the ballot for the masses; then economic democracy; and finally all these solutions in the service of global racial parity and economic justice. Du Bois came to see with absolute prescience the perennial utility of wedge politics in America, that permanent possibility for using color to legitimize evasion of major economic and social reforms in the United States, which would in turn increase, compound, and rigidify poverty, social deformation, and disempowerment until nothing short of institutional and economic meltdown could overcome the electorate’s refusal to face the stupendous cost of remediation.

In the end, he would offer the best explanation of the dynamic of interior and external forces that had shaped and brought him to his final Pan-African resolution, writing in *The Autobiography*:

had it not been for the race problem early thrust upon me and enveloping me, I should have probably been an unquestioning worshiper at the shrine of the established social order into which I was born. But just that part of this order which seemed to most of my fellows nearest perfection seemed to me most inequitable and wrong; and starting from that critique, I gradually, as the years went by, found other things to question in my environment. (1968, 155)

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Some Comments on Dialectical and Logical Contradictions

In two articles on the relationship between formal and dialectical logic, I argued that formal logic and dialectical logic are both reflections of the laws of objective reality, that one cannot set one against the other by assigning their spheres of action to static and changing situations, respectively (Marquit 1990a, 1990b). In a recent article on the subject, Danny Goldstick appears to repeat that view, arguing that “the propositions of formal logic and the propositions of dialectics are in no conflict with each other *logically*” (1995, 103) and that there is “good reason not to lumber either [Marx or Engels] with the philosophical view that any thinking about the real world which ineliminably contains logical contradictions could ever be entirely correct” (113). Goldstick’s article, however, is replete with comments that seem to me to be hedging, such as: “But *is* there a real conflict between formal logic and dialectics? The answer, I think is: dialectically, yes; logically, no” (102); further on he writes that “dialectics’ concept of objective *relative* truth is alien in spirit to formal logic” (104); later on the same page we read, “dialectics and formal logic both depend on each other and militate against each other’s effect: there is therefore a *dialectical* contradiction between them” (104).

Before moving on to the main purpose of my brief commentary, I should like to deal with the second of these statements.

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Objective truth entails no alien spirit in relation to formal logic that cannot be absorbed within concepts of adequacy and approximation. For example, *interconnection* requires both separation and nonseparation of the interconnected objects. The separation is relatively objective—each object can be considered for some purposes in absolute isolation from the other—but for other purposes the connection must be reestablished. An envelope can be weighed separately from the page that is to be enclosed in it to determine the combined weight of both for assessing the postage, but without both the envelope and the page, there is no letter.

My primary criticism of Goldstick's article, however, relates to his effort to obscure the most glaring instance in which an element of Hegelian idealism was uncritically brought into the classics of Marxism, which, in turn, gave rise to the illusion that dialectical materialists accept the possibility of objectively existing logical contradictions, an illusion that was further strengthened in Evald V. Ilenkov's work *Dialekticheskaya Logik* (1974), subsequently published in English translation under the title *Dialectical Logic*. Goldstick refers to Engels's often-cited solution to Zeno's paradox of the arrow in *Anti-Dühring*:

Motion itself is a contradiction: even simple mechanical change of position can only come about through a body being at one and the same moment of time both in one place and in another place, being in one and the same place and also not in it. And the continuous origination and simultaneous solution of this contradiction is precisely what motion is. (Engels 1987, chapter 12, 111)

In his comments on this quotation, Goldstick attempts to transform Engels's instantaneous "moment of time" into a brief but spread-out interval of time in order to avoid the logical contradiction implied by Engels. Engels, however, is actually echoing here Hegel's concept of identity of opposites. By way of justification, Goldstick writes, "If a 'moment,' as Engels uses the term, has any finite duration at all, however brief, then any continuously moving body will occupy more than one location in the course of a single moment, and will at different stages during that

moment be both in and not in certain particular locations” (109). Engels, however, obviously had in mind the same concept of moment that Hegel was writing about in his *Science of Logic*:

External, sensuous motion itself is contradiction’s immediate existence. Something moves, not because at one moment it is here and at another there, but because at one and the same moment it is here and not here, because in this ‘here,’ it at once is and is not. The ancient dialecticians must be granted the contradictions that they pointed out in motion; but it does not follow that therefore there is no motion; but on the contrary, that motion is *existent* contradiction itself. (1969, 440)

From the context, it is absolutely clear that Hegel is referring not to a time interval but to “one and the same moment of time.” Hegel does this because he wants to deal with contradiction in the sense of a formal-logical contradiction. As I argued in my article, “A Materialist Critique of Hegel’s Concept of Identity of Opposites” (1990b), Hegel, in the same discussion on the same page of the material quoted above, writes:

Similarly, internal self-movement proper, *instinctive urge* in general, . . . is nothing else but the fact that something is, in one and the same respect, *self-contained and deficient, the negative of itself*. (1969, 440)

The phrases “one and the same respect” and “one and the same moment of time” are obviously references to one of the usual ways in which the classical law of contradiction is expressed, “a thing cannot be both itself and not itself at the same time and in the same respect.”

Hegel, in fact, equivocated on the question by commenting elsewhere on a similar discussion of Zeno’s paradox of the arrow, as Goldstick noted, “What makes the difficulty is always thought alone, since it keeps apart the moments of an object which in their separation are really united” (Hegel 1892, 274). Hegel therefore recognizes that motion cannot be broken down into an infinite succession of points at rest, each point corresponding to a different moment of time, but that we cannot conceive of motion

in any other way. Modern quantum physics partly resolves this problem by denying the possibility of localizing a moving particle to a uniquely defined position at any given instant of time, that is, it rejects the concept of a trajectory as an accurate representation of the motion of a moving particle. Lenin, too, avoided repeating Engels's formulation, expanding instead on Hegel's comment. In his *Philosophical Notebooks*, Lenin transcribed Hegel's words and added:

We cannot imagine, express, measure, depict movement without simplifying, coarsening, dismembering, strangling that which is living. The representation of movement by means of thought always makes coarse,—and not only by means of thought, but also by sense-perception, and not only of movement, but **every** concept. (Lenin 1961, 259–60)

In my more extensive commentary on the question (1990b), I pointed out that Hegel needed to accept logical contradictions on occasion because he had no way of unfolding the material world in its differentiated existence from the *Idea* [of God] in the form of undifferentiated being except by forcing one to be simultaneously the other as an identity of opposites. The dialectical concept of unity of opposites necessarily entails an identity of opposites in some sense, since two things must share some common quality in order to be dialectical opposites (that is, dialectical contradictions); otherwise they would not be dialectically related. Hegel could therefore argue that the relation of father and son constitutes an identity.

Father is the other of son, and son the other of father, and each only *is* as this other of the other; and at the same time, the one determination only is, in relation to the other; their being is a *single* subsistence. The father also has an existence of his own apart from the son-relationship; but then he is not father but simply man; just as above and below, right and left, are each also a reflection-into-self and are something apart from their relationship, but then

only places in general. Opposites, therefore, contain contradiction in so far as they are, in the same respect, negatively related to one another, or *sublate each other* and are *indifferent* to one another. (1969, 441)

Hegel extended the concept of identity of opposites from a dialectical identity in difference as a necessary characteristic of a dialectical contradiction, to the absolutized identity of opposites as a logical contradiction. Materialist dialectics does not need, nor can it accept, this absolutizing of the identity of opposites.

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Response by Danny Goldstick

Erwin Marquit rightly notes that he and I agree on two important points:

- (1) No statement which logically contradicts itself is ever completely true.
- (2) Dialectics is best understood as entirely consistent with denying that any statement which logically contradicts itself is ever completely true.

A significant issue on which Marquit and I differ is the question whether in fact Frederick Engels was for his part in agreement with both (1) and (2), at any rate consistently. In his exposition of dialectics in *Anti-Dühring*, Engels certainly uses the two sentences that Marquit has quoted in his comments and that he wants to interpret as a case where Engels does assert the validity of logical contradiction, in opposition to (1). But is that what Engels meant?

There is not space here to repeat all of the case I advanced for interpreting Engels differently in the article which Marquit criticizes, but one piece of evidence in favor of thinking that Engels, in accordance with (1) and (2), did really distinguish between logical and dialectical *contradiction* (while seeing them as closely related) comes only five short paragraphs after the two sentences Marquit quotes. Engels is emphasizing the ineliminability of *contradiction* in natural science and mathematics, and says:

It is a contradiction that a negative quantity should be the square of anything, for every negative quantity multiplied by itself gives a positive square. The square root of minus one is therefore not only a contradiction, but even an absurd contradiction, a real absurdity. And yet $\sqrt{-1}$ is in many cases a necessary result of correct mathematical operations. Furthermore, where would mathematics . . . be, if it were prohibited from operation with $\sqrt{-1}$. (1987,112)

“Not only a contradiction, but even an absurd contradiction.”

This shows that Engels considers some “contradictions” are, and some are not, logically “absurd,” I think. (Things Engels says elsewhere show that he did not consider the logically contradictory concept of $\sqrt{-1}$ —as it was then understood—to be fully satisfactory, mathematically indispensable though it was.)

But what about Engels’s statement that a moving body is, for one and the same moment of time, “in one and the same place and also not in it”? Marquit does not deny that the expression “moment of time” (in Engels’s German, *Zeitmoment*) is often used to mean a short *interval*, as well as (the way Marquit wants to read it here) to mean a durationless *point* in time. Which of these two meanings did Engels intend in writing that a moving body occupies two different places “in a moment of time”? (Engels’s actual German word here is *in*, which means “in.”) My main case against interpreting Engels’s use of the term “moment” here to mean a durationless instant is the body of evidence I presented in my article for the conclusion that Engels agreed with (1). Marquit’s contrary case rests on the fact that what Engels says here echoes some words of the dialectical philosopher G. W. F. Hegel in his book, *The Science of Logic*. But did even Hegel mean *durationless instant* by (what appears in the English translation as the word) “moment” in the *Science of Logic* passage which Marquit quotes? “From the context, it is absolutely clear,” says Marquit, that the answer is yes.

For my part, I do not see anything in the context which does make that absolutely clear; though there is one thing about the context, with which I will have to deal later, that indeed might seem to indicate a possible intention on Hegel’s part to deny (1) and assert that *logical* “contradictions” could be completely true. Hegel scholars in fact are divided upon the question what Hegel’s position on this was (see, e.g., Sarlemijn (1975, 81) and Fulda (1978, 151–52). Sarlemijn does, and Fulda does not, think Hegel dissented from the formal-logical Principle of Contradiction.) I think we should agree, though, that it is not necessary to interpret Hegel as being *completely* clear on the point in order to understand him to mean something that is not logically contradictory.

Just what, though, *did* Hegel mean in saying something moves by being “at one and the same moment here and not here”? (Like

Engels, Hegel too uses the German word *in*, translated as “at,” but, unlike Engels, he does not use the term *Moment*: he speaks of “one and the same now.”) Marquit thinks that the quoted *Anti-Dühring* sentences of Engels were a reference to the “arrow paradox” of the fifth-century B.C. Greek philosopher Zeno of Elea, but there is no mention of Zeno at all in Engels’s text, though Hegel certainly did cite “ancient dialecticians” in the *Science of Logic* passage quoted, and no doubt Hegel fully intended to include Zeno among them. But would Hegel have used the plural—“ancient dialecticians”—if he had intended to refer just to Zeno (and not also, say, Parmenides and Heraclitus), and indeed just exclusively to Zeno’s “paradox of the arrow”? The point is relevant because, if Hegel and Engels did mean to refer specifically just to Zeno’s paradox of the arrow, that very well could encourage then a reading of Engels’s use of “moment” as signifying *durationless instant*.

How could an arrow shot from a bow really move even the slightest distance through the air, Zeno asked, since *at any one time* it would have to be stationary at a single location? But it is possible to dispel the appearance of paradox here simply by challenging the word “stationary” in the preceding sentence. In any case, there could not even be any *appearance* of paradox if “at any one time” here did not refer to a durationless instant, which would indeed not be long enough for a moving arrow to cover any distance whatever. On the other hand, Zeno was responsible for other paradoxes of motion that rather call to mind not durationless instants, but very brief, maybe indefinitely brief, *intervals* of time.

Now Hegel in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* does discuss separately and at length the four paradoxes of motion of Zeno which Aristotle listed in his *Physics* (book 6, chapter 9). In fact, though, Hegel’s passage on the arrow paradox is the shortest of the four, and he appears to agree with Aristotle that it and one of the other three are simply fallacious. But he does not so quickly dismiss *either* the paradox based on the thought that to get from A to B it is necessary first to get halfway there, and before this to get halfway to that midpoint, and so on, *or* the famous paradox of Achilles and the tortoise. It is in discussing

Achilles and the tortoise that Hegel's language most resembles Engels's in the *Anti-Dühring* passage we are considering. Briefly, Achilles, fleet-footed messenger of the gods, challenges the tortoise to a race and magnanimously offers the tortoise a small head start; but, before Achilles can reach the tortoise's starting point, the tortoise has moved up to a point a little farther ahead, and before Achilles can reach that new point, the tortoise will have moved ahead again, and so on; so that Achilles can traverse *any* (finite) number of such "laps" in the race without catching up to the tortoise, no matter how slowly that creature crawls. (To us the solution is that Achilles *can* catch up to the tortoise because in fact *infinitely* many such "laps" in the race, taking up ever shorter intervals of space and time, can be crammed into an only moderately long finite stretch; but such recourse to *infinity* was not available to Zeno.) It is hard to reconcile Marquit's interpretation of Hegel as concluding that motion can be correctly described only by means of *logically contradictory* statements with Hegel's express comment: "Zeno's dialectic of matter has not been refuted to the present day; even now we have not got beyond it, and the matter is left in uncertainty" (1892a, 265).

There is, though, as mentioned above, one thing about the context of the passage from Hegel's *Science of Logic* which Marquit quotes that might indeed be taken to be evidence for interpreting Hegel as philosophically opposed to (1), the denial that *logically contradictory* thinking can ever be completely right. This denial, classically called the "law of contradiction," was formulated by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* (book 4, chapter 3) as stating, "The same thing cannot at the same time both belong and not belong to the same object and in the same respect" (1966, 58–59). It really is clear from the context that in the *Science of Logic* passage quoted Hegel definitely does intend to be expressing criticism of the formal logic descended from Aristotle. But just what is the criticism being expressed? In his shorter *Logic* (section 119, addition [2]), Hegel stated his point pretty succinctly, perhaps:

Contradiction is the very moving principle of the world:
and it is ridiculous to say that contradiction is unthinkable.

The only thing correct in that statement is that contradiction is not the end of the matter, but cancels itself. (1892b, 223)

This is not the place to enter further into the debate over what to conclude from a statement like that about where Hegel stood. But Marquit should exercise some caution in praising Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* the way he does, as having "avoided repeating Engels's formulation" on motion, which Marquit wants to say errs by treating *logical contradictions* as fully valid. For, if Hegel commits this error, and Engels, following him, commits it also, then so too does Lenin. For in his *Philosophical Notebooks* on pages 138–43 he quotes and comments on the same *Science of Logic* passage as Marquit—at much greater length—with *unqualified approval* (1961, 138–43). And on page 368 we see Lenin commenting on Aristotle's "**stubborn** struggle" in defending the law of contradiction in his *Metaphysics* against the (proto-) dialectical "idea of the identity of Being and not-Being" (1961, 368). But, seeing how Aristotle actually argues on the subject, in his *Metaphysics* (book 4, chapters 4 and 5), insofar as he bases himself on the ultrametaphysical Aristotelian doctrine that things have eternal, unchangeable essences, probably Marquit too can agree with a *dialectics* that opposes this.

I suggested earlier that I thought it was only reasonable in interpreting the writings of somebody human such as Hegel—yes, and why not Engels too?—to recognize that such a writer may fail to achieve full clarity on a subject and yet, in fact, still be saying something *substantially* sound. I can only hope that readers will be willing to extend similar charity to the interpretation of what I have written.

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Comments on the Marx-Freud Discussion

Permit a few comments on the special issue on Marx and Freud (vol. 8, no. 1).

I note that Professor Howard Parsons was its editor. Despite the great respect I have for Professor Parsons, I do not think the essay by Antal Borbely belongs in a “Journal of Dialectical and Historical Materialism.” Apart from its utter distortion and rejection of Marxism—holding its relevance to be obsolete—its depiction of present reality in the United States is consonant with such rejection.

To cite just a few examples of data concerning reality in the United States. In 1970, a boom period, the Bureau of Labor Statistics stated that what it called a “moderate” income for a family of four was beyond the reach of fully half the American population. Since the Nixon-Reagan era, the maldistribution of income has intensified.

Today the wealthiest 20 percent of the population enjoy a surging income, but the income of the poorest 45 percent has declined. This disaster has led Dr. Benjamin Schwarz, a senior fellow at the World Policy Institute, to write that “the most fundamental changes in our political economy” are required if social

health is to be achieved in our country (*Los Angeles Times*, 19 April 1996). On the same day the *New York Times* reported that income inequality in the United States has increased in recent years.

G. S. Crystal shows in his recent book *In Search of Excess* (New York: Norton, 1991) that the compensation of the average chief executive of U. S. corporations has increased over 300 percent, adjusted for inflation, since 1974. And in the same period the average worker's pay *declined* by 13 percent. Professor Crystal also showed that the pay ratio between a typical worker and CEO in Japan was 1 to 16, in Great Britain 1 to 33, and 1 to 120 in the United States.

Very recently the respected Annie E. Casey Foundation announced that the number of children of the *working* poor rose to 5.6 million in 1994 from 3.4 million twenty years ago—an increase of 65 percent. In the same period the number of children supported by Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the nation's main welfare program, increased by 25 percent to 9.6 million from 7.8 million.

Professor Edward N. Wolff, perhaps the leading expert on wealth distribution, produced a recent study entitled *Top Heavy* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1995). In 1989, the latest data available, the "top one percent of wealth holders controlled 39 percent of total household wealth." Wolff points out, "Focusing more narrowly on financial wealth, the richest one percent of households owned 48 percent of the total" (7). The disparity in income, he continues, is stark. [Editor's note: "The Census Bureau said today that the gap between the most affluent Americans and everyone else was wider than it has been since the end of World War II," *New York Times*, 20 June 1996.]

Ominously the data show that the only comparable period of income inequality in this country was that from 1922 to 1929. Are people old enough or knowledgeable enough to know what happened in 1929?

It must be added that the data emphasize the racist essence that characterizes this society, so that "the relative wealth position of most Black families deteriorated . . . a bad situation grew worse" (Wolff 1995, 2).

None of this reality appears in Borbely's conclusion that the

industrial age has been superseded by what he calls the information age. Professor Borbely must reexamine his "information."

In the limited space of a commentary, I want only to state that Professor John Pittman's remarks in this issue were so rude that one must suggest that his youth may make excuse appropriate.

Herbert Aptheker
San Jose, California

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The British Road to Socialism: Program of the Communist Party of Britain

This is the sixth edition (1994) of the “British Road to Socialism” as revised and amended on the basis of the 41st Reconvened Congress in November 1992. Changes since the demise of the Thatcher government do not appreciably affect the timeliness of document. The text is reproduced here as provided to the Marxist Forum by the Communist Party of Britain.

Introduction

The peoples of the world are today confronted with problems of enormous magnitude giving rise to fears about the very survival of humanity and life on earth. These include: (1) the threat of nuclear catastrophe and the need to switch the huge resources wasted on weapons to meeting worldwide social needs; (2) the ecological and environmental “time bomb” which adds a new threat to human survival; (3) the ever-growing poverty and other ills which afflict the greater part of the billions of inhabitants of our earth.

