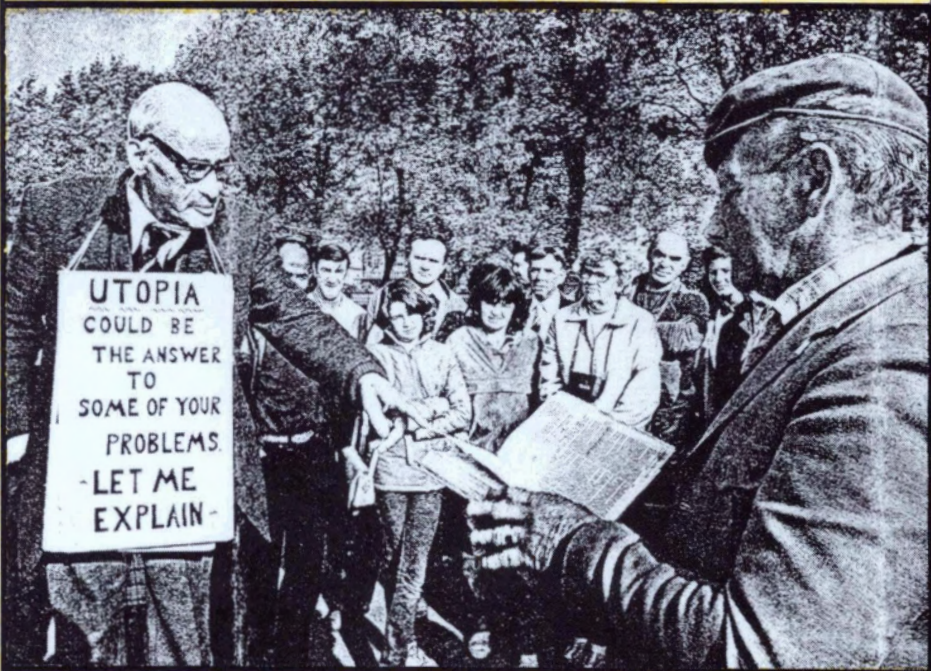


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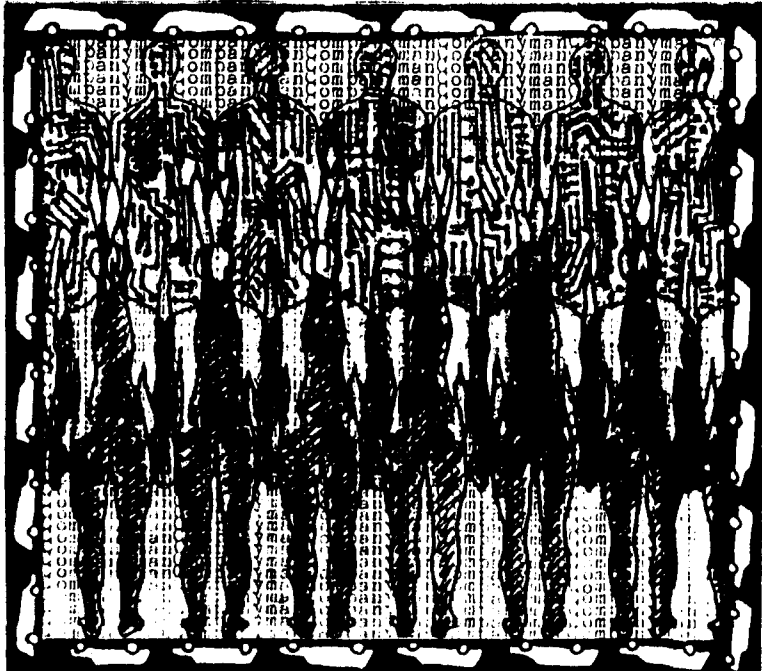
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The General Election and the Break-Up of the U.K. - A Republican Response

REACTIONS TO APRIL 9th.

The election results in Scotland first produced disbelief, then according to the importance people placed in British 'democracy', either despair or anger. S.N.P. voter, Muriel Gray said, " it is the people's fault and nobody else", whilst Labour voting Kenneth Roy said, "we had had our chance and had muffed it. We don't deserve another.....One comes close to despair" ('Scotland on Sunday' 12.4.92).

And over a week later Jim Sillars was berating the people of Scotland saying, "There is a serious question in my mind about the character and ability of the Scottish people" ('The Scotsman' 24.4.92). The people had let down the S.N.P.'s populist deputy leader! He would go off in a huff and take up the business consultancy job he had before Govan.

Here we have the voices of the middle class whose hopes and ambitions have been dashed, but who can retreat into apolitical comfort and nurse their wounds, whilst blaming "the people"! But other members of the middle class, whose personal futures are more closely tied to working class aspirations, knew that something more was required. There would be widespread working class anger, and a feeling of being cheated by the politicians, S.N.P. and Labour, but especially Labour, who had promised them real change. When Labour's official 'New Realism' is found wanting, the 'New Tokenists' await in the wings, to attempt to divert any possible movement from below into safe and constitutionalist channels.

And 5000 angry people turned up on April 11th., at 24 hours notice, in Glasgow's George Square, to be regaled by such stalwarts of 'New Tokenism' as John McAllion and George Galloway (ex- 'Committee of 100'). 'Scotland United/75%' had learned the lesson of the Anti-Poll Tax struggle. If you don't want to be by-passed you must be in at the beginning and offer the prospect of activity.

Meanwhile 2 other groups have come to public attention. The first, 'Common Cause', is linked to people supporting 'Charter '88' and the Scottish Constitutional

Convention - advocates of advanced liberal reform of the British constitution. They are cross party 'popular front' and show middle class disdain for economic and social issues, believing that Labour, Liberal Democrats and nationalists should unite around constitutional reform. Their likely limits were highlighted by the Scottish Constitutional Convention's attitude to the mass civil disobedience of the Anti-Poll Tax resistance - a lofty abstentionism. The working class actually exercising its right to self determination in practice, through united action, is too much for these advocates of parliamentary reform.

The other group, 'Democracy for Scotland', seems to owe its inspiration to the Anti-Nuclear movement and the Greens. It appears to be anti-political party and seeks publicity through vigils - protest rather than resistance.

THE NEED FOR A REPUBLICAN PERSPECTIVE

All those opposing the U.K. state with its monarchist Unionist constitution, must take stock of the General Election result and the post election response of different groups and classes. James Naughtie is one political commentator, who has managed to keep his feet firmly on the ground. He quite rightly stated that, "The election result was not the end of the prospects of change, as weary and grey-faced opposition politicians may feel but the start.....Six months from now, very little is going to look the same.....Who would be Donald Dewar in the next few months?.....And who would be Ian Lang?....The Scottish question is certainly going to stay, whatever the rest of the U.K. thinks. In a way its the heart of this election result; the debate hasn't been concluded, but is going to become more urgent" ('Scotland on Sunday' 12.4.92).

However, we must have a much more strategic vision, based on a thorough understanding of the real nature of the beast we are up against. Any group which merely reacts to the shock of the General Election result, will not be properly preparing people for the long drawn out struggle ahead. We must see both the strengths and weaknesses of the British state, and see how different classes and national movements throughout the U.K. are likely to act. An examination of the historical evidence will show that any long term strategy for national self determination will have to be Republican in orientation. For behind Westminster's parliamentary facade lies a vast accumulation of powers - powers held in the name of the Crown, but wielded in practice by the ruling class.

An earlier movement for Civil Rights in 'Northern Ireland' naively believed that you could press for political and social reform without challenging the constitution and uprooting the hidden Crown powers. And in pressing for social and political change together, they were far in advance of the liberals of the Scottish Constitutional Convention and 'Charter '88', whatever illusions they may hold of themselves as being latter day '1848ers' or Chartists!.

Those radicals and populists involved in 'Scotland for Democracy', who show

understandable scorn for contesting the arena of official politics, and even more understandable contempt for party politics (much heightened by the antics of Labour, Liberal Democrats and the S.N.P., in the run-up to the election) will not be able to politically survive the forthcoming events. Tensions within the state machinery, splits within the 'official' parties, and new political parties will all become the focus for working and middle class aspirations as the constitutional crisis develops.

THOSE VOTING ON APRIL 9TH.

It is clear that interest in the General Election remained high, even amongst the working class. Taking Scotland, there was a 74.5% turnout. The middle class constituencies experienced the greatest increase in participation. This undoubtedly benefited the Tories. There was a small decline in voting turnout in some working class constituencies. In most other working class constituencies the turnout remained largely the same or marginally up on 1987. Against this it must be remembered that considerable numbers of workers have disappeared from the electoral register, because of their opposition to, or fear of the poll tax. It has been estimated that 80,000 have 'disappeared' in Strathclyde.

WHAT DID WORKERS WANT FROM THE ELECTION?

Most obviously they wanted rid of the Tories and the 13 years of increasing misery - high unemployment, homelessness, the poll tax, deteriorating public services, increasing insecurity, health hazards and stress at work - in short a very real feeling of loss of control.

And in Scotland there has been a growing feeling that part of the drive to reassert control will involve some form of national self-determination. Politically this has meant a decline in working class support for the Unionist status quo. Not even the ultra-Unionist Orange Order, is prepared to unequivocally back the Unionist status quo. This has been left to the sects of the radical Right and Left - the B.N.P. on one side and the R.C.P. and 'The Leninist', on the other.

Other 'independent' Left groups have an essentially abstentionist position, which oscillates between support for the Unionist status quo and Unionist Devolution, depending on either the official Labour position, or how they perceive working class Labourist supporters to be moving (Scottish Militant Labour, the Socialist Workers Party and 'Socialist Organiser'). At present only Scottish Militant Labour have any significant support amongst workers, and they have longest held to a formal Unionist devolution stance, although downplaying this in practice, preferring emphasis on economic issues.

Support for Scottish independence has undoubtedly grown amongst workers. However, this does not necessarily equate with support for the S.N.P..

However neither can working class support for the Labour Party be wholly equated with support for the official Devolution policy. Many workers have different expectations from Devolution, to those of the middle class, who see increased career opportunities and defence of privilege. And the Labour version of Devolution would favour the middle class, creating an expanding bureaucracy - a Strathclyde Region writ-large. Many workers see devolution merely as a surer step to independence than the S.N.P.'s "Free in '93" - the political equivalent of Ally Macleod's Scotland 1978 World Cup strategy!

WHAT DID THE MIDDLE CLASS WANT FROM THE ELECTION?

The middle class is always casting its eyes forwards and then backwards, over its shoulder. Looking forwards it sees new career opportunities, increased personal status and rising living standards. Looking backwards, it sees increased job insecurity, thwarted ambitions and indebtedness, even possible unemployment and house repossession - but above all, the danger of falling down the social ladder.

The middle class is varied. In Scotland the key component is found in the large public sector. This public sector has suffered many assaults and reorganisations, beginning under the last Labour government, but stepped up by the Tories. Nearly every reorganisation has resulted in job loss or reduced job security for manual and lower grade white collar workers. However, this has disguised the creation of an increasing number of middle class jobs, in elaborate managerial hierarchies, with greatly enhanced incomes. This has offered many new career prospects and helped to create a bigger managerial middle class. There has also been an increase in para-state agencies and 'independent' consultancies, serving the public sector, offering similar career prospects. Increasingly this 'new' middle class has moulded the Labour Party to meet its needs.

Even the trade unions, which have seen a massive attack on their rank and file, through job loss, productivity drives, short term contracts, dangerous and stressful working conditions and most obviously on their ability to fight back, through anti-trade union laws, have nurtured this 'new' middle class. This has been done either directly, from their own increasingly career minded officials, or by supporting increased managerial power, especially in the public sector. One of the best kept secrets of the years of Tory union bashing has been the increased amounts of state money channelled to the trade unions, entirely for the benefit of their bureaucrats. This money has financed courses and conferences in the same style and premises as those organised by business. This helps to further widen the gulf between the officials and office bearers on one side, and the ordinary membership on the other. The money also gives increased scope for bureaucratic patronage, helping them to silence lay office bearers and conference delegates with the prospect of weeks at smart hotels, overseas trips and general junketing. This has gone along with attempts to reduce membership participation. Instead union leaderships try to arrange sweetheart deals with private and public sector management, offering themselves as a cheap personnel management service.

When it serves its interests (usually to hoodwink workers) the middle class will verbally attack the Tories - sometimes with great ferocity. However, its actions are what counts. The reality has been growing active collaboration between Labour/trade union leaders and the Tories. This was most spectacularly shown in Glasgow's 'City of Culture' Year - a bonanza for the Labour supporting middle class, epitomised by Jeremy Spalding, Director of Museums, and for a host of (no doubt, Tory supporting) Scottish Office backed private contractors and rip-off merchants. Businesses, big and small, and the public sector middle class got the profits or the enhanced career opportunities; workers got a few low paid, mainly temporary jobs and carefully controlled entertainment.

Therefore the issue of political self determination is quite different for the middle class compared to the working class. For the middle class the emphasis is much more on the individual 'self'. Thus the ideal policy for the middle class is Devolution. Devolution offers the middle class protection for existing, or the prospects of new jobs and career opportunities in Scotland, at the same time as preserving the possibility of individual promotion at the U.K. level.

However, due to the two-faced nature of the middle class, there is a constant battle for their souls. If they can be persuaded that their existing living standards under the Union are threatened by moves towards self determination, then this desire is relegated, whilst they defend their more immediate economic self interest. But if they see a growing movement for self determination as being unstoppable, then they will support advanced Devolutionary proposals and even make the break to supporting full state independence, if this looks more likely to save or enhance their prospects.

The General Election results revealed this instability amongst the middle class. They were most susceptible to an Establishment Unionist offensive (especially when coupled to taxation 'threats' from both parties of Unionist Devolution - Labour and the Liberals).

WHAT THE RULING CLASS WANTED FROM THE ELECTION

The British ruling class wants social stability above all. It realises that change may be necessary in the face of E.C. pressure from above, and the growing economic and social pressures from below. However, over centuries, it has perfected a state flexible enough for its own needs, but with ample reserve powers to either coerce and discipline, or buy off and incorporate threats from below. The finely honed political device, summed up in the formula of "sovereignty of the Crown in parliament", gives the ruling class such a formidable and largely hidden arsenal of powers, that it would not even find it necessary to resort to a military coup, if faced with a severe threat. Extreme dictatorial powers could be achieved quite constitutionally, including the

suspension of parliament itself! Gough Whitlam's mildly reformist Australian Labour government felt the long reach of these dictatorial powers in 1975, when his government was dismissed by the Governor General - and that's in an 'independent' country. No need for vulgar military coups, such as in Greece and Chile!

However, central to fronting this anti-democratic state machine is a 2 party system based on 'first-past-the-post' elections. This gives the ruling class both the advantage of providing a semblance of democracy, and gives the political system great stability, without the inflexibility of a 1 party system, or the unpredictability of a multi-party system.

The ruling class, the Tories and Her Majesty's Loyal 'Opposition'

It is important to realise that the ruling class and the Tories are not the same thing. Certainly the Tories are the ruling class's most favoured party, since there are many ties of class, schooling, club and sentiment. The ruling class has its radical Right, conservative and liberal wings. The Tory Party itself is divided into several factions, which reflect the different politics of sections of the ruling and middle class. At different periods of time different factions may receive the active or acquiescent backing of the majority of the ruling class, depending on the balance of class forces at the time.

In order to have greater flexibility the ruling class go to considerable trouble to ensure that there is also Her Majesty's Loyal 'Opposition'. This can act as additional support, either as an open or tacit coalition, or even an alternative government-in-waiting, should their services be needed in times of greater social unrest.

For example, in 1974, key figures from the Establishment - Campbell Adamson (then leader of the C.B.I.) and Enoch Powell signalled that it was time for the ruling class to transfer their allegiance to Labour, in the face of a massive working class counter-offensive, led by the Miners. And how right they proved to be! Under the guise of 'The Social Con-trick' Labour launched an assault on workers, that led to a massive fall in living standards; divided the working class, so allowing fascists to make their first serious inroads since the '30s; and effectively handed the running of part of the U.K. state - 'The Six Counties' to the military and intelligence services!

After this the ruling class returned their full allegiance to the Tories, who took advantage of a demoralised and disorientated working class, to step up their offensive to new levels.

Ruling class divisions over Europe

Throughout most of the '80s, the ruling class were united behind Thatcher's aggressive non-consensus political approach, at least when it came to dealing with workers and national movements. But there were deep divisions over attitudes to Europe.

Growing transnational economic integration at a European level, whether of markets, services, research or production, was imposing its own logic on the Tories. Thatcher was still very keen on the transatlantic link with the U.S., symbolised by her close relationship with President Reagan. Whilst the 'war' with the "Evil Empire" was being conducted, there were still military/strategic interests underpinning declining economic reasons for this alignment. This was highlighted in the 'Westland Affair', when pro-European Heseltine lost out to pro-U.S. Thatcher.

However, as the E.E.C., a largely economic 'Common Market' increasingly gave way to the E.C., an increasingly political union, Thatcher's position was undermined. The E.C. was intended to have a two tier labour market. There were to be the officially registered, largely white citizens of the member countries, who would be offered the prospect of certain minimum wages and conditions at work, and minimum legal rights covering their social welfare outside. These rights would not be guaranteed but would be recognised in the Social Charter. Legal action would be necessary to claim these rights, very much limiting their effectiveness in practice. However, to give the transnational companies that dominate the E.C. more flexibility still, there would also be a lower tier of migrant workers, modelled on the German *gastarbeiter* system. They would have virtually no rights and would initially be drawn from North Africa and more recently from the Slav countries, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, COMECON and the U.S.S.R.. And should these migrant workers offer any resistance, they are likely to face the British contribution to controlling the movement of people in a new E.C. version of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Thatcher, however, represented the interests of both The City and many British companies. The City still had a wider field of operations than the E.E.C., dating from the former days of British world domination. But other British companies were ill-equipped for the competition and were unwilling or unable to cope with the two tier wage structure under the Social Charter. Positioned on the fringe of the E.E.C., and led by the new breed of Thatcherite anti-trade union, cut-throat businessmen, they felt that their interests were best served by a single tier low wage economy, with no minimum wage levels or meaningful legal rights at work. With this they could face the stiff competition inside the E.E.C..

Tories and Labour converge - 'free market' meets 'social democracy' in the 'social market'

Many of the larger British companies began to have increasing doubts about the economic deadend into which Thatcher's perceived anti-European stance was taking them. Amongst their owners and managers were significant members of the ruling class. They had been quite happy to indulge Thatcher, Tebbit and Co., when 'shock troops' were needed against working class resistance and the nationalist challenge (particularly in 'The Six Counties') in the early and mid '80s. The formation of the anti-E.C. Bruges Group sounded alarm bells for this key section of the ruling class.

The disaster of the poll tax, which provoked the widest campaign of civil disobedience, even discrediting their carefully nurtured state machinery, precipitated the 'palace coup', which led to Thatcher's demise. The raw naked, "there is no society", 'free market' drive began to give way to the 'social market'. Furthermore, this new philosophy offered a chance for the ruling class to consolidate its gains by bringing Labour into open collaboration. The Labour Party under Kinnock was in the process of abandoning 'social democracy', with its mixed economy, welfare statist, corporatist politics, for precisely this same 'social market', with its emphasis on individual rights won by legal means rather than by collective bargaining or action.

The change of attitude amongst the ruling class's ideologues was well demonstrated in 'The Financial Times' Editorial on election day:- "If this election were solely a choice between party leaders, Mr. Major would be preferable. But it is not. The dangers of perpetuating in power a weakened and uncertain Conservative Party, set alongside the progress Labour has made in modernising itself, justifies by a fine margin the risk of change". ('T.F.T.' 9.4.92)

And you can imagine just how pleased the ruling class is now, with a 'choice' of Labour leader between John Smith, The City's favourite and Bryan Gould. The first wants a return to 'means tested' welfare benefits whilst the second proudly claims that Labour have jailed far more poll tax non-payers than the Tories! A victory by either Smith or Gould will signal the full transition of Labour from 'social democracy' to the 'social market' - or the 'pink Tories'.

In other words, now that the working class have begun to show some recovery from the bruising and damaging conflicts of the early '80s, and are beginning to exercise their power without (and if necessary, against) their traditional Labour and trade union leaders, the more far-sighted members of the ruling class realise it is time to rehabilitate Labour, the better to stamp out any growing movement from below.

The threat of national movements to the Unionist constitution

However, the ruling class also face a challenge which threatens another central feature of their state - the Unionist constitution. Just as Westminster provides a facade which disguises the real anti-democratic nature of the British state, so the Union permits the continued existence of the constituent nations (or in the case of Ireland, part of one), whilst denying any constitutional right to self determination.

Now whereas Labour can be relied on to do all they can to police the unionised working class, there is a greater problem when it comes to containing the threat of the national movements. In 'The Six Counties' the continuous threat posed by the revolutionary nationalism of Sinn Fein and the I.R.A., means the ruling class are largely united around the Devolutionary option, which is acceptable to the majority of Ulster Unionists (U.U.P., D.U.P. and Alliance) and also, in a different form, to the S.D.L.P.. Devolution also has the advantage for any Westminster government, that it focuses the opposition back on whatever 'Northern Ireland' Assembly can be cobbled together, rather than 'mainland' Britain (and hence lessens the risks of attacks like the

Brighton bombing and the mortar attack on the War Cabinet). The precondition for the Full Integrationist option, supported by a minority of Ulster Unionists and the new 'Northern Ireland' Conservatives, is the elimination of the Republican threat.

It is the different balance of forces in Scotland and Wales, which accounts for the hostile attitude of the majority of the British ruling class towards Devolution here. The S.N.P. are a constitutional nationalist party, like the S.D.L.P., and by accepting the rules of the 'Westminster game' don't yet pose a big enough threat to warrant the ruling class opting for Devolution. Indeed there is worry that the S.N.P. may not be able to dampen down the expectations of workers, attracted to the 'independence option', since unlike Labour they don't have the multi-layered local government and trade union bureaucracy to police any movement. However, the ruling class is definitely keeping the Devolution option open, just in case. At an earlier period of nationalist resurgence in the '60s, Lord Kilbrandon was wheeled out to provide a possible contingency plan. However, this proved unnecessary.

And in Wales, the constitutional nationalists of Plaid Cymru pose no real threat to the Union, since they themselves advocate Devolution. The main thrust of their politics is cultural autonomy and championing the Welsh language. However, the ruling class have still to be persuaded of the necessity for even small moves towards political autonomy in Scotland and Wales, which could threaten the Union itself.

The Tories rally the ruling class behind defence of the Union

By invoking a hardline defence of the Unionist status quo, Major persuaded the majority of the ruling class, it was still better to back the Tories, rather than Labour. He received additional unofficial support from Scottish financial - Scottish Equitable, Scottish Widows and Standard Life, and business interests - Grampian Holdings and the Weir Group, all of which issued threats to their employees about their future employment prospects. But Lord Weir's 'Save the Union' group had remarkably few backers, compared with the '70s 'Scotland says No' Campaign. A lot of the business world was hedging its bets, waiting to see the election results.

However, the Tories played the Unionist card shrewdly in the General Election. They were quite aware of the con being perpetrated on the electorate by both the Labour and Liberal Parties. Both frequently talked as if they were championing self determination for Scotland. Indeed both were joined together in the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which claimed to base its existence on 'The Claim of Right'. This is an advanced liberal document, which ostensibly upholds the right of Scottish self determination, but ignores the reality of the Crown powers held by the British state, which could nullify any real Scottish self determination in practice. Thus, however much these two parties might appeal to voters as champions of self determination, the Tories knew that they were dealing with two fundamentally Unionist parties, directly representing middle class interests, which would place the continuing existence of the Union above any right of self determination. Former Scottish Secretary of State, Rifkind had the full measure of Dewar and Co. - "They have a lot of nationalist rhetoric, but in their hearts they are unionists" - and he might have

added "in their pockets too"!

The Tories, as a firmly based class party, could also sense the weakness of the S.N.P.. It remained mainly a party of the middle class. It drew virtually no support from large capitalists and had no organised links with the working class. It could become a formidable vehicle of working and middle class protest, but without either Scottish institutional support or a more firmly grounded nationalist movement behind it, this support was volatile, at least in the short run. The Tories, like most other people, could also see that the S.N.P. were never going to be able to live up to their claims of winning 37 seats, so they would be able to pour scorn on any likely S.N.P. gains in single figures. Therefore the Tories took a calculated gamble of playing up the nationalist 'bogey', both to split the anti-Tory vote and to frighten the middle classes. Whilst such a strategy might help Forsyth and the candidates in Aberdeen South and Ayr, obviously it presented Secretary of State, Lang with a problem, since it was the S.N.P., rather than Labour, who were breathing down his neck in Galloway and Nithsdale! No doubt the Tories had contingency plans, should their risky strategy lose them their Secretary of State. We'd probably have seen a quite different Governor General in Hong Kong - and one with some experience in 'colonial service' too!

For much of the electoral campaign, Lang and the Scottish Tories employed a strategy designed to save them where Labour was the main challenge. They carefully left a hint of possible future movement, should the Tories fare badly in Scotland. However, Major made a dramatic intervention on Sunday 5th. April at the Tory Party's biggest election rally at Wembley. He announced that "The United Kingdom is in danger. Wake up. Wake up now before it is too late....(the S.N.P.) proposes to tear Scotland away from our union. It is a negative case, a socialist case, a separatist case". And appealing to British imperialist history, he said, "The walls of this island fortress that appear so strong, undermined from within, the United Kingdom untied, the bonds that generations of our enemies fought and failed to break, loosened by us ourselves". And stretching his hand to Labour, he said, "There is no division in the British flag between red and blue. In it, and under it, we are one people." ('The Scotsman' 6.4.92)

The Tories' gamble paid off, not only saving them all their seats, but winning back one each from Labour and the Liberals. However, despite the volatility of sections of the middle class, there was no triumphant resurgence for the Tories. They played two ace cards - the first, Major wasn't Thatcher; the second, defence of the Union. Despite this only increased their vote by just over 1%. However, with an opposition completely mesmerised by the Westminster rules, the Tories could quite confidently turn round and say of Labour and the Liberals that they were Unionist parties and would have to accept Tory Westminster dictates. There were few sights more pathetic on election night than Charles Gray, Labour leader of Strathclyde and the Tories' No. 1 poll tax farmer in the U.K. calling for civil disobedience. This was the same man who threatened to ground the Strathclyde Police helicopter, if they didn't wade into anti-poll tax protesters as heavily as they had waded into striking miners! As for the

S.N.P. they had promised 37 seats, but instead were reduced from 5 to 3. They could be left to lick their wounds, some of which would be further self inflicted, as internal feuding broke out between populists and social democrats over their badly flawed election strategy.