What is the position in Britain in relation to these and other great issues of our day? In Britain, the picture is one of stark contrasts. As the rich get richer and enjoy all manner of luxuries that money can buy, the majority of people face the prospect of diminishing job and educational opportunities, declining living standards and a general deterioration in the quality of life.

This need not be so. Never before in history have there been such opportunities offered by the rapid advances in science and technology, which, if socially controlled and rationally planned, have the potential of achieving an abundance of everything needed for the all-round development of every human being. But in Britain, as in other capitalist

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countries, a deep-seated crisis of the whole economic, political and social system affects adversely every aspect of life. The wealth, effort and ingenuity which could be used to improve the living conditions of working people are, instead, either wasted in war preparations or used to expand the profit base of the transnational monopoly corporations and banks that dominate the country.

The Communist Party of Britain aims to replace the crises, insecurity, profiteering, inequalities and social antagonisms of the capitalist society in which we live by a socialist society.

A socialist Britain would be run for people, not private capitalist profit. The commanding heights of the economy would be publicly owned and production would be socially controlled and planned so as to guarantee everyone the right to a job, a home, education and other social services and benefits. Freedom would be rightly understood, not as the right of individuals to exploit or oppress others, but as the power of human beings, by collectively controlling their society and environment, to develop their individual interests, abilities and talents to the full.

For over a century, British socialists have had this view. It still has to be made a reality. The Communist Party, in this programme, shows how it can be done.

It is not a detailed catalogue of policies covering all issues, nor is it a programme for the next general election or a blueprint for the future. Rather it is an outline of the basic principles governing a long-term strategy for a socialist revolution in Britain. It outlines the general lines of action and struggle which can bring about the unity of the working class and its allies for the winning of political power and the building of socialism. It is a programme of action.

The *British Road to Socialism*, reflecting the experience of the Communist Party and published in its first edition in 1951, is based on the theory of scientific socialism, pioneered by Marx and Engels, and developed by Lenin, creatively applying that theory to the contemporary situation in Britain and the world. It should therefore be read in that context, and has to be constantly tested in practice and re-assessed in the light of experience, both in Britain and internationally. In our programme we make clear our view:

- First, that the major social and economic problems which we face today can only be resolved by putting an end to capitalism and establishing socialism.
- Second, that to achieve socialism, the working class and its allies must take political, economic and state power out of the hands of the capitalist class.

- Third, that decisive advances towards socialism can only be achieved by mobilising the mass of the people in support of an intermediate Alternative Economic and Political Strategy aimed at securing full employment and a general improvement in living standards, a wide expansion of democracy and a genuine policy for peace.
- Fourth, that the socialist revolution can be carried through in Britain by organised mass struggle outside parliament, creating and combining with a socialist Parliamentary majority. This would produce a government and mass movement determined and able to implement a socialist programme.
- Fifth, despite the collapse of attempts at socialism, the contradictions within imperialism and the historical growth of the world's other progressive forces still place considerable obstacles in the way of any attempts at outside intervention in support of the British ruling class, though they do not preclude the possibility that such attempts would be made in one form or another.
 - Sixth, that the forces exist which can put Britain on a course for socialism, and that the need is to unite them in a democratic anti-monopoly alliance led by the organised working class.
 - Seventh, that essential to the achievement of the alliance and the advance to socialism is the building of an effective and much bigger Communist Party.

Our programme is based on confidence in the ability of the British people, led by the organised working class, to overcome all opposition and transform our country into a socialist society where the potentialities of every individual in it would be realised to the full.

The task will not be an easy one. Fierce resistance can be expected from the ruling capitalist class. But in what follows we show how the advance to socialism can be brought about under British conditions in the world as it exists today.

Chapter 1

The Present World Situation

To understand Britain we need to see it in its world context. From 1917 the world comprised two economic and social systems, capitalism and socialism. The history of our times has been shaped by their interaction, as each developed also through its own internal causes.

The outcome seemed to be an irreversible transition from capitalism to the higher system of socialism. But with the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the former USSR that transition has for the time

being been severely retarded and the socialist sector of the world greatly reduced.

As a result of that collapse, the world situation is now shaped primarily by trends within capitalism. Today's trends continue and develop those of the 1980s. To understand these we need to know how capitalism develops.

The development of capitalism

People must consume to live. So in every social system, capitalism included, they must produce the means of life and share them out.

In producing, people enter into two kinds of relations with each other, "technical" relations and "social" relations.

People work by hand and brain, using tools upon the objects of their labour, and turn them into products useful for society— whether they are steel or sausages, lathes or lessons in school. In the scientific language of Marxism, the productive force of human labour-power is (technically) combined with non-human productive forces (means of production) in specialised workplaces, and expended to produce use-values for society.

Production, seen as a technical process, is always "social", but in two senses. First, as a joiner cannot eat beds, nor a baker sleep on loaves, there must be transfers of products between them. The more specialised the producers are, the greater will be the variety of products, and the more complex the network of transfers. Growing specialisation makes production "increasingly social at the level of society as a whole".

But production also becomes "increasingly social at the level of the individual workplace". As technique develops, its use more and more needs the joint efforts of a number of workers of different skills, under a unified control in a single workplace.

Modern societies, both capitalist and socialist, inherited productive forces which were already "social" at both these levels. Within each specialised workplace, workers have a "technical" relation to each other and to the materials and tools they use. This depends upon what they are making and how they make it. Between specialised workplaces and those who use their products, there must be transfers, so that people get the many products they need. The higher the level of technique, the more complex the technical relations of production or, in scientific terms, the greater is the "social character of the production process".

But people are always related to each other in a second way, depending on who owns the means of production. There have been relations between slaves and their owners, between serfs and feudal lords,

between wage-workers and capitalists, and between associated worker-owners in conditions of socialism.

These social relations of production are necessarily bound up with the technical relations. This is because the things, labour-power, means of production, and products, all have owners. So if these things are to be related technically, their owners must be related socially.

Capitalism

In capitalism, the capitalist owners of the means of production use in their workplaces the labour-power which the working class is forced to sell for wages. The relation between capitalists and workers is the primary social relation of production. But there are also secondary social relations, those between the capitalists themselves, and those between one worker and another. Together, these social relations form the relatively stable “economic structure” within which capitalist production takes place.

To put it more concretely—capitalist firms own the means of production and consequently the product that comes from their use. The workers, the large majority, own no means of production, and can obtain the means to live only by working in capitalists’ workplaces under conditions and at wages acceptable to the capitalists. The wages need only be enough to enable the workers to reproduce their labour-power, and are much less than the workers’ product. The difference, the surplus, is appropriated by the capitalists. In this way workers are exploited.

The exploited workers organise to improve their wages and conditions. This threatens capitalists’ competitive positions and their profits. They replace workers by labour-saving investments, and use their profits for this purpose.

So there are two antagonisms: [A] the primary one, the class struggle between capitalists and wage-workers; [B] a normally secondary one, the rivalry within the capitalist class.

It is these two antagonisms together that drive capitalist society forward. For the survivors in inter-capitalist rivalry are those firms which maximise their profits, and use them to expand capacity through labour-saving techniques. As firms expand, they further increase “the social character of production” and the productivity of human labour. This first basic tendency is the source of capitalism’s claim to be historically progressive.

But to maximise profits capitalists appropriate the fruits of increased productivity, and a bigger share of what labour produces becomes concentrated in the hands of capitalists. But that share in its turn is further

centralised among “a constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital”, as “one capitalist kills many”. This second basic tendency Marx called the “increasingly private character of appropriation”.

These two basic tendencies are bound up together, yet pull against each other. Private capitalist appropriation stimulates the social character of production, yet can never use the potential it offers either fully or for the benefit of society as a whole.

One continuous proof of this is periodic slumps, with unsold products, surplus capacity and cessation of new investment, with mass unemployment and the drive for increased intensity of labour and wage cuts. For while it stimulates production, capitalism limits the people’s purchasing power, which forms the ultimate market for production.

As workers fight against exploitation and unemployment, the capitalist ruling class exploits all divisions that exist within the working class, and develops and deploys the forces of the capitalist state.

Monopoly capitalism and imperialism

During the 19th century, these periodic crises speeded up, through bankruptcy and merger, the process of reducing a large number of small firms to a small number of large ones. From this emerged a handful of powerful monopolies straddling industry and banking, supplanting or dominating the smaller competing small firms. Restricting productive capacity relative to markets so as to obtain monopoly prices and profits, they could not find outlets at home for their growing capital. They embarked on investment abroad, aiming to repeat on a world scale the monopoly control they had established nationally. In particular they sought to monopolise sources of raw materials and pre-empt them from imperialist rivals.

They also sought to protect their investments through political control of the countries where they were located, and used this to maintain privileged markets for their own manufactures. Hundreds of millions of people, the large majority of the world’s population, whether as wage-workers or through trade, usury and taxation, were drawn into the sphere of imperialist exploitation and the political and cultural oppression that sustained it. Imperialism had generated for itself a new opponent of enormous potential strength.

In the early 20th century, once the world was completely divided up into colonies and other spheres of influence, expansion of any one imperialism could be achieved only by redivision at the expense of another. No stable carve-up was possible. For capitalist countries develop unevenly, and the faster-growing German industrial power challenged

the status quo dominated by an industrially weaker Britain.

A new stage opened up in the history of capitalism. A struggle between imperialisms was inevitable. To prepare their economies for war and to condition or bludgeon their peoples to accept war's price, the monopolists began to fuse their economic and their political power into a unity, state-monopoly capitalism.

This struggle culminated in the bloodbath of the First World War. Working people, initially bemused by national chauvinism, began to struggle everywhere against war and the system that caused it. In the Russian empire, itself a target for imperialist investment, the military incompetence and corruption of a landlord police-state forged an alliance of the peasants' struggle against landlordism with the workers' struggle against capitalism, out of which came the October Revolution.

A new contradiction—that between two systems (1917–45)

From the Russian revolution of 1917, the new force of socialism impacted upon capitalism's internal contradictions in two ways:

[A] The first was upon the primary class contradiction between imperialism and oppressed peoples, especially the working class.

[B] The second was upon the contradiction between the imperialist powers.

For the working class and oppressed peoples, the Russian revolution was a practical proof of their beliefs. Imperialism was not all-powerful or eternal. Working people could achieve political power and use it to build a social system free from exploitation, unemployment and war. They gained enormously in confidence. More particularly they saw that a communist party based on the theory of scientific socialism had been the vehicle for this breakthrough. On its side, imperialism was faced for the first time in its history with a system which was ending exploitation. This system formed a new and special focus for capitalist hatred. But it was at the same time a new actor in the economic and political relations between states.

Within the imperialist system all the old contradictions continued to develop. The First World War I had stimulated important shifts in the productive forces and production relations. Methods of mass production raised very sharply the productivity of labour, while war economy had accelerated the growth of monopoly. As capitalism became re-stabilised in the mid-1920s, partly by the increased interventions of the developing monopoly-capitalist state, these new shifts meant that workers' consuming power grew more slowly than productive capacity. This contradic-

tion laid the base for capitalism's most profound periodic economic crisis, the Great Depression of the 1930s.

This crisis was uneven between imperialist countries, being deepest where there was no cushion of colonies but where the productive forces had grown most rapidly. In Germany the deepest crisis coincided with a strong but disunited working-class movement. The German ruling class violently destroyed it as preparation for a new imperialist war to redivide the world in its own favour.

That world now included the socialist USSR. Nazi Germany used the anti-Sovietism of powerful sections of the imperialist ruling classes of other countries to strengthen its own economic and military position. The working class led the struggle to build a popular front against war and against fascism, which was the principal force for war. In the struggle against fascist aggression the Soviet working-class state was able to use divisions within imperialism, and successfully prevented a united front of imperialism against itself.

The important lesson is that when powerful working-class forces were fighting to prevent war and then fighting for military victory over fascism, the divisions within imperialism proved to be stronger than the uniting factor of their common hatred of socialism.

The new productive forces after 1945 and their effects upon production relations

After 1945 the productive forces available to society grew at an unprecedented rate. This was the result of the scientific and technological revolution (STR). Widely based, this was marked particularly by the so-called information revolution in which very complex mental processes can for the first time be carried out by machines. If the fruits of the STR are to be used, an ever more complex division and unity of labour is required, and very big expenditures of resources in research and development. In some spheres (e.g. aircraft, automobiles, informatics, chemicals, automation and robotics) giant enterprises form the minimum scale of operation to achieve this, but even they need collaboration with other giants. The fundamental research which underpins the STR as a whole can be organised and financed only by the state, or in some spheres (e.g. nuclear fusion) only by collaboration between states. The STR calls also for a supportive base in education, such as can be achieved only by the state. Few countries are large enough to sustain such activities in every field, and a new division of labour between countries, with a new geographical distribution of productive forces, is objectively necessary. This affects the composition of the specialised productive forces in any country.

How far the potential of the STR becomes embodied in production, and what actual changes emerge in the make-up and geographical location of productive forces, depends upon the stimuli or barriers which economic relations offer to the owners and controllers of the means of production.

Under capitalism such changes are mainly the spontaneous outcome of the decisions of giant capitalist transnational companies (TNCs) linked with their respective capitalist states, tempered only by popular struggle. The motivation is individual monopoly profit, not the needs of nations or of humanity as a whole. The decisions of transnational companies—which sectors to expand, which to contract, which type of productive forces to develop, which to make obsolete or redundant—determine the fate of whole regions, nations, and groups of workers.

During these last decades the transnational companies have followed two paths:

- [A] The predominant path was that pursued by the initially strongest, those of the USA, of victory through liberalisation in the global movement of commodities and capital. As a result, world trade has increased faster than production, and international capital movements faster than either. Penetration of capital from one country into another has weakened or destroyed the old monopolies which rested on protection within single nation-states, and rebuilt rivalry for the time being on a new basis: rivalry between globally operating giants.
- [B] But there was always a second path, that pursued by the initially weaker monopolists of Japan and Germany. These sought to build up their internal strength through state-assisted co-ordination within a protected fortress. This was also a major motive in the building of the European Community.

So long as the capitalist world economy was expanding rapidly, and so long as rival transnationals could share in swallowing-up their smaller common competitors, the first path prevailed. But those following the second path grew faster, and as the rate of world expansion slowed down, mounted a challenge. The economic outcome was the increasing polarisation of the world's monopolists into three groups (USA, EC, Japan), the growing demand for protectionary measures, typified by the failure to agree on the Uruguay round of tariff reductions, by the Single European Act and the North American Free Trade Area. The political outcome was German pressure for a military face to the EC, and Japanese pressure for military "responsibilities".

The contradictions in the world in the mid-1980s*The working class versus imperialism*

This relationship takes two forms:

[A] The first form—traditionally represented as its primary form—is that of the working class with state power, organised in the socialist world system, versus imperialism. This relationship had always been defined as peaceful co-existence, competition and co-operation between two systems as a particular form of the class struggle.

Since 1945 it has been increasingly influenced by developments in the productive forces, for two reasons.

- First of all, nuclear weapons, the main military application of the STR, were initially believed by imperialism to be a viable road to victory over socialism. This has proved to be false, and would be even if the USA could maintain nuclear superiority.
- Secondly, the impact of the world's productive forces upon the natural and socially-made environment increasingly demands global co-operation.

It follows from both these, and especially the first, that the economic sphere was beginning to replace the military sphere as the decisive one. That system would win which could best develop the potential of the STR and use it for social advance.

The logic of capitalist development and its present profound economic crisis demonstrate beyond question the necessity of socialism. But from at least the mid-1970s the USSR and Eastern Europe began to fall behind capitalism—above all Japan and Germany—in the quality and rate of growth of the productive forces. The traditional statement that “the socialist world system was becoming (or had become) the decisive factor in world development” was not valid. In the decisive sphere of economic development the balance of forces was already before the 1980s shifting against “actually existing socialism”, whose bureaucratic command structure in economic political and ideological life proved unable to use the productive forces better than capitalism.

Attempts to renovate socialist production relations and bring democratic control into political and social life, already begun in the 1960s but stifled, were renewed in the mid-1980s.

The earlier achievements of socialism had a powerful ideological attraction for the working class of the industrialised countries and the peoples of former colonial countries seeking a model of social development.

But when the socialist economies began to stagnate economically, their attraction as a model to under-developed countries weakened.

American imperialism was also to some extent successfully able to undermine a number of these countries, such as Mozambique and Nicaragua, using a variety of means, including financial and physical boycotts, military assistance to armed opposition, cultural and ideological propaganda and constraints on social spending attached to IMF loans. It has also to be faced honestly that the political and ideological results of the bureaucratic command system were far from attractive to the working class of countries struggling under conditions of bourgeois democracy.

The *glasnost* of the mid-1980s had a double effect on the progressive forces. On the one hand, as in 1956, the exposure of long-standing distortions of socialism weakened the confidence of many who had from ignorance or loyalty denied their existence. This is one reason for the divisions in the communist movement. Conversely, however, for the large majority of the working class, who had always accepted the existence of and been repelled by the distortions, attempts to rectify them increased the attractiveness of socialism.

[B] The second form of the relation between imperialism and the working class is the struggle of workers in the capitalist world against the state-monopoly capitalism of the transnationals.

The working class expends its labour-power under the control of TNCs whose rivalry in the struggle for monopoly profits forces them to introduce new techniques of production. In doing this they alter drastically on a world basis the technical make-up and the geographical location of their productive forces. This is by no means always done on the basis of seeking labour with the lowest wages. But it always creates new possibilities for playing-off workers of one country against those of another, especially as the organisation and consciousness of workers is not evenly developed everywhere.

During the '70s and '80s capitalism's laws of operation no longer served to maintain the rates of expansion of output that had marked the '50s and '60s. So as new methods of production raised workers' productivity of labour faster than output was allowed to grow, a smaller labour force was required and there emerged a spontaneous increase in unemployment.

This was aggravated by deliberate actions of the monopoly capitalist state to damp down production further, as capitalism proved incapable of combining price stability with high levels of economic activity. At the same time right-wing governments willingly carried out, and reformist ones surrendered to, the wishes of monopoly capital for reduced taxes on profits. As a result they either cut social expenditures or transferred the tax burden to workers, or both.

Everywhere the growing unemployment created less favourable bargaining conditions and reduced the membership of trade unions. Employers returned to traditional methods of victimisation of shop stewards, to short-term contracts and to part-time and unorganised labour. Governments introduced legislation which further limited the power of trade unions, and in that context encouraged negotiating practices conducive to class collaboration.

But the fact that millions of people are seeking a way out presents new opportunities of struggle for the road to socialism.

Inter-imperialist contradictions

We have shown earlier that the basic cause of capitalism's development is the interaction of two contradictory aspects of production. We have seen how concentration and centralisation of capital ownership leads to monopoly capitalism, to imperialism and state-monopoly capitalism.

In our time, as a result of capitalism's further development, the basic contradiction has reached a particular historical form, with new features.

Its productive forces are those of the epoch of the scientific and technical revolution. The qualitative changes in the productive forces have profoundly increased the general impact of society upon the inherited environment and generated new dangers. This is particularly true of nuclear fission, which has transformed war into a method of solving inter-state disputes which for the first time in history threatens our very lives.

Its relations of production, exchange and distribution remain those of state-monopoly capitalism, but that has been transformed by the full maturing of a new feature. The decisive monopolies have become transnational companies, exporting capital from the country of the monopoly's main owners to large numbers of other countries, with each transnational company organising its profit-maximising activities on a global basis. The transnational company is the particular anti-social form of the international division of labour through which monopoly capitalism adapts to the new potential of the productive forces. But there are quite different forms of adaptation by nation-states which can benefit humanity as a whole.