Therefore the ruling class majority had come to a position, where they were quite sanguine about a Labour victory, with a minority actually thinking it was their best option, in order to step up the attack on the working class. But doubts as to the effect of the rising national movements, meant that Major was able to convince the majority of them, that the Tories would provide the best defence of their centralist state machine (much strengthened under the Thatcher years).

WHY THE U.K. IS BREAKING UP

Building support for the Union - the ruling class, middle class and aristocracy of labour

Although the General Election provided a camera shot picture of the balance of class forces at the present time, a much longer view has to be taken, to understand the slow break up of 'U.K. Ltd.'. The British ruling class faces a difficult prospect, with its state machine under simultaneous pressure from above (from the E.C.) and from below, with rising working class discontent and continuing national movements. The Thatcher years already marked the break-up of the social democratic consensus. The increasingly open, partisan use of the state machinery; the crushing of dissent; the massive strengthening of police powers and a renewed willingness to resort to imperialist wars, were just a few indications of what the British ruling class will resort to, if it feels sufficiently threatened, either internally ("the enemy within") or externally ("the enemy without"). And a close examination of British policy in 'The Six Counties', under both Tory and Labour, shows the rest of the U.K. what the ruling class is prepared to resort to, when they feel threatened enough.

It is very important that socialists in Scotland, don't narrowly focus their attention on events here, however important they are. The British ruling class operates throughout the United Kingdom, and uses lessons learned in one part, to aid them in another. They are also masters of divide and rule tactics.

Why is it that the U.K. Constitution, carefully developed over centuries, and renowned internationally for its apparent stability, is now facing increasing crisis? The cement that long held the Union together was the British Empire, which offered the traditional ruling classes of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland vast profitable opportunities. A genuinely all-British ruling class formed a joint stock company managing this vast empire. After a considerable and sometimes testing period of cooperation, this ruling class became increasingly indifferent to the national origin of its individual members, even if England was always the dominant interest in 'The U.K.Ltd.'. English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh members became either Prime Ministers or Cabinet members - all united in their 'Britishness'. Even if England was

the dominant interest in 'The U.K. Ltd.' and the closely associated company, 'British Imperial Investments', Scotland attained the status of second major shareholder. Recognition was given to the kilt as alternative court dress.

However this British ruling class also tried to cultivate a distinctive separate style and code, that was almost as divorced from the lives of most of the English. 'The Queen's English' was promoted in 'public' schools in England and Scotland. The accent bore no resemblance to English spoken anywhere in the U.K..

However, this Union also protected the economic and social position of the middle class as they became politically important. A series of laws modified the workings of the original Acts of Union, to incorporate Irish, Scottish and Welsh middle class aspirations e.g. the repeal of anti-Catholic legislation in Ireland, the Parliamentary Reform Acts, Local Government Reform, the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland and Wales, the appointment of a Scottish Secretary of State presiding over a separate Scottish bureaucracy.

In the heyday of Empire, at the end of the 19th century, it even became possible to create an aristocracy of labour, based particularly in those areas directly serving the industrial needs of the Empire e.g. ship yard workers in Belfast and on the Clyde. The cross class Orange Order celebrated Empire and Union.

The working class national and internationalist traditions

The majority of the working classes of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland developed their own distinct cultures drawing on earlier domestic revolutionary and democratic traditions. There was of course increasing international cooperation on a U.K.-wide basis, including all-Britain and even all-U.K. (including Ireland) trade unions. However, with the growing bureaucratisation of the trade unions under the influence of trade union officials, 'the popular sovereignty of the membership', in their branches or workplaces, gave way to 'bureaucratic sovereignty' - all power to the officials. First Lib-Lab, then later Labour officials brought their increasingly pro-Unionist, pro-monarchist and pro-imperialist thinking into this working class movement. This role was recognised by the Establishment as union officials or sponsored M.P.'s received their Orders of the British Empire, knighthoods and lordships. It is this imposed bureaucratic unity from above that the 'Brit.' Left upholds as the "unity of the 'British' working class". So mesmerised are they by the political and economic wings of Her Majesty's Loyal 'Opposition' that they can't uphold true internationalism, which is a voluntary union in action, from below!

The 'effectiveness' of the bureaucratically dominated all-U.K. unions is shown in 'The Six Counties', where any half-hearted attempts to overcome the massive discrimination soon falters when the state responds with repression. The nature of 'The Six Counties' state is a taboo issue and support for resistance 'beyond the pale'!

The decline of Empire leads to the decline of the Union

However, the domination of the Union depended on the continued existence and

prosperity of the British Empire. Once its dominant position began to decline, and it began to fall apart, in the face of anti-imperialist revolts, the cement holding together the U.K. began to crumble. The U.K. is undergoing slow disintegration. The most damaging period was in the revolutionary years after the First World War. Ireland, where the majority had always been more oppressed, and the local members of the ruling class particularly brutal, was the first to slip from the U.K.'s grip. Inspired by this, the great Scottish revolutionary John Maclean raised the banner of 'The Scottish Workers' Republic'. However, as the international revolutionary tide ebbed, counter-revolution appeared from within the Irish revolution, and partition led to the sectarian states of 'Eire' and 'Northern Ireland'. In Scotland leadership of the working class passed largely to the militantly reformist 'Red Clydesiders', who were quickly tamed through their acceptance of Westminster.

But when the post-Second World War period of relative prosperity began to recede, and the remainder of the British Empire began to break up, the strains underlying the Union began to show again. 'The Six Counties', Scotland and Wales all lay very much on the periphery of a United Kingdom, whose markets were increasingly in Europe, and particularly 'The Golden Triangle' of the E.E.C..

THE THWARTED MIDDLE CLASS, THE THREATENED PETTY BOURGEOISIE AND THE REVIVAL OF NATIONALISM

In all 3 countries, movements for national self determination began to grow. The traditional aristocracies of labour had long disappeared, leaving the old members reconciled either to the reformism of the Unionist and monarchist Labour Party or flirting with semi-fascist organisations (such as began to appear in 'The Six Counties' in the mid '60's). However, an ambitious new middle class, often uneasily allied with a traditional petty bourgeois of small farmers, fishermen (with their own boats), shopkeepers and other small businessmen and members of the rural 'intelligentsia' - teachers, ministers/priests, local newspaper journalists, began to lose faith in the Unionist status quo. They formed nationalist cultural and political organisations (or greatly changed already existing ones e.g. the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru). But in many areas the Labour Party was also showing advanced signs of decay, so it became possible for these nationalist parties to appeal to workers, disillusioned with Labour in office, either in Westminster or the local town hall.

These nationalist parties underwent a process of social democratisation to try and reach out to, and incorporate disillusioned working class voters. This still coexisted with more traditional petty bourgeois populist nationalism, which remained dominant for a long time. It was this Right wing populist politics that led many socialists to label the S.N.P. - 'Tartan Tories'. However, the petty bourgeois element was much stronger in the S.N.P. and the bourgeois element almost absent. Some of these S.N.P. supporters were prepared to take direct action, like the fishermen's blockade in 1975. They behaved much more like small farmers in Europe than traditional Tory supporters. However, even at this time there was a growing social

democratic element in the S.N.P., based in the Central Belt.

Both the S.N.P. and Plaid Cymru often appeared to be federal parties, taking on a different political hue, according to the locality in which they were operating. Thus in the '60s and '70s Plaid Cymru was quite different in the South Wales Mining Valleys compared with Welsh speaking north and west Wales. The S.N.P. was quite different in the housing schemes and New Towns of the Central Belt, compared with the traditional farming and fishing counties of the North East.

CHANGING BRITISH STATE STRATEGY IN RESPONSE TO THE DEVELOPING NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN IRELAND

'The Six Counties' - not just a colony, but part of the U.K. state.

However, we need to go back to 1969, when the Civil Rights Movement burst forth on the 'Northern Irish' and U.K. scene, to get a deeper understanding of the present phase of the break-up of the U.K..

Although 'The Six Counties' was the last part of the U.K. to show renewed breakaway tendencies in the later '60s, it is here that there has been the most continuous threat to the continued existence of the U.K.. The British ruling class have seen this as their front line. If it had been just another colony, as many 'Brit.' Left groups maintain, then it is likely that the British government would have either - washed their hands of political responsibility (such as they did in 'Rhodesia'), allowing a combination of Unionists and Loyalists to establish a fascist state; or they would have come to a new neo-colonial arrangement (such as they later did in Zimbabwe), with the help of Dublin, U.S.A. and the E.C.. However 'Northern Ireland' remains constitutionally part of the U.K. state, which is why the ruling class can't so easily let it go. This would have a knock-on effect for the other constituent nations of the U.K. as well as serious consequences for the U.K. constitution. For example the last time the 2 Party System faced real crisis, was in the aftermath of the secession of 'The Irish Free State' in 1922. This was closely followed by the first minority Labour government, after a long period of Conservative and Liberal dominance.

Thus the over-riding British policy objective in 'The Six Counties' has been to isolate and contain the threat of any national movement, first within 'The Six Counties' itself, then within the nationalist areas. For 50 years a policy of Devolution had successfully achieved this isolation. The Unionists were allowed to run this political slum, through Stormont and its highly sectarian state, with very little direct attention from either Westminster or Whitehall.

This arrangement revealed itself as unstable from 1969, in the face of first, the Civil Rights Movement and then later the Republican Movement from 1969. Yet the political priority of the British government remained the shoring up the devolved

Stormont administration. When Labour's Home Secretary, Callaghan, sent British troops in 1969 to supplement the R.U.C. and the 'B' Specials, his first concern was to maintain Unionist law and order. There was no attempt to impose a thoroughgoing reform from above and take direct responsibility, just a series of half-hearted and often cosmetic measures, which were seen as "too little, too late". Westminster basically tried to tinker with the irreformable. A combination of mass civil disobedience - the rent strikes against Internment, and a new I.R.A. military offensive (both by Provisionals and Officials) finally forced the abolition of Stormont in 1972. Direct rule solved nothing. It meant the focus of opposition now switched to the U.K. 'mainland' - the least desirable outcome for the British ruling class. Moves to Full Integration with the U.K. would only highlight the Irish question, making it the subject of debate, for the whole of the U.K.. That is why the abolition of Stormont was soon followed by a massive escalation of military, police, judicial and other coercive measures to confine the struggle to 'The Six Counties', whilst simultaneously attempting to cobble together another political Devolutionary settlement, first through Sunningdale, then the Constitutional Convention, and later through the Hillsborough Talks. This way the national struggle could be kept at arms length from the rest of the U.K..

Direct Rule led to the setting up of Westminster/Whitehall/Northern Irish Office influenced all- 'Northern Ireland' agencies like the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, to bypass the highly sectarian Unionist dominated local authorities. Later the Tories under Thatcher would attempt something similar to bring Left led , mainly English local authorities into line e.g. the G.L.C.. The poll tax was meant to be the final coup de grace, which would reduce 'mainland' local authorities to the same negligible social and economic role, as those in 'The Six Counties'. The achievement of this aim already in 'The Six Counties' was the main reason why the poll tax wasn't extended there.

However the all- 'Northern Ireland' agencies have not been too successful in combating discrimination. Whereas the once the Unionist-supporting workers and middle class could depend on the local state machinery to buttress their privileges, many now turned to semi-fascist organisations to assert their privileges on the city street, country lane or workplace.

In addition, now that local authorities had virtually no responsibility for any public service, they could concentrate their thoughts almost entirely on the constitutional question. If public services were removed entirely from local authority control in Scotland (and in Wales), then it is quite possible that these local authorities would become the focus for discussion of the national question as in 'The Six Counties'.

From Civil Rights to Civil War

It is also often forgotten that the early stages of the Civil Rights Movement were not dominated by militant Republicanism. Leadership was shared between reformist C.P./Republicans (later to emerge as the Officials) and nationalist elements in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association on one hand, and the more radical Peoples

Democracy on the other. What made the movement so explosive was the combination of social issues - particularly housing discrimination, and political issues - the end to gerrymandering and plural voting. Neither placed the continued existence of 'The Six Counties' statelet at the centre of their thinking. Indeed some of the more radical elements saw 'The Border Issue' as a dangerous diversion.

The scale of civil disobedience was the most sustained that has been seen in the U.K. this century, outstripping the later poll tax resistance on the 'mainland'. One of the leading radicals, Bernadette Devlin/McAliskey was elected to Westminster from Mid Ulster. Dave Nellist, one of the independent Labour candidates most associated with poll tax resistance, polled very well in the recent General Election. But even with the additional advantage of being the sitting M.P., he did not achieve the triumph of Bernadette Devlin in 1970.

Those responsible for the running of the British state, and their Ulster Unionist allies, understood that 'The Six Counties' was too brittle a statelet, to accommodate such radical reform. The radical reformist road came to a brutal end, when peaceful, marching demonstrators met a hail of bullets from British paratroopers on Bloody Sunday in Derry on January 20th.1972.

However, this heightened repression, which had already been preceded by Internment without trial in 1971, didn't have the desired effect - to break the resistance. It merely led to the leadership of the movement passing to those advocating direct action - rent strikes, and to those advocating military action, mainly the Provisional I.R.A.. Indeed there was considerable overlap between the two as 'No Go' areas became established. But it was the recently reformed Republican Movement, which saw most clearly both the need to overthrow 'The Six Counties' statelet, and was prepared to meet armed repression with armed resistance.

It was after this that the British state developed an all-encompassing strategy, based on the writings of counter-insurgency expert, Frank Kitson. Since this date, nearly every aspect of political, economic, social and judicial policy has been subordinated to military/police/intelligence considerations. Even planning for new housing, roads and community facilities are subordinated to this end.

The Provisional I.R.A. thought they were on the road to victory after the fall of Stormont in 1972. However, Direct Rule became the cover under which the British state could centralise its response. Firstly this involved the covert use of military/intelligence directed loyalist death squads and army undercover units, including the S.A.S.. 'Operation Motorman' was launched in July 1972, to break the 'No Go' areas.

Later an incoming Labour Government was to enact the two main policies to ensure that 'The Six Counties' remained a 'local' issue. First the Prevention of Terrorism Act was designed to silence Irish residents in 'Britain', and help prevent the formation of an effective solidarity movement. Second was the policy of

'Criminalisation', through the ending of political status for political prisoners, and a conveyor belt system of 'justice', based on the juryless Diplock Courts and paid informers. This was complemented on the 'mainland' with Show Trials, such as those of 'The Birmingham Six' and 'The Guildford Four', all designed to demonise the Irish, the better to make people turn a blind or jaundiced eye on what was actually happening there. This was all the more necessary, when the Loyalist Workers' Strike effectively put an end to the Sunningdale attempt to cobble together a new Devolutionary deal. The lack of government response to this loyalist challenge revealed that it was the army and intelligence services who effectively made government policy in 'The Six Counties'.

With minimalist support from outside those areas feeling the heavy hand of army and police repression, Republican strategists saw 'Britain' as a monolithic whole, responsible for the War, being waged against the isolated nationalist communities. In a War situation non-military targets on the 'mainland' were seen as quite legitimate, since certainly the British Army, the U.D.R. and the R.U.C. didn't confine itself to military targets in the nationalist communities.

There was another very useful aspect, to the British army and police commands, of pursuing this policy of containment and isolation. It provided testing grounds for the latest techniques and technologies of repression, surveillance and control. Senior police officers were exchanged between the R.U.C. and 'the Met'. This would prove useful later, when the English inner cities exploded and when the Miners' Strike occurred. It was only at the Trafalgar Square Anti-Poll Tax Riot of 1989 that the limits of certain police tactics became apparent. You must first sow the seeds of division, before they can be made to appear 'legitimate', in the eyes of the public. 'Criminalisation' doesn't always work!

However, a growing strand of the British state strategy in 'Northern Ireland' was to wean over the constitutional nationalist leadership of the S.D.L.P.. They had given verbal support to the rent strikes from 1971-3. However, offered the prospect of a power sharing deal, under the Sunningdale agreement, the middle class leaders of the S.D.L.P. turned on the rent strikers and Austen Currie, Northern Ireland Executive minister responsible for housing, drafted the draconian Payment of Debts Act, which allowed a 25p surcharge on rents.

Once again the self interest of the middle class overrode the demand for national self determination. In words that have a certain prophetic ring to them, Austen Currie said "There can not be an amnesty. Arrears must be paid. Any other decision would be unfair to the great majority of tenants who have paid their rent"!

The comprehensive nature of the British state's response was shown in the variety of forces it was prepared to resort to, to criminalise and isolate the Republican Movement. The Catholic hierarchy were encouraged to denounce "the terrorists". In addition, the Official I.R.A. and the associated Republican Clubs/Workers Party, after suspension of military operations against the British presence, started on a political

trajectory that took them from social republicanism, through social democratic constitutional nationalism to 'liberal' Unionism. Increasingly the British state seemed to tolerate their existence, illegal fund raising and propensity to kill or injure Republicans, particularly those in the breakaway Irish Republican Socialist Party and Irish National Liberation Army. And another group were the 'Peace People', who received the uncritical attention of the world media, until the naked self interest of its leaders discredited them. And of course, there was the Queen herself, who visited selected Unionist bastions in Jubilee Year. Those in the nationalist communities, who instead received the attentions of Her Majesty's loyal regiments and the Royal Ulster Constabulary, were less than impressed. An anti-Jubilee march in west Belfast marched behind a huge placard, with a crown and inscription reading 'Elizabrit - Queen of Death'.

By the late '70s it looked as if the British state response of containment and repression was beginning to work in 'The Six Counties'. There was war weariness and the nightmare of 'tit-for-tat killings', highlighted by the Whitecross Massacre in 1976, and bombing operations that went badly wrong, like La Mon Hotel in 1978.

Republican renewal and the British state counter attack in the '80s

However, the mass mobilisation around the Hunger Strikes followed by the election to Westminster of Bobby Sands, Owen Carron and Gerry Adams marked the beginning of a new Republican breakthrough. Once again the higher level of resistance in 'The Six Counties', compared even with poll tax resistance over here, was highlighted in the present General Election. 'The Scotsman' was quick to point out the similarity of Tommy Sheridan's prison candidacy in 1992, with Bobby Sands' in 1981. Although Tommy got a very respectable vote in Pollock, Bobby Sands won his Fermanagh and Tyrone by-election. Unfortunately Bobby Sands was left to die, but Tommy, whilst remaining in jail, luckily lives to fight another day. But perhaps the anti-republican Tommy may care to ponder in his remaining days at Shafton Jail, why it is, he has been detained "at Her Majesty's pleasure"!

In response to the British counter insurgency strategy, the Provisional I.R.A. leadership eventually sanctioned a widening of the field of contest, through its new policy of 'the ballot and the bullet'. It was felt that this would legitimise the Republican military struggle and help overcome the British state policy of 'Criminalisation'. It also reflected a change in leadership politics from 'pure' to social republicanism. Sinn Fein made considerable headway in local elections, receiving 42% of the nationalist vote at the highest point. However, this successful political strategy also went along with a more effective military response, highlighted by the Brighton Bombing, which almost killed Thatcher and the attempted mortaring of Major's War Cabinet.

The British state response to this widened challenge has been both political and military. The military strategy has included increased numbers of British troops; the use of the S.A.S., both in Ireland and abroad; increased recognition for the U.D.R., with regular visits from Thatcher and the receiving of royal colours; the continued

official recognition of the U.D.A., which undertakes covert operations too sensitive for official units; increased cross border cooperation with the Garda, and an increased building programme of special forts and surveillance facilities. This has undoubtedly taken its toll on Republicans. Some of the problems that appeared in the 1970's, when the Republicans were under heavy pressure reappeared - such as the bombing and deaths at Enniskillen. Republicanism splintered at its margins, producing groups like I.P.L.O., which resorted to sectarian killings, in response to the state aided loyalist death squads. And with the British occupying forces increasingly drawing civilians into construction work, the war took on a more total character, as the I.R.A. waged a campaign against those contractors, and then workers repairing or building fortifications in the nationalist areas.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement was the political cover for the British policy of increased repression against the Republican Movement and the working class nationalist communities. The S.D.L.P. was given massive help, much of it covert, to try and marginalise the growing political challenge of Sinn Fein. This new state policy has had some success at the E.C. and Westminster parliamentary level, as a certain war weariness grows. This has even affected Sinn Fein, which has moderated its platform considerably. However, those working class and Border communities that face constant British state harassment and repression don't in the main vote for this formal platform. They vote Sinn Fein as a gesture of defiance and resistance. Hence in the local elections, which more clearly differentiate between working class and other constituencies, Sinn Fein's vote has held up, and in some areas of Belfast, it has increased, so that it is now the second party on Belfast City Council.

Yet one of the aims of British state policy was achieved in this General Election, with the ending of Gerry Adams as M.P. for West Belfast. This involved the coordinated actions of every wing of the state, both formal and informal. There was the constant army and police harassment of Sinn Fein election workers; the complete silencing of Sinn Fein, except for the short final election campaign (when almost needless to add, the media coverage wasn't designed to let Sinn Fein present its case!); the channelling of state money to Roman Catholic and S.D.L.P. projects, at the expense of community controlled projects; then finally, the help of the U.D.A. to mobilise 3000 loyalist tactical votes, mainly on the Shankill Road, for Joe Hendron, the S.D.L.P. candidate! Gerry Adams' vote remained unchanged from his winning vote of 1987.

But the British state response, which significantly, included the T.V. and radio silencing of Sinn Fein spokespeople, has been largely successful, not in defeating the Republican Movement, but in bottling it up once more in the Republican 'ghettos'.

Developments elsewhere, not least in Scotland, could quite dramatically end, not only this isolation, which imposes such a high sacrifice on these beleaguered communities, but undermine the very notion of 'Britishness', which has become an uneasy transitional identity for many Protestant workers, since the partition of Ireland. The choice will then be between going 'independent' and forming a fascist,

loyalist run state of 'Northern Ireland'/'Ulster', or moving back towards an Irish identity, helped by the possible ending of the Catholic, (and to a much lesser extent) Gaelic exclusivist nature of 'The 32 Counties'.

CHANGING BRITISH STATE RESPONSE TO THE RISING NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN WALES

Constitutionalism and direct action

Although 'The Six Counties' has provided the British state with its most difficult challenge, it was in Wales that the present phase of the break-up of the U.K., first showed itself in the late '60s. In a dramatic by-election victory in 1966, Gwynfor Evans took Carmarthen from Labour for Plaid Cymru. And again in the Rhondda and Caerphilly by-elections of 1967 and 1968, Plaid Cymru polled 40% of the vote, coming a close second to Labour in its South Wales heartlands.

Unlike the S.N.P., cultural concerns have tended to dominate Plaid Cymru, particularly the issue of the Welsh language. This led until relatively recently to a certain willingness to be involved in direct action. Whether it was the campaign for Welsh language signposts or against the flooding and breaking up of Welsh speaking communities to provide water for England, there was continuous official Plaid Cymru involvement in direct action. In 1980, their party leader, Gwynfor Evans was even prepared to go on hunger strike to get the government to honour the promise of a Welsh language T.V. channel. This was to be the last official support for direct action. The British state had developed a strategy for breaking this link. By 1988, when the S.N.P. was giving official support to poll tax non-payment, albeit with opposition from their 'Tartan Tory' areas, Plaid Cymru had turned its back on its earlier history.

Divide-and-rule - cultural autonomy and repression

What the British state was able to do was play on the undoubted tensions between the increasingly respectable, constitutionalist Plaid Cymru leaders, drawn along the Westminster road and more radical activists involved in Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (Welsh Language Society). This tension was heightened with an overlapping membership, particularly in the north and central Wales. To make matters worse for the party leaders, Cymdeithas yr Iaith also involved non-party members, who were prepared to extend direct action into arenas, which distinctly worried Plaid Cymru.

For in 1969 the state decided that the best way to meet the nationalist challenge was to play the royalist card. The Investiture of Prince Charles, as Prince of Wales was arranged, with all the pomp and ceremony necessary to overawe the middle class and other loyal subjects. There were protests and considerable mockery (mainly in the Welsh language), particularly from the radical wing of the national movement, already involved in sabotaging reservoirs, sit-ins, destroying T.V. masts, and harassing officials. But in addition an attempt to let off a bomb went badly wrong at

Abergele, when the 2 bombers were killed and a child badly injured. The British state had its stick to beat the national movement with. The Plaid Cymru leadership was desperate to distance itself from any republican sympathies, and the national movement lost momentum.

However, the British state was also aware that there would need to be a longer term strategy to deal with a rising national movement in Wales. Following close on Plaid Cymru's by-election victory came the Welsh Language Act of 1967, which gave limited official recognition to the Welsh language. Initially though this just gave the Welsh language movement more confidence. It was also much affected by the student radicalism of the late '60s. Many activists therefore shared the radical scorn for electoral activity, and unlike the Plaid Cymru leadership, were relatively little affected by the 1970 election. However, the chosen ruling class strategy was increasingly designed to create a respectable Welsh speaking middle class and isolate the more radical forces.

For those still advocating direct action the state resorted to repression. As well as the massive security operation around the Investiture, which involved a 24 hour watch on certain nationalists and the use of agent provocateurs, there were the 1971 and 1978 conspiracy trials against Cymdeithas yr Iaith activists, the latter involving jury vetting by the police.

But to others the state offered the prospect of cultural autonomy. This policy has been developed and continued by both Labour and Tory governments. Local government reorganisation greatly increased the scope for this strategy. The possibility of a new type of politics opened up for the leadership of Plaid Cymru in Welsh speaking areas like Gwynedd. Here it was possible for Plaid Cymru to dig deeper roots by becoming the main party advocating primacy for the Welsh language. Increasingly, career hierarchies, reserved for Welsh speakers, were implemented in local government and education. This created a new middle class. Just as the Labour Party has its middle class 'police' of trade union officials, politicians and local government officers, so Plaid Cymru was able to become the political vehicle of a growing state sponsored Welsh speaking middle class, whilst also slowly displacing the Labour Party as the recipient of Welsh speaking working class votes.

It took another surge in Plaid Cymru electoral support and continued direct action through the '70s, before the ruling class wholeheartedly adopted this policy. In the mid '70s, Plaid Cymru once more grew in strength, in opposition both to a Tory government, wounded by the Miners' Strike, and a Labour Welsh establishment, increasingly conservative and corrupt. And this time Plaid Cymru made a spectacular breakthrough in Labour's working class heartlands in the South Wales mining valleys. After Labour had taken office at Westminster in 1974, disillusionment soon arrived. In the 1976 local elections, Plaid Cymru took control of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney. Plaid Cymru seemed to have definitely broken out from the Welsh language, cultural movement 'ghetto'.

However, the more social democratic Plaid Cymru of South Wales could offer little alternative in office to the social democratic Labour Party, it sought to replace. This was the time that Callaghan's Labour government was bowing to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and introducing the first public expenditure cuts. Plaid Cymru councillors played by the rules of the game. They were soon seen by the working class, as little different to the Labour Party

Furthermore, the policy of Welsh language cultural autonomy, underwritten by the British state, was beginning to provide political dividends. As well as taming and deradicalising sections of the Welsh national movement, divisions were opened up between Welsh and English speaking Welsh.

Divide-and-rule bears fruit - the Welsh Devolution Referendum debacle.

This proved remarkably useful in the 1979 Welsh Devolution Referendum. Welsh speaking Wales was played off against English speaking Wales. In the south people were told that Welsh speaking would become compulsory for jobs, whilst in the north, people were told they would be ruled by the numerically dominant south. Only 12% voted for a very weak Welsh Assembly, with the highest level of support being in Gwynedd, where it was still only 22%, whilst in Glamorgan it was only 8%. Plaid Cymru campaigned harder than the Labour Party for the official Labour government Devolution policy! This was because Plaid Cymru, particularly in the Welsh speaking areas, was becoming the political beneficiary of the British state policy of cultural autonomy. Devolution rather than independence offered better financial safeguards and Plaid Cymru policy increasingly followed this logic.

Devolution was the ruling class's chosen response to the challenge of the national movements in both Scotland and Wales (and in a different form in 'The Six Counties' too). However, the 1974-9 Labour Governments broke the back of the earlier working class counter-offensive, whilst neither the S.N.P. or Plaid Cymru were able to offer workers anything better (and in some cases, when in local office, were just as bad). This meant that by the time of the Referenda, Devolution was no longer required by the ruling class, and was only half-heartedly put forward by the Callaghan Government. This was very evident in Wales, where prominent Labour M.P.'s, Neil Kinnock and Leo Abse campaigned as strongly against Devolution, as any Tory. In adopting this ultra-Unionist stance, they were championing the interests of that section of the Labour bureaucracy, which felt that its career options might be narrowed down to Wales, rather than the much grander spoils that were available through Westminster.

The crushing defeat of the Welsh Referendum, was followed the next day by the Labour government's announcement of 2000 steelworker redundancies. However, whereas in Scotland there had been a small 'Yes' majority on Devolution Day, the S.N.P. were reduced from 11 to 2 M.P.s in the following General Election. In Wales, however, Plaid Cymru held on to 2 out of 3 seats, both in strongly Welsh speaking

Gwynedd. This confirmed that Plaid Cymru was rapidly ceasing to be a national party for all Wales, and was increasingly becoming the political representative of Welsh speakers at Westminster, quite happy to recognise the British state, provided it continued to underwrite cultural autonomy. For a brief moment, it looked as if Thatcher might reverse this policy, but Gwynfor Evan's threatened hunger strike, convinced even this ultra-Unionist Tory, that continued administrative devolution and cultural autonomy, was in the best interests of the British state. This was a price well worth paying for the deradicalisation of a national movement, that had a tradition of direct action.

The Left and Republicanism in the early '80s

This successful derailment of the Welsh national movement led to opposition to the traditionalist Right leadership of Plaid Cymru. A 'National Left' formed within Plaid Cymru, led by Merionydd (in Gwynedd) M.P., Dafydd Ellis Thomas. He had the advantage of a being a sitting M.P., who represented one of the Welsh speaking constituencies, as well as being champion of the more social democratic members in South Wales. Thus Left social democratic Dafydd Ellis Thomas was able to win the Presidency of Plaid Cymru, for the 'National Left'. This contrasted with the situation in the S.N.P., where the politically similar '79 Group' was expelled.

However a more radical Welsh Socialist Republican Movement also formed, which involved both members from Plaid Cymru and those outside. This group upheld the direct action tradition with some members seeing little benefit in electoral activity, whilst others contemplated becoming a political alternative to Plaid Cymru.

This championing of direct action was directed to two areas. In response to the Tories' threatened axing of more steelworkers' jobs, the Welsh T.U.C. uncharacteristically called for a one day General Strike in Wales in 1980. The trade union bureaucrats who sanctioned this, after allowing large scale job losses in steel, coal and rail transport under Labour, knew full well that they would be over-ridden by the British T.U.C., led by the later to be knighted, Sir Len Murray! However, there was undoubted rank and file sympathy for the call. Thatcher, at this stage, still proceeded cautiously, worried about any major unrest. The W.S.R.M. threw themselves into the agitation for the strike.

In addition, a new campaign had also appeared in the Welsh speaking areas, directed against holiday houses. Cymdiethas yr Iaith had earlier led a campaign of occupations. Now secret organisations appeared, of which 'Meibion Glyndwr' became the best known, committed to a campaign of arson, directed firstly at holiday cottages, then at estate agents. The W.S.R.M. also welcomed this new development.

The state breaks Republicanism and the 'National Left' moves Right
The state responded to this new threat with 'Operation Fire', a major attempt at a political frame-up, once again resorting to the notorious conspiracy laws, primarily directed against the W.S.R.M.. It also tried to implicate 'National Left' Dafydd Ellis

Thomas, noted for his apparent sympathy for Irish Republicans, demonstrated in his moving of the writ for the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election, after Bobby Sands death.

The state was successful in breaking up the W.S.R.M.. However, despite continued covert police surveillance it hasn't been successful in stopping the campaign against holiday houses. However, with the defeat of the Miners Strike, and the lesser known North Wales Quarrymen's Strike, the following year, the prospect of uniting in action the social and economic concerns of the working class with the cultural and political concerns of the national movement receded.

These defeats along with growing developments in the E.E.C. and Eastern Europe, also had the effect of accelerating a rightwards shift in Dafydd Ellis Thomas's politics. In 1987 he turned his back on his earlier Republican sympathies and wrote to Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, to warn him of a proposed cultural visit by Irish Gaelic activists in West Belfast at the invitation of Welsh language activists! The General Election loomed, along with the prospect of winning Yns Mon, with its anti-Irish state security services at Holyhead. Yns Mon was won but the 'National Left' went into decline and leadership was once more taken by the traditionalist Right, with its almost exclusive emphasis on the Welsh speaking Welsh.

Thus both the increasingly tame constitutionalist Plaid Cymru and the secret illegal action of 'Meibion Glyndwr' are confined mainly to the Welsh speaking areas. This highlights the success of the British state in dividing the national movement on language lines.

CHANGING BRITISH STATE RESPONSE TO THE RISING NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN SCOTLAND UP TO 1987.

The S.N.P.'s early electoral breakthrough

Winnie Ewing's winning of the Hamilton by-election in 1967 heralded the public resurgence of the national movement in Scotland. The S.N.P. went on to make electoral gains at local authority level, but they weren't able to hold on, in General Elections, to seats spectacularly won in by-elections. However, from 1970 the S.N.P. has had a continuous General Election parliamentary presence, representing first the Western Isles, won by Donald Stewart - very much a traditionalist Right winger. However, in both 1974 elections, the S.N.P. made significant electoral gains, winning 7 then 11 seats, including seats from Labour in the Central Belt.

1974/5 saw what almost amounted to a rolling, but disconnected, general strike across Scotland's Central Belt. Only the S.N.P. were saying there was no need "to tighten one's belt", buttressed by the near magical quality of their very successful slogan - "It's Scotland's Oil".

The incoming Labour response was to go for Devolution - the best way to preserve the Union, in the face of rising working class discontent, coupled to a rising national

movement. They were much helped by the constitutional nationalism of the S.N.P., which left them bound by debilitating Westminster procedures. The S.N.P. did little to build a national movement on the ground, outside of election periods.

Labour Unionists open the doors to the Right

The Devolution option met considerable hostility within Labour's own ranks. There was a feeling it would cut off career opportunities on the all-U.K. level, sidelining aspiring Scottish Labour bureaucrats. Brian Wilson, Robin Cook and Tam Dalyell all worked to undermine official Labour Party and S.T.U.C. policy.

A section of the ruling class sensed there was a chance to take advantage of this split, and help push Labour aside, now that they had performed the job of massively softening up and demoralising workers under 'The Social Contract'. The sudden resignation of Wilson showed a malaise in Labour's ranks. Margaret Thatcher, the new leader of the Tories, chosen from their radical Right, was well connected to the Conservative supporters of the Ulster Unionists, the intelligence services and American inspired anti-trade union businessmen. She quietly dropped her previous support for Devolution as part of her developing political strategy. This involved a battering down the hatches of 'H.M.S. Britannia', with an all-out assault on working class and nationalist opposition. This would help the 'U.K. Ltd.' face the competition, in an increasingly crisis prone and hostile world. Economic power would be transferred from the state to the owners and managers of the most competitive companies. Welfare spending would be slashed, as the 'bottom 25%' were calculatedly abandoned, to face an much strengthened repressive state agencies, particularly the police, should they rebel against the removal of the welfare 'safety net'.

She won the support of The City, the C.B.I. and eventually every significant section of the ruling class for this strategy, as Labour increasingly ran into problems. The business backed campaign 'Scotland Says No' appeared and took advantage of Labour splits to adorn their platforms.

Ironically, the S.N.P. were the first victims of the change of political tide. After a significant breakthrough in the 1976 District elections the S.N.P. soon showed their anti-working class colours. They sometimes sided with Tory councillors to impose anti-working class measures. This was also done at Westminster level, when the S.N.P. joined with the Tories to prevent certain shipyards being nationalised. These actions allowed Labour to begin to claw back some of its lost working class support, despite itself being responsible for swingeing attacks on workers, whilst in office.

The decline in nationalist fortunes gave the Labour ultra-Unionists increased confidence, and they began to campaign more openly against official Labour Party policy. They were helped in certain areas by the 'Brit.' Unionist Left, particularly the S.W.P. and 'Socialist Organiser'. A real unholy alliance was opening up, stretching from the City and big business, the dominant Tory Right, through the Labour ultra-Unionists to the 'revolutionary Brit.' Left.

Within Labour's ranks there was a growing sense of dismay at the leadership's accommodation of the ultra-Unionists. This prompted the breakaway Scottish Labour Party in 1977, led by Jim Sillars. There was the beginning of a realisation that, in Scotland, the principal Establishment party had long become the Labour Party. The ossified Scottish Tories provided too antiquated an image to have any popular appeal, particularly with the decline of overt sectarianism, and the loosening of Tory connections with the Orange Order. The rising new class of businessmen beginning to dominate the Tory Party under Thatcher also happened to be English, and not so integrated into the 'anational' style of the traditional all-British aristocratic or City Tory, as happy shooting on a Scottish grouse moor, fishing an Irish lough or hunting an English fox. The Labour Party had become the ruling class's best means to preserve the Union in Scotland, whether implementing its own safe policies, or meekly complying with Tory central government policies.

The short lived S.L.P. was a harbinger of the future. Any significant social and/or constitutional struggle would bring into question the nature of the Labour Party itself. The monolith could split. But in 1977, Jim Sillars merely wanted a tartan Labour Party, which wouldn't move too far from its Labourist roots. When it failed to attract significant working class support, outside South Ayrshire and Paisley, Sillars decided to abort the S.L.P. and head for the S.N.P..

Working class demoralisation eventually overwhelmed Labour's Devolution proposals. The ruling class no longer needed to resort to the Devolution option, Labour had done such a good job of derailing the earlier movement. The real fatal blows were delivered from the increasingly aggressive anti-Devolutionists within their own ranks, particularly the Cunningham '40% rule'.

A mild "whiff of grapeshot" frightens the middle class

In the meantime, sensing victory for a new harsher strategy, the wider ruling class did a further softening up exercise. This was tame stuff, compared with 'The Six Counties', but by now the S.N.P. and the worn-out Labour government were 'easy meat'.

First there was the age old imperialist tactic of divide-and-rule. The non-Central Belt areas were warned of domination by a Labourist bureaucracy, exercising dictatorial centralist power through their control of a new Scottish Assembly, in the old Royal High School buildings. Less plausibly, the people of the Central Belt were vaguely threatened with the vista of compulsory Gaelic, kilt wearing and non-stop Jimmy Shand on the radio, and "White Heather Club" on T.V.! The most successful use of divide-and-rule tactics was the campaign to have the Orkneys and Shetlands secede from any possible Devolved Scotland. Partition became part of the ammunition of the ruling class, much helped by Liberal M.P., Joe Grimond.

There then followed the mildest display of some of the huge armoury of powers available to the Crown. But the ultra respectable constitutional nationalist leadership

of the S.N.P., with their policy of support for the Queen, didn't need much warning off. Nevertheless Her Majesty's Loyal Armed Services conducted a well publicised joint exercise, letting it be known that the target of campaign was a possible future nationalist take-over. The Queen, in an unusual departure from protocol, hinted at the dangers to her realm represented by the nationalists. The Church of Scotland's very loyal Moderator neutralised the official Church position of support for Devolution.

The S.N.P. had already led the national movement into decline with their parliamentary cretinism and anti-working class actions. Therefore the ruling class's metaphorical 'whiff of grape shot' unnerved many of the S.N.P.'s middle class and petty bourgeois supporters. Significantly, in the ensuing Scottish Referendum, there was a 'No' vote, in the non-urban areas, represented by S.N.P. M.P.s (with the exception of the Western Isles, which could draw on a deeper rooted radical tradition).

Overall there was a narrow majority in the Scotland Devolution Referendum, mainly confined to the mainly working class areas, but not enough to pass the '40% rule'. And it was the national question that was to prove the undoing of Labour. Even Labour's tacit alliance with the most reactionary parliamentary force in U.K. politics, the Ulster Unionists (rewarded with the prospect of extra parliamentary representation in the only Integrationist move made by Labour!) couldn't save Labour. The two Irish nationalists so appalled at Labour's bloody and coercive 'Northern Ireland' policy joined with the 'shell-shocked' S.N.P. and voted against the government, in a vote of 'No Confidence'. But without a back-up extra parliamentary strategy, the S.N.P. M.P.'s were "turkeys voting for Christmas". They were reduced from 11 to 2 seats in Thatcher's 1979 triumphal election. And worse, in Donald Stewart and Gordon Wilson (who held his Dundee East seat through tactical voting by Tories!) the party was represented by exactly those ultra-constitutionalist forces, whom the British ruling class had found so easy to outmanoeuvre. They offered no way forward.

Left social democrats and the ultra-nationalist Right in the early '80s

This in itself produced a growing crisis in the S.N.P., leading to the development of a Left social democratic grouping - 'The '79 group', as well as an ultra-nationalist, Right group- 'Sìol nan Gaidheal'. The paramilitary antics of 'Sìol nan Gaidheal' provided an excuse to ban all internal factions, and several leading members of 'The '79 Group' were expelled in 1981, including Kenny McAskill, Stephen Maxwell and Alex Salmond. When later readmitted, it was tied to a promise not to organise any open factions within the S.N.P., and each has subsequently taken a different political position, on the social democratic spectrum.

Another major step towards the full social democratisation of the S.N.P. also occurred in the mid '80s, ironically under the influence of Left populist Jim Sillars. His populism was reserved for domestic politics. On the international arena he was a Right social democrat. He pushed the S.N.P. into adopting the slogan 'Independence in Europe', thereby making the party more acceptable to the transnational companies, increasingly operating at an E.E.C.- wide level. This policy effectively made the

S.N.P. a new Unionist Party - only the focus of its Unionism wasn't Westminster but Brussels! The S.N.P.'s criticism of the archaic English notion of 'parliamentary sovereignty' looks a little misplaced, when the S.N.P. now offer an apology for the even less democratic 'bureaucratic sovereignty' of Brussels!

Devolution - Tory style

But immediately after the 1979 election Scotland got a taste of Devolution - Tory style. Whereas 'The Six Counties' had been used as a testing ground for military and police repression, Scotland was to be used as a testing ground for reactionary legislation, undermining comprehensive schooling, attacking local government through rate capping, limiting legal rights and finally giving the poll tax a trial run. As it became increasingly clear that official Labour and the S.T.U.C. would put up no resistance, as 'New Realism' became the order of the day, the Tories grew in confidence. Eventually the logical conclusion of this became apparent in the 'Forsyth Phenomenon'. Seen as a right wing extremist, even within Tory ranks, he was allowed to dictate the pace and direction of Tory policy in Scotland, backed by a few fanatics from the Federation of Conservative students. This would be virtually incomprehensible, but for the fact that Forsyth more than any other Tory politician had learned that there was no longer any 'bottom line' for the Labour 'opposition'. The 'Forsyth Phenomenon' was merely the flip side of the 'Dewar Phenomenon'.

However, even Forsyth came up against his limits. He, like Thatcher became over-confident and mistook the supineness of the official 'opposition', for the end of political resistance. He couldn't conceive of an arena of struggle outside the formal political channels. The poll tax was to be both his and Thatcher's undoing.

THE ANTI-POLL TAX STRUGGLE - BEYOND PROTEST TO RESISTANCE

The poll tax combines the national and the social issues

It was the attempted imposition of the poll tax, which has led to the re-emergence of the national question in Scotland as a major political factor. What is more, as in 'The Six Counties' in 1969, it was the potent combination of social and political issues that has proved such a combustible combination. If the poll tax had been implemented across 'mainland Britain' on the same day, then the feeble response of Labour would have been understood by many of its supporters and voters, wearied by years of 'New Realism'. However, the blatant lack of any democratic mandate for a one year trial test in Scotland proved too much, even for them. Tens of thousands of Labour supporters were to become poll tax non-payers. Many of these began to appreciate the essentially conservative Unionist nature of Labour, despite the now near official unanimity over Devolution policy.

Labour would once more begin to unravel itself. A new Scottish Socialist Party breakaway, led by former Edinburgh District leader, Alex Wood was formed. (Ironically Alex, himself a one time ultra-Unionist, was ousted from District leadership, in a 'Night of the Long Knives', helped by Labour councillor George

Kerevan, one time advocate of a Scottish Workers' Republic, and I.M.G. entrant into the earlier S.L.P.!) However, the political space for the S.S.P. was very limited, because the S.N.P. had decided to support a policy of poll tax non-payment, and could thus itself make a radical appeal to the working class.

The significance of this was apparent at the Govan by-election, when Jim Sillars successfully toppled a Labour 19,000 majority as the S.N.P./No Poll Tax candidate. Such was the hostility to Labour for the antics of their poll tax snoopers, that certain housing areas became 'No Go' areas for Labour canvassers!

This development led to shockwaves in the British Establishment, not least amongst its Scottish Labour senior members. Already one response to the growing national movement, had been the formation of the Scottish Labour Action Group, an officially tolerated internal pressure group, which it was felt would limit any defections, by diverting demands for action into safe bureaucratic channels. However, this hasn't prevented certain defections, particularly M.P. Dick Douglas.

The limits of the 'Brit.' Left

Another serious development was the challenge of the 'hard' Left inside the Labour Party itself, particularly 'Militant'. Although slow, outside Lothian, to get involved in the Anti-Poll Tax struggle, 'Militant' had Central Belt wide organisation, and were quicker in setting up Regional Federations and then the Scottish Anti-Poll Tax Federation. Here they utilised all the bureaucratic skills they had learned in the Labour Party, to try and police and control the movement. However, the tensions between trying to lead a genuine movement from below and subordinating it to the Labour Party soon became apparent. The Labour Party acts as an agent of ruling class control, policing the working class. It can tolerate socialists within its ranks, prepared to work within the confines of its bureaucratic constitution, and who limit their activities to trying to change policies. It can not tolerate organised oppositions which defy the officials and their machinery, and begin to organise working class resistance.

In 1990 Musselburgh councillor Keith Simpson was deselected for his principled opposition to the poll tax. He stood as an independent Labour candidate, and won 21% of the vote in a 4 cornered fight, which included the S.N.P. (on paper, also supporting a campaign of non-payment). He received no help from any major Left grouping, including his own organisation - 'Militant'. But the contradictions of 'Militant's' position constantly reappeared, most notably over Tommy Sheridan. Even though expelled from the Labour Party as a 'Militant' member, he remained a Labour loyalist, until he was persuaded that this was not convincing any of the new younger members, recruited through anti-poll tax struggle, in the teeth of a hostile Labour officialdom. Tommy Sheridan belatedly moved to a position of standing independent candidates. 'Militant' then initially tried to use Scotland as a test bed for this 'independent' strategy, by forming Scottish Militant Labour. Later officially rigged Labour selection meetings on Merseyside, followed by expulsions, including M.P.s Dave Nellist and Terry Fields, led to this 'independent', electoral strategy being

developed outside Scotland too.

Yet, Militant are only a partial break from Labour. They broke very late and only when they were faced with very little option by the official Labour Party. Already the deadening effects of Labourism had had more influence on them, than their politics had on Labour. Thus their ambivalent attitude to the state was highlighted when both Tommy Sheridan and Steve Nally publicly stated on T.V., after the Trafalgar Square Riots, that they would report any known rioters to the police! When the Anti-Poll Tax Movement was faced with a massive state campaign of attempted 'Criminalisation', modelled on 'Six Counties' experience, Militant took a profoundly hostile attitude to both the rioters and the independent Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign. The level of confrontation with the state reached at Trafalgar Square was too much for 'Militant'. They had reached a similar position to the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in 'The Six Counties', who could no longer take the movement forward, when the British state openly revealed its mailed fist.

This ambiguity to the state was further highlighted, when eventually, even 'Militant' supporters were jailed. The official 'Militant' attitude to having members and supporters jailed seemed almost to be - "It's a fair cop, guv"! At no time were prisoners' support campaigns set up. Perhaps, there was an awareness that the main recent precedent for prisoners' support committees was once again the Republican Movement in 'The Six Counties'. It was 'The Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign' which was to follow this precedent, not 'Militant'.

And when the Tories finally ditched Thatcher, giving them a very troublesome number of weeks, 'Militant' fiercely opposed the call for a major demonstration to immediately end the poll tax and bring down the Tories. At the November 1990 All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation Conference it was clear they feared another large London demonstration almost as much as the Tories. Instead the Conference Hall was plastered with posters calling for an immediate (i.e. Kinnock led) Labour government.

Since the scrapping of the poll tax legislation 'Militant' have confined themselves largely to defensive mobilisations against attempted pointings and warrant sales. Even the jailing of Tommy Sheridan, resulting from a very successful action against the uplift of pointed articles in Glasgow, only led to a very low key defence campaign, until opportunity of the General Election candidature presented itself. There was a distinct feeling the ruling class was testing the 'post-poll tax' mood, to see whether it was safe to resume normal anti-working class harassment. When Tommy Sheridan was released pending appeal, Scottish Militant Labour launched no mass campaign, so the Judge having tested the waters, felt more confident in imposing the draconian 6 months sentence.

However worse still, 'Militant' deliberately wound down the Regional Anti-Poll Tax Federations and most local groups, leaving only the 'Militant' network. At their highpoint the regular Federation meetings involved hundreds of activists, whilst the local groups thousands of activists - far outnumbering those that met regularly in

Labour Party ward meetings. The embryo of an organisation that could have really challenged the Labour Party was deliberately demobilised. 'Militant' provided an inestimable service to the official Labour Party.

Dewar, whilst holding firm to the official 'Do Nothing' position turned a blind eye to a variety of 'New Tokenist' schemes, from 'Stop It' to the 'Committees of 100'. Yet they completely failed to take the leadership and politically derail the Anti-Poll Tax Movement. 200,000 people turned up in London on March 31st, 1990 and 40,000 people in Glasgow not only independently of 'official' Labour, the T.U.C. and S.T.U.C., but in the teeth of their total opposition. This was the highpoint of the biggest campaign of civil disobedience seen in 'mainland Britain' since the General Strike. It toppled Thatcher and put the Tories on the defensive.

And if we are to build a real campaign of resistance, challenging Major's mandate, asserting self determination in action, then the Anti-Poll Tax campaign is the best model. It was successful because it made the poll tax unworkable. To achieve real self determination for Scotland, Wales, Ireland and yes, for England too, we will need to aim to make Scotland a place where the government's writ doesn't hold. We need to move beyond protest to resistance.

We also have to be aware of the battery of powers available to the British ruling class, behind the 'democratic' facade. Only a republican strategy takes these Crown powers into consideration. It is the acceptance or ignoring of the real nature of the British state, that traps all the official, and much of the 'Brit.' Left 'opposition' into either a dull constitutionalism, which plays by Westminster's rules or acting as advisors to Her Majesty's Loyal 'Opposition'. And our strategy must be internationalist since the British ruling class draws on its experience throughout the U.K. and increasingly in the E.C. too.