The development of transnational companies combines two tendencies:

The first is that the old national framework, within which individual monopolies grew by reinvesting their profits and by merger with other monopolies, is substantially replaced by a new one. Today, the

concentration and centralisation of capital takes place on a global basis, across national frontiers.

This deepens the polarisation of society into two classes, as TNCs from several countries destroy or appropriate smaller rivals. Thus, in most developed capitalist countries the wage-working class now forms 80–90% of the economically active population. But in each country it is a class that is exploited by capitalists from more than one country. And each TNC in turn exploits workers in many countries. So the TNCs from many countries have a growing common interest in creating, in each country where they operate, the most favourable conditions for capitalist exploitation. Where a TNC is itself too weak to create those conditions *vis à vis* the working class of its own country through its own state power, it seeks the collaboration of TNCs from other states, who exploit the same workers. More generally, the TNCs of a number of countries pool their state strength. This is one element in the antagonistic unity between the TNCs of the European Community.

But there is a second, and opposite, tendency. When TNCs began their rapid growth in the 1960s, the monopolies of each country had long been integrated with the state to form state-monopoly capitalism. In their continuing struggle, now marked by a wider arena of rivalry, by more powerful weapons and therefore by greater hazards, no transnational company can dispense with the vital economic and political aid of the state. Failure to take full account of this tendency leads to the mistaken view that “TNCs have no country”.

The integration between state-monopoly capitals of different states

The United States and Japan are unitary states. The TNCs of the USA or Japan, even where they have the majority of their capital dispersed in different countries of the globe, have owners who belong to a single nation-state, and expect and require their state to support their external struggle against rivals and to create internally a class and financial regime favourable to that struggle. In these two cases there is no ambiguity about their integration with the state for these ends.

In Europe, the strongest TNCs have always sought the aid of their national governments to build their own hegemony through wider centralisations of capital within Europe. For in processes of centralisation of capital in its many forms—from temporary consortia through cartels to the higher forms of merger and to inter-state alliances and integrations—monopoly capital knows only one law—domination of the stronger over the weaker. This is the history of every European monopoly capitalism and especially of the strongest industrially, namely Germany. And it is part of the history of the USA today, when powerful

TNCs from the generally weaker state of Japan invest in the stronger US in order to achieve domination over weaker US rivals in particular sectors.

But the use of state power to establish monopolies which dominate on the single-country or European scale is no longer enough. The struggle for domination has a global arena, and European TNCs are disadvantaged without a unitary all-European state. True, some TNCs, or weaker capitalisms, seek to maintain vestiges of old positions within Europe as subordinate agents of stronger US or Japanese partners. They split the front of European monopoly capital. But the predominant tendency in Europe up to now has been for the industrially most powerful monopoly capitalism, Germany, to organise others under its own hegemony into an economic unity backed by a unitary state capable of taking on the US and Japan in a global struggle.

Imperialism versus the "Third World"

The changes stemming from the STR and operating through the actions of the TNCs have had an impact upon all countries and regions, but unevenly. Their most devastating effect has been upon the poorest and least developed countries in the world, who are faced with the need for massive adjustments in the composition of their output in a brief space of time, yet have neither the resources nor the social structure to do it.

In these countries the changes have a two-fold effect. The first is indirect. As productivity and incomes have risen in the developed countries, the increases in personal consumption have not gone to increase imports of food, whose average proportion in household budgets has in fact fallen to less than 20%. Among the forms of consumption which have expanded fastest have been health, education, and other services, which are intensive in their use of labour rather than of materials.

The second is direct. The industrialised countries' imports are increasingly of sophisticated manufactured goods, whose raw material content is either decreasing, or composed of artificial substitutes, or both. There has been a historical decline in the demand for goods exported by former colonies whose structure had been formed by their historical role as the raw-material hinterland of imperialism. By the mid-1980s the developed capitalist OECD drew less than 10% of its imports from them, compared with 75% from within itself. Of imports of food, beverages and tobacco, and of crude materials other than petroleum, OECD drew less than 20% from former dependencies, as compared with two thirds from within itself. Even in respect of the OPEC countries, who are far from being poor, the savings in energy use,

the slower rate of growth of the world economy, and the development of nuclear power have all kept down the demand for oil, even though raw material substitutes are made from it.

All the old methods of exploitation of the underdeveloped countries through trade, such as transfer pricing, continue to prevent their development and to benefit the TNCs involved. But that trade is of much smaller significance to imperialist centres than it was in the '50s or '60s.

But the relative reduction in demand for raw materials from underdeveloped countries has in turn shifted foreign investment away from them and towards sophisticated industrial products and the developed countries which make them. The picture of imperialist investment as directed solely to raw materials, and mainly to economically underdeveloped countries, while it had some substance up to the 1960s, has been replaced by a massive historical shift away from raw materials, and away from the poorer countries.

For example, by 1987, 84% of the stock of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) owned by British TNCs was located in the developed capitalist countries of Western and Northern Europe, North America, Japan and the (so-called "white") Commonwealth. Of the remaining 16%, a considerable part was located in the Newly Industrialising Countries (e.g. of the stock of FDI in Asia more than three-fifths was in Hong Kong and Singapore, and only 7% in India), and not more than 10% in the underdeveloped countries. Less than 1% was invested in the oil-exporting countries. Oil TNCs were earlier pushed out of production in the majority of oil-exporting countries, shifted production into politically more secure areas, including the North Sea, and moved downstream in an effort to monopolise refining and distribution. For the longer-term future, the strategic importance of oil must diminish as general environmental needs and ecologically viable transport systems reduce the consumption of fossil fuels.

A similar tendency operated for the foreign investment by TNCs of other capitalist countries. This means also that the flow of rent, interest and profit on overseas investments is now predominantly between the developed countries themselves.

We must likewise assess correctly the significance of "Third World" debt to the banks and governments of the imperialist countries. The majority of debt is in fact owed by Newly Industrialising Countries such as Brazil and Mexico and the Argentine. But even if the annual payments from the "Third World" in the narrower sense were as high as \$50 billion, this must be compared with the size of the national income of all OECD countries together—in 1987 this was \$12,500 billion. Of

this total the receipts from debt payment accounted for less than one half of 1%.

These debt payments pushed poor countries into starvation; but they could not be an important source of the wealth of First World monopolists.

This analysis of world economic relations shows that exploitation of the working class of the highly developed capitalist countries (the so-called First World) had already in the 1980s become overwhelmingly the most important source of profits for imperialism as a whole. So long as that situation holds, it follows that the rapidly sharpening struggle between the three main imperialist blocs for redivision of the world must be primarily a redivision of markets and spheres of investment and influence within the First World itself.

However, the oppression and increasing indebtedness of much of the Third World will continue to give rise to revolutionary struggles and attempts to break from the yoke of imperialism, although the developments in the Soviet Union will make the struggle more difficult. In addition, the highly developed capitalist countries will be concerned to control or limit any new imperialist groupings developing. These new imperialist groupings will be involved in the struggle between the three major groupings of imperialism, and thus we can anticipate the risk of further military conflict outside the First World. Control of strategic oil supplies will continue to be of importance in the short and medium term.

How is this complex of contradictions changed by the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the USSR?

The new relations of Eastern Europe and the former USSR to imperialism

The former USSR and the other former socialist states are not identical in their stage of transition from old to new. The former GDR is integrated into capitalist Germany; the remainder are neither politically in the Warsaw Pact nor economically in CMEA. Economic relations with capitalist countries, formerly confined to trade, are deepening through direct TNC investment and financial links with the IMF and the European Community.

But it is too early to say exactly what new form of social system is coming into being.

Eastern Europe cannot easily or rapidly break long-standing economic links with the former USSR. For the capitalist markets at this stage of the crisis are hardly waiting with open arms for new competition. In Eastern Germany it is relatively easy for the Treuhand to sell

off factories so cheaply that it becomes profitable for German or other capital to invest in them and use the cheaper labour to compete in Western markets. In other independent states privatisation is less easy. Nonetheless, unless powerful socialist forces re-emerge, these countries are probably becoming part of the world capitalist system, and the struggle of the internal progressive forces will take place within that context.

The relation of the former USSR to imperialism is more fluid, and the attitude of imperialist countries towards it ambivalent. They are united in welcoming all defections from socialism. But they calculate also in terms of balance of power. A new capitalist state of 300 million people, highly educated and with a developed industrial and scientific base, could hardly be kept in a subordinate position. Nor would it be some new source of "access" to oil and metals. These have long formed some 60% of Soviet exports. A powerful industrial country would in the not so long run become a serious force in world markets. That is why they imperialism welcomes a disintegration which leaves only the smaller Russia as a potential rival.

Effects upon inter-imperialist conflict

The collapse of the former Soviet Union coincides in time with a rapidly sharpening conflict between the three major imperialist blocs. Attempts will be made by each bloc to use the individual nation-states that composed the Soviet Union as factors in that conflict. Such attempts are especially likely from the US which needs to offset the growing threat of the EC and Japan.

The USSR and the USA were moving in the late 1980s, for reasons we have outlined earlier, towards a more secure phase of peaceful co-existence and competition. Today, the possession of super-power nuclear weapons by some nation states of the former Soviet Union turns the imperialist drive for realignment into a destabilising and dangerous process. The struggle for continued nuclear disarmament and for non-proliferation needs to be accelerated.

The collapse of socialism in the USSR and Eastern Europe has replaced the East-West conflict by inter-imperialist rivalry as the principal (or central) contradiction between states. No longer needing to unite their resources in the common struggle against the USSR, the imperialist states can devote all their energies to the redivision of the world. But at the same time it has removed the USSR as an important force for peace in world where the final arbiter of inter-imperialist conflict has always been war. In this context the role of China as a state becomes more important.

Effects upon the relation between imperialism and dependent countries

Socialist military and political aid has frequently played a crucial role in warding off imperialist interference from countries struggling for independence, in particular Vietnam and Cuba.

But in assessing the effects of its disappearance from that role, we have to ask two questions.

First, was that role always based on a realistic appraisal of the effects of its use? From the mid-1960s there was over-optimism about the possibility of going directly from the national-liberation to the socialist revolution, based on a wrong appraisal of internal class forces. Where bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces prevailed, Soviet military aid was wasted and scarce economic resources were used not for development in the interests of the people, but in parasitic consumption by minorities.

Second, when aid has been accompanied by interventions which were not consistent with the declared policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, the world peace and anti-imperialist forces have been weakened.

The absence of the socialist countries from this arena will give greater scope for imperialist adventures, including even a reversion to the open military methods of colonialism. But it would be mechanical and misleading to draw parallels with imperialism's position in the period before the Russian revolution. The present-day intensity of the contradictions within imperialism is dependent not only on the role of socialist countries, but at least as much upon the higher levels of consciousness and organisation achieved by the working class and the national independence forces in 70 years of struggle.

How to tackle the contradictions in the interests of social progress

To preserve and develop socialist countries and those of socialist orientation, their right to self-determination without imperialist interference must be defended by the world's working-class movements.

In the former socialist states, the best condition for slowing down and even reversing the trend to capitalism is that the people's democratic and socialist organisations shall have the greatest freedom to operate. Their fight to keep their countries' development free from external capitalist intervention is a vital part of the working-class struggle for national self-determination everywhere.

In the capitalist world the principal historical trend is the growing imperialist struggle for redivision of the main sources of monopoly profits. As always, the preparation for this means a deepening trend towards reaction in every sphere of social life.

Economically, this trend coincides at present with a severe cyclical economic crisis. The two together mean aggravated pressure upon wages and the social wage, reinforced by political and ideological offensives. The response to this must be practical struggles for the first stages of alternative democratic strategies consistent with the historical position and traditions of each country. At this stage, there is particular need to defend jobs and trade union rights and to build solidarity against the TNCs.

Politically and ideologically, pressure for a reactionary unity within Europe will coincide with pressure for growing hostility towards the USA and Japan. Alongside chauvinism, the ruling class will everywhere seek to make into its scapegoat the national and ethnic minorities. In this context communists have the special responsibility to fight for the working-class conception of national self-determination combined with solidarity for workers and oppressed peoples everywhere. This includes above all a combination of two struggles—the fight for national independence and anti-TNC policies inside each country, and the fight for solidarity with the peoples of other countries engaged in similar struggles.

The future role of the United Nations depends, as it always has, upon the balance of forces and interests between nation-states, and between peoples and governments. The collapse of the USSR removes a powerful progressive force from the Security Council and UN agencies. The Soviet Union, from its inception, attempted to pursue a policy of peaceful co-existence between nations.

Today growing divisions within imperialism preclude a US monopoly, and provide openings for greater influence by smaller and “Third World” states, where popular struggle can reinforce a neutral or anti-imperialist stance. This emphasises the importance of the Non-Aligned Movement. The objective global interdependence created by nuclear weapons and the growing threat to the environment also gives opportunities to exert popular pressure upon governments through UN forums and directly through Non-Governmental Organisations. A great responsibility rests upon the working class of developed countries which are the main source of the nuclear and environmental dangers.

In all these struggles communists advance their conception of the path to socialism. This raises the question: What is socialism?

The conception of socialism

What policies during the last stages triggered the final collapse of actually existing socialism is a question which will not be quickly or easily resolved.

For Marxism, a socialist order of society became necessary not only because capitalism was unjust, but above all because it became obsolete. Compared with what was possible, it became a barrier to the development of the productive forces and their use by human beings for their own full, free, and beneficial development.

Only if the main means of production are collectively owned by those whose labour sets them in motion, and only if the people fully exercise their rights of ownership, and have full control of their own future, can the creative initiative of tens of millions be mobilised.

This the bureaucratic command system could not do. That is why production and intellectual life stagnated, socialist legality was violated, and the national and ethnic questions remained unsolved.

The only model of socialism that is capable of winning the allegiance of the working class is that which starts from Lenin's conception:

Comrades, working people. Remember that now you yourselves are at the helm of state! No-one will help you if you yourselves do not unite and take into your hands all affairs of state . . . Socialism cannot be decreed from above. Its spirit rejects the mechanical bureaucratic approach; living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves.

The struggle for environmental and ecological security

Success in the campaign for peace and disarmament would release enormous resources for the conquest of poverty, hunger and disease, and for protecting the world's ecology. By opening up a new system of international relations it would make possible co-operation between all states, irrespective of their social system, to deal with the problem of global environmental protection. For this is essentially an international problem, one where the interdependence within the modern world is most apparent.

The main obstacle to establishing this new system of international co-operation, so vital for protecting the environment, is imperialism and its world-wide rush for profit and power. Imperialism has ravaged the resources and environment of the world for a century and more and laid the basis for many of today's problems.

This has produced a situation where the stability of the life-support system on our planet is under threat, though the urgent need to tackle the problem is not yet appreciated. The threat arises from a complex of factors, the most important of which are the greenhouse effect, ozone depletion, acid rain, de-forestation, desertification, chemical, agricultural and sewage pollution of the air, of rivers, lakes and the sea, and the

extinction of species, which is occurring very rapidly with the destruction of the rain forests. Disposal of toxic wastes from the chemical industry is a serious problem, as is the disposal of radioactive waste, including that left in nuclear plants at the end of their useful life.

The transnationals, aided by imperialist governments, have exported ecologically dangerous processes to the developing countries where safety laws and their enforcement are inadequate. This adds to the total pollution of the environment and must be stopped.

Pressure on the environment is exacerbated by the continued growth in world population. World resources are finite and the planet clearly cannot sustain an infinite number of people. While moves to contain population growth must be welcomed, it is essential that population policies are seen as just one element in a programme of sustainable development. Family planning policies should be combined with a far-reaching programme of education and above all poverty alleviation. The world needs development to raise living standards most urgently in the developing world.

It is a well-known fact that in poor countries poverty leads to a desire for large families both as a form of insurance against old-age and a source of labour for subsistence agriculture. This desire persists even in the early stages of development and, combined with improvements in medical services, leads for a period to acceleration in population growth. But earlier experience shows that once development has become established and poverty decreases, family size tends to diminish.

However, development in living standards must be carried out in a way that does not jeopardise the world environment for future generations. Sustainable development, where the protection of the environment is central, is an achievable goal. It must be recognised that population growth is not sufficient to explain the degradation of the environment. A major factor is capitalism's drive for profits, its unplanned exploitation of the earth's resources and the consumerist psychology which it engenders. New bio-technologies which use as their raw material species of plants and animals found in the Third World, particularly the rain forests, should not fall into the hands of the transnationals which have such a record of ruthless exploitation and destruction of other natural resources.

An environmentally safe system of energy production does not yet exist. One is urgently needed, since the present system of energy production is a major factor in the changes emerging in the environment. These could become catastrophic as is indicated by the greenhouse effect. In dealing with this, greater emphasis will have to be placed on

energy conservation, and on the development of renewable resources and nuclear fusion, less reliance on fossil fuels. Cheap public transport will cut down the use of cars and the production of carbon dioxide from the combustion of petrol. The burning of coal will remain a major source of energy for the foreseeable future. It should be British, not imported coal. Fluidised-bed combustion and adequate scrubbing of waste gases must be introduced to cut down the emissions which produce acid rain. But because of the environmental hazards from nuclear power based on fission, particularly from the disposal of nuclear wastes and the problems of decommissioning, existing nuclear plants should be phased out.

We must move towards an overall system of production in which waste products are either eliminated or reduced to an absolute minimum. The atmosphere, the oceans, and the land can no longer be treated as a dustbin. Waste must either be recycled or used as a starting point for other processes. If this is not possible in a particular process of production, it may be that that process will have to be abandoned or replaced by an alternative process which does not produce unusable waste. And at all times, the effects of human activity on the environment will have to be carefully monitored, and research carried out to deal with problems as they arise. This applies to agriculture as much as to industry.

The change to the sort of closed system of waste-free production to which we have referred is incompatible with the existence of an unplanned capitalist economy dominated by the transnationals and the drive for maximum profit. This means that the short-term objective of profit takes precedence over the long-term consequences for the environment. It makes the case for socialism as a system of society where there are no in-built obstacles to environmental protection.

Private capitalist profit is just such an in-built obstacle. It leads to the wasteful levels of consumption of raw materials seen today in the highly industrialised world. Radical changes in production techniques to reduce this waste are essential if the world as a whole is to attain a high standard of living.

It follows that measures to protect the environment must feature prominently in any programme for advance to socialism. But even under socialism, as experience in the socialist countries shows, environmental protection will require constant vigilance, public awareness and democratic involvement.

To protect the environment calls for the widest possible development of democracy, openness and accountability. This is a struggle for today. But it is also part of the total struggle for socialism in Britain and the world.

Chapter 2

Britain's Crisis

Britain's problems today reflect the general problems of world imperialism, and at the same time exhibit certain specific features arising from its parasitic colonial past. Britain, the first industrial capitalist power, was once the "workshop of the world", dominating world trade and commerce, and controlling the largest colonial empire in history. Up to the First World War, London was the financial capital of the world and the pound was monarch of the international monetary system.

All that has changed. By the turn of the century new capitalist nations, including France and Germany but especially the US were increasingly challenging Britain for supremacy. Since 1945 the peoples of the colonies have fought for and in the main achieved political independence leading to the collapse of the British Empire. The need for a complete break with past imperialist policies was urgent, but instead, successive Tory or Labour governments continued with them.

Central to this was the effort to maintain the international role of the pound and of Britain as a major financial centre. British monopolies continued to invest huge resources abroad at the expense of investment at home. Colonial wars and repression continued after the Second World War, while neo-colonial policies thwarted the efforts of former colonies to achieve real independence, and racist and oppressive regimes were backed in Southern Africa and in other parts of the world. Britain played the role of junior partner in US imperialism's efforts to hold back national liberation and direct the cold war against socialism, which meant a gigantic waste of resources on arms and bases abroad.

In the initial post-war period these policies, though their cost was enormous, did not prevent advances in living standards from being made. The immediate post-war situation favoured sustained expansion in the world economy and this meant that Britain also enjoyed a period of growth. Although Britain's economy compared unfavourably with those of other capitalist countries, showing one of the worst records for investment, productivity, and trading performance, it nevertheless compared favourably with its performance in the pre-war period. This meant that significant concessions could be yielded to working people in terms of jobs, wages and other material and social benefits. The creation and expansion of the Welfare State in this period is important evidence of this.

This is not to say that the capitalist class in Britain voluntarily or benevolently granted concessions to working people. On the contrary,

these concessions were the fruits of a hard struggle, with its roots in the pre-war period itself. Nevertheless the fact remains that in the early post-war years of relative expansion, the capitalists were favourably placed to yield concessions. The situation altered towards the end of the 1960s and early 1970s when the chronic weaknesses of the British economy, temporarily cushioned by the conditions of post-war world expansion, became sharply exposed with the change in the economic climate. The crisis in the world capitalist economy reacted with extra special force on the ailing British economy because of its long-standing and acute underlying weakness. This meant that the task of placing the burden of the crisis upon the shoulders of the working people, and clawing back previous concessions, was for the British ruling class that much more urgent and had to be executed that much more quickly.

The Heath government was the first to attempt a complete break with Keynesian style class-collaboration policies which had in the main characterised all post-war Labour and Tory governments alike. From the moment of its election in June 1970 the Heath government opted for open confrontation with the trade unions and labour movement in a swift attempt to reverse many of the post-war gains won by the working population. But judged even from its own class standpoint, the Heath government was an abject failure.

When Labour was elected to office in February 1974, many thought that the magnificent struggles of the miners, the dockers, the power workers and the whole working class might be rewarded, because Labour's election manifesto promised to "bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families". But this did not happen. It was thwarted by commitment to the class-collaborationist Social Contract. As a result, there was a further substantial shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of the capitalist class.

Essentially the class objectives of Labour's right-wing leadership were the same as those of Heath and the Tories. The difference was that, where Heath had failed to achieve these objectives by means of open confrontation with the labour movement, Wilson and Callaghan had succeeded by enlisting the collaboration of the majority of trade union leaders. In September 1974 the TUC endorsed the Social Contract, which was presented as a means for involving the unions in a partnership with the government in the making of national economic and social policy. But its real specific purpose was to get the TUC itself to enforce and police a wage-restraint policy, something that was unprecedented in the history of UK government-labour relations.

The results of the Social Contract were catastrophic for the working class. The period between 1974 and 1977 saw a larger recorded drop in real wages than during any comparable period in UK history. This was accompanied by a wide-sweeping attack on the social wage as the government, operating behind the facade of an IMF diktat, slashed government spending on industry, infrastructure and social services. The period of the Social Contract was for the working class a period of betrayal and broken promises. But as their position steadily worsened, and their initial confidence and expectation turned into disgust and disillusionment with the Labour government, the ground was inexorably prepared for the return of another Tory government under Mrs. Thatcher in 1979.

Tory strategy today

The strategic objectives of the Tories in the current period are basically twofold: to develop and sustain a comprehensive assault on the incomes and living standards of working people so as to restore and consolidate the profit base of the monopoly corporations and the financial sector; and at the same time to adopt every means possible to suppress democratic rights with the intention of breaking working-class resistance to these belligerent wealth redistribution policies on behalf of monopoly capital. Towards these objectives, Tory legislation has facilitated the deeper and more direct penetration of monopoly capital in many areas of social life and activity, such as sport, leisure, culture, education and housing.

The Tory government has sought to hide its real class aims behind an elaborate propaganda campaign extolling the virtues of private enterprise and the market economy, and the so-called freedom of initiative and individual choice which they permit. But the harsh reality of the situation in Britain today is increasingly exposing the hollowness of these claims. Take for example the monetarist economic policies of the Tories which, they say, are designed to squeeze out inflation, restore business confidence and competitiveness, and thereby eventually secure long-term improvements in industry and jobs.

Far from this happening, their cuts in public spending and investment, their sell-off of vital public assets and nationalised industries at knock-down prices to private monopolies both here and abroad, their encouragement of a continuing exodus of capital, and their volatile interest rate and exchange-rate policies have all combined to accelerate the decline of Britain's economy leading to massive redundancies and worsened job conditions, continuing inflation and balance of payments crises and cuts in living standards.

Of course there is nothing accidental about all this since the same policies that have attacked living standards have also resulted in a massive accumulation and concentration of wealth in the hands of the monopoly capital sector. This same disparity is evident in regard to Britain's continuing membership of the Common Market where the extra profits enjoyed by British transnational corporations and the City of London institutions, through operating in a wider European market, stand in sharp contrast to the decline in workers' jobs and real incomes as many smaller British firms collapse in the face of increased foreign competition, or as British and foreign transnationals increasingly relocate their production units in other, more central, parts of the Market.

In actual fact, Britain's manufacturing base has been eroded to the extent that in the current period, for the first time in its 200 year history as an industrial nation, Britain imports more manufactured goods than it exports. And so little is spent on industrial research and development that Britain has now become very much a second-rate low-tech and low-skill economy. The mass unemployment resulting from these policies has caused enormous hardship for millions of working people, disrupting whole communities particularly in Scotland, Wales and in the north of England. Urban communities have been impoverished by cut-backs and mass unemployment and have been thrown to the mercy of capitalist market forces. New development is often carried out in the interests of the big property, leisure and retailing companies not primarily to serve the needs of the majority of local people.

The same is true in rural areas where local communities often face problems of seasonal, low-paid employment, second-home ownership, exploitative tourist development, and the growth of agri-business. Far from having any real concern about solving the problem of unemployment, the Tories have employed it as a weapon to clamp down on working-class morale and confidence, knowing that fear of the dole-queue makes many workers refrain from struggle and strike action. At the same time, unemployment has been used in a more direct way to weaken working-class resistance, as policies are implemented which compel the unemployed to compete for jobs with those at work in order to force down wages, effect speed-ups and further undermine trade union power.

The attack on workers' wages and job conditions has been accompanied by a wide sweeping assault on social service provision to the extent that the Welfare State, steadily weakened through years of government underfunding, is now facing the prospect of outright abolition. The reductions in pensions, unemployment and child benefit, and in other benefits; the run down and dismemberment of the National Health Ser-

vice; the cut-backs in house construction; the cut-backs in education and the so-called reforms which together pose a threat to the whole principle of a free, all-round state education for all; and the deteriorating conditions in all forms of public transport are all contributing to a severe reduction in living standards and in the general quality of life for the majority of the population of Britain.

The worst affected are inevitably those sections who are especially disadvantaged, including women, young people, pensioners, ethnic minorities, the unemployed and one-parent families. Not only do women perform the bulk of work in the home, but they also comprise a growing proportion of the paid workforce, tending to occupy part-time, low-skilled and low-paid jobs. So, as well as wide social discrimination, women face additional exploitation and discrimination at work. This social and economic position makes them particularly vulnerable to cuts in social benefits and social service provision. At the same time these cuts inevitably worsen the position of the majority of black people, particularly black women, and black youth, who are oppressed not only as members of the working class, but who face various forms of racist prejudice and discrimination because of their colour.

The savagery with which the Tories have attacked the incomes, jobs and living conditions of working people in Britain is a sign of their intention to secure a massive redistribution of wealth towards the capitalist class, and at the same time to make the process permanent and irreversible. In particular, they want to force the working class to lower its aspirations and to accept lower standards as a way of life. But to achieve this objective, it is necessary to undermine the confidence and the ability of the working class to fight back. This explains why the attack on the trade unions, the main organisations of working-class solidarity and struggle, has been, and continues to remain, the central plank in the Tory anti-working class-programme.

While the Tories have used unemployment to heighten the climate of insecurity, and weaken working-class morale, they have at the same time passed anti-union legislation to ensure more direct, physical constraints on trade union resistance. The successive Employment and Trade Union Acts of the 1980's have removed piece by piece many of those immunities from the law, which enabled trade unions to adopt a wide range of activities to defend the interests of their members. In particular, many forms of strikes and other types of union action, such as secondary picketing, have been made illegal. The imposition of mandatory ballots on every conceivable occasion and the other forms of gross interference in the internal affairs of trade unions have further helped to debilitate trade union fightback potential. At the same time that these

and other measures have weakened the bargaining position of the trade unions, the power of the employers has been strengthened as they now find it easier to dismiss workers and to sack strikers, to have shop stewards disciplined, and trade unions financially crippled in a court of law.

The attack on trade union organisation represents a serious threat to democracy in Britain today. But under the Tories the attack on democracy is comprehensive and uses every instrument of state power, including the police, the judiciary, the secret services, the civil service, as well as the media and other forms of influencing public opinion. With the passage of legislation such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Official Secrets Act, and the Public Order Act, the intention is to give the police and the courts a wider range of powers to harass, intimidate and convict people, and to make it generally more difficult for people to voice their opposition in any effective way. There must be opposition to attempts to bring back the death penalty.

The Tory attacks on living standards and democratic rights have combined with a reactionary ideological offensive to create a climate of fear, insecurity and intolerance, in which personal greed and ambition is encouraged, and any sense of collective responsibility or concern for people's mutual well-being is undermined. Individual private charity cannot be a substitute for organised, collective provision.

In Tory Britain the conditions have been created in which anti-social and self-destructive behaviour has increased. The widespread portrayal of women as sex objects, for example through mass-produced pornography has led to less freedom and greater insecurity for women as well as perpetuating divisive and oppressive sexist attitudes within the working class.

While the attacks on democracy and the reinforcement of an atmosphere of intolerance and repression have affected the majority of people in Britain, they have had a more severe impact upon those sections who face extra forms of oppression. This, for example, is the case with gays and lesbians, who have met with increased prejudice and discrimination in the recent period. The position of black people in particular has worsened. Apart from confronting growing racist prejudice and violence, much of which has been aggravated by Tory economic and social policies, their legal rights have been further cut by racist immigration laws and by the discriminatory and increasingly coercive actions of the police and the law courts.

In the communities, genuine local democracy is being extinguished as it becomes increasingly subordinated to central government diktat. The policies that began with rate-capping and spending limitations, followed by the abolition of the Greater London Council and the

metropolitan councils, and are leading to the replacement of the rating system by the Poll Tax, thus increasing financial burdens on the community in favour of the wealthy—these policies are all designed to strip local authorities of any significant power, and to prevent local residents from having any real say in the running of their communities. Locally raised finance should be based on local income tax.

For the peoples of Scotland and Wales the erosion of basic democratic rights is further exacerbated by the centralisation of power in London thereby effectively denying them any real means to influence or determine policies affecting their national economic, social and cultural interests. This threat to the national rights of the Scottish and Welsh people overlaps with the wider threat to the sovereign rights of all British people as the legislative powers of the nationally elected Parliament are increasingly curtailed with the passing of responsibility for many areas of decision-making to the Common Market Commission in Brussels.

Within the comprehensive suppression of civil liberties and democratic rights in Britain today there can be little doubt that those who have suffered the most are the people of Northern Ireland. Colonised by Britain over 800 years ago, Ireland was partitioned in 1922, with a puppet state set up in the north as a means of perpetuating British imperialist domination in the face of the growing struggle for liberation. But the continuing development of that struggle, and the growth of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland, led eventually to the collapse of the Stormont regime and its replacement by direct British rule operated by Tory and Labour governments alike.

In 1969 British troops were transferred to Northern Ireland ostensibly to keep the peace, but instead the army has consistently been used to suppress the nationalist forces seeking a united independent Ireland. It has been responsible for torture, killings, mass arrests and the maintenance of a martial law presence in working-class areas. Diplock courts, hunger strikes, shoot-to-kill and counter-violence have become the norms in Northern Ireland. What is also ominous is the “guinea-pig” role of Northern Ireland, as methods of repression first applied and tested there by the British state are then subsequently transferred to Britain as instanced by the militarisation of the police, their equipping with plastic bullets, CS gas, special armed vehicles and the growing attacks on the jury system.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement is the latest manoeuvre by the British state to give the impression that it genuinely wants to seek a solution to the problems in Ireland. But there can be no solution unless the British government renounces its right to occupy Northern Ireland and declares

an intention to withdraw. Far from contemplating this, British imperialism is seeking instead to use the Anglo-Irish Agreement to extend its domination over the whole of Ireland, to end Ireland's traditional neutrality and involve it in the reactionary NATO military alliance. The British labour movement must be won to support the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland at the earliest possible opportunity.

The policy adopted by the Tory government towards Ireland symbolises, as it were, the identity and continuity between its reactionary domestic policies and its reactionary foreign policy. Successive Labour leaders have colluded with the Tories to ensure continued imperialist domination of Ireland. Together with the US government, the British state stands at the forefront of aggressive efforts to hold back world progress and maintain the grip of imperialism. The Tory government provides every form of assistance to reactionary regimes around the world and, despite muted criticism from time to time, continues to give full support to the apartheid regime in South Africa, using its power of veto to prevent economic and other forms of sanctions against that regime. At the same time the Tory government also used every opportunity to perpetuate an atmosphere of suspicion towards the Soviet Union as the necessary backcloth to maintaining the nuclear arms build-up, to which the Tories are committed. Yet the colossal arms spending involved robs the social services of the resources which they need. Conversion to peaceful production would in fact create more stable jobs and be of real benefit to society.

Although the Tory government is forced by changing world conditions to rely on economic, political and diplomatic measures to promote its imperialist and neo-colonial interests, it can still resort, when required, to gunboat tactics reminiscent of its Empire days, as the Falklands war showed. But the loss of its colonies, and the fact that Britain is no longer a leading world military power with bases across the globe, means that the ruling class has to rely increasingly on US military strength in order to protect the parasitical, neo-colonial interests of British transnational corporations and their subsidiaries abroad.

It is this factor, more than any other, which accounts for the Tory government's slavish support for US imperialist aggression in Central and Latin America and for US policy in the Middle East and other parts of the world, and why it has given endorsement to the US arms expansion programme since the early 1980s, including the infamous "Star Wars" project. This is also the reason why the British government helps to reinforce US domination inside the NATO military alliance, and at the same time allows Britain to play host to over 130 US military bases,

making it the main centre for “forward-based” American strategic weapons and therefore a main target for retaliation in the event of nuclear conflict.

But Britain’s relationship with the US is complex. For although one side of British imperialist interests dictate the necessity for alliance with US imperialism, another side of those interests dictates the need for closer unity with the West European imperialist powers grouped inside the Common Market. British monopoly capital was originally opposed to the formation of the EEC in the 1950s because at that time it ran contrary to Britain’s global interests. However, British imperialism now plays a key role in the Market, seeing it as a necessary framework for protecting its interests, in common with those of other Western European imperialist interests, against the intensifying competitive threats posed by Japanese and US transnational corporations. At the same time, the British ruling class also sees the Common Market as a vital supranational monopoly capitalist institution that both helps to undermine organised working-class struggle, and at the same time facilitates the collective neo-colonialist exploitation and oppression of the former colonies in Africa and other parts of the world. In its historical development it has also been closely linked with NATO.

There are of course some acute contradictions and antagonisms within the Common Market, particularly between Britain and other members as the Tory government under Mrs. Thatcher attempts to block certain aspects of Western European centralisation within the context of general support for progress towards a Single Market Union by 1992. This opposition to complete centralisation, however, far from reflecting any desire to protect national sovereignty and democracy on behalf of all British people, on the contrary reflects the Tory efforts to balance and reconcile its Western European involvement with its so-called “special relationship” with the USA.

The drive for closer unity within the EC brings the issue of national sovereignty into sharp focus. Membership of the EC has already undermined the sovereignty of parliament over important areas of Britain’s economy. Further steps towards economic and monetary union would carry this process to its logical conclusion. The trend of the 1980s for de-industrialisation and capital outflow would grow stronger. The restructuring of British industry in the interests of the transnational companies would be encouraged. The supposed social gains for British workers, of better trade union rights, improved health and safety laws and better training facilities are a diversion from the real issues of the power of the transnationals to move resources around Western Europe like pieces on a chess board, playing off one national working class

against another. Despite Thatcher's populist assertions about defending British sovereignty, numerous Community edicts undermining that sovereignty have been accepted by the government. The Communist Party will raise the banner of national independence in the name of the working class and of all who uphold their right to keep sovereign power in the hands of Britain's parliament.

In assessing the Tory strategy in the 1980s and into the 1990s, it must be recognised that it does exhibit certain new features in comparison with earlier ruling-class strategies. For example, there are differences in the way in which the state apparatus has been harnessed to a comprehensive array of policies in an all-out war on the working class. And there are differences too in the subtle way that ideological and propaganda weapons have been used to throw up a smoke screen around the Tory government's increasingly aggressive and reactionary stance on home and foreign policy.

But no matter how significant or varied the differences in the method of conducting the ruling class strategy, its class content remains the same. The contemporary crisis of the world system of state-monopoly capitalism and neo-colonialism has dictated the fundamental tasks facing the dominant section of the capitalist class in this as in other countries. These tasks were common to the Heath, Wilson-Callaghan and Thatcher governments alike. What distinguishes the Tory Thatcher government from its immediate predecessors is the consistency of purpose it exhibits in its role as the executive arm of the transnational corporations and the City of London banks, and the uncompromising ruthlessness with which it attempts to fulfil its ruling class objectives.

Fundamentally, this ruthlessness is not a sign of strength but of the weakness of the capitalist system. The bigger the crisis of capitalism, and the bigger the threat posed by the forces for progress both here and abroad, the less room for manoeuvre and compromise there is for the capitalist class, and consequently, the more frenzied and vicious must be the attacks on the working class and its organisations.

Reformism

The struggles we have seen by the miners, printworkers, teachers, nurses, seafarers and others show that among many and diverse sections of the working class there is a readiness to fight ruling-class policies. The key problem today is that this same readiness in the ranks of the labour movement and the working class as a whole, is not shared by the right-wing leadership of the movement. Far from seeking to help confront and defeat Tory policies, their main concern is to keep a

position of general accommodation with these policies, and to limit or deflect resistance to them. As a result the anger and frustration amongst working people that could be channelled into sustained and effective struggle, is wasted as the right-wing reformist leadership seeks to dampen the struggle, and attempts to keep any opposition to Tory policies confined within Parliament.

The clearest expression of the right-wing leadership's abandonment of any class commitment to the working people of Britain, is the watering-down or outright abandonment of policies that could promote their collective interests. On a whole range of domestic economic, political and social issues, and on the issue of peace and disarmament and matters of foreign policy, the Labour leadership supports policies which, although they may afford some minor concessions to some sections of the working class, in general protect the economic and political power base of the capitalist sector as a whole.

There is of course nothing new in this. The right wing has always dominated the Labour Party leadership, and they have always promoted reformist policies aimed at preventing the struggle of the working class from developing to the point where the capitalist state could be challenged, and the capitalist system of exploitation as a whole could come under threat. It is this diversionary role of reformism which explains why the ruling class itself not only has always supported and encouraged the right wing inside the Labour Party, but has also tolerated the election of reformist Labour governments.