Our immediate aim isn't 'Devolution under the Crown' or 'Independence (under the Crown!) in Europe', but a Federation of Republics in Scotland, Wales and England, as well as supporting all moves to a democratic, secular united Irish Republic.

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Poetry

by Margaret Fulton Cook

Hospital Efficiency and the Smell of Success

incontinency
punctuates
the nurses' day
with a supported
after meal slipper shuffle
to toilets
and back
to chairs
where they'll remain
till fed again
these acutely insane
women

the ward sister
who stays at her station
has decided on
a regulation
of the bowels

liquid paraffin's
the medication
freely given
to every patient
for constipation

the increased efficiency
of defecation
will also keep

the nurses
on their toes

a quiet calm of an afternoon
has broken into
an all too soon
cacophony of moans
groans
fits
and farts
as the major
clean up
starts

hospital issued
crimplene dresses
are hurriedly discarded
into heaped up messes
of plastic laundry bags
and
active patients
speed in
out
through toilet doors
as nurses try
to clear the floors
in case of
further accidents

and faeces freely smushed
into fingers
faces
down the front
of new donned dresses
and through the hair
of motionless middle aged
motherless masses
curled in chairs
unaware
of anything
in or
out
whilst others
hysterically create
about the stench
the appalling rate

that human waste
sludges round the ward

in the office sister sits
cleanly white
no sign of shit
she gives an almost humorous chort
while filling in the ward report
having shut the door
against the smell
she writes

ALL PATIENTS BOWELS
ARE WORKING WELL

JOAN
Monday 3rd July 1989

steam trickles
down the asylum's
ancient windows and
walls
that stop watchers peering in
patients from fleeing out
and
inside the weekly wash room
females paddle
semi clad in
and out
of showers

the door
is locked
with a big key
that stays shut
inside the nurse's pocket
she mixes orders
and bath water,
naked
all the women
with a practised
flick of her wrist

seven women
in the room drip
exposing every crevice
except for one
the one in charge
turns the hot tap off
tests the water
takes Joan
by the skin
" get in "

Joan sees
neither bath
shower
or our
understanding of life
only
her
coffin
tempts
and teases
yawning wide
waiting
for her
to steep
inside
be encased
alive
for
ever

and bare flesh slaps
on sodden floors

the nurse stands back at the wooden door
takes a sneaky soggy puff
sister drags on her mind
wages clink in her head
" get in "
she says

Joan screams
in her face
patients scream
in between
showers

orderlies
come to the rescue

later

seven nurses
in the wash
room
all dressed
the same
except
for Joan
in the bath
whose screams
clamber on the asylum walls
that bar watchers from peering in
and patients from fleeing out

Wednesday 27th July 1989

Joan is
in the geriatric chair
wrapped tightly
in a blanket
that has white squares

she does not see
the strutting woman
the tendered domestic
or the hypodermics
that prick her
three times a day

her pupils transfix
exposed
onto
nothingness

she is
outwardly dead
mechanically sound

sister smiles on her rounds
everything is neat and tidy

Joan lies
eyes
open

eight hour shifts change

Joan lies
eyes
open

" she is catatonic
lost
for days
and days "
someone
experienced says
and nurses fill
in time
by tucking the blanket
smoothing her hair
shifting the chair
from here
to there
allowing domestics
to clean
the carpet
wipe up
the menstrual blood
that drips
now
and then

Sunday 30th July 1989

Joan is in the dining room
she is thirty two
and has a hard plastic bib
round her neck

around her mouth
she has bits
of the butchered meat
she refused to eat
at lunch time

Joan is a vegetarian

from her hair drops
the mince
she threw at the nurse
who crunched the spoon
against her teeth
squeezed her nose
till she
couldn't breathe
packed her mouth
when she
gasped for air
held
it shut
rubbed her throat
made her choke

it was then she threw the mince

Joan is in the geriatric chair
staff nurse said
leave her there
till tea time

Destruction as the Determination of the Scholar in Miserable Times*

Johannes Agnoli

Preface

As we all know, the determination of scholarly work originated with Johann Gottlieb Fichte; at that time, Hölderlin drew widespread attention to the misery of the period. In the midst of that misery, Fichte founded his verdict on the belief that a new era would emerge while Hölderlin came to question the role of a poet during such a time of misery.

In our time, misery remains hidden and strangely alien. Conformist construction prevails without suspicion. We are witnessing the reconstruction of values. Foreign countries are rediscovered and the dignity of nature is unearthed together with its flora and fauna. Ruptures are common and numerous, of course, but always in other regions, thus confirming our own, never-dying wave of progress. To put it differently: an end is still being proclaimed. This proclamation comes from the United States and it announces the end of history; that is, the victory of the Western order. In contrast to Marx's dream of the beginning of real human history, this proclamation of the end of history celebrates the blessings of capitalist accumulation and the achievements of a state of law-and-order (*Rechtsstaat*) (1) as something eternal. The scholarly world, (i.e., those sciences, that do not deal with pure chemicals or with physical quantities, but with human affairs, conditions, and troubles) does not remain on the side-lines. It provides a powerful contribution to the stabilization of the world order, of the system of values, of communicative interactions (2). It also provides a powerful contribution to the protection of a new citizenship, to the new interiority and exteriority (3), and to a new functionality. Certainly, as almost never before, the pursuit of constructive endeavors is understood as the appropriate role for scholars. Reason is agonizingly discussed, in part to support a systematic and well-ordered simplification of the general world view (commonly referred to as the 'reduction of complexity'), in part to found an emancipatory form of communication (i.e., the philosophical data-processing of

information studies) (4), in part, and in a complete reversal of reason, to attack reason. Because of an affectional feeling of discontent, the attack on reason leads to cheerful leaps into the spiritual, the mush of the soul. The latter is not worth discussing. More disturbing, however, is that the new propagandists of the enlightenment deny reason its historic role of, at any given time, provoking insubordination and destroying horrors, whether it be from church, State, despotism - or any other form of rule, as Voltaire liked to say.

It's not that the scholarly world accepts the absence of rupture uncritically. Nolte criticized historiography and its failure to interpret German fascism in asiatic terms; Habermas criticized Nolte and his dismantling of reason; Tugendhat criticized (according to the *Frankfurter Rundschau*) Habermas's friendly criticism. (5) Yet, a trusting mood dominates. And those who do distrust - especially those who distrust power and are therefore following an emancipatory path - but shun positive proposals and a constructive politics, will unintentionally come into conflict with the stipulated norms for social planning of controlled reproduction.

But the misery of our time that is crystallizing at all points in the frozen, stabilized structures - even the alternative protest movement has become becalmed from self-content - this misery demands destruction. The 'system of order' must be demolished; trust must be erased; the explosive power of doubt must once again be restored to its rightful place so that at last the soothing picture will change, and faced with dramatic developments, the symbols of the positive, the good and the pretty vanish: Kohl's self-contented television face or the know-it-all chatter of Vogel. (6) Meanwhile, Germany (fortunately only the West, recently) (7) seems to remain a country in which critique always blossoms in constructive colours.

German political culture? A continuous, uninterrupted German intellectual tradition?

The Classics

The best of the German proponents of the enlightenment teaches us something different. Both according to tradition and Kant's own statements, he regarded duty as a noble endeavor, the moral code in our hearts as a useful institution, and the star-studded sky as an object of admiration. Anything else, however, that popped into his mind - or better, into his head - he demolished: the metaphysical unity of the world, the objectivity of space and time, the immortality of the soul, the indisputable existence of God. Admittedly, despite his objections, he let Goethe's '*Alien Herrn*' [see below] return through a back door that he conveniently constructed, but only as an authority to impose better everyday behavior; more precisely, as a 'Postulate' demanding that we all live decent lives and regard humanity as purpose, not as resource (e.g., for the realization of profits or to score parliamentary victories).

Heinrich Heine (whom Goebbels publicly declared a *Destruktiver*, a 'force of

decomposition') held Kant as a more resolute and decisive revolutionary than the French Jacobins. And Giosué Carducci (Nobel Prize 1906) picked up Heine's contention: '*Decapitaron Emmanuele Kant il Dio, Massimiliano Robespierre il Re*' - which is to say: Kant decapitated God, Robespierre decapitated the king. Whereby Kant holds first place among the destructive figures of history.

But Kant was not satisfied by doing away with God. He did worse: he decapitated the impartial head of science and replaced it with Reason: the principle of partiality, of social duty. Only science is able to lead the common individual to dignity (Hartenstein, *Nachlass* VIII, 625). He added an even more destructive element. On the 12th of October, 1794 he was given a 'special order' from his Majesty the King according to which he was commanded to cease his philosophic 'distortion and degradation of Christianity' (note that if one replaces Christianity with the liberal-democratic ground order of the German constitution, the King's order entails the first conception of an anti-radical law) (8). Under this type of pressure, Kant began to understand the character of a constitutionally regulated political order and therefore picked an argument with the constitutional scholars. In his 'Dispute of the Faculties,' he developed the principle of partiality in its entirety. Jurists might make concrete progress within the realm of social duty and may affirm existing conditions, but philosophy has a more important role to play. It is philosophy's role to enlighten people about the 'true character' of the constitution in spite of orders to conceal it. What did Kant understand by 'true character'? Kant in no way meant the well-known gap between constitutional norm and constitutional reality which politics and scholars too often use to justify propositions with which to restore the imperfect. Kant did not differentiate between 'good norms' and 'bad political reality'. Kant's emphasis on the true character of the constitution focused negatively on the rotteness of the norms themselves. He vindicated the right of philosophy to destroy all constitutional illusions and expose the fiction of public representation as, in fact, a reality of domination [*Herrschaft*]. He called all constitutional guarantees by one name: 'Deceitful publicity' (*Disputes of the Faculties*, Königsberg 1798).

Kant's view of the determination of scholars did not remain without consequences. The destructive element found its way into Hegel's conception of negation as the motive force behind the consciousness of freedom - even though, in the end, the aging Hegel (in contrast to Kant who became wiser with age) subsumed negation under a general reconciliation with the State. Hegel was a poor master who, however, had a much better student. The good student followed Kant's 'critical project' and pushed aside Hegel's reconciliation. Marx wanted neither to construct nor affirm. He wanted primarily to negate. Like Heine, he was tradition-bound to the historic duty of decomposition, but he went several steps beyond: into the depths to the basis of society - to the 'mothers,' as Goethe would say. For Marx, unveiling the true nature of the constitution was not sufficient. One had to go beyond the pure recognition of a constituted fiction and, following the announcement of its true character, the reality of its essence (that is, its function) had to be revealed. He destroyed the illusion of a pretty form organized around an ugly contents. The absurdity of a mode of production on which bourgeois purposive-rationality, profitability, and respectability feed, was

exposed. It stood naked. All, who live from their labor and the sale of their labor power, 'find themselves directly opposed to the form in which, hitherto, the individuals, of which society consists, have given themselves collective expression, that is, the State; in order, therefore, to assert themselves as individuals, they must overthrow the State'. Bakunin on Asia? No: Marx on Germany (Marx, Engels *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 80).

Negation and destruction are not missing from German scholarly history. On the contrary, it has its classics. Their destructive reason has representatives even where common wisdom and the educated middle classes would least expect. Only a few in this country know, for example, who this *Benimm-Knigge* really was: 'free Mister' Knigge was a radical Jacobin, who understood *la terreur* and who, thinking about 'Ca ira', criticized the German condition, lamenting that in Germany, 'the nice lampposts are standing unused.' (9)

Some Edifying Notes

It begs the question if this tradition is not the 'other Germany', that has been historically pushed aside by the mainstream, constructivist Germany.

In reassurance, meanwhile: Knigge's lampposts - whether pretty or not - are still quite properly providing light only for the streets. For the scholar, on the other hand, there still remains the Kantian duty and the Marxist project to continue the philosophical-political destruction of this stable, preserved misery, blessed by consensus. By doing so, however, scholars are likely to be forced to live in the shadows. They remove themselves from the general goodwill and make themselves suspect. But they must accept that danger if they are to take their determination and themselves seriously. So, against all administrative orders (Basic Law, Art. 5, 3) (10), scholars are left with no alternative but to reveal the fiction of freedom that is inscribed in the 'Palace' (as the ancient Egyptians referred to structures of domination) and disclose the brittleness of the liberal-democratic ground order on which the palace rests. But when scholars orient themselves to Kant, they appropriate Kant's wisdom (see his answer to the special order of the King) and deal with the liberal-democratic ground order and palace in a two-fold and justifiably famous manner. First, they attempt to veil the true character of the constitution to, secondly, operate according to the *Zeitgeist*. (11)

The *Zeitgeist* (12) creeps away from the true determination of scholarly work, and elects to participate in building consensus: if one affirms existing conditions and norms, abuses and disruptions lose their reality and transform into correctable accidents. The responsibility for their eradication rests with the familiar self-cleansing forces of the market, Power, and parliament.

The first manifestation of the *Zeitgeist* undoubtedly understands itself as critic, but

does not recognize its negative determination which is above all and carefully characterized as *de omnibus dubitandum* [doubt everything]. The critical dimension of the *Zeitgeist* is characterized by the painstaking quest for the good; that is, justice, equality and freedom. The good is supposed to be constitutionally guaranteed, despite various weaknesses. But the comforting conviction that the liberal democratic ground order is basically sound despite the occasional infiltration of bad political practices which can be coped with whenever necessary, renders philosophy a pure work of edification, of State building. In spite of all enlightened declarations, and in opposition to a programme admirably devoted to rationality, these new visions of State building discover the universal element upon which, and out of which, all political interactions first realize their human character: LOVE. But even love can possess the rationality of destruction (see Goethe's *Marienbader Elegie*). Rescued from such danger, caught on the edge of the abyss, and drawn into the positive, love becomes transcendental if, through edification, it is offered an object of desire that lies beyond all critique. Such transcendental love remains shielded from all adverse experiences and can therefore be loved because of itself and for itself.

One can, of course, not deny the initial enlightenment of the *Zeitgeist*. Love has been offered a rationally defined object that inhibits any stumbles into emotional barbarism, and guarantees something substantive instead. Love of the fatherland, patriotism in the original sense of the word, has run out, and it has disposed of many unpleasant things as though they were indigestible fare well past their sell-by date. On this point, philosophy remains philosophical and maintains its destructiveness. But as love enters a phase of edification and reaches its object, it becomes harmless, observable, and worthy of affirmation: edification brushes away the love of the fatherland and proclaims, instead, love for the constitution. Love takes the form of constitutional patriotism. In this respect, Friedrich Engel's observation is confirmed: that in the rest of the world, political power explicitly insists on the rule of law and on the recognition of the constitutional order. In Germany, however, obedience to law, order, and constitution is not sufficient, one is required to love them as well.

For fear of undermining the political culture and of raising new uncertainties about proven institutions, free reason dissolves into pure affection. As such, it asserts itself in a two-fold manner: first in general, and second as love. In the late middle ages, philosophy freed itself from servitude - due in part to the destructive force of nominalism. It no longer wanted to remain in the role of an *ancilla theologiae* and managed to win back its autonomy. Now, the constructive manifestation of philosophy has fallen back into the role of social servant: *ancilla constitutionis*. By refusing the possibility of a destructive autonomy within society that searches for emancipation, and by refusing to observe norms of order with suspicion - these are all norms of domination - philosophy affirms existing conditions and provides a defense of the constitutional order as well as a long-awaited ideology for legitimating political domination. This development is in stark contrast to a not-so-distant past in which the security service was scolded by the intellectuals. Nevertheless, if we are dealing with supposed or real enemies of the constitution, the activities of this form of institutionalized love is quite different compared to those who, with honest

intentions, are devoted to the constitution. The revolutionary tragedy of the Jacobin terror has long since been transformed into a constitutional comedy - to use a famous phrase (compare Robespierre's speech on the 12th of December, 1793 and German Basic Law, Article 18) (13). But in the meantime, love has become a satyr's game: the new Chauvin (14) stands grinning at the Celler whole. (15)

In this manner, Kant has been stood on his head: the true character of the constitution lies in the fact that the constitution is true. Consequently, any further thoughts about it, any critical pronouncements, any destruction of the palace becomes superfluous. For constitutional patriotism, the destructive scholar is a scandal.

Systemic Considerations (16)

Edification affirms itself and takes great delight in wide acceptance. The other positive manifestation of the *Zeitgeist* is more reserved in its acceptance of the 'palace'. Doesn't a living 'State' need the struggle between different opinions and interests, between groups and partners? Does it not require the contested terrain of pluralism? Cianetti (Italy's Corporations Minister, 1943) already saw the necessity of social conflict. But he also declared that conflict must be confined within the limits of the system; in general, it must be regulated, not provoked. This clever notion has been integrated into systems theory, into its ideas of the constructive nature of conflict and the consolidating function of strikes. Besides, the German constitution guarantees conflict and seeks to support it as long as it is confined within the boundaries of the constitutional ground order.

It is not love which is seen here as the most secure foundation of the political form, but CONFLICT. It stabilizes the system, gives it structure and secures its success. Wherever such functional conflict expresses itself, however, the critical element is there. Conflicts without critical ideas prove to be mere bouts of shadow-boxing and so cease to function. Critique seems, thus, to be a systemic condition of stability. But this condition presupposes a particular, venerated form of critique that has lost its negativity: it must refrain from destruction and work constructively. Constructive critique - once again a tautology of the *Zeitgeist* - constantly makes constructive proposals and seeks to improve and strengthen existing conditions. In so far as it opposes any attempts by the destructive critique to demolish, the constructive critique is also a critique of the destructive critique. But the latter - considered systemically - lacks the functionality of the positive.

The system focuses with care on the positive moment of conflict, for the positive is the yardstick against which anything new is measured. Any theory which deals with the State in a serious manner and sees the State as 'Being', must analytically treat any new forces entering the political arena not only with love, but also with severity. For as we know, within the system, all fields, processes, movements, facts and persons not only interact with one another; but even more importantly, they

constitute a tightly-stretched, fine-meshed net that is susceptible to disturbance and rupture. Should one mesh fail and a dysfunctional conflict, an unknown intention, or an autonomous social power slip into the net, then the complex relations between functions and system can destabilize and destruction may conquer.

Against this, systems theory has found a very reliable insurance that is much more dependable than any talk which might develop in a free speech situation, that is, in a sphere characterised by the non-existence of power. This norm that facilitates integration, comes from Max Weber. It is not called love; it is called responsibility. New energies are subsumed under the obligation of responsibility. Only when new forces enter the palace on the basis of responsibility and not merely on the basis of conviction, do they exhibit their 'political ability'. If a group acts responsibly, it leaves behind all its subversive, insurrectionary potential and works, instead, on the stabilization and extension of political domination in cooperation with other groups. It, thereby, demands full acceptance and gains the 'capacity to act as opposition' [*oppositionsfähig*], the 'capacity to enter into coalitions' [*koalitionsfähig*], and the 'capacity to form a government' [*regierungsfähig*]: thus, the group becomes a firm constituent of State power and, although it may have previously stormed the palace, its previous unruliness is undermined in favour of a reconciliation with the norms, rules, and limitations of the palace. Stated in other words, the group performs a systemic function while its representatives are transformed into functionaries of representation. In the end, neither the good A. Vollmer nor the bad J. Diefenbaker can withdraw from this undercurrent that is so much stronger than the power of constitutional love. (17)

Who would deny that systems theory deals with its object (the constitutional State) in a similar manner to that of the followers of critical theory: that is, critical but constructive. Occasionally, systems theory even displays mistrust, but only for the sake of form. For its declared intention is precisely the opposite: it aims to create new relations of trust. In this it is supported by its complicated glass-bead games and a logic of argumentation that is rich with associations. Destructive critique is a horror for systems theory. It is suspicious of any mistrust, since mistrust threatens to undermine its own belief in the correctness of conditions. In essence, and without knowing or intending it, systems theory finds its political consummation in the German constitutional guarantee of the continuity of power: in the 'constructive vote of no-confidence'. (18)

I don't know if the members of the parliamentary council were aware of the etymological humour of this monstrous idiom. In any case, systems theory finds in it its belated justification. The vote to remove an old chancellor by a new one during a parliamentary term results from a conflict situation and, in this way, symbolizes precisely the type of conflict that serves stability. Constructively handled distrust - such as the constructive vote of no-confidence - grows out of a trust in the continuity of power, the demise of which should be the burden of the scholar.

But since trust forms the basis of love, edifying and systemic work find themselves

together again in the end, and entertain themselves by patching together a new theodicy of the State. Love of the constitution is not misled by the evil of the political world; systems-theory even directs the functional integration of love. Systemically achieved edification is realized in a constitutionally secured, high level of tolerance: the neo-Leibnizian proof for a secularized theodicy. But this theodicy also has its malice - just like the original. For in his time, God certainly loved the best of all possible worlds - but he very carefully watched the haphazard evil of the human race in order to correct and mete out final punishment. A love that protects and safeguards the constitution cannot love without exercising control. It is for this simple reason, that all those who are lovingly tolerated are also systematically observed.

Something Subversive

In the end, there should be some constructiveness after all. 'Where is the positive?' In the misery of our time, we find it only in the negation, in Nowhere - in the so-called Utopia. And in fact, the Utopia that emerges out of the destruction of all structures of inequality, repression and control - this utopia is today, the last exit from self-prepared obliteration. For the scholar, this means that social conflict must be freed of its systemic, stabilizing function, it must be released from all constitutional love and it must be restored to its historic duty of destabilisation. The vindication of destabilization is the kernel that contains the defense and realization of freedom. 'Who claims to earnestly want freedom but simultaneously battles all destabilizing activities, contradicts himself' (Geymonat). (19)

Postscript

Doubts must be expressed: I have written this for German readers, for they are earnest people whom one must take seriously. Hence the concluding problem: How can we achieve enlightenment with respect to destruction as the determination of scholars without the *furor teutonicus* [teutonic furore] playing the accompaniment? The melody, that will entice the ossified social relations to dance, needs the basso continuo of irony - that is the most secure defense against a constructive deadend road.

Translators' Notes:

1: On the meaning of the Rechtsstaat and on Agnoli's conceptualisation of the *Rechtsstaat* see Bonefeld 'Constitutional Norm versus Constitutional Reality in Germany', *Capital & Class*, no. 46, London 1991.

2: Agnoli refers here to the stabilisation of political loyalty to capitalist domination through the brain police. The regressive transformation of consciousness into forms of technological rationality entails a modernisation of inquisition: i.e. the imposition of uncritical social communication.

3: Agnoli refers here to phenomena such as occultism, spiritualism and the growth in psychoanalysis during the 1980s.

4: Agnoli refers here to Habermas's work.

5: Agnoli refers here to the so-called historians' dispute which was a debate about Germany's new patriotism, freed from historical misgivings about its past.

6: Vogel was until recently the leader of the the German Social-Democratic Party.

7: Note that the article was written during the so-called revolution in the GDR.

8: Agnoli is refering to the *Radikalerlaß* of 1972. This *Erlaß* barred people such as teachers, post-men and medical students with supposedly anti-constitutional opinions, from public employment.

9: Adolf Freiherr von Knigge, 1752 to 1796, was the author of a book on how to behave. *Benimm-Knigge* translates as Behave-Knigge.

10: This Article of the German Basic Law says that the freedom of scholarly work does not liberate the scholar from the loyalty to the constitution.

11: Agnoli refers to the practical loophole in Kant's thought: philosophy's role is determined as a negative task at the same time that God is reintroduced (Goethe's "Alten Herrn") as a normative force to ensure a social practice focused on human purpose.

12: Agnoli's critique of the *Zeitgeist* relates to the Greens expousing of parliamentary democracy. For a detailed discussion on this subject see Bonefeld's (cit. ob.) introduction of Agnoli to English readers.

13: Art. 18 of the German Basic Law declares that those who make an unconstitutional use of the basic liberal rights of the Basic Law loose their basic rights.

14: The term chauvinism comes from a French comedy in which the character of Nicolas Chauvin plays the role of an ardent veteran of Napoleon's. Chauvinism's absurdly extravagant pride in one's country repeats itself as a comedy in the activities of the secret service against supposed enemies within (see footnote 14).

15: Agnoli refers here to the activities of the security service of the federal Land 'Lower-Saxony'. It became known in 1986 that the bomb which exploded outside the walls of a prison in the town of Celle was not detonated by a terrorist group but by the security service. The person responsible for the bombing was a convicted murder who had been released from prison. The bomb attack was used as a means of intensifying the search for terrorists and of infiltrating the convict into the terrorist scene as a contact. The constitutional comedy, referred to by Agnoli, entails, thus, the new Chauvin as an ardent follower of law and order of a constitutional status quo based on state terrorism.

16: Agnoli refers here to the work of C. Luhmann, a German systems theoretician.

17: A. Vollmer and J. Dittfurth are representatives of the German Greens' realist (Volmer) and fundamentalist (Dittfurth) fractions. The realists call for a policy of ecological reformism and contemplate coalition with the SPD; the fundamentalists represent a more comprehensive rejection of the established system and are very reluctant to contemplate any coalition with the SPD since they fear that this would end with their being absorbed back into the established system. On Agnoli's analysis of the Greens, see Bonefeld (cit. ob.). Note that the article was written before the official split of the Green Party in 1991.

18: 'The Bundestag can only pass a vote of no confidence in the Federal Chancellor by the election, with an absolute majority, of his successor' (Basic Law, Article 67 (1)).

19: Ludovico Geymonat - Italian philosopher and professor of philosophy at the University of Turin. Agnoli quotes here from Geymonat's *La Liberta*.

* Translated by Byrt Klammack and Werner Bonefeld

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The Theory and History of the Mass Worker in Italy (Part 2)

Sergio Bologna

Introductory Note: What follows is Sections 2 and 3 of the article which Bologna originally wrote for the journal of the Hamburg based Institute for the Social history of the Twentieth Century. Section 1 was published in *Common Sense* No. 11.