However, the nature and techniques of reformism can change in different phases of capitalist development, mirroring in fact changes in ruling class strategy itself. Thus, for example, in contrast to the post-war reformism of the Labour Party, which was of a more benign kind offering hopes of increasing benefits for the working class within the context of a "managed" capitalism, reformism today is of a more restrictive type. It seeks to condition workers to acceptance of the "new reality" of capitalist "reorganisation", and therefore to reduced incomes and living standards.

To win acceptance for these reformist policies, we find them offered as "new" initiatives under the banner of the "new realism" and presented in a "left" or "socialist language", and even in "Marxist" language. In this connection the role played by the Eurocommunists who dominate the leadership of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and who control the journal *Marxism Today* is of some importance. [The CPGB subsequently changed its name to the Democratic Left.—Ed.] For this group, having abandoned the most basic class and internationalist principles of Marxism-Leninism, and having virtually severed all links

with the industrial working class, now acts as a vehicle for the promotion of reformism and class-collaboration inside the labour and progressive movement as a whole, and inside the left of the movement in particular. From this position it has spearheaded the drive for “left-realignment”, which far from uniting the left, has disrupted and disunited it, taking it away from any clear broad-based commitment to the goal of socialism.

Symptomatic of its complete and unashamed abandonment of working-class interests, is the call by the revisionist group in control of the CPGB for electoral pacts between Labour, SLD, SDP and other parties, against the Tory government. Such electoral pacts would lead to Labour’s complete abandonment of progressive working-class policies. After all, if the original SDP grouping broke away from the Labour Party because of the Labour Party’s swing towards a more progressive stance on a range of issues in the early 1970s, it would hardly be likely to entertain the notion of electoral pacts unless there were strict guarantees that such a stance would be jettisoned.

Clearly, pacts with such parties can only weaken and undermine the fight for left and progressive policies, and must therefore be resolutely opposed.

Of course, Marxists are not opposed to electoral agreements in principle. At particular moments in the struggle for socialism and in specific circumstances they may be tactically necessary. But to advocate an electoral pact in present circumstances only serves to weaken the struggle, breed defeatism and undermine the confidence of the working-class and the labour movement in their ability to defeat the Tories. The revisionists spread confusion by equating electoral pacts with the justifiable desire of most socialists to build a broad popular movement against monopoly-capitalism. Today, in fact, such pacts with forces opposed to the working class, would hinder the building of such a movement.

The urgent need is to step up pressure to win the Labour Party to a commitment to left policies. For though the Labour Party leadership at present opposes electoral pacts, it is nevertheless promoting policies that are virtually indistinguishable from those of these other parties, in the mistaken belief that these will help Labour’s election chances.

However, successive election defeats for Labour in recent years show that such policies, which offer few real prospects for the majority of working people in Britain, can only disillusion and alienate important sections of Labour’s traditional voting base. One aspect of this has been the proliferation of Trotskyist and other ultra-left groups which have had some success in making recruits, particularly among the young.

Generally they play a disruptive role, and despite their revolutionary-sounding slogans, objectively impede the struggle for socialism.

The consequence of the division in Labour's base of support is that the Tories can repeatedly win elections with only a minority vote in the country. And with each successive electoral victory, the Tories are further encouraged to widen the scope of their attacks on the living standards and democratic rights of working people in Britain.

The lesson from all this should be clear. Just as the ruling class supports a strategy which protects its position, so also must the working class and its allies be mobilised in support of a strategy that can promote its interests. This can only be a strategy for socialism.

Chapter 3

The Strategy for Socialism

The lesson of the past decades is that the problems facing the great majority of people in Britain will never be solved within the confines of the capitalist system. Crises are endemic to capitalism and the capitalist class will always seek to place the burden of these crises upon the shoulders of working people. The only solution is a fundamental change in the very structure and organisation of society. The system of exploitation must be abolished and replaced by a new, higher system free from exploitation and all forms of oppression. Capitalism must be replaced by socialism, for only socialism can overcome the basic contradiction of capitalism from which every aspect of the crisis flows.

But the transition to socialism will not come about of its own accord. It will only come about through revolutionary struggle, in the course of which the working class and its allies, by uniting and concentrating their forces, take state power out of the hands of the capitalist class.

The necessity for this comes from the fact that under capitalism the state is not something neutral. On the contrary, as the experience in Britain in the recent period has again confirmed, the state is an instrument used by the capitalist class both to maintain the system of exploitation of working people, and to prevent any effective and organised means of opposition to that system. Therefore the working class and its allies must take state power if they are to be in a position to determine the future direction of society in their favour.

By taking state power they would be in a position to replace private ownership of the means of production with social ownership, thereby ending exploitation and replacing production for the sake of private profit with production for the needs of society. Industrial democracy

would become a reality with the expansion of social ownership, and the democratic planning of production would make possible the full use of modern scientific and technological advances to eradicate poverty, raise the standard of living and end, once and for all, the scandalous contrast of extreme wealth for a few and hardship for millions.

At the same time using state power to change the economic base of the system would not be an end in itself, but a means of creating conditions in which human beings will be able to realise their full potential in working together for the common good instead of being divided by class, sex, race or creed. Socialism is necessary to create the conditions for genuine democracy and participation in all spheres of society, allowing people to establish a new quality of life free not only from economic and social pressures, but from all forms of prejudice and discrimination. The differences that remain between people will be determined, not by inequality of opportunity, but by their own different talents and inclinations. Instead of the exploitation and maximisation of private profit that is the guiding principle of capitalism, the guiding principle of socialism would be "from each according to ability; to each according to work".

Although the establishment of socialism, and the taking of state power necessary to achieve this, are in the objective interests of the working class and its allies, the actual conditions for socialist revolution in Britain do not yet exist. The major problem is that the growth of trade unions, and working-class consciousness in general, has not been matched by a growth in socialist consciousness. The reasons for this are complex.

In the period of British imperialist dominance, some of the profits exported from overseas could be diverted towards improving the relative position of the more skilled and better organised sections of the labour force with the aim of limiting dissatisfaction with capitalism. In more recent times British imperialism has lost its position of unchallenged pre-eminence. In the jungle of inter-imperialist rivalry, the scope for concessions has been curtailed. But the ruling class is still prepared to provide privileges and benefits to certain sections of the working class, and this maintains divisions and holds back the full development of working-class political understanding. At the same time, the capitalist class continues to use every avenue open to it to promote capitalist concepts and ideals in order to prevent dissatisfaction being turned against capitalism itself, and to block any search for ways to replace it by a new and fundamentally different system. To this end, for example, the capitalist class exploits ideologically the growth of home ownership among the working class, as well as the limited share ownership among some of its sections.

Racism and national chauvinism are two particularly damaging legacies of Britain's imperialist history, and overcoming reactionary ideas in these areas is a crucial part of winning the battle of ideas in favour of socialism.

A further important factor which helps to impede the development of working-class consciousness into socialist consciousness, is the role played by right-wing reformism the leadership of the labour and trade union movement as a whole, and especially in the leadership of the mass political party of the labour movement, the Labour Party. For central to this trend has always been the argument that the problems facing working people in Britain can be solved through minor adjustments and improvements to the capitalist system, and on the basis of co-operation with capitalist employers, thereby making a revolutionary change neither necessary nor desirable.

Given these and other factors which prevent the growth of socialist consciousness, how can they be overcome? How can the gap be closed between the objective necessity for the working class and its allies to take state power and establish socialism, and the need for a greater awareness of these tasks? This is the central question today.

An important part of the answer to this question depends upon the extent to which the main organisations of the Left, and in particular the Communist Party, can succeed in projecting socialist concepts and ideas within the ranks of the organised working class and other sections of the population. This is a point to which we shall return later. But the wider answer must lie in the experience gained by working people in the course of the class struggle itself.

In Britain in recent years, this struggle has grown in scope and intensity as different sections of the working class have taken action on a wide number of issues, for example to defend wages or job conditions, or to defend benefits and services, or to protect basic democratic rights and civil liberties.

One important and very positive aspect of these struggles is that, where successful, they help to boost the morale and confidence of the people involved and encourage them to expand their demands.

Another equally positive aspect is that these struggles help, to a greater or lesser extent, to advance people's awareness of the fact that behind the power of the private monopolies and the banks stands the power of the state. This was illustrated in particular by the experience of the historic miners' strike of 1984-85 when the miners, who took mass action against pit closures, saw the Tory government make full use of the riot police, law courts, media and the whole state apparatus to intimidate and harass them and undermine their support. Another example is

the experience of the Wapping dispute in 1986–87 where the print workers understood all too well that one of the principal reasons why Murdoch won the dispute was the fact that he could resort to the new Tory anti-union laws in order to sequester the funds of the print unions and thereby force their eventual retreat.

The major lesson from all this is that if we are to help raise the general level of awareness of the class nature of the state, and therefore of the need to take state power in order to establish socialism, we need, as a starting point, to help develop the different struggles on the immediate issues facing working people. More than this, we need to bring these struggles into a common stream so that the experiences of working people can be pooled, and their efforts concentrated and pointed in the direction of making inroads into the wealth and power of the capitalist class as a vital part of achieving basic social change.

However, if we are to ensure that this does happen, that the struggles of different groups of working people do develop, not in isolation or in contradiction to each other, but in a mutually reinforcing manner, the various demands in question need to be placed in the context of a wider, more comprehensive, and at the same time integral, campaigning strategy. That is to say, there needs to be a strategy which, by linking separate policy demands on a range of issues into a single, coherent framework, is capable of promoting a united, co-ordinated, and therefore more effective, struggle in defence of working-class interests. The Alternative Economic and Political Strategy, developed by the labour and trade union movement, and by the Communist Party in particular, is just such a strategy.

Economic and social policies

The immediate aim of the economic proposals of the strategy is to substitute for the present Tory anti-working-class programme of spending cuts, a reflationary programme aimed at boosting the economy. It is proposed to cut VAT, to reduce direct taxes on working people's incomes, and to shift the burden of taxation on to the rich, for example through a special wealth tax and stricter controls on tax evasion. An integral part of the process must be the repeal of the Poll Tax and its replacement by a local income tax. Incomes of those in currently poorly paid jobs should be lifted through the implementation of a National Minimum Wage Policy linked to average earnings, while at the same time there should be provision for equal wages for work of equal value for women, ethnic minorities and other discriminated sections of the workforce.

Alongside measures to boost individual incomes of workers, there needs to be a massive and sustained increase in public spending in several priority areas. One priority is industry. There must be a big investment drive in the traditional publicly owned industries and in the newer industries based on modern advanced technology. This investment drive needs to be accompanied by measures which will ensure both an all-round increase in jobs, and which will provide equal opportunities for access to those jobs for all sections of the working population.

The implementation of a shorter working week would be one of the most important ways of ensuring that investment in new technology does not lead to an overall loss of jobs. Training must be an integral part of a policy for expansion in investment and job creation. In particular, funds should be made available for high-quality education and training for all young people and particularly working-class youth. At the same time it is important to provide a programme for training and retraining adults, especially women and ethnic minorities, to allow them entry into the more skilled, secure and better-paid jobs in the manufacturing sector.

The education system for all our young people at every level has been viciously attacked by the Tories and should be developed into one that is of high quality and free to all sections of society. Nursery provision needs to be improved and made available to all: primary and secondary education should be adequately staffed to enable all children to receive a full and comprehensive education. Further and higher education, including the universities must be made available to all sections of society, with grants generous enough to support students without recourse to family contributions or loans. Student grants should be a right for all people with the necessary qualifications wishing to continue with their studies and no part of the grant should be repayable or in the form of a loan.

The planned investment drive must also take into account the important question of regional distribution. It is necessary to rebuild a regional economic development strategy to stimulate industry and employment in Scotland, Wales and the English regions suffering severe economic depression and social inequalities. Strong systems of regional economic planning and development, democratically accountable to the peoples of each region, must be a key part of this programme for expansion. Within the framework of planning at an all-Britain level, the peoples of each region must have the powers to ensure that industrial development is made increasingly accountable to them and that curbs are placed on the freedom of big business and property speculators to wreck and distort regional economies.

Another priority area is social service provision. Funds must be made available to increase pensions and services for the elderly to enable them to live in dignity and comfort. There must be an increase in spending on housing, education, hospitals and other health services, and on leisure, cultural and recreational facilities. And much more needs to be spent on family allowances and maternity grants, and on nurseries and child-care facilities, for only the greater provision of these kinds of services will actually afford women, especially those with children, the means to escape casualised work on the margins and to enter better jobs in the mainstream of the economy.

The aim of securing an ambitious programme for economic and social expansion raises the question of how the programme is to be financed and what type of controls need to be imposed. As regards this we must first make clear our unequivocal opposition to incomes control, or to wage restraint of any form, as a means of forcing one section of the working class to finance any improvements or benefits for other sections. On the contrary, the main intention behind the Alternative Economic Strategy is to seek the collective improvement in the living standards of all working people, forcing the capitalist class, and the monopoly sector particularly, to foot the bill out of its profits.

In this connection there are several controls which need to be implemented. In the first place there needs to be arms control. The end of the Cold War removes the last false argument against a massive reduction in Britain's arms spending and conversion to peace projects. Britain continues to spend a higher proportion of its GNP on weapons than any other capitalist power outside of the USA. Cuts in this total would release enormous resources for use in Britain's depressed social services and in Britain's ailing industry.

There needs to be a system of price controls. A prices commission must be set up to ensure that wage increases are not arbitrarily passed on to consumers via price increases, but are absorbed, where necessary, through a reduction in monopoly profits. At a more fundamental level, there needs to be a system of investment controls which must, as a priority, include the policy of democratic nationalisation. The major areas of industry which have been privatised by the Tories should be re-nationalised, not on the old lines but on a new basis ensuring worker and consumer representation in management so as to guarantee that they are run according to social criteria and not the criterion of private profit.

There also needs to be further nationalisation covering the strategic sectors of the economy, including the major banks and financial institutions so as to ensure that the vast amounts of funds at their disposal are

directed towards investment in British industry. At the same time, nationalising North Sea oil would be the only way of ensuring that the revenues here, currently being squandered to pay for imports and investment of capital abroad, are used instead to help restore Britain's manufacturing base.

There also needs to be a comprehensive system of planning agreements whereby the government, with the fullest participation of the trade unions and workforce concerned, can set and if necessary impose on major private companies in industry guidelines for investment and growth. In the struggle to control those transnationals still in private ownership, the potential of the public sector as a powerful economic lever will need to be exploited to the full. The role of the co-operative movement should be strengthened and expanded through the development of workers' co-operatives.

To enable industrial and social development to take place in a planned and balanced way, the big landed estates in the town and countryside will have to be taken into public ownership. The free market in land will have to be brought under local and democratic control, within an overall national plan.

Turning to the external dimension of the Alternative Economic Strategy, there would need to be capital and exchange controls to ensure that the vast sums of long-term capital currently being channelled abroad are invested in domestic industry and jobs. In addition, there would need to be selective import controls to protect and redevelop key areas of British industry such as cars, electronics, steel and coal. The protection of these areas of industry would be crucial to the restoration of Britain's manufacturing base, and would allow for balanced development of other interlinked or dependent sectors of the economy.

Finally, in order to ensure the implementation of the wide range of domestic and external controls listed above, there must be a clear commitment to the immediate withdrawal of Britain from the Common Market. The call for Britain's withdrawal from the Common Market is not a call for Britain's withdrawal from the European economy, or from international economic relations in general. On the contrary, it is a call for a different form of participation in these relations. By withdrawing from the Common Market set-up, it is possible to restructure British industry, to which reference has been made above, by replacing the present system of unbalanced and inequitable relations with a few select partners, by a system of balanced and equitable economic relations with all countries in Europe as well as in the rest of the world.

The struggle of the British working class to improve its living

standards and surpass those existing anywhere in the world is not dependent upon Britain's membership of the Common Market. It cannot be overemphasised that the struggle of the British labour and progressive movement to advance its interests against those of monopoly capital must entail unity and solidarity with the struggle against the transnational monopolies and imperialism on a world wide scale. This means unity with the working class throughout Western Europe, the US and Japan. And it means unity with the people of the developing countries who, under the present system of neo-colonialism and debt-bondage, continue to have their wealth and resources plundered by imperialism and remain in a state of abject poverty. In specific economic terms, unity here should mean not only planning for balanced and mutually beneficial trade with the developing countries, but also making active provision of favourable credits and other forms of direct aid to assist their industry and trading position.

The expansion of democracy

If the struggle to promote the economic and social interests of working people is to be successful and to have any real meaning, it must be seen as part of the wider struggle for the expansion of democracy.

Policies which aim at increasing jobs, social service provision, and living standards must be linked to a comprehensive set of policies that can guarantee corresponding political and human rights. This means in the first place repealing all Tory laws that have suppressed civil liberties and democratic rights in many spheres of society, and have aggravated inequalities and divisions in the ranks of working people.

There must be a more open and democratic form of central government. Voting should be on the basis of proportional representation, which more accurately reflects the wishes of the electorate; MPs should have greater control over the executive; there must be provision for their recalling. The House of Lords and eventually the Monarchy should be abolished. The current process of growing centralised domination and control over local government should be reversed, and new non-authoritarian relations between central and local government should be established. Local government should be strengthened and at the same time made more democratic to ensure greater participation by all local residents in the running of their communities.

The trade unions should be fully independent and free from government interference or control. In particular, this would mean repealing all Tory anti-union laws, restoring the traditional immunities of the trade unions. The vitally important question of greater democracy inside the

trade unions themselves, involving for example greater accountability and links between the leadership and the membership, should be a matter for the members themselves to decide, and not subject to government interference.

A crucial aspect of the fight for democracy is the fight against all forms of oppression and discrimination. There need to be vigorous measures to combat racism in all walks of life. The various state practices and laws, including the immigration and nationality laws which institutionalise racism, must be abolished and replaced with legislation that removes all forms of discrimination, and guarantees black people and other ethnic minorities in this country equal opportunities.

This same principle must underpin measures to ensure genuine equality for women. Whilst we recognise that this can be fully achieved only under socialism, it must be fought for here and now. Policies aimed at economic and social expansion provide the material basis for women's liberation, but there must be at the same time legislation that can end all forms of discrimination and subordination of women. And the democratic character of the struggle must embrace support for campaigns to end all forms of discrimination against lesbians and gays.

Policies to tackle the national question must form an important part of the democratic process. The governmental system in Britain needs to be restructured so as to end the domination of Scotland and Wales by the central government in London. In particular, the peoples of Scotland and Wales must have the right to elect Scottish and Welsh Parliaments that have the wide-ranging powers to tackle each nation's economic and social problems, and to defend each nation's distinctive cultural and linguistic identity.

The economic backwardness of Cornwall, the bits-and-pieces development that goes on, requires radical changes to be made to improve the living standards of the Cornish people. Part of Cornwall's rich natural resources must be devoted to the development of Cornish culture both in schools and in the community at large.

A new foreign policy

The progressive and democratic principles that underlie domestic policies for Britain should also extend to its foreign policy. Britain should pursue an independent foreign policy, based on the principles of peaceful co-existence and co-operation with all states irrespective of their system. It should withdraw from NATO, unilaterally renounce nuclear arms, dismantle existing nuclear war bases in Britain, and remove all foreign bases. It should support a treaty to outlaw the manufacture and possession of nuclear weapons by all nations with similar

prohibition of germ and chemical warfare, and it should work for general and complete disarmament.