In this abridged version the footnotes (which make up about a third of the total) have been omitted. They will be published, together with an unabridged text, in a forthcoming publication by Red Notes, *Selected Writings of Sergio Bologna*. For further details write to Red Notes BP15, 2a St Paul's Road, London N1.

SECTION 2

10] The political and social climate of the early 1960s encouraged researches into the social history of the proletariat under Fascism. Through this work the historiography of the working class in the auto industry was enriched through new, albeit sometimes fragmentary, understandings. [Note 35]

We have a particularly valuable contribution in the researches of Gian Carlo Jocteau, on the history of the labour tribunals and labour litigation in Turin through the period of the Great Crisis. [Note 36]

The introduction of the Bedaux system, the wage cuts and the sackings at FIAT and in other industrial sectors in Turin during the Great Crisis had triggered social conflicts which very often led to proceedings in the labour tribunals - proceedings which had the support of the Fascist unions. The records of these labour tribunal proceedings thus provide an important source for reconstructing the conditions of working-class exploitation in that period. Given that channels for social and political

mediation of conflict did not exist in the period of the Great Crisis and after, labour conflict went through a phase in which it expressed itself in the law courts. The labour magistracy in Fascist Italy had the power to make rulings as well as administer them; thus it played a far more important role in Italy than in other countries, as a moment of the control and mediation of industrial conflict. This magistracy also had an influence on the definition of collective labour contracts, and thus brought to a head a number of contradictions within the Fascist union, which was the chief party responsible for the juridicalisation of labour conflicts. However we should bear in mind that the Fascist union never pressed collective proceedings in the labour courts, but only individual cases. [Note 37]

11] Another important contribution to an understanding of this period is provided by Giulio Sapelli's book: *Fascismo, grande industria, sindacato. Il caso di Torino 1929-1935* ("Fascism, big industry, and the trade unions. The case of Turin, 1929-35"). [Note 38] With this book the question of the relation between technology and labour-power was brought back to centre-stage.

Sapelli had made extensive use of the archives of the Fascist police and the archives of the *Unione Industriali di Torino* (Turin Industrialists' Union); in this way he was able to provide a detailed reconstruction of the period of the Great Crisis and the social tensions associated with it. This was the period in which the National Fascist Party had to face the problem of how it was to find a mediating role for itself, between the extremely aggressive behaviour of the employers, who were not inclined to accept the concept of the corporate state, and a working class that had been embittered by the mass sackings that had been taking place most particularly in the textile and construction industries, and in the area of small-to-medium industry. The application of the Bedaux system of exploitation, in its "Italian version", and the rise in the cost of living had further increased the bitterness of the working class. The Fascist unions in Turin went through an "extremist" phase. In other words, they were supporting workers' protests, were initiating legal proceedings against the employers in the labour courts, and were demanding the abolition of the Bedaux system. The Fascist Party was obliged to intervene in the union with a view to getting it to take a softer line; to this end it despatched Tullio Cianetti as commissar, who was later to become secretary of the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Workers (*Confederazione Fascista dei Lavoratori dell'Industria*). [Note 39] The National Fascist Party (PNF) and the local government authorities adopted social welfare policies with a view to helping the poor and the unemployed; but at the same time they pushed through measures in order to maintain capital and its profits; this was the period of the state funding interventions, with the setting-up of the "Institute for Industrial Reconstruction" (*IRI - Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale*). [Note 40]

Sapelli made extensive use of source material from the emigr*e communist press, and on the basis of police records he was able to verify that the reports that the clandestine communists were sending abroad were remarkably precise in their information. He also made extensive use of the archive of the Fascist Party, and the archive of Mussolini's personal secretariat.

While Castronovo had been principally concerned to analyse the figure of Agnelli, Sapelli, in the first chapter of his book, analysed the policy of the entire Turin employing class, in which Agnelli obviously played a very important part, but which he did not wholly represent. For instance, there was a strong freemasons' lodge, and within the Turin employers there were various other notable figures with their own particular interests. The unifying link between them was that they were all using the Fascist regime as a means of disciplining the working class. The myth of a capitalist but anti-fascist bourgeoisie which maintained its faith in progressive liberal traditions, and distinguished itself in its respect for the dignity of man and for democratic freedoms, collapsed completely. Finally, Sapelli addresses himself to the problem left open by Castronovo, of an alleged "autonomy" of Agnelli in relation to Fascism. The hypothesis whereby Agnelli allegedly used Fascism, but kept them firmly outside the strategy of his business decisions (a hypothesis which is very similar to what Hans Pohl maintains for the relations between the company management of Daimler-Benz and the Hitler regime) may find confirmation in various specific instances of Agnelli's behaviour, but, as Sapelli shows, this circumstance can in no way obscure the fact that there was a perfect correspondence between FIAT company policy and the basic objectives of the Fascist regime.

As suggested above, the most novel and interesting aspect of Sapelli's book is where he deals with questions of the organisation of the labour process. On the one hand he has tried to reconstruct how Taylorism was taken up by factory managers and production engineers; on the other, he provides an outline history of technological innovation at FIAT and examines the introduction of certain machine tools which required the application of new job-evaluation and wage systems. He thus sheds light on concrete aspects of the discussion on the Bedaux system, [Note 41] which at the time was dominating debate at the political, trade union, juridical and entrepreneurial level. A second aspect that Sapelli examined related to the discussion on Fordism. Although the Lingotto FIAT plant in Turin was the most technologically advanced factory in Europe, Agnelli seems to have adopted up Fordism as a social precept (ie the notion of the worker as consumer) only after the Great Crisis - in other words, at a point when the sharpest class conflicts had already been subdued, and when FIAT was engaged in introducing a new industrial cycle which was largely to be financed by the fascist armaments policy. In the preceding period, in the 1920s, Agnelli, for all that he was running a factory with Fordist technology, didn't need to adopt Fordism as a social doctrine, because, for him, problems of conflict and consensus had already been resolved by the fascist repression. (On Fordism itself: One should distinguish between myth and reality; thus, for example, the five-dollar day was principally a means of selecting workers). [Note 42]

In subsequent years Sapelli deepened his researches into Taylorism and Fordism in Italy. In particular he explored the role of the ENIOS (Ente per l'Organizzazione Scientifica del Lavoro), the national foundation which was set up in 1926 for research into the scientific organisation of work. He looks at the contribution of production

technicians, engineers, managers and individual capitalists to the culture and practice of "rationalisation" in the inter-War years. His researches provide an important contribution to the analysis of the modernising process of the industrial elites, and demonstrate the powerful influence that the so-called "German" technical thought exercised on whole generations of Italian engineers and production managers. These managers were fascinated by the German example, by the myth of Germany as "the country of rationalisation". The social policies of Hitler's National Socialists, on the other hand, were regarded somewhat more suspiciously (too "social", in their opinion). The same sceptical distance applied in relation to the Nazi state's anti-Jewish racist policies. From the date of its founding, through to 1938, the key figure in the ENIOS was Gino Olivetti, a Jew and a man man who had the full confidence of the Fascist Confederation of Industrialists. This research was compiled by Sapelli in the book *Organizzazione, lavoro e innovazione industriale nell'Italia tra le due guerre* ("Organisation, work and industrial innovation in Italy between the wars"), published in 1978, and in his essay *Gli "organizzatori della produzione" tra struttura d'impresa e modelli culturali* ("The production organisers: company structure and cultural models"), published in 1981. [Note 43] Both these works are to be seen as researches into the history of the technocracy. In both of them the problematic of class conflict is more or less pushed to one side. Sapelli's intention is to write simply a history of the ruling class, via through a neo-Fabian approach which incorporates the aristocracy of labour. As a result, Sapelli went on to a brilliant academic career in the 1980s, then became one of the most active managers in the field of historiographical research sponsored at an international level by public funds and by high finance; he then became head of the Feltrinelli Foundation, and is now director of the *Associazione di Studi di Storia dell'Impresa* ("Association for the study of Business History"), the Italian equivalent of the *Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte* run by Hans Pohl.

12] With the flare-up of workers' struggles after the Hot Autumn, with the spread of *consigli di fabbrica* ("factory councils") and the shop stewards' movement (*delegati di reparto*), with the continuing activities of the extra-parliamentary groups and the mass response to all state attempts at "authoritarian solutions", Italian society lived the early 1970s in a permanent condition of tense conflictuality: the factory working class became a central political and cultural reference point. In the tertiary and service sectors traditional forms of trade-union organisation with direct election of representatives were changed in line with new negotiatory forms that were arising in the factories. So began a new phase of political "literacy training", which often employed the concepts that had been developed by the "workerists" of the 1960s. People who only a short time previously had been dismissed as heretics by the official labour and trade union movement suddenly found themselves, at the start of the 1970s, regarded as "anticipators", as ahead of their times in terms of theoretical and intellectual development.

In this climate, of great tension and great political passion, a group of intellectuals who, in different ways, had taken part in the workerist elaborations of the 1960s, decided to address themselves to the historiographical problematic, in the

terms in which it had previously been sketched in Quaderni Rossi and Classe Operaia, only now with an updated posing of the questions.

This led to the publication of the journal *Primo Maggio* ("First of May"), whose first issue appeared in 1973. Under the rubric "Essays and documents for a class history", the journal was edited by myself up until 1980 (Issue 13), and thus far has produced 29 issues.

One of the principal aims of the journal was to re-start the process of historical reflection on the mass worker - particularly in the auto industry. Already in the Editorial to the second issue (1974) a number of methodological considerations on the relation between factory and society were examined, taking as their base a critical re-reading of Gramsci's article "Americanism and Fordism". The same issue also contained an analysis of the company structure of the FIAT motor company, which was to appear in the form of a book a few months later. [Note 44] Discussion also focussed afresh on researches into the organisation of the mass worker in the USA, in Europe and in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s.

At the same time, there was a move for a renewed initiative around the Workers' Inquiry (*inchiesta operaia*) - in other words, around a process of reflection and analysis to be undertaken in direct collaboration with the collectives in the factories, with a view to documenting the currently existing relations of class power. *Primo Maggio* thus became the first journal to identify and anticipate the "capitalist counter-reformation" in the auto sector. These counter-reforms began with the restructuring of the Innocenti-Leyland plant in Milan. The principal instrument of this restructuring process was the *cassa integrazione guadagni* a special form of unemployment benefit in the shape of a redundancy fund which was financed through the social security system, and which has facilitated a drastic reduction of personnel in the factories in the period post-1975, and at the same time has led to an effective selectivity process for the hiring of future workers.

The events at Innocenti-Leyland were analysed in *Primo Maggio* in collaboration with the workers' collective that had led the struggle against the company's restructuring plans. The journal was supported in this work by a group of specialists in "oral history" from the De Martino Institute, in particular by Cesare Bermani, who at that time was already a member of our editorial board, and who, at the time of writing, is the journal's director. [Note 45]

The combination of oral history and workers' inquiry, as it was pursued at the Innocenti-Leyland factory in 1975-6, was taken up immediately afterwards in Turin, where an editorial sub-group of the journal had been created, coordinated by Marco Revelli (son of the well-known oral historian Nuto Revelli). This led to workers' inquiries being conducted at FIAT too, which made possible an examination of the formation of the mass worker in Turin. This work continued through to the dramatic defeat of the FIAT workers in October 1980.

After the October 1980 strike, following the company's announcement that 24,000 FIAT workers were to be sacked, the work of this group was carried on, at an individual level, by some of the group, despite the fact that the Turin redazione of Primo Maggio had dissolved itself. Only a small part of the materials that were gathered in this five-year period of work (1975-80) has ever been prepared for publication. Most of it remains in the archive. The material consists of: a) materials on technological innovation at FIAT-Turin, in particular on the phase of robotisation; b) hundreds of taped interviews with FIAT workers, both men and women; c) hundreds of interviews with young proletarians who were organised in the "circoli del proletariato giovanile" (youth proletarian clubs); this section has already been transcribed from tape recordings, and runs to about 5,000 pages; d) trial documents and associated paperwork arising out of labour and criminal court proceedings which were conducted against factory workers and against young proletarians and militants of various political organisations; this material was put into safekeeping in the offices of lawyers who had represented workers and militants in that period, and who had close contact with the Turin editorial group of Primo Maggio; e) documents on FIAT company policy, on the "consigli di fabbrica" (factory councils), on the trade unions, and on the role of various local government organisations and political parties in the social conflicts; f) photographic and audiovisual material.

In March 1974 the journal "Classe" published a special issue with the results of a sociological investigation into the operai di linea (assembly line workers) at the Alfa Romeo factory, under the title *L'operaio massa nello sviluppo capitalistico* ("The mass worker in the history of capitalist development").

The journal *Classe*, whose intellectual head was for many years Stefano Merli, first appeared in June 1969, and it had as its brief an analysis of the past and present history of the working class and the organisation of the labour process. Already in its early issues (see Issue 8 for the mass worker), *Classe* had published a number of articles on workers' struggles at FIAT and in other car factories, and it was continually concerned with the theme of the history of Taylorism and Fordism in Italy (the theme of a Special Issue in December 1982). [Note 46]

By comparison with Primo Maggio, the journal *Classe* was far more systematic in its investigations. The circle of its contributors was far broader than that of Primo Maggio. *Classe* could also rely on the distributional support of a medium-sized publishing house, while Primo Maggio financed itself, was entirely self-sufficient, and was distributed via an alternative distribution system. *Classe* could also reckon on the support of political and trade-union circles, which saw the publication as their semi-official theoretical journal. The individual volumes of *Classe* were published as monographs, more or less in book form, running to 300-350 pages apiece, while Primo Maggio was always in the nature of a magazine, generally about 70 psages in all, was more experimental in nature, and was more closely linked to the autonomist movement. *Classe* represented the "average" of the rank and file trade union movement of the 1970s, and to that extent represented a characteristic testimony to the culture of that period.

As regards the history of the auto workers, the following articles in *Classe* deserve consideration: Angelo Dina on the internal FIAT strikes of 1968-9; the above-mentioned investigation into assembly-line workers at Alfa Romeo; the work of Paola Agosti Ronza reconstructing the various turning points in trade-union policy at FIAT between 1955 and 1962; the interview with a group of workers from the Innocenti-Leyland factory in Milan; the diary of an Alfa Romeo worker from the "Portello" factory in Milan; and finally, a number of contributions on the history of the workers' struggles at Pirelli in Milan. [Note 47]

In this way the building blocks were coming together to enable us to reconstruct the history of the mass worker in the auto industry. In 1975 the journal of the Centro Piero Gobetti in Turin, *Mezzosecolo*, published a long interview with Battista Santhi*a, who had led the comitati di agitazione (agitation committees) in FIAT and in other Turin factories during the Resistance. These committees were the clandestine trade-union structures of their time, and they reached such a high degree of organisation that they were able to practise sophisticated forms of struggle and sabotage (and, according to Santhi*a, eventually caused a 10 per cent fall in production). [Note 48] The interview is informative about very interesting and hitherto unknown details such as the methods employed by the partisans to hinder the German troops in their project of dismantling the FIAT plant, and the relations between communists and anarchist militants within the Resistance, as well as giving new details of the class composition of the time.

The same issue of *Mezzosecolo* also published an important article by Marco Revelli on the organisation of the Italian Communist Party among factory workers in Turin shortly before the introduction of Mussolini's Special Laws. By the time of the Party's last legal provincial congress in 1924, factory workers made up 70 per cent of party members. The communists succeeded in winning a big following in the elections for the internal trade union representatives in the FIAT works in April 1925 - three years after Mussolini's seizure of power! In the brand new Lingotto factory, they got 2,978 votes in the Mechanical Section, and 1,595 in the Bodywork section. The fascist list received only 429 and 218 votes respectively. The thesis of Revelli, who was on the editorial board of *Primo Maggio*, was that this political following was to be related back to the "workerist" line adopted by the Turin party organisation, a line that was supported by Gramsci. In his article he attempted to show that the working class did not let itself be subjected by Fascism; that their resistance originated in the everyday resistance to exploitation in the factory; and that the socio-cultural identity of the factory worker had found a new point of political identification in the radical line of the PCI.

One indirect but nonetheless highly significant contribution to the history of the mass worker was provided by the 1976 edition of the *Annals of the Feltrinelli Foundation*, which was dedicated to the history of Italian trade unionism in the post-War period. Particularly important in this regard was the introductory essay by the editor, Aris Accornero, *Problemi del movimento sindacale in Italia 1943-73*

("Problems of the trade union movement in Italy, 1943-73"). [Note 49] Accornero, who had been close to the journal *Classe Operaia* in the 1960s, had earlier been a worker at the RIV ball-bearing factory in Turin, one of FIAT's supplier plants, and a trade union militant. Then he became a trade-union official for the CGIL, and he now teaches sociology at the University. He had already published investigations into the origins of Taylorism, and personal accounts covering the period of his trade union militancy in the factories during the first major phase of restoration of the employers' power in the post-War period. His familiarity with the workerist literature of the 1960s and his own personal experiences led him to ascribe a decisive importance to the relationship between the working class, the organisation of the labour process, and technology.

Other rank and file trade-union militants, and local cadres of the PCI who had lived through the realities of the workers' struggles and had also participated directly in those struggles in their capacity as negotiators for their organisations, willingly transformed themselves into historians and continued to contribute to the extensive literature on the workers' struggles in that period. In this context, the book of Marino Gamba, *Innocenti: Imprenditore, fabbrica e classe operaia in cinquant'anni di vita italiana* ("Innocenti: Company, factory and working class through fifty years of Italian life") is worthy of attention, as is Renzo Gianotti's *Trent'anni di lotte alla FIAT* ("Thirty Years of Struggle at FIAT").

The theme of working-class collectivity was also taken up by industrial sociology - for example in Dario Salemi's book *Sindacato e forza lavoro all'Alfa Sud. Un caso anomalo di conflittualità industriale* ("Unions and workers at Alfa Sud. An anomalous case of industrial conflictuality").

An area meriting particular attention is the work of Dario Lanzardo, who was formerly a contributor to *Quaderni Rossi*. In 1962 he had been directly involved in the clashes in Turin, around the first big of engineering workers' strike since the strikes of the Resistance period. This was the occasion when demonstrators attacked the local headquarters of the UIL trade union (which was politically close to the Socialist Party of Italy, PSI), because the union had signed a separate agreement with FIAT management. In later years these clashes, which spread from Piazza Statuto into the centre of Turin and which were particularly violent, were to take on something of a symbolic character. Some saw them as the starting date of the autonomous working-class movement in Italy; others saw them as having been caused by provocateurs, intent on exasperating the industrial conflict, and thereby firing the starting shots in what was to become the period of "red terrorism".

Lanzardo used the available documentation, as well as the records of juridical proceedings and personal interviews with people who had been directly involved in the demonstrations, in order to show that the Revolt of Piazza Statuto (this was also the title of his book on the subject, which was published in 1980: *La Rivolta di Piazza Statuto*) was an expression of authentic proletarian anger after the years of superexploitation and repression. The repression had been assisted not least by the

collaboration of a number of "yellow" unions, which, acting on behalf of FIAT company management, had acted as spies, snoopers, and agents of intimidation against the workers. One of the people interviewed ends his account as follows:

"Question: Do you remember anything else about Piazza Statuto? Answer: No, I can't remember anything now; you should talk with Emilio... he's been to college... When a worker does something, they don't think about what people are going to say about it afterwards. We simply do it because there's nothing else we can do!"

13] The end of the 1970s was marked by a series of social and cultural movements which exploded not only the interpretational methods of the traditional Left, but also those of the extra-parliamentary Left which had originated in the movement of 1968. As a result of this, rank and file trade unionists were as disoriented as those intellectuals who had chosen to involve themselves in working-class struggles in the period between 1968 and 1978, and they all tended to react by rejecting politics. From that point on, armed groups such as the Red Brigades (Brigate Rosse) and Front Line (Prima Linea) were permanently on the front pages of the newspapers. These groups also had roots inside the car factories, particularly in FIAT in Turin and Alfa Romeo in Milan. Some of the statements which they distributed after their armed attacks contained detailed analyses of the position of the workers in the factories, and very precise descriptions of the organisation of the labour process. Managers in the car plants also became victims of the armed attacks. Each important phase of the trade-union struggle was accompanied by actions that were then claimed by the armed groups. [Note 52]

The problem of violence was the central question of political life, and it engaged the attention of public opinion to an extent that was hitherto unprecedented. The question here was not only the organised violence of the armed groups, but also the actions of the so-called "diffuse terrorism" and the violent actions that took place in connection with militant trade-union and community struggles: for example, the "militant pickets" (picchetti duri), or the internal marches round the factories which regularly ended with the destruction of administrative offices and the (generally symbolic) kidnapping of management personnel. This social reality explains the harshness of the state reaction in 1979 and 1980. In the minds of manipulated public opinion, there began to be less and less distinction between the murders by the Red Brigades and the militant pickets, which in the meantime had begun to invade the tertiary sector and the public services. During this period, workers in heavy industry were already beginning to feel the effects of the restructuring. When one criticises the brutality of the repression in the period 1979-80, one should not forget that the armed struggle had reached an almost frenetic pitch, so that in cities such as Turin, armed attacks were taking place at a rate of one every three hours on average. This was one of the factors that contributed to the destruction of the movement as a whole.

This all brought about a situation in which, at a political and cultural level, the struggles of the mass worker came to be identified with terrorism; this in turn led to a paralysis of left-wing culture, and of the Left which had participated in the struggles

of 1968-9.

During this situation, in which one had the impression that the course of history was careering out of control, the so-called "Movement of 1977" came into being, a movement which contained a whole range of new elements, and which brought to light many contradictions in the theory and practice of the Left. The editorial group of Primo Maggio was probably the only group of intellectuals and historians which concerned itself with trying to understand the nature of this movement, and at the same time began to re-examine its own theoretical paradigms.

The first paradigm to be brought into discussion was precisely the historical centrality of the mass worker. The process of tertiarisation and decentralisation, the diffusion of small units of production and (particularly in Italy) the extension of home-working began to undermine the material bases of Fordist society. The movement of 1977 had brought a new generation of young people onto the stage of history. Their needs, their symbols, their ways of expressing themselves, their position within a radically altered labour market, their situation within a conception of the family and of society which had been brought into question by the feminist movement - all this needed to be understood, and this was the task that we set ourselves - although it was only fulfilled to a very limited extent.

All this was also the subject of discussions within the Primo Maggio editorial group, which took place on the basis of my article "The Tribe of Moles" (*La Tribu delle Talpe*). [Note 53]

In the auto industry we saw an occurrence which, even at a distance of ten years, still remains puzzling - namely the hiring of 10,000 young men and women by FIAT. These hirings brought the generation of 1977 into the factory. What would be the process of their assimilation, in the light of the realities life on the assembly line, the introduction of new robotised technologies and the experiences of the previous generation of workers? So began the most interesting phase of the "workers' inquiry" (*inchiesta operaia*) on Primo Maggio, a phase which had to be broken off because of the repression of the years 1979 and 1980. The results of this inquiry were never completed; for the most part the material still lies in our archives. Of course, of these 10,000 new hirings in 1977, many left the factory within a few months, of their own accord; others were sacked by management in October 1980.

Up until this point, we had still seen no well-grounded historical analysis of the mass worker in the auto industry. At the start of 1977, however, the first international conference on oral history was organised in Bologna. Cesare Bermani made the introductory speech, in which he raised important questions about the subjectivity of the working class and of the young proletariat.

14] The essay by Duccio Bigazzi (*Gli operai della catena di montaggio: la FIAT - "Assembly-line workers at FIAT"*) which was published in the *Annals of the Feltrinelli Institute* in 1980, dealt with the problem of technological standards in the

FIAT auto industry in the period 1921 to 1938, on the basis of a wealth of documentary material. Bigazzi analysed the process of professional change which was triggered by the introduction of new machinery into the factories; his intention was to reconstruct an outline of the mass worker in Turin during the period of Fascism.

Bigazzi described the various phases of the construction of the Lingotto factory, on the basis of documentation from the "FIAT Historical Archives Centre". He also made extensive use of oral testimonies and contemporary publications in the technical and economic press. This enabled him to construct a detailed picture of the Lingotto factory at the time when it came on-stream (1924-5). He concludes that Lingotto was at that time the most advanced auto factory in Europe, and that the high level of its technology was matched only by the Opel factory at Rüsselsheim. Once the assembly lines had been introduced and the process of technological innovation brought to a conclusion, FIAT sent some of its technicians to visit Ford's factories in America, in order to produce a comparative report on the relative technological standards of the two concerns. From this report by FIAT's technical staff it becomes clear that the technological content of each of the two concerns was at essentially the same level, but that Ford had a far higher level of productivity. This was for two reasons: at FIAT there was insufficient coordination in the supply of component parts throughout the production process; and labour time in the various individual work-phases of the process were insufficiently saturated. In order to deal with the second of these two aspects, FIAT management pushed ahead with a "Taylorisation" of the company. This culminated in the introduction of the Bedaux system during the years of the Great Crisis. On the other hand, there were no major innovations as regards machinery, except in the area of body-painting and sheet-metal working. One could summarise these developments by saying that at FIAT, under Fascism, first the Fordist factory and then Taylorisation were introduced. This would confirm the thesis that the system of technology was a deterrent and was used as a factor of intimidation and disciplining in times of heavy repression. This organisational model reappeared at FIAT in the period 1980-1. It was after the mass sackings (veiled through the mechanisms of the *cassa integrazione*) that we saw an acceleration in the installation of robots in production.

At the time of its opening in 1924, the FIAT-Lingotto factory appeared as the embodiment of the working-class defeat. Lingotto was to become a pilgrimage point for visitors who were taken on tours through the various departments of the factory in minibuses; the factory was divided into four floors, with a test-track on the roof. Witnesses mentioned the *silenzio operaio* (the silence of the workers) as a phenomenon that they found particularly striking.