Arrangements should be worked out to end the colonial status of the few remaining British colonies, and all British troops should be withdrawn. British support for reactionary and repressive regimes in different parts of the world should be terminated, and replaced with a policy of active support for national liberation and independence. This should include a repudiation of neo-colonialist economic policies, and the stepping-up instead of economic and other forms of assistance to the developing nations. Britain should institute full economic sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa, including disinvestment of corporate shareholdings.

Given that Ireland has been the subject of British imperialist domination and repression longer than any other country, and the way the consensus between successive Tory and Labour governments has perpetuated this, Britain has a special responsibility in ensuring a democratic solution in Northern Ireland.

Repression in Ireland feeds authoritarianism within Britain itself. The continued inclusion of the Six Counties within the United Kingdom is therefore a major obstacle to social and democratic progress in Britain, holding back the struggle for socialism itself. The removal of this obstacle is therefore in the interests of the British working class and of all who would benefit from the creation of a more democratic progressive society in Britain.

For these reasons all repressive and undemocratic laws and practices in Northern Ireland should be ended immediately, and there should be a declaration of intent to withdraw British troops. At the same time Britain has a duty to provide substantial financial and other material forms of assistance in order to tackle the acute problems of poverty and unemployment caused in the main by British imperialist exploitation, opening the way for the Irish people to determine their own future as a united, sovereign and independent state.

The European Community was established primarily to increase the power and the profits of the transnationals through the greatest exploitation of the working class and the peoples of Europe as well as of the countries of the Third World. Its bureaucratic, anti-democratic structure reflects this purpose. More and more it threatens the national sovereignty of member states and this will be taken an important step further with the Single European Act, which comes into full operation after 1992. The argument that "now we are in, we may as well accept it", or that the European Community can be transformed into an instrument for advancing socialism, ignores the realities—who controls the

Community, how they control it, and the actual strengthening of the position of the transnationals that is taking place today, and the overall threat which all of this poses to the working class. The fight to take Britain out of the Common Market is more important than ever. An essential part of that fight must be to develop solidarity between the workers of all European countries, particularly those employed by the transnationals, and to step up the campaign in defence of jobs and for the improvement of living standards.

The policies for economic expansion and greater democratic rights, together with the policies for disarmament and progress in the world arena, characterise the Alternative Economic and Political Strategy as a comprehensive and integral strategy with a coherent class content. It is a programme for planning, restructuring and redirecting the British economy and society in a manner which benefits and strengthens the collective position of all working people, and which forces the monopolies and finance capital to concede the necessary wealth and political power to achieve this.

Although the AEPS is not in itself a socialist programme, it is nonetheless a programme of action directed against state-monopoly capital. It takes as its point of departure the balance of class forces within the existing framework of capitalism. It is in fact a bridging strategy, linking the defensive battles of working people to protect their immediate interests, with a more offensive array of struggles that can challenge the fundamental power base of monopoly capitalism. It is for this reason that the ruling capitalist class, and the monopoly sector in particular, will not sit back and allow such a programme to be implemented, but will, on the contrary, do everything possible to block and derail such a programme.

Meeting capitalist resistance

The inevitability of fierce resistance to the proposals of the AEPS highlights the question of what type of government—in alliance with the mass movement—can possibly implement such a programme. In the present conditions of Britain its implementation can only begin to come about with the election of a Labour government. However, it cannot be a Labour government of the usual right-wing reformist type that we have seen in the past, which, although it can be compelled to carry through a few progressive measures, is basically committed to managing and protecting the capitalist system. On the contrary, it must be a Labour government of a completely new type, a government which can come about through the wide-ranging struggles of a mass movement demanding the type of policies contained within the AEPS.

This would involve a decisive shift to the left in the Labour Party, particularly in its National Executive Committee and in the Parliamentary Party. In turn, this shift would depend in large measure, on a significant move to the left in the trade unions, which form the mass base of the Labour Party, and on the growth in size and influence of the Communist Party working closely with the Labour Party. It is in the course of the struggle to achieve this that leaders will emerge who would make up a government elected on the basis of the AEPS, and, alongside the mass movement, fight to carry it out, overcoming in the process the resistance by the monopoly corporations, the banks, and their backers abroad.

The power of resistance by the ruling capitalist class should not be underestimated. It will try to use the mass media to whip up a vicious propaganda campaign against the AEPS. International experience, e.g. Chile, shows that the ruling class will seek support from international capitalist institutions, such as the IMF or those of the Common Market, and from the world's major transnationals, in an effort to blackmail a left government. It might seek to organise a capital strike, or encourage the transnational companies to withdraw their operations from Britain in the hope of sabotaging the economy. Efforts could also be made to change the law to make the election of left governments more difficult or impose limitations on their powers. In addition, illegal methods, sabotage and attempts at an armed coup are all possible. Every effort to create an atmosphere of chaos and disruption should be anticipated, because this could then be used to justify the use of force against the left government.

However, if the economic, political and ideological power of monopoly capital is not to be underestimated, neither should it be overstated. The ruling class is not all-powerful. It can only work within the limitations imposed by the actual balance of forces, internally and internationally. Its resistance can be overcome, providing two essential conditions are met.

Firstly, steps must be taken to ensure the widest possible democratic involvement of all sections of the working population at every step in the implementation of the AEPS. Neither the labour and progressive movement nor the left government, should see the AEPS as a matter of parliamentary legislation and government jurisdiction. It is a programme which at all stages must be firmly rooted in mass support and participation, and must be implemented not only through parliamentary legislation but also through extra-parliamentary struggle. This could involve not only established organisations of the labour and democratic movements but also new organisations of popular and working-class struggle

created in the way that previous battles throughout our history have given birth to such bodies as factory trade union combines, councils of action, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, miners' and print workers' support groups, and Women Against Pit Closures. We cannot overemphasise the fact that the most sustained pressure, mobilising the organised working class and other progressive forces, will be needed to keep a left government on a correct course and defeat the resistance of the monopolists and their allies. In this situation the Communist Party would have a special responsibility for developing and leading the mass struggle and campaigning on the issues involved in the workplaces and localities.

Secondly, steps must be taken to ensure that the power of parliament, government and the state is effectively utilised to limit and severely restrict the powers of resistance of the opponents of the AEPS. Such steps should include the democratisation of the media so as to allow supporters of the AEPS greater access to the television, radio and newspapers to present their views. It is vital that monopoly control over the media is broken up because the capitalist-owned newspapers, and the television and radio under capitalist control, are a powerful factor in conditioning working people to accept capitalism and the futility of struggling for a new society. The media do all in their power to distort the issues involved in the struggles of working people in Britain and overseas. And they try to undermine confidence in the achievements of socialist countries and their efforts to overcome the difficulties and problems, in order to combat the spread of the idea of socialism among the working class.

In this regard, it is important to recognise that only the *Morning Star* gives full support to the working people in all their struggles, and argues the case for the AEPS and for socialism. Therefore, a big increase in its daily readership is vital for working-class advance in Britain.

Other essential measures to restrict the possibility of resistance to the AEPS must involve closing the current gap between the legislative and executive function of government. Steps must be taken to bring the powers of the executive under tight scrutiny and control by a parliament, itself made more responsive to the people and their democratic mass organisations. The civil service and other key areas of the state including the police, judiciary and the armed forces should be democratised and their top personnel replaced so as to make them directly accountable to parliament and the people. Members of the armed forces and the police should be entitled to join trade unions. There should be the adoption of a wide system of measures to limit finance capital's control over the movement of funds.

In this connection, the struggle for disarmament assumes added importance. For the existence of a large professional army, plus foreign US bases and US military personnel, would pose a potential threat to a government determined to implement the AEPS, since they could obviously be used in any military coup which might be attempted.

Finally, to repeat once again: democratic mass activity is the decisive factor in guaranteeing the effective use of governmental power to enforce the legislation needed to make a reality of the AEPS and overcome resistance to it.

State power

From the moment of election of a new type of Labour government committed to implementing the AEPS, the class struggle in Britain will enter a more acute and protracted phase. The capitalist class will seek by every means to resolve that struggle in its favour, and the working class and its allies will seek to resolve it in theirs. Which side will win? The answer ultimately comes down to which class controls state power.

As long as the capitalist class continues to maintain control over every layer of the state apparatus, the policies for increasing living standards and extending democracy can never be taken to the limit where capitalist exploitation itself is abolished and a new system of socialism is established. Only when democratisation of the key sectors of the state is taken to the point where the working class actually takes over the whole state apparatus, and transforms it into an instrument that enforces its policies, will it be possible for the working class to remove the very basis of its own oppression.

Through this process of struggle, parliament and the mass movement must begin to enforce changes in the top personnel and the radical restructure of state bodies, in particular the armed forces and security services, the police and judiciary, and the civil and foreign services, to ensure that they begin to carry out their function in the interests of the working class and its allies. Depending on the circumstances, this would include measures to involve creating new structures and dismantling any which serve exclusively the interests of monopoly capitalism. The process would also include measures to involve the independent organisations of the working class, along with elected MPs, in the exercise of the functions of the state.

The necessity of revolution, therefore, the taking of state power by the organised working class and its allies, is a fundamental precept which is not open to question. But what is open to question, is how the working class and its allies can be won to an understanding of the tasks before them, and it is here that we come back to the importance of the

Alternative Economic and Political Strategy. For in the real, concrete conditions of modern Britain, the question of state power will only be put on the agenda in the course of mobilising the working people to secure the implementation of a programme which advances their economic, social and political interests at the expense of those of the ruling class, and which will therefore meet resistance from it.

Only by this means will the realisation come, not in a narrow or formal sense, but in a mass practical way, shaped and conditioned by struggle itself, that there can be no permanent advance by the working class unless state power is taken and used to block monopoly capitalist opposition, and further to remove the economic and political base of this opposition altogether.

It is at the point where the struggle for advance envisaged in the AEPS brings into play the question of state power and its use by the working class and its allies, that the fight for the AEPS flows into the fight for socialism itself.

To sum up, the achievement of state power by the working class and its allies will open up a qualitatively new stage. State power, involving democratic participation and control by working people at every level, will be used systematically to take resources out of the hands of monopoly capital and allocate them in a planned way for the needs of society.

This will make possible a new type of democracy which ensures economic conditions for personal freedom and an unprecedented extension of human rights, including safeguards for the pluralism of views and their political expression, freedom of dissent, respect for the views of minorities, religious freedom, and freedom to press their demands for all the shades of interest that will exist in socialist society.

A new morality, replacing the egotistical individualism of capitalism by collective care and concern for every individual and for the full, all-round development of the human personality, will become the guiding principle of society.

Chapter 4

The Forces for Advance

The forces exist which if mobilised around the demands of the Alternative Economic and Political Strategy can put Britain on a new course, tackle the crisis in the interests of the people, extend democracy, and open the way to socialist revolution. Glimpses of their potential strength have already been seen in the struggles of past years, as wide and diverse sections of the people have been fighting against the adverse

effect of capitalism and capitalist policies on their lives.

The urgent need now is to link these struggles closer together. What this means is that, just as the policies of the AEPS aim to promote the economic, social and political interests of all working people in a combined and mutually reinforcing manner, so also, at the level of organisation and in the course of mobilising for struggle, there needs to be every effort to unite the various forces for advance in the widest possible democratic alliance directed against state-monopoly capitalism. Building and strengthening the democratic anti-monopoly alliance must be the top priority today.

To achieve it however, involves an understanding of the class forces in capitalist society in Britain. These are as follows:

The capitalist class

The capitalist class comprises the owners and controllers of the means of production, distribution and exchange—the factories, banks, shops, land etc.—and their agents. People in higher managerial positions and in the higher echelons of the civil service and the state apparatus, although they sell their labour-power, are part of the ruling class because they act directly or indirectly on behalf of the capitalists, identify with them, and often own substantial amounts of capital.

Even as a whole the capitalist class is only a small fraction of the population. But within it there is a still smaller minority exercising the dominant power—those who control the very big firms and banks, which not only exploit their workers, but also operate at the expense of many smaller businesses, small shopkeepers and farmers. These small enterprises are among the first victims in periods of acute crisis, many of them going bankrupt, being forced to close down, or being swallowed up by the big firms. When working-class standards are cut, small producers, shopkeepers and traders are also adversely affected.

There is therefore an objective basis for an alliance between the working class and many in these sections of the capitalist class. For they all confront a common enemy—the big British and foreign transnational corporations and banks. There will be problems in building such an alliance, since the smaller employers are in a contradictory position in relation both to the monopolists and the working class.

They face the prospect of being squeezed out by the big firms, but are also often linked to them as suppliers, or as distributors of their products. They usually see it as in their interests to keep wages down for the sake of their profits, and working conditions are often worse in small workplaces.

However, the organised working class needs to show them that there is no solution to their problems in lining up with big business against the workers. It must seek to win them to the side of the working class, and prevent them becoming prey to right-wing and fascist propaganda. This means campaigning for specific measures to assist them, such as cheap credits, restrictions on monopoly price manipulation, control of rents, relief from high rates, the abolition of VAT etc., as well as winning them for the wider democratic demands of the working class, including the struggle for peace, disarmament, and environmental protection.

Intermediate strata

While in contemporary capitalist society the great majority of people are either members of the working class or of the capitalist class, there are also those whose relation to the means of production places them in an intermediate position. Middle-grade management and the middle ranks of the state apparatus act to a considerable extent as agents of the capitalist class, but the degree to which they exercise control over the means of production is often limited, and their income is derived mainly from selling their labour-power for a salary. They may therefore be considered part of the intermediate strata between the capitalist class and the working class.

Members of family business, small shopkeepers and small firms who employ little or no labour are another such group, as are those among professional sections like architects, lawyers, doctors, writers and artists, who are self-employed. They are affected by the social and economic crisis of capitalism, and by the ways in which it holds back advances in spheres with which they are particularly concerned, such as housing, health, disarmament, the environment, and culture. Policies need to be advanced by the working class and progressive forces which will win as many as possible among these sections for the democratic anti-monopoly alliance.

The Arts are not something apart from life. The welcome growth in recent years of community arts of all sorts has been hamstrung by lack of money. Our priceless museum collections are in mortal danger. The Labour movement must take seriously the funding of all the Arts, and help to mobilise all those involved in the area of culture as key elements in the struggle for socialism.

The working class

Without question the leading force in the democratic anti-monopoly alliance will be the working class. Its interests are most directly and

consistently opposed to those of the capitalist ruling class. Its strength and capacity for organisation enables it to give leadership to all forces for advance in society. As a class, it can only achieve emancipation through socialism. The working class includes the great majority of the population, who sell their labour-power, their capacity to work, in return for a wage or salary, and who work under the direction of the owners of the means of production or their agents. The working class is important not just because of its numbers, but because of the special place it occupies in capitalist society.

In capitalist Britain it has been for a long time the class which does almost all the work—in production of goods, in transport and communications, in distribution and services, in social services and in local and central government. Most of those who formerly produced as small capitalists or self-employed have been wiped out in competition with big firms concentrating huge amounts of capital in large-scale production with advanced techniques. And despite some short-term reversals of this process in a few fields, small producers continue to be wiped out and converted into wage or salary earners.

Wage and salary workers, employed by capitalists who sell their product, are directly exploited no matter what they produce, whether they are manual workers or whether they are clerks or technicians, and whether they work in mines or factories, or in shops or offices. Historically most of them have been manual workers directly engaged in material production and services, but today the boundaries between manual and non-manual work are being eroded by technical change. The sphere of material production and services still employs nearly two-thirds of all wage-labour.

Other workers in central and local government, or in those social services still under their control, do not work for private capitalists, but for the capitalist state. Their product is not sold by their employers in a market subject to competitive pressures. But both their wages and their conditions are subject to downward pressure as the capitalist class strives to carry out the necessary state tasks with as little, and as cheap, labour as possible, in order to prevent taxation eating into their profits. For the inter-capitalist struggle forces capitalists to invest and to accumulate from profits in order to invest. For them the only good taxation is no taxation. These workers are therefore exploited as wage-workers like those in all other sectors of the economy. Indeed, because they are directly employed by the state, cuts in their wages and conditions are frequently used as a lever to attack wages generally.

At the heart of the working class is its most advanced section, those workers concentrated in large-scale enterprises. The very scale of the

means of production used in these enterprises means that their workers can never own them and control their use, except as a collective owner, that is, under socialism. A large proportion of them work in heavy industry, where the anarchy of production and profit-seeking causes the most severe economic crises. They also work where technical innovation raises the rate of exploitation and economic insecurity the fastest. Of all sections of the working class, the workers here have the greatest need for, and can see the already planned character of the enterprises in which they work. They can thus more readily be won to see the potentialities of planned socialist production.

Further, such large enterprises embrace the greatest diversity of workers, reflecting in miniature the diversity of the whole working class. To build here a concentration of organised forces capable of confronting the organised power of their monopolist employers inevitably involves these workers in the deepest and longest experience in overcoming sectionalism, and in putting the long-term interests of the class as a whole before the immediate interests of its various sections. Today they work for transnational corporations, and have the greatest need for, and impulse towards, building international solidarity.

Finally, because the ruling class knows that its defeat in such huge enterprises has the most dangerous implications, it has always brought to bear upon the workers there the concentrated force of its coercive and ideological weapons. Therefore, those workers, on their side, have been forced to mobilise the solidarity of the whole working class. Thus they have unparalleled experience in the struggle for unity.

Though some workers may regard themselves as “middle class”, and often work in institutions which help to perpetuate capitalism and its ideas, they are objectively part of the working class. Their interests broadly coincide with those of the workers in manual occupations, and indeed the distinction between manual and non-manual work is being more and more being eroded as a consequence of technological advances and modern processes of production. In the past many non-manual workers may have held aloof from the industrial working class and from trade union organisation. But changes in the nature of production and the impact of the capitalist crisis have produced a transformation in recent years, with a great increase in trade-union organisation among these workers and a readiness to take action to defend their interests. The strike actions of the health-workers, nurses, and teachers in the recent period are important examples of this.

This shows that the carrying of trade-union organisation and ideas of class solidarity into sections of workers employed in the state machine, in the mass media and in other spheres of society represents an impor-

tant extension of the potential power of the working class in mass struggle outside Parliament, as well as through elections.

An important development has been the growing number of women joining the workforce, often in part-time jobs. Increasingly they are joining the trade unions, and as the TUC women's conference shows, they are making a major and positive contribution to the labour movement. The scandal of low pay among women must become a key issue for the trade unions who have a responsibility to step up the fight for equal pay for work of equal value, for child-care facilities, against sexual harassment and for other measures that can ensure the equality of women.

It must be recognised that women comprise over half the population and it is unthinkable that real progress in developing the unity of the working class is possible without a continuous challenge to all discrimination and a commitment to end it. This will include the fight to improve conditions at work, to win equal pay for work of equal value, and facilities for child-care, education, and the development of stable family lives. A struggle along these lines will help to build the confidence of women so that at they participate on a basis of equality along with men in the joint struggle to end capitalist exploitation. This leads us to a more general point, which is that although exploitation of the working class forms the objective material basis for unity within it, this does not mean that the task of establishing organisational and ideological unity is an easy task. On the contrary, the task of establishing such unity will be a complex one calling for clarity of perspective and conscious effort. For example, the capitalist class implements specific forms of oppression, especially of women and black people, to divide and weaken the working class so as to maximise the conditions of exploitation as a whole. The result has been that working women and black people face many diverse and specific problems because of their oppression on the basis of sex or colour, in addition to the problems that arise out of their exploitation as members of the working class.

The organised labour movement must therefore be won to the fullest understanding that in addition to demands on jobs, wages and on other issues of immediate concern to it, the demands for genuine equality for women, black people and for other oppressed or discriminated sections, represent central areas of struggle.

More than this, it must be won to an understanding that the struggles against the subordination and repression of women in society, and against racism and other forms of oppression, while each in their own way exhibiting distinctive features, nevertheless form essential aspects of the class struggle. The struggle for women's liberation and for black

liberation, therefore, is not a priority only for women and black people respectively, it is a priority for the whole working class.

The labour movement

The main influence of the working class on society is expressed through the labour movement, though this does not yet comprise the whole of the working class. It includes the trade unions and the Labour Party, and the Co-operative movement. The trade unions are the biggest and most powerful organisations of the working class. They play a vital role in allowing workers to combine and exercise their collective strength in defence of wages and working conditions in the face of capitalist greed for profit. As such they are important training schools for workers involved in class struggle. Trade unions today take up a wide range of issues which are highly political. But they cannot be a substitute for political parties of the working class, although, because of the federal nature of the British Labour Party, with its trade union affiliations, many unions play an important role within it. By their very nature, unions tend to concentrate on class struggle in the economic sphere, that is on the more direct relation between workers and employers. But if the struggle of the working class is to attain the fundamental aim of ending all exploitation then this struggle must go beyond the specific economic relation between workers and employers to embrace the political relation between workers and the state.

This has been demonstrated in the recent period, which has shown that industrial militancy is not enough, and that there is a need to combat the economic outlook which sees the trade union struggle on economic issues as sufficient in itself. The fact that this struggle needs to be linked with a political perspective if it is to produce lasting gains for the working class, has been consistently stressed by the Communist Party, which considers it vitally important that its members should work to strengthen the trade unions, the shop-stewards movement and workplace organisations, the British TUC, Trades Councils, and the Scottish, Welsh and regional TUCs and the Co-operative movement for political and social, as well as economic struggles.

Such a vigorous fight for the interests of their members on all fronts could help the trade unions to draw back into their ranks those who have been lost through the decimation of industry, the millions who have never been organised, and at the same time give new life to the branches and workplace organisations. In particular, they need to do far more to attract, organise and draw into activity the young workers on whom the future of the movement depends. At the same time a more conscious and determined effort needs to be made not only to attract more women

workers and black workers into the trade unions, but also to ensure that they have equal opportunity of promotion and representation at every level of trade union organisation.

In addition to this a stronger and more united left fight is needed to end the still dominant position of the right wing. This must be conducted at workplace level, among the mass of the workers, and not just at the level of union leadership. To win workers to a socialist, and not only a militant class outlook, increased political activity by the Communist Party and the Labour Left in the workplaces is essential. As part of this, the Co-operative movement needs support and strengthening.

The Labour Party is the mass party of the working class which continues to enjoy the electoral support of large sections of this class. Therefore changing the politics of the Labour Party is bound up with changing the politics of the working class. The reformist outlook currently dominant in the Labour Party sees it as confined exclusively to a parliamentary role within the capitalist system. Its political role is seen almost entirely as participating in elections, and it carries out little or no socialist education. Far from developing mass action, as well as electoral work, the right wing has tried to hold back such action whether by the Labour Party or the unions and the shop stewards.

The left within the Labour Party has opposed right-wing policies, and has often succeeded in winning the annual conference for a left position on important questions. But it has not been able to break the right-wing grip, especially on the Parliamentary Labour Party, nor decisively to change the right-wing policies of Labour governments. The left's growth is of great importance, and could be assisted by more activity in struggle by ward and constituency Labour parties, with the fullest participation of trade union delegates.

But without underestimating the importance of the Labour Party left, it is not a cohesive and united force. While some of its members are influenced by Marxist ideas, and hold firm to basic working-class principles, others are too ready to abandon these principles and embrace the reformist outlook on such questions as the need for mass struggle in the workplaces and localities, incomes policy, the nature of the state and the issue of political power in the struggle for socialism. Because the Labour left still lacks a clear political perspective, is not centrally organised and is not sufficiently related to the many extra-parliamentary struggles, it cannot by itself bring about the necessary transformation in the outlook and activity of the labour movement. Nor is the answer to be found in the various ultra-left groups, which have in common a narrow interpretation of Marxism and a mistaken strategy, and whose tactics are therefore often adventurist and irresponsible.

The vital need is for a distinct and separate Communist Party which, guided by the principles of scientific socialism and active amongst the organised working class and other progressive forces, is capable of providing leadership to them, not on the basis of elitism or sectarianism, but on the basis of co-operation with the left groups in the Labour Party and in the wider labour and progressive movement. It cannot be stressed too often that a leftward shift in the balance of forces within the labour movement and the country at large is dependent upon the growth in size, influence, and effectiveness of the Communist Party. This is the decisive factor.

Other democratic movements

Apart from the trade unions, the Labour Party and the co-operatives—the main organisations of the working class—many other organisations and movements have grown up as different groups of people have sought to promote their struggles on a range of important issues. These movements and organisations have their own distinctive methods of struggle, but if they are to be successful, they must be won to work with the labour movement.

The women's liberation movement in Britain is diverse, embracing the National Assembly of Women, women's structures in the labour and trade union movement, as well as single-issue national and local campaigns. Through their work these various organisations and campaigns have focused attention on a wide range of issues including the sexual division of labour, and particularly how women's role within the family, their economic dependence, and responsibility for child care limit educational opportunities, career prospects and participation in social and political life on equal terms with men. This has highlighted the debate on economic and social issues like equal pay and child care, and shown the importance and potentialities of organising on related questions like abortion and violence against women. It has also raised other questions on the nature of personal relationships, human sexuality and the future of the family, with which the labour movement needs to concern itself much more than in the past.

However, while noting the importance of the new and varied initiatives of the different sections that make up the women's movement, we must also note the tendency amongst some of them to divorce the issue of women's liberation from a class context, and to place theoretical and practical emphasis on the personal, subjective, individual experience of oppression by men. We must also note the tendency by some men to support women's liberation in theory without undertaking necessary changes in their organisational, political, and personal circumstances, in

practice. These approaches can only weaken the mass basis of the fight for women's liberation, and reinforce any tendencies to marginalise the issue. Therefore, to counteract this, there is both an urgent need to project a clear Marxist perspective on the question of women's equality, and a need to step up efforts to win the organised working class to play a more decisive and effective role in the struggle for women's liberation. We must recall that the subordination and oppression of women represents a fundamental feature of the exploitation of working people in all class societies, and most notably under capitalism. Therefore the fight for women's equality, which cannot be relegated to a secondary position but must be central to the class struggle, is not a fight for women alone, but for the whole working class.

This point applies with equal force in the fight against racism in all its forms. In a country like Britain, with its long history of imperialism, racism is reflected in the dominant ideology, and in discrimination and open violence, aspects of which have become institutionalised. Black people and other ethnic minorities who are oppressed not only as members of the working class but also because of their colour, language and background, are increasingly developing their own organisations and other important initiatives in the effort to combat racism. If this struggle is to be effective, there must be the widest unity between black and white people, and between black and white workers especially. In this regard, the labour movement, again, must play a decisive part in winning the whole working class to reject racist ideas and practices, and in assisting black people to combat discrimination wherever it appears. Increasingly, lesbians and gay men are being won to an understanding that their struggle for equal rights can only be achieved in the context of a united struggle by the working class and for socialism.

In Scotland and Wales powerful national movements have developed. They reflect the severe economic, social and cultural problems that have arisen from the growing centralisation of control within the British state. The development of the Scottish and Welsh nations has been increasingly crippled by the grip exercised over their economic and social life by monopoly capital and its close links with the state apparatus at British level. The creation of Scottish and Welsh parliaments with effective executive and legislative powers is now crucial. These parliaments would provide the basis for combating economic and political centralisation and in mobilising a wider alliance of forces which can strike at the state power exercised by monopoly capital over all people in Britain. The convening of a Scottish Convention, which is a people's Convention, is an important contribution to the fight for a parliament in Scotland.

The fact that the labour movement played a key role in the initiation of the Scottish Convention illustrates how the labour movements in Scotland and Wales have a major role to play in the fight for self-determination. Their close links with workers elsewhere in Britain give them the potential strength to build an alliance of forces and the political clarity needed to direct it against those who hold state power in Britain. They can, however, do this only if they do fully become the champions of the national rights of their peoples and shake off reformist and right-wing ideas.

The nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales are based mostly upon sections of the intermediate strata, including the professions, intelligentsia, small capitalists and farmers who have been politicised by the historical conditions in their respective countries. The Welsh Language Society has played a vigorous role in campaigns to secure the national and cultural rights of the Welsh people and to defend the continued existence of working-class communities. Both parties therefore contain certain anti-monopoly capitalist, anti-militarist, and radical-democratic elements who have in turn, attracted some working-class support. There exist wide areas for co-operation with the left. At the same time, these forces will not of themselves develop a class understanding of the roots of national oppression or of the united class power needed to combat state-monopoly capitalism at British level. Therefore if the struggle to secure the right of self-determination for the Scottish and Welsh nations is to take place in a way which unites, rather than divides all working people in Britain, then it is the responsibility of the labour movement to give the leadership in the fight for national rights, and prevent right-wing forces from using the issue to confuse and divide the people.

Within the communities and localities a mass of problems exist, on the environment, on housing, urban decay, transport, health, leisure, cultural and recreational facilities. Associated with them is the attack on local democracy and the increasing trend toward central government dictation over local councils. In response to these problems many movements and organisations have developed, including tenant's and residents associations, environmental groups, community newspapers, theatre and other cultural groups, transport campaign groups, broad committees against social service cuts and anti-poll tax committees. Not only are working people affected everyday by these problems, but it is also increasingly an area in which capitalism is intervening and profiteering.

In this connection, the ecological movement is assuming an especial importance, mobilising people from a wide cross-section of society in the struggle to prevent the destruction of the environment and its

eco-systems, which are so vital to the quality of living and even to human existence itself. The battle for participation in local politics and the struggles around all aspects of community and environmental issues are of concern not only to the groups directly involved, but to the majority of the population in Britain. Therefore it is especially important that the organised working class takes up these issues, campaigns on them in a more concerted way and establishes close links with the various movements concerned.

Organisations such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament have been developed to bring together and organise many people who are committed to the cause for world peace, and to Britain's nuclear disarmament in particular. But the desire for peace and the removal of all nuclear weapons and foreign bases from British soil extends far beyond their ranks and needs to be expressed in a much more powerful and broad-based peace movement as part of the democratic anti-monopoly alliance. To this end support for CND and other peace organisations such as the British Peace Assembly as broad, tolerant, non-sectarian campaigns needs to be greatly increased and help must be given to strengthen them organisationally and politically at all levels. In view of the fact that the church is becoming increasingly outspoken on the injustices in our society, and also that many of its members are active in the peace movement, Christian CND has an important role to play as part of the general peace movement. In this connection stronger links between the peace organisations and the trade unions need to be built, to draw trade unions into a more active role in the peace movement. An important role must be played here by TU CND.

Young people, apart from the problems they face in common with other sections of the working population, also face their own specific problems whether as students or as young workers. Unemployment is leaving its mark on an entire generation of young people, and aggravates the discrimination felt by young women and black people. Discontent among them is increasingly met by harassment from the authorities, and there is the danger that continuing youth unemployment could lead to the strengthening of right-wing trends stemming from growing frustration and a lack of contact with the left and progressive movement. Therefore the organised working class needs to step up its campaign on their demands, providing organisational structures and social facilities for them, recruiting them into the unions, and fighting for their right to study and for their right to work.

The fight against unemployment must unite the employed and the unemployed around the key demands for a shorter working week, reduced retiring age, increased unemployment benefits and pensions,

apprenticeship and proper training for workers of all ages at trade-union rates. To this end, there is an urgent need to develop an unemployed workers' organisation, closely linked with the labour movement and working with it. This would enable the unemployed to fight for their demands, and in that way, they would be brought into the struggle for the AEPS, deepening their political understanding in the process.

In recent years the pensioners' movement has taken on new militancy and there is a great need to develop a truly mass movement on the issue. The fight for a "living wage" pension is not the responsibility of the pensioners alone. The trade union movement needs to understand that it is a fight for their members' future, as the provision of a state pension is the only way to ensure a secure pension. Therefore, although the pensioners' movement has received more backing from the trade unions and local Labour parties in its battle for adequate pensions, and for the extension of social services dealing with the elderly and disabled, the labour movement needs to undertake more vigorous and consistent activity in support of the pensioners' demands, including the setting up of retired members' sections in every union.

The democratic anti-monopoly alliance

In confirming that the basic force for advance in our society is the class struggle between workers and capitalists, we have at the same time seen that capitalism not only exploits people at work, but also oppresses them in many different ways and adversely affects different aspects of their lives. Thus they react and struggle against capitalism and its effects not only in their workplaces, but in their communities and in their social, cultural and leisure activities, as men and women, black and white, young or old, Scottish, Welsh, Irish or English. And movements and organisations develop which may embrace people not only from different sections within the working class but from other classes and strata in society.

It is clear, however, that if these movements and their struggles proceed in isolation from each other, they can do no more than challenge the position of the ruling class on isolated issues, and not its overall control and domination. If they remain apart from the labour movement, not only will they themselves suffer from the lack of its support, but the organised working class will be unable to fulfil its role as the leading force in society.

It is imperative, therefore, that the organised working class builds the widest possible alliance with all other movements fighting for progress, democracy and equality in order to bring the combined weight

of the overwhelming majority of the population to bear on the political, economic and other forms of power of the capitalist state and the monopoly corporations and banks. The construction and development in struggle of the democratic anti-monopoly alliance will help not only to strengthen unity between the organised working class and other movements, but it will also strengthen unity inside the working class itself as it promotes a deeper understanding of how capitalism creates the full range of problems facing all workers.

At the same time, in seeking to implement the policies of the Alternative Economic and Political Strategy, not in isolation, but in the context of the democratic anti-monopoly alliance, the organised working class can become both more conscious of, and more confident in, its task of leading the fight to challenge the domination of state-monopoly capitalism, take state power and abolish the system of exploitation. In other words, by being the leading force inside the democratic anti-monopoly alliance, the organised working class can become the leading force for socialism.

The democratic anti-monopoly alliance will not grow or develop spontaneously. There will be some who, understanding the need for fundamental change, will also understand the need for the widest unity between the working class and its allies. There will be others who, being involved only on specific issues, may not see or understand the nature or necessity of such unity. Therefore the work of the left, both in the practical development of activity and in the battle of ideas, is vital in building the democratic anti-monopoly alliance. And in this, the Communist Party, as the organised Marxist-Leninist political party, has a key and decisive responsibility.

Chapter 5 **The Communist Party**

In this programme we have shown that the many acute problems facing the majority of the population in Britain today, and millions of people in many other parts of the world, basically stem from the system of capitalist exploitation and oppression. We have shown that these problems can only begin to be solved if capitalism is abolished and replaced by the new system of socialism. At the same time we have shown that the strategy for socialism in the conditions of Britain today presupposes mobilising the organised working class and its allies around the policies of the Alternative Economic and Political Strategy. And we have shown that only by establishing the unity of the working class and its allies

through the building of the democratic anti-monopoly alliance can the struggle for progressive policies be lifted, and the way opened to taking state power and building socialism.

However, the fulfilment of these tasks will depend in large measure on the existence of an effective Communist Party capable of providing the required ideological, organisational and campaigning leadership. The necessity for this leadership, and the possibility of its exercise, are not linked to any subjective or arbitrary notions of elitism, but to the aims and principles of organisation on which Communist Parties, as distinct from other political parties, are based.

The most important characteristics of a Communist Party are the following:

- First, the Communist Party is based upon the class and internationalist principles of Marxism-Leninism which enable it both to analyse the nature of capitalist society and to develop a strategy that will lead to socialism.
- Second, it is organised for socialist revolution, and therefore constantly seeks to strengthen its roots in the working class, because of the latter's leading role in revolutionary social change. On that basis it seeks to weld together all progressive movements at a local and national level, initiating and assisting the people's campaigns. In order to help develop political consciousness, it organises itself both in the workplaces and localities.
- Third, the Communist Party is a democratic party, one which draws on the initiative and creativity of its membership in planning and carrying through its activity and policy, and in electing its leadership, answerable to that membership. To this end the party develops and maintains close relationships within its own ranks, between different sections of workers, between men and women, black and white people, young and old.
- Fourth, the Party is centralised, so that it can intervene in the class struggle as a disciplined and united force, once policy is decided. These last two points, democracy with centralism, embody the principles of democratic centralism which, among other things, make the Party capable of acting in a uniquely effective way.
- Fifth, the Communist Party seeks close relations with the communist movement in other countries, based on the independence, equality and mutual respect of each communist party in a world movement which is leading the transition to socialism on a global scale. This unity, together with international solidarity

with other movements fighting for peace, progress and national liberation, is vital not only in the immediate struggles, but for the achievement and building of socialism in Britain.

These essential characteristics of the Communist Party have enabled it over the years to be an effective vanguard party of struggle, involved in a central way in the main battles of the working class and the labour and progressive movement, generating class and socialist consciousness, and showing the need to win political power and advance to socialism.

But the Communist Party is still too small, and its roots among many sections are still weak. It has recently re-established itself in order to overcome the difficulties and divisions created by the revisionist assault on its integrity. It needs to grow both numerically, and in terms of its political influence.

To do this, it must inspire discussion with a view to developing activity and struggle, not only in the labour movement, but in all progressive organisations and democratic movements. It must aim to win the confidence of those potentially revolutionary forces coming into political activity. It must aim to encourage positive cultural movements, seeking to make available those forms of the arts which have hitherto been of an elitist nature. It is vital to recognise the place of culture in the lives of working people. It must help, organise and educate a new generation of active Communists to invigorate, staff and lead its organisations in the workplaces and communities. Central to the creation of this new generation, the Party will need to pay particular attention to the needs and aspirations of young people. And it needs to increase its electoral activity, although Communist contests should be undertaken on a selective basis, taking into account the overall political situation, the level of Communist work, the Party's influence in the constituencies or wards concerned, and the nature of the candidates put forward by Labour.

The Communist Party must also endeavour to show more effectively in experience of action, as well as by explanation, that class collaboration has to be replaced by class struggle, that the "neutrality" of the state is an illusion, that only if parliamentary struggle is combined with mass struggle outside parliament can the working class and its allies win significant victories, and that the problems we face can only be successfully tackled by a strategy for socialist revolution. Ready to listen and learn, as well as to provide strategic leadership, Communists will more and more become a trusted and respected popular force.

In this way the Communist Party will be able to become a mass

party—not just a party with a numerically bigger membership, but with members ideologically equipped and drawn from, and involved in, every section and area of our society, a party through which more and more people can be brought into political action. All of this constitutes the essential condition for the Communist Party to develop its distinctive political role as a force which leads from where the people are, which fights for the unity of the working class, and for the cohesion of the democratic anti-monopoly alliance at every stage. Only in this way can the reformist influence amongst working people be overcome and replaced by socialist consciousness.

At the same time, however large our party, we could not envisage achieving this development by ourselves. Other parties and organisations will play an important role in this process. But the distinctive aspiration of our party is, in placing our policies and strategy for socialism before the people, to give this process coherence and vision, and to exercise democratic leadership. This means that the Communist Party, as part of the labour movement, seeks no special privileges within it. What it does seek, however, is the removal of all discriminatory bans and proscriptions directed mainly against Communists, but also affecting others in the left, which only help the right wing by keeping the movement divided. This is why Communists want to ensure that the trade unions have the democratic right to elect, from among those who pay the political levy, delegates of their own choice to the Labour Party, and to put forward nominees for selection as Labour candidates.