But the workers wanted to visit the factory too. The fragmentation of work within the Fordist-Taylorist system had deprived them of an overall view of the cycle of production. So on Sundays they would turn up back at the factory - they made up the largest group among the visitors - and what they were looking for was the meaning of their work, their individual contributions, within the cycle of production as a whole. It was not some attachment to the factory that brought them back into the

plant on their free days; the factory was for a long time known as "Portolongone", which was the name of a nearby jail for prisoners serving life sentences. The first attempts at a coordination between technological innovation and the wage structure was the introduction of a collective pieceworksystem, in the form of a plant-wide production bonus designed to get workers to operate collectively and always to bear in mind that there was someone waiting down the line for them to finish their jobs. This seems to have been more an educational policy than a technical requirement - in fact the system was soon dropped, in favour of individual piecwork agreements. Nonetheless the system achieved real results in terms of work-rhythms: in 1926 FIAT produced 51,000 vehicles, a record which was not to be surpassed until 1935-7.

In 1927 a period of stagnation began, which was further exacerbated by the crisis of 1929, and which meant that at Lingotto very few technological innovations were introduced; production fell and the number of workers and of hours worked was reduced. Uniquely among the major European auto manufacturers, FIAT did not invest in technological innovation until 1938, when the situation was to change with the building of the new Mirafiori works. Lingotto, the most modern factory in Europe in 1924, was actually scheduled for closure and demolition in 1937 to make way for the new Mirafiori works. In the event, things turned out differently: Mirafiori was built in another part of town, and the Lingotto works continued in operation through to the 1980s, when it was finally closed. The latest plan is to develop it in part as a monument of industrial archaeology, and in part as a kind of "FIAT Beaubourg".

During these ten years of technological stagnation (1926-36), from management's point of view the only reserve resources for higher productivity was human labour-power. This meant a relentless, crushing process of the transformation of living labour. For this reason, output-related wages (individual piecework, group piecework, section piecework etc) were manipulated in such a way that the wages obtained via the higher productivity remained barely sufficient to put together a living wage. In 1928 this situation was further exacerbated by the introduction of the Bedaux system, with the result that workers rebelled with increasing frequency against foremen and time-and-motion personnel, which in turn led to the intervention of the police and the arrest of numbers of workers. However, when, in 1930, after sackings and a general rise in the cost of living, a wave of strikes broke out in Turin and other industrial cities, strikes which were even supported by the local Fascist unions, the Lingotto workers did not stream out into the streets of the city, but confined their protests within the four walls of the factory.

In these years FIAT accelerated up another process, namely the introduction of new workers into the position of specialised manual workers (i.e. the modern operaio di linea - line worker). Turnover was very high, and the sackings during the Great Crisis enabled the company to be extremely selective in their hiring policies.

During this period the relationship between FIAT and the government was also extremely tense, since the government was alarmed at the prospect of public disorders. The Prefect of Turin asked FIAT for a weekly statement with a list of those

who had been sacked, and the reasons for their sacking. The statistics as gathered by Bigazzi in this regard (October 1930 to December 1931) make interesting reading :

Reasons	Number	%
Staff reduction	847	70.2
Indiscipline	143	11.8
Sickness	90	7.7
Unsuited for work at FIAT	102	8.5
Voluntary redundancy	25	2.0
Reason not known	38	

The formulation "Unsuited for work at FIAT seems to me to be characteristic of the company's behaviour towards its workers - and the sackings for "sickness" and "indiscipline" can be seen as variants of that general definition. When one takes these figures as indicators for the degree of selectivity of factory personnel, one arrives at a rejection rate of something like 30 per cent, which is very high.

Bigazzi also researched hospital records in the city and established that in these years the number of workers who were hospitalised as a result of accidents at work rose very markedly. This led to the Bedaux system being called into question. Even the Fascist unions were calling for it to be abandoned, and this was to happen - albeit only in appearance - in 1934. This fact caused the engineer Charles Bedaux to publish an article in *Il Corriere della Sera*, in which he challenged the notion that the system applied by FIAT was the same as his own. He had scheduled rates of increase of 100% for points obtained over and above the operating standard, whereas at Lingotto the increase was only 75 per cent.

During this period of extreme social tensions brought about by heightened exploitation in a context of general economic crisis, Agnelli brought into his factories a new generation of workers, "new" not only as regards the nature of their skill qualifications, but above all "new" in relation to the experiences of that generation that had either experienced or had been present during the defeat of 1922. This was the first real generation of mass workers in Italy. This becomes clear when one reads the emigr*e communist press of this period: the older party cadres had real difficulties in understanding the attitudes and behaviour of the newly hired workers, attitudes which vacillated between anger and rebellion on the one hand, and opportunism and individual compromises on the other.

In 1933, and again in 1935, Agnelli travelled to the United States to visit the new Ford plants at River Rouge. By now FIAT was once again producing at a satisfactory level of output; military orders and Italy's colonial adventure in Africa had made it possible for the company to pull out of stagnation. In 1936 the first studies were undertaken for the construction of the Mirafiori works, which was originally planned as a kind of horizontal Lingotto. Construction of the new plant began in 1938, and once again FIAT was up with the most advanced technology of the times. (The

Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg was constructed according to the same model, and with the mass participation of Italian labour-power.) By the time that production actually began, Mirafiori was no longer merely a car factory, but a factory that made everything possible; two thirds of its output consisted of military goods.

Bigazzi's historical analysis ends at this point. The historiography of the Mirafiori works during this period is still fragmentary. If one discounts the material contained in the biographies of Agnelli and Valletta, most historical analysis into the relation of capital and the working class at FIAT during World War II is limited to one important episode in the history of the Resistance - the strike of March 1943, which brought about the crisis of the regime, and the fall of the Mussolini government. Studies of the period 1940-45 at FIAT tend to follow the fortunes and misfortunes of the historiography of the Resistance. The entrepreneurial history of this period also shows a certain reticence towards a deepening of analysis of the War period, which was marked by a new attempt to discipline the workers and by an alteration of the composition of the workers following the massive input of female labour power into production to make up for shortages of available male labour.

After the publication of the Daimler-Benz Book, it appears to me that - although details would still need to be corroborated via accurate historical research into FIAT's operations - that working conditions in Italian factories never sank to the levels of absolute degradation that occurred in German industry under the domination of the Nazis; on the contrary, shortages of labour-power had inclined Italian industrialists, most particularly in the armaments sector, and at FIAT in particular - to a "softer" policy towards their workers: they favoured a wage policy which brought certain privileges for qualified and specialised labour-power, in particular for technical personnel. This does not mean that the living conditions of the working class during the War were good or even satisfactory; it is simply to say that when one takes FIAT as an example, in the years from 1940 to 1945, the intensification of exploitation was not pursued as violently as in the years of the Great Crisis, when the first generation of mass workers was created in the factories.

Finally, one should not forget that after 8 September 1943 (the Badoglio government's armistice with the Allies) Italy's industrialists began a slow process of political realignment with a view to loosening their ties with Fascism and to re-establishing relations with the Allies. The Agnelli and FIAT had no difficulty in re-establishing close contacts with US big capital, and with the intelligence services of the US army. This turnabout also provided for contacts with the Italian Resistance movement - not only with its liberal and monarchist sections, but also with the communists and socialists, with the partisan movement and the working class itself - an alliance which the industrialists very much needed when the German Wehrmacht began dismantling plant and machinery with a view to transporting it to Germany. It was workers organised in the clandestine movement who saved the machines, and thus provided a valuable service to their bosses.

A further factor which may have influenced the conditions and ways of behaving

of the "new FIAT workers" during the War - was the attitudes of the young peasants, artisans and students who had applied for jobs in the company's armaments producing departments in the hopes of avoiding or postponing their military service.

Finally, one should not forget that after 8 September 1943 the clandestine work of trade-union organisation at FIAT experienced a major upswing. The organisation of this movement moved from the rather spontaneous strike movement of March 1943, to increasingly difficult collective forms of *autoriduzione produttiva* (self-reduction of production) in the period 1944-45. In order for these forms of struggle and resistance to be used successfully against the Nazi occupation, it was obviously necessary to have a detailed knowledge of the cycle of production and of the factory as a whole, a knowledge that the mass worker did not have; to this extent, another form of thinking was required, a culture which only the older militants of the generation of the 1920's still possessed. These were the ones who had survived in the silence of clandestinity, or those who were returning from emigration, or those who had been freed from imprisonment in the Fascist prisons. Apart from detailed knowledge of the factory, it was also necessary to create an alliance with other layers of employees ranging from technicians to white collar workers, through to security personnel, workers in the internal factory transportation system and the plant engineers. This was a phase of solidarity, of collective complicity, and a phase of the reconquest of knowledge, which later was to become the basis for the ideology of the self-management councils (*consigli di gestione*) in the immediate post-War period. This was also a phase of stronger identification with the factory and with the technological heritage it housed. Once again, as previously in 1920, communist ideology was able to reconcile men with machinery, and opened space for high-sounding dreams and utopias.

14] At the time when Bigazzi's essay on the creation of the first generation of mass workers in Italy appeared was published, we were hardly in a position to appreciate it. Good friends had been arrested and the judiciary had decided that the full responsibility for all the illegal acts committed in Italy since 1968 was to be laid at the door of Italy's "workerist" tendency. The witch-hunt against the intellectuals of the "workerist Left" was already in full swing. They were to be silenced - through show trials, long years of imprisonment in special prisons, exile, expulsion to officially designated locations, by the destruction of their books by erstwhile "Left" publishing houses, and by denying them access to libraries. The historian "establishment" made a great contribution to this witch-hunt campaign, inasmuch as some of its best-known members were active participants.[Note 54]

The independent alternative network of Left bookshops and distribution cooperatives was destroyed, and journals such as *Primo Maggio* had great difficulties in surviving at all. Nevertheless, in 1981 the editorial group of *Primo Maggio*, together with the *Istituto De Martino*, was able to organise a conference in Mantova, which brought together a wide range of historians who were involved in the field of "history from below". The first proceedings of this conference, published five years later, show that despite the shock of the defeat, the experience of Italian left-wing historians, both in method and in terms of empirical analysis, had found a clear

voice. Duccio Bigazzi laid out in his essay the first results of his researches on the auto workers of Alfa Romeo, which appeared as a book in 1988, and which was the most important monograph of the 1980s dealing with this topic.

15] The conference can be seen as the last (failed) attempt to found a "society of Italian radical historians". [Note 55] From that point on, political resignation and the individual pursuit of academic careers led to self-censorship (as of 1982, thousands of new teaching positions were tendered, and salaries were raised).

Thus the balance of Italian historical writing in the 1980s on the man-machine problematic in industrial conflict, or in general on the problematic that Gramsci sketched in his "Americanism and Fordism", is very meagre.

But when we consider the retreat of left-wing historians, the defeat of the factory council movement and the mass sackings in the big factories played a far more important role than the campaign against the "workerists".

With the sackings, militants of the factory councils - particularly those who had fought on job-protection and health and safety issues - and sick workers and non-productive workers, and older workers, were selected out. More than 700,000 workers were sacked by companies up and down Italy.

In the motor industry, these developments took their course with the sacking of 61 FIAT workers for "suspected membership of terrorist groups" in Autumn 1979. This put the engineering unions in a difficult position: for the first time since the "Hot Autumn" and the coming into effect of the *statuto dei lavoratori* ("workers' statute"), factory workers were being sacked on explicitly political grounds. These sackings brought a new situation of workers' legal rights into being. Moreover, the question needed to be asked: how had FIAT management been able to identify the "suspects"? Did there exist alongside the ordinary factory security personnel a special company police, or had the lists been drawn up by the carabinieri of the Anti-Terrorist Squad? From the point of view of criminal law, too, a new situation was being created.

Nevertheless, there were hardly any solidarity initiatives, either on the part of "liberal" public opinion, or on the part of the unions. From the published "Memoirs" (1988) of FIAT's general manager at the time we learn that the sackings had been discussed in advance with the general secretary of the CGIL union (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, Luciano Lama. [Note 56] One of the few political initiatives was the protest meeting that was called in Turin by the editorial board of *Primo Maggio* together with other journals. The proceedings of this meeting were published in a special edition of *Inchiesta*. [Note 57] The records of this initiative are important for the recent history of FIAT workers, because they document the level of discussion and the sense of "before the Deluge" that prevailed at the time - in other words, a few months before the "35 Days" strike at FIAT against the mass sackings, which was the focal point of the defeat of the Italian factory council movement in the

1970s.

A comparison between this special edition of *Inchiesta* and the proceedings of a Turin Communist Party conference (February 1980) on company policy and the economic situation of FIAT, shows that the PCI conference discussed seriously the possibility of Agnelli's concern being absorbed into the state sector of the economy, given the conjunctural difficulties it was going through at that time. This is revealing, given what we know of what happened a few years later - in other words, exactly the opposite: the state auto manufacturer Alfa Romeo was absorbed into Agnelli's private empire. This shows how unclear the PCI leadership was about the real relations of power at FIAT. [Note 58] On the other hand, the dangers of a catastrophic defeat of the workers' movement and the restoration of the old FIAT despotism was accurately analysed and assessed at the Mantova conference.

In this stocktaking of the Italian historiography of class conflict in the auto sector, the proceedings of both these conferences are of particular interest, since they are the last available sources of information on the workers' reactions to the new technologies (the first robots were introduced in 1978-9) prior to the long hiatus in historical and sociological analysis which was to last for ten long years.

The destruction of the network of Works Councils, the re-establishment of despotic industrial relations which left the workers no room for negotiation on questions of technological innovation, and the disintegration and ideological disorientation of the Left intelligentsia all led to a situation in which no further information came out of the FIAT works in Turin, and the situation at the workplace ceased being an object of analysis. It was only when the Ministry of Labour sent its inspectors into FIAT that the world of FIAT was once again, after ten years, opened to public scrutiny. The inspectors' brief was to look into the truth of complaints that had been received from trade unionists and social workers, against FIAT management, regarding alleged infractions of the basic rights of workers. These complaints led to a judge in Turin ordering an investigation against FIAT management, which in turn led to FIAT being put on trial.

Parallel to this ambivalent-seeming state-bureaucratic initiative (which here serves only as a possible source for a future possible history of working conditions at FIAT in the 1980s, and also as a symptom of an "atmospheric" change in public opinion in relation to FIAT), there were signs of a revival of interest in circles close to the trade unions, in the history of labour struggles at FIAT. The occasion for this was provided by the twentieth anniversary of the "Hot Autumn". It seemed that the cultural establishment also had an interest in these themes, as is shown by the publication, by the Milan publisher Garzanti, of Marco Revelli's book *Lavorare in FIAT* (November 1989).

Marco Revelli, who had previously been a member of the *Primo Maggio* editorial group, was one of the few intellectuals who, during the big strike in October 1980, followed the struggle on a day-to-day basis and set about collecting documents and

eye-witness accounts (see above). After the defeat and the mass sackings (in 1979 FIAT stillemmployed 102,500 workers in auto production; by 1984 the figure was only 55,400), together with Mariella BerraRevelli conducted a sociological investigation into the phenonema of mental depression and disorientation among those sacked FIAT workers who were living off the cassa integrazione, ie in a position where they were still de jure employed by the company, but were de facto in a kind of retirement, which it was impossible to say whether it was temporary or permanent. As many as 200 committed suicide. [Note 59]

In the course of 1981-2, Berra and Revelli conducted several interviews. [Note 60] The important thing that emerged from the interviews was that unemployment destabilised family relationships and put the central role of the man in the family so strongly in question that many became prey to depression, and some committed suicide. This is additional evidence for the way in which strongly patriarchal structures still exist in working-class families, even when the woman is in full-time employment. The unemployed men were reticent about getting involved in new functions (housework, childcare). However, this is only one aspect of the problem.

Another aspect was that the sudden lack of a community of solidarity led to a loss of emotional equilibrium. The factory was the only spatial fixed point of social aggregation and identification with one's own class. Other socialisation- and meeting-points that existed outside the factory (party branches, trade union offices, bars) had either long since faded away, or had been made non-viable by the great level of mobility among workers. The self-organisation of workers at plant level had reached such a pitch that the factory was no longer simply a place where one went to work, but also a place of socialisation. A precondition for workers to get financial support from the cassa integrazione (which made good up to 90 per cent of your previous wages) was that the worker undertook no other paid employment. It was not lack of money, but the loss of social and political role, the enforced idleness, and the lack of any initiative or policy aimed at retraining, that was the source of the depression. Occasionally initiatives were undertaken with a view to offering the "cassa integrati" (as they were known, half ironically, half dismissively) unpaid work in the community. Only a small majority were in a position to refind the way to autonomous self-organisation, but even people involved in these initiatives suffered* under a severe psychological strain. By this analysis, all Gramsci's observations in "Americanism and Fordism" were recurring, except that here it was not a matter of forcing upon the workers, through the company structure, a new socio-hygienic system of values; it was more a collapse of what really had been a workers' civilisation, a workers' culture, which may have had its ambiguous aspects, but which for thousands of proletarians constituted a unique res publica. Workers' identification with this culture was so strong that it evoked among a shocked population an emotion of being at the end of an epoch, of being rolled over by history, a sort of Gotterd*ammerung atmosphere. [Note 61]

In his above-mentioned book on the Fascist trade unions and the working class in Turin, in order to highlight the level of exploitation at FIAT during the Great Crisis

(1930-1), Giulio Sapelli stresses that in that period two FIAT workers committed suicide. What historian of the future is going to ascribe a historical meaning to the wave of suicides in our own times?

16] The factory workers, and above all the militants of the factory council movement, had perceived the mass sackings of the 1980s not merely as a conjunctural restructuring policy but as the collapse of an epoch and the twilight of a civilisation; the intellectuals, on the other hand, saw them as a turning point, as the end of an epoch that had begun with the movement of 1968, an epoch which had been stamped with illusions and extremist mistakes. Even a section of the intelligentsia who had been imprisoned repudiated their own political past and "revised" their own history by means of an internalisation of the defeat. The great majority of the left-wing intellectuals interpreted the turning point, sometimes publicly, sometimes tacitly, as a liberation from their continuing relationship of analysis with real mass movements and complex political phenomena such as the urban guerrilla movement. The restoration of order in the factories and in society as a whole was greeted with relief. Apparently one can do one's researches better when dead silence rules all around. In Italy's special prisons, and during the course of interrogations, there were instances of torture, but the reaction of the intelligentsia was to ignore it. The rules about crown witnesses in political court cases led to the total undermining of the right of defence (in the reforms of the penal code which came into force in 1989, this advance was even institutionalised: the trial dialectic between the representative for the prosecution and the representative for the defence was replaced by a system of direct "negotiation" between the judge and the accused). Leftwing intellectuals, with only a few exceptions, left indignation about this to the specialists in penal reform. Thus they turned their backs not only on the trade-union struggles of the working class, but also on fundamental values of the liberal tradition.

The responsibility for this situation is borne by the Communist Party, whose policies had helped mould the culture of the *emergenza* ("emergency"). The judges who had been responsible for the wave of arrests of 4,000 suspected "terrorists" were closely linked to the Communist Party. The prosecution logic, and even the techniques of cross-examination, were on a par with those of the Stalinist trials of the 1930s. The PCI put their best lawyers at the disposal of the crown witnesses. The culture of "emergency" established a tendency whereby every mass movement that went beyond the bounds of legality was viewed on the same level as the armed actions of organised groupings. For this reason, the factory council movement and the defensive struggles of the factory workers were seen more as likely ground for acts of anti-State violence than as the healthy components of basic democracy. [Note 62]

So it was that our Leftwing intellectuals undertook a 180-degree turn, on societal questions. They enthusiastically embraced the crass ideology of Reaganite neo-liberalism; they lost their basic democratic instincts; they repudiated not only their reformist-communist and social-reformist culture, but even the spirit of liberalism. They succumbed fully to the ideology of post-Fordism, and returned to conceptions of society that dated back to these-called "Golden Age" of America in the

1920s. In short, they threw overboard the whole of Keynesian political thinking. They engaged in idolatry of private enterprise and abandoned any idea of a "humane" capitalism, even though in Italy there exists a fair tradition of socially responsible capitalism (Adriano Olivetti, Enrico Mattei). In short: the leftwing intellectuals went right over to right-wing conservatism. In recent European history, to find such a radical betrayal of one's political roots one has to go back to 1933, when many democratic and social-democratic Germans went over to national socialism. So it is no wonder that, today, ten years after all this, Italy is the only country in the OECD where entire regions are no longer under state control, but are under the Mafia; where justice - according to the 1990 annual report of the Bar Association - is all but paralysed; and where the highest level of concentration of capital in Europe is matched by a Parliament incapable of establishing a sufficiently strong government majority to be able to set up an anti-trust law. What is unprecedented in this Italian model is the combination of a strong tendency to monopoly with an independent level of production organised in small and medium-sized firms: "concentration without centralisation", in the apposite definition of the American sociologist Bennett Harrison. This is the core of post-Fordism. [Note 63]

17] In the heads of our historians, political scientists, sociologists and so on there is an id*ee fixe that industrial conflict is about to disappear from the stage of history, that work-relations are no longer the basis for socio-political identity, and that terms such as "class" or "class composition", as methodological tools for the study of history, are valid only as far as the October Revolution and no further.

The debate on post-Fordism and post-industrial society that emerged in those years was marked by this orientation of the leftwing intellectuals. This began with a series of studies on Taylorism (which I analysed in a paper for the Hamburg Institute for Social History, *Einführung in die Lektüre von Gramsci's "Americanismo e Fordismo"* - "Introduction to a Reading of Gramsci's Americanism and Fordism" - November 1989) in which a positive "historical revisionism" appeared in outline. For social historians this turnabout meant that instead of the history of industrial society, they cultivated the history of companies, and as far as business and entrepreneurial history went, it was occasionally low-grade stuff.

So it was that, for example, it was rare to find studies on the auto industry that still concerned themselves with the history of working conditions and class relations in production, and what few there were generally originated from the same authors. There was no new blood. It is also worth noting that all these studies first appeared in print after 1988, at the same time as a certain anti-FIAT sentiment was beginning to make itself felt among public opinion.

One exception was the important study by Stefano Musso on wages policies at FIAT before and after the Great Crisis, which first appeared in *Classe* (December 1982).

Musso sets out to deal with the same questions that Castronovo, Sapelli and

Bigazzi had already discussed (see above): "Was there a 'Fordist phase' in FIAT's wages policies during Fascism?" He examines, on the one hand, the organisational debate on the Taylorisation of small enterprises, and on the other hand he establishes certain difficulties with the wage statistics; his thesis is that Taylor's system was, in the Italian case, tested more in the smaller supplier industries rather than in the big auto manufacturers. In opposition to Bigazzi, he interprets the introduction of the Bedaux system in FIAT in 1927 as merely the intensification of individual work outputs, and not designed to promote a reorganisation of the productive apparatus. From there he poses the wages question historically, in the following manner: In Italy, up until about 1920, there was no wage scale system by which wage levels could be accurately related to levels of qualification among the workforce. The wage scale system under Fascism, in other words from 1929 to 1939, had only prescribed the level of minimum wages; wage scales related to qualification levels and job specifications were very vaguely defined. Thus the data failed to establish the real wages, for example under piecework working, and to evaluate the knowledge with a view to a comparative study. The only source was the wage scale books (*libri matricola* - the one for the FIAT-Lingotto works was destroyed during the War). On the basis of certain data - what was published by the employers themselves, what was available in publications of the city administration, and an Inquiry by the ministry of labour in 1925, Musso believes that he can argue that wages at FIAT were 30 per cent higher than in other sectors, namely before and after the introduction of the Bedaux system; nevertheless, neither in 1914, nor in 1925, nor in 1948 were these wages sufficient to guarantee a minimum standard of living for a five-person working-class family. Only highly skilled workers, or unskilled workers putting in a lot of overtime, could hope to reach that minimum.

In order to corroborate his thesis that there was no Italian Fordism, Musso leans heavily on an interview that Giovanni Agnelli gave to the United Press agency in June 1932, in which he described Fordism as a social philosophy that was only suitable for the United States, and where he added that the higher wages were unthinkable in Italy because of the limited market existing within Europe.

The communist emigr**e* press of the period took these assertions as pure 'demagogy', and Musso attaches perhaps too much significance to them. However I agree with his conclusion, that FIAT never set their sights on a wages policy that would presuppose the creation of an internal consumption market. In the Fascist period, as far as the prevailing business philosophy was concerned, the working class was not seen as potential buyers of cars. The same number of *Classe* had a further article dealing with the problematic of the cycle of vehicle production: Carlo Carotti, *Sistema Bedaux e sindacato fascista alla Pirelli* ("The Bedaux system and the fascist union at Pirelli").

18] A typical product of Italian historiography of the 1980s was the biography of Vittorio Valletta, the general manager of FIAT. [Note 65]

Vittorio Valletta presents a unique case in the history of European motor industry

managements, because he succeeded in maintaining his position of power in an unbroken continuity from 1929 to 1964. He embodied the history of the firm far better than the members of the Agnelli family - in fact he was more or less the embodiment of the company's philosophy. He came to be known simply as *l'Ingegnere*. Unlike Castronovo, Sapelli and Bigazzi, Piero Bairati (who was commissioned by FIAT to write this biography) had the opportunity to use the records of board meetings, the company correspondence from 1943 to 1967 (the correspondence prior to 1943 was destroyed by bombing during the War), the archives of the American Multic company, which had had business dealings with FIAT, and various individual personal archives, such as the Jona archive in the Luigi Einaudi Foundation. However, Valletta's personality, which was of considerable historical significance, was rather devalued by Bairati's style of "palace history writing". The reader who is looking for a history of "technology from above" will be disappointed. Instead of a reconstruction of the system of personnel management, he gives us an unproblematised and adulatory life history of the man.

However, some passages of this book deserve closer examination, and may be of particular interest for German readers. Bairati writes: "In the reconstruction of Valletta's role during the War, I have found the documents of the "German bureau" within the FIAT archive to be of extraordinary importance." The head of this bureau was the then director of FIAT-Germany, Piero Bonelli.