It is important to stress that the Communist Party does not seek to replace the Labour Party as a federal party of the working class, but rather to strengthen its original federal nature. We see a much more influential Communist Party as crucial to the future of the Labour Party itself, and to the development of the labour movement and the democratic anti-monopoly alliance as a whole. If right-wing ideas and leadership in the labour movement are defeated and replaced by people and politics committed to the struggle against monopoly capitalism, and if the Communist Party itself grows in strength and influence, and if bans and proscriptions which promote disunity are removed, new opportunities will open up for still more developed forms of Labour-Communist unity, including in the electoral field. Under these circumstances, future affiliation to the Labour Party could become a realistic possibility.

Central to any strategy for advance to socialism in Britain is the need to build up the unity of the left. Our programme is fundamentally

based on seeking to achieve the widest possible unity on a principled socialist basis. It offers therefore the basis for achieving left unity in the course of struggle. The development of this unity must involve respect for the principled differences which do exist. This is the condition for building up mutual confidence and trust, for developing work together on specific issues and on that basis creating the atmosphere where it becomes possible to discuss differences in a comradely way, leading progressively to the achievement of common understanding. An important element in the development of left unity must obviously be efforts to overcome divisions which still exist within the Communist movement.

One of the reasons for re-establishing the Party on the basis of its rules and programme was to create an organisation around which it would be possible, in time, to bring together all British Communists as part of the overall development of left unity. In the meantime, the best way to overcome differences and to prepare the ground for principled discussion leading eventually to forms of organisational re-unification is to work within the broad left on specific issues together with other Communists whatever their affiliation.

The degree to which the Communist Party can realise the aims outlined above depends to a great extent on access to a means of mass communication, independent of monopoly capitalist control, through which it can channel its programme for socialism into the ranks of the working class in the widest possible way.

In this connection the role of the *Morning Star* is crucial. The *Morning Star* remains today the only national daily newspaper which is co-operatively owned and free of control by the press barons. Maintained in existence, with its predecessor the *Daily Worker*, since 1930, by the tireless support of its readers, the *Morning Star* consistently takes up the cause of all working people in their struggle against all forms of monopoly capitalist exploitation and oppression. At the same time, providing analysis and advice from a consistent Marxist and internationalist perspective, it is also the only daily paper which can help mobilise working people and other progressive forces for peace and socialism. Helping to build the democratic anti-monopoly alliance, it helps to cement links between the labour and trade union movement, other groups of the working class, and other sections of the British people.

As we say, the role of the *Morning Star* is vital, and all on the left should support it. But for communists in particular, the task of

expanding its circulation and its influence within the trade unions and other progressive movements must be an overriding priority.

Conclusion

The analysis, arguments and objectives presented in this programme sum up what the Communist Party stands for. As we said at the outset, our intention has not been to provide a detailed account of every area of policy, but to provide a general perspective on a strategy for action and struggle which can bring about the unity of the working class and its allies for the winning of political power and the establishment of socialism. It is the Communist Party's firm belief that if there is working-class unity in Britain, and if there is international solidarity and unity with all the other major forces in the world fighting for progress and socialism, then the moribund system of state-monopoly capitalism in Britain as in other imperialist countries, with its neo-colonialism and its plans for arms build-up, war and destruction, can be defeated and the way opened up for working people's liberation everywhere. The struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people and the establishment of socialism is the cause which motivates the Communist Party. That is the cause for which we shall fight. The socialist society for which we are working in Britain will draw inspiration from the experiences of socialism everywhere. It will have essential features in common with other socialist societies but it will be built by British people, and it will be constructed on the basis of our own democratic, revolutionary, and cultural heritage. We invite all who share our aspirations, our world outlook and class commitment, to join our ranks and help us win that fight.

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The Marxist Forum is an autonomous network formed to make available discussions and programmatic materials of Marxist organizations in different countries. Materials from the Forum are distributed through the Marxist Educational Press. For more information about the Forum, write to Gerald Erickson, Marxist Forum, 9 Pleasant Street S. E., Room 330, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Additional materials and commentaries appropriate for distribution are most welcome.

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Canada: Documents of the 32nd Convention of the Communist Party of Canada. 1995. 42 pages. \$6.00

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Book Reviews

Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation. By Jonathon Kozol. New York: Crown, 1995. 256 pages, cloth \$23.00.

Let us hail the appearance of a great book—of a book like Gorky's *Childhood* and Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk*. In that splendid company belongs Jonathon Kozol's *Amazing Grace*. Discerning readers will know Kozol's earlier books, *Death at an Early Age* and *Savage Inequalities*; they are splendid cries from the heart. But his *Amazing Grace* is a masterpiece; it can move a stone.

Kozol lived in the South Bronx among the people of that forsaken area. Here exist tens of thousands of Black people. They are in tatters, they are hungry, and they live a stone's throw from exploiters who wallow in closely guarded estates.

The people with whom Kozol lived saw his understanding and anger; they saw in Kozol—this Jew—a person of compassion, a new Jesus, a man who utterly understood them, who loved them. They made him one of their own. The Reverend Gregory Groover on a Sunday morning prays: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord." And the congregation responds: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Kozol tells of the suffering, of the cries of mothers whose children fall through damaged elevator shafts, who cry in hunger. His book does not offer a way out; it cries aloud for this atrocity to end, here in this land of boundless wealth and utter heartlessness.

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I taught for a few years in a community college in the heart of the South Bronx; I was a half-time lecturer. The classroom was always crowded. We rarely had enough heat, or enough chalk. I discovered my eager students—graduates of New York high schools—did not know who Abraham Lincoln was.

Some of the young women carried infants with them, carefully wrapped. All listened intently after they found the teacher respected them. He marvelled rather at their guts and sought hard to be worthy of their respect and eagerness.

This helped me understand Kozol.

Meanwhile, the *Wall Street Journal* (4 May 1995) reports that the year's first quarter brought "the highest level of corporate prosperity in the postwar era, and probably since the latter stages of the Bronze Age." And the *New York Times* (5 Jan. 1996) reports: "The demand for free meals at New York City soup kitchens and food pantries is outstripping supply even as Congress proposes to cut funds for emergency food programs."

Prisons are multiplying, and the number of policemen is tripling. But nothing will or should thwart the mounting anger of these people who show Amazing Grace but do have a limit of patience. More power to the coming explosion. The meekness of Kozol's prose is its only fault. Baldwin warned of *The Fire Next Time*; it is past time.

Those with a conscience should read Jonathan Kozol and act as that conscience directs. He ends his masterpiece this way:

I do not know how to thank Anabelle for her smile or the children in the schoolyard for their jump-rope rhymes, or Destiny for the way she held a purple crayon. I do not know how to thank Anthony for his honesty and decency and inner grace. This book is my best effort to give thanks to all these children. I pray that many will lead long and happy lives and that their deepest dreams may be fulfilled.

Such prayers no doubt are helpful but the experience of humanity teaches that prayers must be helped along by action—mass, united action by an aroused populus deciding at long last that the crucifixion of children must stop.

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The Evolution of Racism: Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science. By Pat Shipman. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994. 318 pages, cloth \$22.50.

The DNA Mystique: The Gene as a Cultural Icon. By Dorothy Nelkin and M. Susan Lindee. Salt Lake City: W. H. Freeman, 1995. 276 pages, cloth \$22.95.

These two books discuss how biological concepts such as genetic determinism influence social policy to promote racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia. *The Evolution of Racism* explores these questions by examining the history of evolutionary theory, while *The DNA Mystique* explains how the gene has been expropriated in modern culture to explain all kinds of human behavior. Although both books deal with eugenics, racism, and homosexuality, they differ significantly in political approach.

The story Shipman tells spans one hundred and fifty years of the development of evolutionary theory. She describes the personalities and contributions of individual scientists, relating (to some extent) their ideas to class background and societal conditions. She shows how evolutionary theory was applied as social Darwinism in the context of nineteenth-century capitalism, and how Hitler, supported by some German scientists, made explicit use of the idea of “survival of the fittest” to eliminate Jews and those regarded as mentally defective or unfit.

Some lack of clarity is evident in Shipman’s discussion. Although she criticizes the role of German scientists in carrying out the Holocaust, she also says that “science will reveal the truth about racial differences.” As an anthropologist, Shipman believes that the use of measurements to describe body types can differentiate races, but she acknowledges that no pure races exist. She writes about the influence of social environment on behavior, and yet she declares that genes involved in intelligence and criminal behavior can be defined by further studies.

The DNA Mystique argues that genetic essentialism gives a new aura to genetic determinism today and reduces the self to a molecule—DNA.

Conveyed by scientists as they describe the meaning of their research, this idea of genetic essentialism has been readily adopted in popular forums where DNA—the invisible, eternal and fundamental basis of human identity—has acquired many of the powers once granted to the immortal soul. Like the sacred texts of revealed religion DNA explains our place in the world, our history, our social relationships, our behavior, our morality, our fate. (57)

Nelkin and Lindee and their students have collected an amazing amount of material from television, movies, comic books, and other forms of popular culture that promote this idea of the overwhelming power of the gene (the DNA). The authors suggest that scientists in the Human Genome Project, in an effort to maintain their funding, are behind some of this media blitz. It is promoted also by political leaders of a society in economic decline to justify raising profits by cutting back social programs. If our fate is in our genes, social efforts to change our environment are useless.

Among the social issues given specific attention by both these books are crime, eugenics, and homosexuality. Shipman devotes two chapters to the Violence Initiative and the Genetics of Crime Conference, coming to the conclusion that the former, as proposed by Frederick Goodwin, may well have been racist in concept. Only African American men were to be studied, primate and human behaviors were to be compared, and drugs were to be given to correct violent behavior. She finds, however, the latter, a conference proposed by David Wasserman, more scientific and possibly helpful in understanding the role of genetics in criminal behavior. To support the idea of fighting crime by finding causative genes, Shipman quotes Arthur Jensen, who declared intelligence to be 80 percent heritable; Shipman feels that the same concept applies to crime (260). Her only source on behavioral genetics is Jensen, even though a vast literature exists critical of both Jensen and this crime conference.

The DNA Mystique devotes a chapter called “Creating Natural Distinctions” to the relationship of genes to gender and race. On the latter issue the authors note that “in the 1980’s a growing concern about the cost of welfare, changing ethnic composition of

major cities and a growing underclass encouraged speculation about the role of genetics in perpetuating poverty and violence” (115). Nelkin and Lindee attribute these social ills to the loss of jobs, less money for education, and lack of community services rather than to the genes of the victims.

While public pressure called off the plan for the Genetics of Crime Conference in 1993, it was finally held in late 1995. Demonstrators charged racism and pointed out that crime is not genetic. It is clear that Shipman blames individuals and their genetics for crime, while Nelkin and Lindee hold the social system responsible.

The ideas of eugenics, Shipman demonstrates, were promoted by scientists studying evolution in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She directly links two German scientists, Ernst Haeckel and August Weismann, with the development of eugenic ideas that led to Hitler’s Holocaust. Shipman relates eugenics to the industrial revolution and the rise of capitalism, and shows the misuse of the “survival of the fittest” concept to give these ideas an apparently scientific basis. The fit were rich, it was argued, and the unfit were poor. Eliminating some of the unfit, therefore, by sterilizing the “feeble-minded, paupers and criminals” was acceptable and would prevent spending money on social programs. After the Second World War the eugenics movement ended, and “biologists who believed that the study of human evolution might bring improvement to our species migrated to the field of genetics” (141).

Nelkin and Lindee also consider eugenics historically. Before the advent of the gene, the discussion was around the germ plasm as “the determiner of personality and character, the source of social order, and the locus of immortality” (36). Popular literature on eugenics was vast then also. The authors found five hundred books published between 1900 and 1935 proposing that problems of criminality, feeble-mindedness, alcoholism, and pauperism could be eliminated by using sterilization to prevent people with these traits from having children. After Hitler, eugenics as a movement declined but the vision persisted of developing a better “race” through research into the nature of the gene and development of the field of behavioral genetics.

Eugenics in contemporary culture is less a state ideology than a set of ideals about a perfected and healthy human future. These beliefs—conveyed through the stories told by popular culture—draw on the assumption that our future will depend on voluntarily controlling the genetic constitution of the human species. (191)

The authors give examples showing the current promotion of this new eugenics: (1) CBS commentator Andy Rooney: “Most people are born with equal intelligence but blacks have watered down their genes because the less intelligent ones are the ones that have the most children” (171). (2) Herrnstein and Murray in *The Bell Curve*: “We can expect a future confederacy of dunces due to the falling birth rate of affluent educated women” (173). (3) Slogan in advertisement for a mating service in a “hate” publication: “White men and white women be fruitful and multiply” (179).

Both books discuss sperm banks as an area of eugenics. Shipman describes the founding of the Nobelists’ sperm bank early in this century; Nelkin and Lindee report an increase since 1980 in the number of sperm banks from one to one hundred. The notion of preserving “good sperm” with “good genes” depends on the false view that genetic conditions cannot be modified. Nelkin and Lindee point out that the limited scientific knowledge we have of the gene is being misused by the capitalist class to maintain power, cut spending on social programs, and prevent people from fighting back.

Both books mention the attempts of Simon LeVay and Dean Hamer to find a genetic basis for homosexual behavior. LeVay examined the brains of cadavers of nineteen homosexual men and found an area of the hypothalamus to be smaller than in brains of forty-four heterosexual men. Hamer claims to have found a difference on the X chromosome between homosexual and heterosexual men. Shipman says this work suggests that homosexuality might be “an example of genetic influence over a complex behavior rather than genetic control” (266). Nelkin and Lindee criticize the work of LeVay in that the size difference in the hypothalamus could be the consequence of behavior, coincidental with or due to AIDS. They discuss the influence of culture

on attitudes toward homosexuality throughout history. They remind us that the basis for Hitler's "extermination of homosexuals was grounded in their presumed biological status" (122).

Again Nelkin and Lindee draw on popular literature to show the effect of genetic determinism on the understanding of the cause of homosexuality, citing a speculation in the *National Inquirer* that a "simple injection will let gay men turn straight" (122), and a statement in the "Dear Abby" column of the columnist's belief that homosexuals "are born that way" (124).

The Evolution of Racism gives a detailed history of the development of evolutionary theory with all its political errors. Shipman contributes little, however, that is new about evolutionary theory and does not see the role of economics and politics in the interpretation of research in evolution. She is antiracist, but does not understand what this means.

The authors of *The DNA Mystique* point out that "DNA has become a cultural resource for the construction of differences"—ironic because one of the conclusions of human genetic research is the profound chemical similarity, at the level of DNA, among human beings. Our DNA differs from each other by less than 0.1 percent. The lesson of the Human Genome Project should be to recognize that we are very much alike, rather than to look for group inferiorities.

The DNA Mystique is certainly recommended reading. Nelkin and Lindee understand how the gene is being used to perpetuate a social system not serving majority needs. They conclude:

The powers of the gene in popular culture—expansive, malleable, sometimes fantastic—derive not from evolutionary forces or biological mandates, but rather from social or political expectations. Infused with cultural meanings, the gene has become a resource that is too readily appropriated, too seldom criticized, and too frequently misused in the service of narrow or socially destructive ends. (199)

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ABSTRACTS

Annaliese Griese and Gerd Pawelzig, “Why Did Marx and Engels Concern Themselves with Natural Science?”—As work proceeds on the complete original writings of Marx and Engels for the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA)*, the extent to which they dealt with the natural sciences is quite striking. Since their interest in the natural sciences was not connected with professional ambitions in these areas, this interest must have been motivated by the connections they saw between developments in the natural sciences and their general sociotheoretical work connected with the working-class movement. Among the principal factors that contributed to their interest in the natural sciences was the need to draw upon the methodology of the natural sciences for the application of dialectical and historical materialism to the social sphere. The often-made allegation that Engels’s understanding of dialectics, especially in regard to the natural sciences, was incompatible with Marx’s is sharply disputed.

David Levering Lewis, “Lecture at the Dedication of the W. E. B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst”—A biographical sketch is presented of W. E. B. Du Bois, the premier architect of the civil rights movement in the United States. Born in 1868, he cut an amazing swath through four continents, writing fourteen pioneering books of sociology, history, and politics, and in his eighties a second autobiography and three large historical novels, complementing the two large works of fiction he wrote in the first two decades of this century. Du Bois was among the first to grasp the international implications of the struggle for racial justice, memorably proclaiming, at the dawn of the century, that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the color line. In the course of his quest for racial justice, Du Bois became increasingly radical, evolving into a committed Marxist, and finally joining the Communist Party at the age of 93, two years before his death in 1963.

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“The British Road to Socialism”—The sixth edition of the *British Road to Socialism*, the program of the Communist Party of Britain, presents the party’s general perspective on strategy for action and struggle aimed toward the eventual winning of political power and the establishment of socialism in Great Britain. The revised program also addresses the world situation in the light of the changes that have occurred in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

ABREGES

Annaliese Griese et Gerd Pawelzig, «Pourquoi Marx et Engels s’intéressaient-ils aux sciences naturelles?»—Tandis que les travaux sur l’intégralité des écrits de Marx et Engels pour la *Gesamtausgabe (MEGA)* suivent leur cours, on est frappé par l’importance soutenue que ces derniers ont accordé aux sciences naturelles. Dans la mesure où leur intérêt pour les sciences naturelles n’était pas lié à leurs ambitions professionnelles dans ces domaines, cet intérêt a dû être suscité par les rapports qu’ils décelèrent entre les développements dans les sciences naturelles, et leur travail général sociothéorique lié au mouvement de la classe ouvrière. Parmi les facteurs principaux qui contribuèrent à attiser leur intérêt pour les sciences naturelles, se trouve la nécessité d’extraire des sciences naturelles une méthode permettant d’appliquer le matérialisme dialectique et historique à la sphère sociale. Les auteurs contestent sévèrement l’allégation souvent émise qui stipule que la compréhension de la dialectique de Engels était incompatible avec celle de Marx, surtout en ce qui concerne les sciences naturelles.

David Levering Lewis, «Une conférence à la dédicace de la bibliothèque W. E. B. Du Bois, Université de Massachusetts, Amherst»—Le conférencier présente un aperçu biographique de W. E. B. Du Bois, le premier architecte du mouvement pour les droits civils des noirs aux Etats-Unis. Né en 1868, Du Bois ouvrit une voie considérable sur les quatre continents en écrivant quatorze livres pionniers dans les domaines de la sociologie, de l’histoire et de la politique. Sa percée notoire repose également

sur ce qu'il écrivit en tant qu'octogénaire, à savoir une deuxième autobiographie et trois grands romans historiques qui complétèrent ses deux grandes oeuvres de fiction (toutes deux datant des deux premières décennies de ce siècle). Du Bois fut parmi les premiers à saisir les implications internationales de la lutte pour la justice raciale, en proclamant mémorablement, à l'aube du siècle, que le problème du vingtième siècle serait le problème des divisions selon la couleur de la peau. Au cours de sa quête de la justice raciale, Du Bois se radicalisa en évoluant vers un marxisme engagé; il finit par adhérer au parti communiste des Etats-Unis à l'âge de 93 ans, deux ans avant sa mort en 1963.

«La Voie britannique vers le socialisme»—La sixième édition de *La Voie britannique vers le socialisme* (le programme du Communist Party of Britain), présente la perspective générale du parti quant à la stratégie pour l'action et la lutte visant l'éventuelle accession au pouvoir et l'établissement du socialisme en Grande-Bretagne. Le programme révisé concerne également la situation mondiale qui est perçue en tenant compte des changements advenus dans les anciens pays socialistes de l'Europe de l'Est.