These documents were evaluated by Bairati particularly in the chapter *La tattica del camaleonte* ("The tactic of the chameleon"), where he follows Valletta's activities from the Badoglio armistice (8 September 1943) through to the end of the War. He advances the thesis that Valletta was able to use cleverly planned obstructions in order to hinder the German occupation troops from transporting FIAT plant to Germany, and was able to place FIAT's armaments production under the direct control of the Reich Minister of the Economy. According to him, Valletta was playing a clever double game, which almost led to his being imprisoned by the German occupation troops; he maintained good relations with the representative authorities of Mussolini's Salò Republic and the German occupation authorities, and at the same time he maintained contacts with the American secret services and also with anti-fascist and partisan groups. The reconstruction of one particular episode from 1944 is very informative for Bairati's approach in describing the incident: the German military authorities were wishing to transfer Shop 17 of the Mirafiori works, the section where aircraft parts were manufactured. On 19 June 1944 the whole factory was paralysed by a strike, and on 21 June the Prefect of Turin ordered the factory to be closed. On 26 June, while the factory was still empty on account of the lockout, as Bairati writes, "the Allied air forces, with unbelievable accuracy, bombed, precisely, Shop 17".

From the way in which the episode is described, the reader might conclude the following: a) the organisation of the strike was known to the factory management and perhaps they even had a hand in it (this would presuppose a direct link existing between the plant management and the illegal strike committee - but Bairati says

nothing about this); b) the strategic leadership of the Anglo-American air forces was informed that there was a danger of Shop 17 being trans-shipped, and that they were informed of the location of that shop and were told that on such-and-such a day they could bomb it without any danger to the workers - on this Bairati says nothing. He gives no explanation; he leaves history to float in the sky, and leaves the reader to his own fantasies and conjectures. and On the question of "which non-communist partisan groups did Valletta have contact with", he offers no answer. He states simply that he had come across a list of resistance groups which had received financial support from FIAT. No more than that. In order to build the picture of Valletta as a saviour of men and machines, Bairati faithfully records all the instances in which the Ingegnere intervened with the German military authorities to argue for the release of imprisoned FIAT workers. However there is one fact which cannot conceal - namely that the head of the internal factory security force, and Valletta's right-hand man, was an ex-secret agent of Mussolini who had shared responsibility for the murder, in 1937 on French soil, of the Rosselli brothers, two antifascist intellectuals who were leaders of the emigr*e group Giustizia e Libert*a.

At the end of the War, despite his patriotic services rendered and his donations to the resistance movement, the "chameleon" was sentenced to death by communist partisans. Valletta escaped execution by a hair's breadth. He was provided with a hiding place by the partisans of the (socialist) Matteotti group. On the authority of the Liberation Front, he was removed from office, and a commissar was installed, although only for a period of a few months. As a result of the reconciliation policies of the PCI leadership, which had been a member of the Badoglio coalition for the period of the liberation war in the Italian territory that was under the administration of the German military authorities, Valletta was able to return to his post as general manager of FIAT.

Bairati does not address the historical question of the kind of debate that took place on this, within the communist movement and the political leadership of the Liberation Front, or the question of how meaningful was the idea of punishing Valletta for his political responsibilities under Fascism. As a result, the questions that were thrown open by Liliana Lanzardo's book (see above) are left unanswered.

Giulio Sapelli, the president of the Institute for Advancement of Business History, attacked Bairati's work with unaccustomed vehemence. In his opinion it is an example of how business history should not be written. [Note 66]

19) The first volume of Duccio Bigazzi's monograph on the history of the Alfa Romeo car company appeared in 1988. [Note 67]

This study should have been a useful source for an inquiry into the Taylorisation of the company and the changes in the skill and grading structure of the workforce, but even though the author was to analyse a section of the company's archives and had access to the minutes of most of their board meetings, he limited himself strictly to general aspects of the history of the company. The first volume describes the year

of the company's foundation, the major changes in class composition during the First World War, the turbulent post-War years up to the victory of the Fascist Party, the insuperable crisis that the company went through until the first intervention by state capital (in 1926, the year of Mussolini's emergency regulations and the suspension of political pluralism). In contrast to Bigazzi's first essay on FIAT, which had been an example for the history of the mass worker, this second study dealt in exemplary fashion with the history of the worker aristocracy. In fact it is not possible to draw a clear dividing line between these two conceptions. Alfa Romeo was founded by a French businessman in 1906, and a few years later transferred into Italian hands. The Alfa Romeo workers were known for their degree of professionalism. Famed as "magic mechanics", they built for themselves a closed group that was distinguished by a pride in its work. Bigazzi does not allow himself to be influenced by this legend, and criticises the notion, taken over from traditional historiography, of the "work ethic". He agrees with David Montgomery that these groups of highly qualified workers, whose hardcore consisted of tool preparation workers and maintenance workers (*attrezzisti*), had a sense of being bound by an ethical code of solidarity. [Note 68]

Bigazzi's work does not only go into the "Taylorist problematic"; the reactions of people to the new methods of evaluating labour output, to the introduction of new technology etc, are only one theme of his inquiry. A second important theme is the analysis of the relations between the factory and the surrounding industrial network that was dependent on Alfa, which consisted largely of supplier firms. The final location for the Alfa factory (abbreviation of *Anonima Lombarda Fabbrica Automobili*, which first got the name Alfa Romeo in 1913) was sought in an area on the outskirts of Milan where there was as yet no industry settled, and which was a long way from the districts where proletarians lived and from other industrial sectors. The factory was clean and well-lit: it was seen as the height of modernity. Within a short time a lot of other small companies had moved into the same area, companies which functioned as subcontractors for Alfa. There was a brisk exchange of labour between these companies and Alfa, which had a high turnover rate.

When we compare this situation with the situation at the Ford plants in Detroit, we see that despite big differences of size and the level of organisation, their personnel policies were essentially the same. [Note 69] In 1913, fate took the two companies down separate paths: Alfa had to confront a big market crisis, because its sports and luxury models were not finding buyers. Ford, on the other hand, went down the path of the cheap standardised model. Nineteen-thirteen was the year of the first big trade union discussions in both companies. The Alfa workers plumped mainly for the syndicalist-revolutionary organisations, and thereby constructed a "turbulent enclave" in the otherwise markedly reformist labour movement in Milan. The craftworker ethic goes hand in hand with a strong class consciousness, which reached out into the hinterland of the smaller companies and workshops in the auto-producing sector. A solidarity began to build up in the auto sector at the time when the first rationalisation policies were being put into effect. The texture of relations between "Il Portello" (the main Alfa works), the supplier firms and the other auto

sector companies and workshops (in those days Milan was a more important auto city than Turin) shows a community of militant workers which was held together by more than just a shared place of work. The strategy of uprooting - in other words, the decision to locate the factory a long way from where the workers lived - was to backfire. The syndicalist-revolutionary trade union groups answered such a model of organisation more successfully than the reformist unions. Seen in historical terms, for the Italian working class they constituted the transition from "shop unionism" to "industrial unionism". This was also the meaning of the emergence of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the USA. This form of organisation, which went beyond the limits of individual firms, and which existed outside the neighbourhood solidarity of the proletarian districts, was to reappear repeatedly in the history of the Italian labour movement. It was a characteristic of the factory council movement in the 1970s.

20] The history of the "Portello" Alfa Romeo works in Milan reminds us that Milan was the first capital of Italian vehicle production, before Turin took the lead. But Milan still remained an important centre of the production cycle after FIAT began to grow larger and consolidated its domination of the domestic market. After the Second World War, through to the 1970s, there were still three independent motor manufacturers producing in Milan - Autobianchi, Innocenti and Alfa Romeo - and a number of medium-to-large component companies, such as Pirelli, Magneti Marelli and Borletti. Many of these firms have now been incorporated into the FIAT empire; only Pirelli has maintained an entirely separate identity.

In the 1960s, Alfa Romeo built another bigger factory in Arese, a few miles north of Milan. This plant gradually took over production from the old "Portello" works and set up new production lines. Trade union organisation at Alfa Romeo never suffered the catastrophic defeats that occurred with such regularity at FIAT. This difference was established principally in the phase 1979-82, when the factory council organisation at Alfa Romeo had to overcome the great crisis. [Note 73] Several factors contributed to this. Alfa Romeo belonged to the state concern I.R.I., in which industrial relations had generally been conducted on a rather cooperative basis between the unions and plant management. The Milan engineering group of the Christian union federation CISL took the course of supporting the workers' resistance to the various restructuring attempts at Alfa Romeo, and entered into open conflict with the other engineering unions and with its own federation, which by the end of 1989 had decided to send a commissar in, to restore control. This group of militant trade unions had great support from the Milanese labour tribunal, which often ended with sacked workers and unpopular factory councils being reinstated. The court judgements of this small group of courageous labour judges - who were heavily criticised and attacked both by the employers and by the trade unions - were a unique thing in the gloomy panorama of Italian justice.

In the mid-1980s, under the prime ministership of Bettino Craxi, the state sold the Alfa Romeo works to FIAT, at a ridiculously low price. Their hope that FIAT-style despotism would be able to restore order at Alfa Romeo was not to be fulfilled.

On the contrary, it was out of the Arese Alfa Romeo works that the spark came that led to the "FIAT scandal". A technician, the chairman of the Communist Party cell in Alfa Romeo, complained that the factory management had discriminated against him on account of his political affiliation. The communist press started a campaign protesting at the violation of the civil rights of FIAT workers. This campaign was directly supported by the press organs of the De Benedetti group (in particular by Italy's largest daily newspaper, *La Repubblica*). We discovered with a certain surprise that FIAT's despotic style of management was also unpopular with public opinion. [Note 74] Some circles among the employers - for example the Benedetti and Gardini groups- seized on this opportunity as a way to set limits to the power and influence of the FIAT group. The government was forced to intervene, and the Ministry of Labour sent in its inspectors. They established that certain violatory practices were widespread. For the workers this was an opportunity to give vent to their longsuppressed anger against a tyrannical company management. They streamed in to see the inspectors and to place their evidence on record. FIAT's reputation was seriously shaken. The outcome was that a criminal judge found that there were serious violations of rights on the part of FIAT's company doctors, and he took a decision to issue summonses against the chairman of the FIAT board, Cesare Romiti, and FIAT's two personnel managers. In addition, for the first time in nine years FIAT workers went on strike again. [Note 75] This turning point, which can be characterised as political rather than merely "atmospheric", coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the "Hot Autumn". Testimonies and reflections on the events of the Hot Autumn were published. One example of this material is Gabriele Polo's volume *I Tamburi della FIAT* ("The drums of FIAT", Turin, 1989), a collection of the personal experiences of eleven FIAT workers. There was also the special edition of the daily newspaper *Il Manifesto*, on the *Autunno Caldo* (12 December 1989). These recollections also provided an opportunity to recall the bombing of the National Agricultural Bank in Milan on 12 December 1969, in which twelve people were killed.

The most significant publication of this period was Marco Revelli's book, *Lavorare in FIAT* ("Working for FIAT"), which appeared in a large paperback edition published by a well-known Milan-based publishing house, Garzanti. This book, of only 139 pages, describes graphically the most important phases of the class conflict at FIAT. Revelli skilfully combines technical data, economic background material and personal interviews with FIAT workers. He offers no fresh historical insights, but the book is indispensable for an account of the history of the working class. Another important work appeared at about the same time: Liliana Lanzardo, who eighteen years previously had written an important contribution to the history of the Turin working class (see above), edited a volume entitled *Cattolici e comunisti alla FIAT* ("Catholics and communists at FIAT" - a series of personal accounts of active militants, which is valuable for making available a wealth of new details on the period between the 1920s and the 1960s.

Postscript: Red Notes Italian Archive

Over the years Red Notes has been amassing an Archive of materials relating to the revolutionary Left movement in Italy. This Archive is available for public consultation, and is in the process of being deposited with the British Library of Political and Economic Science (BLPES), 10 Portugal Street, London WC2A 2HD. Tel: 071 405 7686.

We have a number of translated articles which are relevant to the areas covered by Bologna in the above article. In principle we can provide photocopies of them for interested parties. These include:

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| S. Bologna: | <i>Class Composition and Theory of the Party at the Origins of the Workers' Council Movement</i> |
| F. Gambino: | <i>Workers' Struggles and the Development of Ford in Britain</i> |
| M. Revelli: | <i>Working for FIAT - The Defeat of 1980</i> |
| Red Notes: | <i>The Book of FIAT</i> |
| R. Panzieri: | <i>The Capitalist Use of Machinery</i> |

Now harder to achieve

No Vietnam victory today.
They're celebrating
Afghan girls unlearning how to read.
The intifada, fewer friends today.
No free Angola
Everything more difficult today.

The simplest thing
now harder to achieve.

*

It's the triumph in the tv voices I shudder at
the arrogance of these little people
the cowardice of their privilege
bought by money,
in this land of money,
bought cheap.

One bright young thing
all dressed to kill
is mouthing off about how now
house music's big in Leningrad
(renamed).
She's sussed it all
her shades and stupid camera angles telling us
how up-to-date we are compared to them.

She takes the piss endlessly.
Easy to take the piss
out of bureaucrats and greyness and people who think that
tractor production matters more than record production.

She'll have spent a summer before college
on some fuckin, daft kibbutz,
so she'll know all about the world.
She'll think that famine's really bad
but there's not just one simple cause.
We British, young and bright,
Oh, we know all about the world.

And for the masters of these minions, more.
Markets, labour and resources to exploit.
And how.
The gates are open now.
The gates are open now.

*

I hate what they have done.
But more, much more,
I hate that we won't see what they have done.

*

Socialism's no 'idea'.

It's steelworks out of nothing.
Houses built,
Bread in mouths,
Children taught to write.
And all defended
time and time and again.

War they threw at it, as soon as it was born
to strangle it,
to kill a flame they couldn't chance would catch.
Tanks and terror hardly with a break
"We decimate and then we say it does not work",
but on it worked,
against embargoes, trade restrictions,

unpoetic things.
Unpoetic things
that count.

Now new leaders squabble over market shares and borders
that's how its going to be now.
The peoples who beat the Nazis side by side
are arguing amongst themselves
dividing up the land
for sale.
And as this all goes on before our eyes
before our tv-filtered eyes
just ask:
who wins from this
who loses?

No Vietnam victory today
They're celebrating
Afghan girls unlearning how to read.
the intifada, fewer friends today.
No free Angola
Everything more difficult today.

The simplest thing
now harder to achieve.

Colin Chalmers
August 1991

*The poem "Now harder to achieve"
is reprinted here as a result of a
number of errors in the version we
printed in Commonsense 11 being
brought to our attention*

Art, the Social Construction of the Self and the Classical tradition in Scotland.

Murdo Macdonald

Introduction

In 1990 George Wyllie anchored his Paper Boat in the shadow of the World Trade Centre in New York. (For an example of this event and other examples of Wullie's work referred to in this paper see the book *George Wyllie* published by the Third Eye centre in 1991). On board was a copy of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* which Wyllie publicised in New York to counter the common misinterpretation of the same author's *The Wealth of Nations*.

Wyllie was even reported in the Wall Street Journal and his work shows in no uncertain terms that an awareness of the history of ideas is alive and well among Scottish artists. Wyllie's other activities, for example, his delicately balanced Spires - constructed from and counterbalanced by materials appropriate to where they are located, each one defining its place from an ecological point of view - and the Straw Locomotive from 1987, which questioned not only the decline of heavy industry but also its social meaning, underline this point.

There are two main strands of ideas in relation to art that I'd like to offer as a starting point for consideration here: (i) the social construction of the self and (ii) classicism. What I'll do is to draw these two ideas together.

The Social Construction of Self

Back to Adam Smith. If we look at the *Self Portrait* by David Wilkie painted in 1813 (now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh) and remember that it's part of a culture in which the nature of the self was the key philosophical question, one can begin to see this image interacting with the history of ideas. It is often forgotten that David Hume and Adam Smith concerned themselves not only

with the nature of knowledge and economics but also with social psychological questions.



"Paper Boat" poster by George Wyllie, London 1989.

They pioneered for the modern period the ideas of the social construction of self which were advocated by the Chicago School of Sociology this century. This theory, as put forward by Charles Cooley and George Herbert Mead (and Cooley quotes Smith directly) explores the notion that an individual can only make sense of what she or he calls whole life. We all know the importance of the approval of others for how we feel about ourselves. Hume put it neatly when he said "the minds of men are mirrors to one another". That is to say you get immediate response to your actions in the expressions, gestures and behaviours of others and this has consequences for the way you feel and perceive yourself. The manifesto for the social construction of self was issued by Adam Smith in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* when he said,

"Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments or conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All these are objects which he cannot easily see, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can present them to his view. Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance or behaviour of those he lives with, which always mark when they enter into and when they disapprove of, his sentiments; and it is here that he first views the propriety and impropriety of his own passions, the beauty and deformity of his own mind."

(Adam Smith, *A Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part II, Chapter 1, para 3, Quoted by George Davie in *The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect*, p. 259).

This statement makes the advocacy by some politicians of the ideas of Adam Smith, while at the same time denying the importance of society, ironic to say the least. From the point of view of painting it's interesting to find Hume and Smith using analogies from visual perception for social processes. So one finds Smith drawing a strong analogy between the physical reflection of features in a mirror and the social reflection of self in the behaviour of others. This gives one an insight into the basic function of the mirror in traditional self-portraiture, namely to have a look at your self as though you were someone else - or, as Burns put it in *To a Louse*: "to see ourselves as others see us" - a social construction of one's own self, if you like. (It is no coincidence that Burns was well-read in Scottish philosophy, see, for example, his *Letter to James Tennant* in which he satirises the work of Adam Smith and Thomas Reid while at the same time expressing strong interest in it). But Wilkie takes this further and makes the social construction of the self utterly explicit in a work from a few years later, *The Letter of Introduction* (National Gallery of Scotland), in which his reality as a young artist is, for a time at least, almost totally defined by the reactions of another, older man.

Duncan Macmillan in *Painting in Scotland: The Golden Age* (1986) has pointed out that the picture relates both to Wilkie's own experience in London after the death of his father and is a more general commentary on social contrasts which relates it to a

poem by Robert Fergusson, who was a friend of the Wilkie family:

"The boy is fresh-faced and vigorous. He is ill at ease in his city clothes and does not know how to hold his hat and gloves. The dog can smell on him the unfamiliar scents of the country. The old man in contrast is decrepit. He is dressed in indoor clothes, slippers, dressing-gown and turban. There is neither door nor window visible in the picture, so his environment is seemingly cut off from the outside, . . . As a witness to his artificial taste . . . he has an exotic Japanese jar prominently displayed in the foreground, and in contrast to his visitor's obvious ingenuousness, he is suspicious and calculating. Perhaps where his visitor looks for kindness, he considers cash." (Macmillan, p. 165).

By painting two portraits, one more or less a self portrait, Wilkie makes this a picture which is both a mirror of his physical being and of his social being, simultaneously. At one and the same time he makes use of the physical mirror (portraying his own features) and also draws attention to the mental mirror, the social mirror, to which Hume refers when he says "the minds of men are mirrors to one another". Wilkie perceives his own one-time naivety through the hard-bitten cynicism of the older man. He sees his own inappropriateness to his present situation in the disapproving mirror of the face of another.

The general, but not particularly informative, art-historical term for a picture like this is a narrative picture, but this term seems to avoid the philosophical implications of the work, making it just a saleable object rather than a bearer of ideas. What I'm suggesting is that Wilkie is firmly situated in the Scots philosophical tradition and he can remind us of the importance of the social philosophy of this period. This view owes a great deal to the approach of Duncan Macmillan. His book *Painting in Scotland: The Golden Age* is recommended reading for anyone interested in the interpretation of art and Enlightenment ideas in Scotland, as is his later book *Scottish Art: 1460-1990*.

This consideration of Wilkie gives us insight into one of the essential strands of art and ideas in Scotland. What we can broadly call the social construction of the self, or the making and the unmaking of identity, has been a crucial concern of artists in Scotland. One can find it in contemporary installation work, not least the thoughtful *Self Conscious State* at the Third Eye centre in November 1991. The words of the title which can be seen from a variety of perspectives, most notably personal and political. They are as much a part of this show as anything else and they clearly convey the personal, social and political motivations of the artists involved.

But I want to return closer to Wilkie's time for the moment to look at one of the most interesting but under-rated of Scottish artists, William McTaggart (1835-1910). (A recent assessment of his work is *McTaggart* by Lindsay Errington, published by the National Galleries of Scotland). A critical aspect of self, or identity, is memory and in particular childhood memory both conscious and unconscious. This is where McTaggart makes his contribution. Virtually all his pictures are concerned, one way

or another, with children, or with childhood memories, although I don't think he would have distinguished these two factors. Typical is *Fishing in a Ground Swell* in Aberdeen Art Gallery. For years McTaggart has been criticised as being sentimental and Victorian and people have been saying how his pictures would be fine if he missed the children out. But that completely misses the point and tries to force McTaggart into an Impressionist straightjacket which is not relevant to him.

McTaggart came from a family of fishers and crofters in Kintyre, and when he paints a work like this I find it hard to believe that he is painting anything other than the experiences of his own childhood, seen through the experiences of other children. His paintings have what Adam Smith called sympathy, what we would today call empathy, that is to say they exhibit a total involvement of the self of the painter with the humanity of the subject.

This sympathy reaches a point of absolute clarity in McTaggart's work in a series in which he draws directly on his own childhood memories at the point where they intersect with the systematic state-sponsored atrocity of the Clearances. It's interesting to note that McTaggart's *Emigrant Ship* series dates from the 1890s, the same decade that Alexander Mackenzie published his history of the clearances, both men responding in different media to the same history, one might almost say creating the same history, making sure that the information survived.

It should also be noted that this picture contains some of the most radical artistic experimentation of the last century. As I've said in these works McTaggart is drawing on memories of the forced depopulation of the Highlands when he was a child. If one needed independent evidence of this use of childhood memory, one needs only to note that the type of ship he painted in these pictures was of the time of his childhood, and that McTaggart, brought up as he was with the sea, would not have painted this by mistake. (See Lindsay Errington's book on this point).

But in terms of the present argument about art and ideas one must stress not only the way his work relates to his own childhood self, but also the inherently social nature of the work. Because of the popularity of impressionism this century, McTaggart has often been seen as someone who would have liked to be an Impressionist but didn't quite make it. This is just rubbish.

What interested McTaggart were not just the quasi-scientific effects of light so beloved of Monet, but the conveying of the nature of a real place, with real people and real history. *The Emigrant Ship* series far from being impressionism is one of the most inventive pieces of social realism ever painted. If the series has any continental European counterparts it is with van Gogh's *Potato Eaters* but it is a much more sophisticated work, rooted in the experience and identity of the artist. Thus what McTaggart is doing demands to be understood in terms of the social philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment, not in terms of the contemporary developments in France.

And yet, perhaps we shouldn't reject links with Impressionism too fast. Recently Duncan Macmillan has pointed out that there is a real case to be made linking the perceptual theories of Thomas Reid, which stressed the direct nature of perception and saw the painter's task as recording what was optically present rather than imposing moral or whatever ideas on the image, and the development of Impressionism in France. Consider, for example, Raeburn's wonderful portrait of the philosopher Thomas Reid which hangs in Fyvie Castle.

This straightforward image seems quite ordinary today but the more you think about it the more you realise that works like this by Raeburn (1756-1823) were among the first very directly painted images (if you are looking for a precursor to Raeburn you find Allan Ramsay (1713-1784, extending the tradition of Vermeer), and they seem to link easily with the style of French innovators such as Eduard Manet (1832-83).

This may seem far fetched and an example of the tempting intellectual malpractice of arguing that everything started in Scotland. But, as George Davie has pointed out, the first history of the Scottish Enlightenment (it is still the most comprehensive) was written by Victor Cousin, the French Minister of Education in the early nineteenth century. In addition Cousin had Reid's works produced in cheap editions for use in French schools. So the proposed influence of Reid's notions of direct perception on Manet are not far fetched at all.

Which brings us back to McTaggart. I've suggested on the one hand that McTaggart's work was, like Wilkie's, rooted in the social philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment. On the other hand, we see him using paint in a very direct way, similar to Impressionism but independent from it. If we see both McTaggart and Impressionism as owing a great deal to Reid's theories of perception we can see that the similarities make sense without having to suggest influences of Monet on McTaggart or vice versa.

This begins to give one a real insight into why a Scottish city, Edinburgh, became known as "the Athens of the North". This was only to do with neoclassical architecture in so far as this was an outward expression of a more fundamental cultural reality. It had a lot more to do with the passion for philosophy among the Scots at that time. The architecture thus becomes possible through the ideas. It is both an expression of these ideas and a symbol of the classical commitment to an everyday intellectualism which penetrated society.

The Classical Tradition

The classical tradition, which is again so much a part of Scotland's art and ideas, is at least two edged, mixing a passion for ideas throughout society on the one hand (what George Davie has called a democratic intellectualism), with rigidities of utopianism, social control and state terror. No one has explored this ambiguity better than a Scots artist of today, Ian Hamilton Finlay, for example in a work which includes an image of a frigate and the phrase "For the Temples of the Greeks our Homesickness

Lasts Forever". This work juxtaposes the piety of war and the peity of a religious space, suggesting an uneasy and threatening permeability between these two notions, all in the context of our own cultural history. The resonance with the conflicts of religious principle so characteristic of pre- and post- Enlightenment Scotland is immediate. On a more general level we find an expression of ambiguity of the human condition, a striving for perfection accompanied by the disasterous rigidity which regularly accompanies such perfectionism.



Hume's Mausoleum and the Monument to the political martyrs, Edinburgh.

Edinburgh itself sometimes strikes one as a giant Ian Hamilton Finlay, the double-edged nature of classicism rearing its well-proportioned head everywhere. This double-edged quality can lead one to explore an enduring idea of Scots identity, namely that it is somehow double, on both an individual and a national level. In its individual form Stevenson's Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is an expression of this, in its national form Stevenson again provides a prototype in the form of the bond between David Balfour and Alan Breck, or, to put it another way, the goodie-goodie presbyterian who ends up at mounting the steps of the British Linen Bank and the celtic, potentially drunken warrior, who "escapes" in more ways than one.

The notion of duality is normally, if explored at all, left at some sort of beast-in - man level: the contents of a Freudian Id forever threatening to bubble over and upset the reality negotiations of the ego and conventional constraints of the super-ego. This is of course relevant (and one should not forget here the direct links between the thinking of William Robertson Smith, Sir James Frazer and Freud - or for that matter

the general congeniality of psycho-analytic and related thinking to Scots from Hugh Crichton Miller through Ronald Fairbairn to R. D. Laing) but one should also note that what is on offer within this idea can be seen as epitomising democratic intellectualism as much as psychoanalysis. A key notion of democratic intellectualism is that one area of thinking, or thinker, can illuminate the blindspots within another, and vice versa. Duality is its minimum form.

The deep engagement in Scotland with the classical can perhaps illuminate this duality further: the presbyterian notion can be seen as *utopian* and the celtic notion as *arcadian*. A fine Edinburgh synthesis of these two ideas is Burn's monument on Calton Hill. A utopian monument to and arcadian temperament. In Finlay's terms perhaps our real homesickness is for this dual nature of classicism, but what is important is to see this duality as positive not negative. The dialogue between David Balfour and Alan Breck, or between utopia and arcadia is a genuine and continuing dialogue; it is not something to get rid of. A nation should not be homogenous any more than an individual should be.

On the one hand we have utopian notions of order as, for example, explored by Thomas Markus in his brilliant book on Enlightenment architecture *Order in Space and Society*, or as in the concretised epistemology of Robert Adam's design for Register House in Edinburgh, or as enforced in the show trial of the radical lawyer Thomas Muir in 1793, an event commemorated by the obelisk which dominates Old Calton cemetery. On the other hand we have the arcadian, republican vision of Burns who responded to that trial by writing "Robert Bruce's March to Bannockburn". "Scots, wha hae", as it is better known, is often seen as some sort of sentimental, romantic nationalism which owes more to Burn's imagination than to his own experience, but when one recognises it as an immediate response to a political trial it has a rather different resonance.

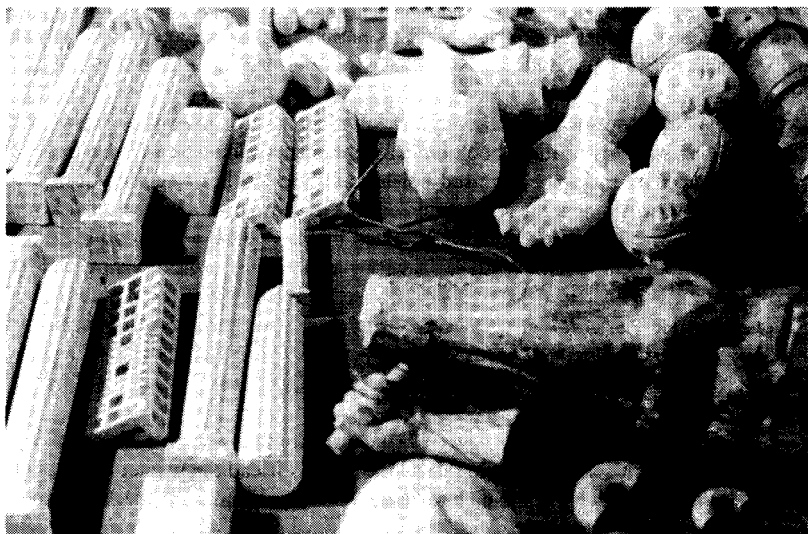
In art we have Burn's arcadian vision developed by his friend the painter and architect Alexander Nasmyth, who in his pictures transformed perception of the landscape of Scotland according to the principles of the French seventeenth-century painter, Claude Lorrain, and his architecture (e.g. St Bernard's Well by the Water of Leith in Edinburgh) transformed the actual landscape.

It is worth remembering here that the image of Burns as the ploughman poet is as acceptable from a classical (i.e. Virgilian) perspective as it is from a working class one. Thus in Burns one finds a genuine meeting point of the history of ideas in Scotland, that is to say a meeting point of classical and working-class perspectives. The fact that he was well read in the classics and in the philosophers of his own day makes clear that George Davie's notion of democratic intellectualism is no myth.

To return to Calton Hill: it's still a key meeting point for art and ideas in Edinburgh. For example, in 1987 Kate Whiteford made a work called *Echo* behind the National Monument. She linked this notion deriving from classical myth with celtic symbols, a spiral and the salmon of wisdom, and these were positioned in front of the

monument. (A wonderful aerial photograph of the whole installation can be found in Patricia Macdonald's book *Shadow of Heaven*; indeed the book itself is an exploration of art and ideas).

At the foot of Calton Hill and really bringing us back full circle to the social construction of self, but firmly situated within the classical tradition is Eduardo Paolozzi's *Manuscript of Monte Cassino*. The installation of this sculptural group in Picardy Place in 1991 was an event of some significance. A giant hand and a foot to match seem to represent the cutting edge of the mind and the balance point of the body respectively. The massiveness of each piece complements the sensitivity of Paolozzi's conception, and the whole work links the artist firmly to the city of his childhood and youth while at the same time reminding that city of its long-standing but often-observed tradition of the creative interaction of art and ideas.



Fragments assembled by Eduardo Paolozzi.

From the mid-1950s onward Paolozzi has developed and explored ideas of cultural and physical fragmentation and synthesis. The theme of Hephaestus, explored from the late-1980s onwards has a particular relevance to the Picardy Place Sculpture. Paolozzi sees in Hephaestus, the crippled artificer of the Greek pantheon who is nevertheless an Olympian god, a metaphor for a human condition, Hephaestus works at the forge and creates the expressions of his own imagination, but rather than freeing him these creations are part of the working out of his own fate; he is bound to them and technology and art become at once a boon and an addiction. But the key to the Hephaestus sculptures is that they are also self portraits. Each, in head, hands and feet, bears a close relationship with Paolozzi himself.

In *Ms. of Monte Cassino* there is not much left of Hephaestus but what is left is the point: a hand open to the sky and nature, a foot placed solidly on the ground, ready to support something. The text of the poem itself appears around the bases of the pieces and, as it reflects on the pastoral beauty of Monte Cassino for the tired traveller, it becomes a counterpoint to the wartime destruction of this Italian monastery, just as the solidity of the sculpture itself implies continuity as well as fragmentation.

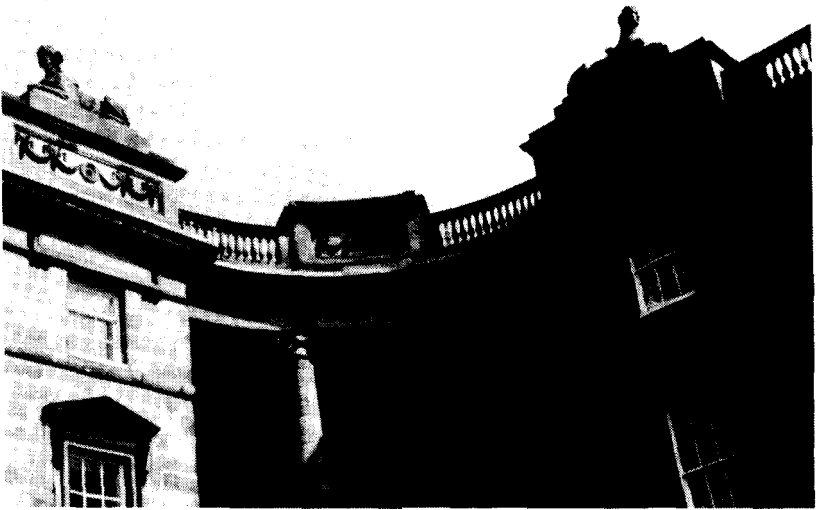
This conjunction between classical reference and self-portraiture can also be seen in the work of a much younger Scottish artist, Calum Colvin. Colvin is an acute and humorous analyst of his own personal and cultural identity. In large cibachrome images of constructed and painted spaces littered with carefully contrived illusionistic devices he shows an impressive understanding of the psychological possibilities of visual ambiguity. For example, in a work which gave the title to his recent Fruitmarket Gallery exhibition, *Brief Encounter*, a model of the Venus de Milo flips in and out of awareness as one sees it either in its own right or as part of a painted parody of a sculpture (by Lord Leighton) of a hero wrestling with a snake.

Colvin's language of images is culled from sources as diverse as the story of the Minotaur and the comic-strip morals of Oor Wullie, but central to his work is a sort of mock-heroic, self-portrait figure of an Action Man clad only in a kilt. This figure acts as a counterpoint to the art-historical and literary references around it and becomes a focus for questioning the thin ideology of machismo.

At the same time this sparsely-dressed figure is a kind of lament for the impoverished nature of a Scots cultural identity at present, which denies its international historical validity by depending on tartan kitsch on the one hand and on the other on a succession of fragmentary "renaissances" which take the place of a properly recorded and taught history. Colvin creates work which is quintessentially Scottish both in its humour and in its concern for philosophical ideas. In one work - in which the mock-heroic, kilted Action Man struggles with bagpipes as real as any genuine souvenir - an epigraph from Oor Wullie becomes an ironic and resonant motto for the Scottish present: "Just when it seem disaster looms / up come Wullie's quick-grow blooms." A useful reminder of the fact that Scotland has had at least three quick-grow-bloom "renaissances" this century alone, but that what is needed is a properly supported and continuous cultural dialogue controlled from within Scotland rather than dependent on intermittent rediscovery from South of the Border.

Conclusion

I want to end here where I began, namely with George Wyllie. For the *Scotland On Sunday* magazine, Wyllie made a very simple self portrait that is a genuine social construction of the self and which illustrates the interaction of art and ideas in Scotland. This cartoon figure in a welding mask makes out of steel a question mark. If ever there was a representative image of democratic intellectualism it is this.



Sphinxes: Parliament Square, Edinburgh,

To counterpoint this I want to refer to an image in which the ambiguities of the classical tradition are again laid bare, in all their clarity and complexity. This is Ian Hamilton Finlay's *Sphinx* from *A Wartime Garden*. In the end this image of an aircraft carrier with its metal feathers rippling in the wind may elude description except as a riddle of the human condition which resonates with its Theban model, but here it can be a symbol of the continuing interpretation of art and ideas in Scotland.

Book Reviews

Danny Burns

The Poll Tax Rebellion

AK Press, Edinburgh 1991

208 pages

ISBN 1 873176 50 3 £4.95

*Reviewed by Bob Goupillot,
whose still not paying!*

"It is not a tale of the heroic deeds of hardened political activists, for compared to the action of ordinary people these pale into insignificance" (Danny Burns, January 1992)

Given the defeats suffered during the eighties how were working class people to organise to defeat the poll tax? *Poll Tax Rebellion* by Danny Burns tells how it was done, who did it and just as crucially who actively undermined resistance. In doing so it reveals in concrete terms the role played by the Labour and Trade Union leadership in sabotaging resistance to the poll tax.

A RICH MAN'S TAX

The introduction of the poll tax followed on from a campaign within the Tory party against the domestic rates, (particularly loudly after re-rating in Scotland) and the business rates. Many companies instituted their own non-payment campaign. Arrears of business rates and other company taxes are still far

higher in total than poll tax arrears. (This is never mentioned in the media or by any of the parliamentary parties) The Poll Tax simply switched the tax burden from rich to poor. Further, the Poll Tax needs to be understood in the context of other government measures and how they dovetail into an overall 'strategy'. This refers particularly to cheap labour schemes (Employment Training (E.T.), compulsory Y.T.S.), compulsory privatisation of local authority services by enforced 'competitive' tendering, union bashing, attacks on claimants and the centralisation of power.

The governments plan went something like this. The poll tax was geared to rise disproportionately year by year. A high poll tax will be electorally unpopular and put pressure on local government to reduce the costs of services by putting them out to tender. These services are usually labour intensive so the organisation with the lowest labour costs will tend to win the contract. E.T. trainees are paid the dole plus £10 by the state. Private cleaning companies for example taking on E.T. trainees will have a minimal wage bill and will provide the minimum in holidays, no pensions, cut back on health and safety measures etc.. Unionised Direct Labour Organisations, for example, will be unable to compete. Fly - by - night, non unionised firms will win the lion's share of contracts.

These contracts last a few years at most. E.T. contracts last a maximum of a year. In case of any dissent from their workforce these companies can clear them all out in less than a year (in practice they can do it much quicker) with no legal comeback. It is almost

impossible for a workforce to get organised in these circumstances. This will leave Local Authorities with the job of dishing out contracts and no control over income. Revenue will be collected centrally through things like V.A.T. This has been the situation in Northern Ireland since direct rule was imposed. This is one of the reasons why the Poll Tax wasn't introduced into N. Ireland - it wasn't necessary! Incidentally, this also demonstrates just how wrong it was to characterise the anti-Poll Tax Campaign as involving a single issue.

Poll Tax Rebellion is a book of contrasts. It describes ineffective Committees of a Hundred who protested against the injustice of the "Community Charge" "problem" and were confident in their solution. - bleat (but not too loudly) pay and passively wait for a Labour victory. The book compares these to the hundreds of community and workplace anti - poll tax groups left facing the task of organising class resistance.

The people who led the local groups were mainly those ignored by the official Labour and Trade Union Movement or whose experience had made them cynical about such organisations. They tended to be women, parents with children or unemployed (or all three). They already had their backs to the wall and were painfully aware of the effects of any cuts in local services or household income on their families.

Crucially they were unfamiliar with the traditions of dodgy deals, shady compromises and official procedures (hence they were often characterised as being disruptive when they were simply being straight forward). They simply

wanted to win because defeat i.e. paying, was simply not a viable option.

Most anti - poll tax activists were angry but inexperienced. Many lessons old and new had to be learned.

"The important thing about the Anti - Poll Tax campaign, that made it different from all other campaigns, is that old thing of self activity. People stopped waiting around for the Labour Party and trade union leaders. They said 'Well we really don't know what to do, but we'll have a go' and they worked it out and they got organised." (P.196)

Initially many strategies were suggested from letters to the Queen (Citizens Against the Poll Tax), through token eleven minute stoppages (the S.T.U.C..) to absolute non compliance. The real debate was between empty protest and real resistance. The initial strategy supported by the vast majority of activists with real roots in the working class was summed up in the 3 D's

DON'T PAY!

DON'T COLLECT!

DON'T IMPLEMENT!

After further discussion and more practical experience a fourth D was added
DON'T REGISTER!

This strategy was based on the simple fact that lots of people, including the poorest and most vulnerable in our society simply couldn't afford to pay. These would form the bedrock of the anti - poll tax campaign.

Labour and Trade Union Leaders and many of their followers turned from token opposition to Tory policies to i



plementation of those policies. Many Labour councils didn't even inform their electors of legal methods of opposing the Poll Tax. They attacked the poor for their resistance to Tory rule and blamed Poll Tax non - payers for cuts in local services. This was a complete lie. So much for Kinnock's dented shield!

Attacks, by Labour councils, on non-payers totally disorientated those organisations e.g., the Militant Tendency and individuals who characterised the Labour Party as essentially a fighting working class organisation temporarily gone astray. The Militant Tendency would have preferred the resistance to have been led by Labour Party branches (their power base) and the Trade Union Leadership. Thus,

"Even though over 17 million people had refused to pay the tax, and 200,00 had demonstrated in March 1990, the All Britain Federation was prepared to negotiate with the T.U.C. about calling a joint demonstration which jettisoned the banner of non-payment" (p.196)

Militant thought that the cowardly leadership of the trade unions was more important than a mass movement of the poor and the principled. They sought to undermine anti - poll tax groups which were seriously critical of the Labour Party e.g... Prestonfield, Muirhouse, Broughton/Inverleith, Southside in Edinburgh. They rightly feared that local anti - poll tax groups would become a political/social alternative to the Labour Party Branch.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

The limits of Militant 's politics were revealed after the Trafalgar Square police riot on 31st May 1990. The anti -Poll Tax march began at about 1.30 . Around 3pm some 20 people sat down peacefully opposite Downing St. The police response was deliberately provocative.

"A man in a wheelchair was attacked and arrested by the police, separated from his wheelchair and thrown into a police van. A woman was arrested and in front of the crowd stripped of her clothes.....300 people sat down, and then the police

brought in the horses. Mounted riot police baton charged the crowd.....Young people, armed only with placards fought hand to hand with the police. Some demonstrators were battered down with truncheons, others had riot shields thrust into their faces." (p.89)

"I saw horses charge up the steps of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, where young children had been taken, supposedly out of harm's way. They made no attempt to disperse the crowd peacefully. They just came charging in."

Eleanor Mills "The Independent", 2.4.90. (p.92)

Faced with the brave anger of those who defended the crowd and a hysterical media cry for blood, leading Militant, Tommy Sheridan, stated,

"the majority of those who became embroiled in the running battles had nothing to do with our protest".

At a later meeting of Lothian Federation of Anti - Poll Tax Groups Mr. Sheridan again slandered the Trafalgar Square Defendants claiming that black women stewards had been spat at by demonstrators and that fire extinguishers had been dropped from buildings into babies prams. (without bouncing out?) to be found later by Militant stewards.

RULING CLASS FEARS

A key question is why was the London Demo deliberately attacked while the Glasgow demo on the same day was relatively unmolested? The police on several occasions tried to stop and divide up the Glasgow demo in an attempt to make it look smaller. When this

happened in one section women from Prestonfield and Broughton/Inverleith (two groups from Edinburgh) led by prams ,kids and Mary McInnes in a wheelchair went round and between lines of police horses. The police let this go without escalating the confrontation.

The authorities realised that, in Scotland, an enormous, well organised movement, led by people they had never heard of, had appeared (in their eyes) overnight. Large sections of this movement had no allegiance to and so could not be controlled by the traditional structures of the working class. i.e. Labour Party and the S.T.U.C.. Further, this movement was so obviously popular that any physical assault would be interpreted as an attack by an English Tory government on the Scottish people. Escalation was considered too risky a strategy. Such organisation could not be allowed to arise over the border to England and Wales where most potential non- payers lived or even worse link up with nationalist struggles in N. Ireland. It had to be divided, smashed and criminalised as quickly as possible. It had worked with the miners and the printworkers. Trafalgar Square was to be our Orgreave and Wapping rolled into one. but the government made a mistake.

ORGANISING FOR THE FUTURE

The politicisation of large numbers of activists was an extremely important. aspect of the whole campaign. Many women spoke about their home lives for the first time often revealing deep unhappiness and dissatisfaction with their situation. Their participation in the struggle against the Poll Tax and the support of friends they made often gave them the confidence to challenge and

change other parts of their lives.

"Myself I don't know what will happen after the Poll Tax. I just cannot see me returning to being just an ordinary housewife. I want to go to college in September, and I hope to take politics and sociology."

Chris Moyers, Mayfield A.P.T.U. 6.5.91 (P.201)

"We rotate the chair at every meeting. People take the chair now who would never dream of taking chairs of anything. That's the beauty of it. Its great. Its become a social education."

Linda Wright Prestonfield Community Resistance, 10.5.91

To get an amnesty for all non-payers and to get Britain's Poll Tax prisoners out of jail we need to understand the movements strengths that forced the government to abolish the tax and the weaknesses that have allowed the movement to collapse at its moment of victory.

"To engage people in a mass campaign, the Anti-Poll Tax Unions.....had to make people feel wanted and included and give everyone a sense that they had a role. In order to sustain a long and protracted struggle, it was necessary for as many people as possible to feel responsible for some aspect of the movement" (p.190)

"In this situation the most effective leadership ...means providing information and ideas so that people can make choices, and helping them to set up groups so that they can share experiences and provide each other with solidarity. (P.193)

"This leadership depends on trust, and trust is dependent on the personal and political integrity of leaders. It can only be maintained through openness in

decision-making and it is only possible where people are consulted so that they continue to feel involved in the process. When a group is seen to want 'control' it is not trusted. That is why Militant failed to gain the trust of the movement despite the hard work of many of its activists." (P.94)

The really heartening thing about the "Poll Tax Rebellion" is its powerful confirmation of the historical fact that left to their own resources working class people repeatedly create profoundly, democratic organisations which can be remarkably flexible and effective whether used for defending past gains or pressing forward new demands. It is through such organisations that we collectively shake off the muck of ages and learn as a class. This book contains lessons for us all.

Available from A.K. Distribution 3, Balmoral Place, Stirling, Scotland FK8 2RD Single copies £4.95, 5 or more copies £3.00 each; 20 or more £2.50 (Prices include postage and packing within the U.K.).

Ingrid Strobl

'Sag nie, du gehst den letzten Weg': Frauen im bewaffneten Widerstand gegen Faschismus und deutscher Besatzung

[*'Never say this is journey's end': Women in armed resistance against fascism and German occupation*].

Fischer series 'Die Frau in der Gesellschaft',
Frankfurt am Main 1989,
ISBN 3-596-24752-7, DM 16,80.

Reviewed by Werner Bonefeld

The book is in German and is not yet translated into English. The main body of the book is devoted to the stories of former female resisters.

In the ghettos of Eastern Europe, in occupied Netherlands, in Tito's partisan army, from Lyon to Biolystok, women fought against fascism. While some of their male colleagues have been celebrated as heroes these women sank into the darkness of history. Post-war reconstruction was characterised by anti-communism and an attempt to divest women of the freedoms 'granted' in wartime and to return them to their 'natural' domestic, biological and sexual role-subservience. Strobl contends that in this climate the fact of female armed resistance in wartime could not be acknowledged. No attempt therefore was made by contemporary archivists and historians - male and female - to record, analyse or publicise the experience of women resisters. Strobl, faced with an almost total absence of documentary

sources, sought to interview survivors. Here again she was hampered by official obfuscation and denial. Many of the resistance organisations refused to admit the involvement of women in armed insurrection. Strobl soon learned that no information meant suppressed information. With painstaking detective work she identified and interviewed survivors and was able to piece together a vivid account of their involvement in the armed resistance against fascism and German occupation. This book is the result.

Her interviewees speak about their motivation to take up arms and to join the resistance, the dangers involved in armed struggle, the nature of their missions and combats, the hardship they encountered, the difficulties involved in living and fighting alongside men and the constant danger of capture, torture and death. The stories of these women and the tasks they performed are horrendous. The women were young, mostly 16-18. They became resisters because they could see no alternative. They are certain that what they did was right, necessary and the only possible means of survival. They did not join as wives, sweethearts or lovers. They felt themselves challenged as women.

The book is moving and exciting. It is moving because it contradicts the common perspective of fascism as an irresistible apparatus of violence. It undermines the comforting idea that resistance was impossible and raises the question - why was resistance not more widespread? The book is exciting not as an adventure story but because of its lucid and detailed account of apparently naive motivations for practical resistance. 'What else could I have done? It was the

only thing one could do'. There was no adventure seeking. Rather it was a major watershed in these women's lives - a radical and final break with the roles and rules of womanhood. Everything was left behind. Existence, daily life and even thought became communal and everything became subordinate to discipline. Communal living with men imposed special strains on many. Menstruation posed horrific problems. Showing fatigue or emotional distress was taken to indicate the weakness of women as a gender. They had to be twice as good, twice as vigilant. Some were denounced as un-natural, whores and monsters. Their involvement in the armed struggle was sustained by motivation and conviction growing out of long standing political activism. Fascism was seen by most of the interviewees as a horrific culmination of a their experience of normality: poverty, exploitation, discrimination and violence.

Why has the history of armed female resistance been suppressed? Why are women denied their historical status as armed resisters? Strobl puts forward three reasons. The post-war attempt to reimpose gender-based role definitions could not accept women as armed resisters. Secondly, resistance came to be defined as a matter of national pride, in which there was no place for communist resistance. Finally, post-war reconstruction denied the existence of Jewish armed resistance. This was because of prevailing anti-semitism and society's collective inability to mourn as well as its collective suppression of historical guilt. Since those who had been slaughtered in their tens and thousands had not been the passive victim so much sought after by those

seeking to forget and to suppress their past, this fact had to be suppressed and denied. Strobl shows that armed female, communist and Jewish resistance was strong. Most of the women dealt with in the book were Jews or communists. In some cases they were both.

For Strobl there is a connection between the suppression of armed female resistance and that of Jewish resistance. Victims are touching. One can cry and suffer with them in their inescapable fate and, thereby, avoid the more fundamental questions about one's own lack of courage in similar circumstances. Acknowledgement of armed resistance challenges the cosy presupposition that survival whatever the cost must be the highest aim of one's existence. For women, their gender adds another reason for dismissing their history. The knowledge that women took up arms shakes the foundation of role definitions. If women were able and competent to confront the German army then women might even be able and competent to resist less dangerous enemies. The suppression of armed female resistance involves not just the denial of historical facts. It involves also a preemptive undermining of a practical critique of existing forms of oppression and exploitation. It is men's role to take up arms and it is the role of women to nurture new warriors. Official history made resistance a male affair. A woman's place is in the kitchen. Women who fought cannot be real women. They broke with their role as child bearers; that is they broke with the definition of womanhood: peaceful, weak, subordinate to men and natural. The latter involves a definition of women as givers and protectors of life; a role definition which,

Strobl believes, is impossible to reconcile with armed female resistance. The perversion of history is perceived by Strobl as a replay of the monster and whore theme, a theme which allows female involvement in resistance only insofar as the female participant was a monster or a whore. Official history denies the particular difficulties which women encountered and eradicates an experience of equality, substituting for it an imposition of natural gender differences.

Strobl also criticises, in particular, those feminists who insist on the dogma of the peaceful nature of women. In this view, fascism is seen as an expression of male domination and violence. There is no possibility of challenging nature and thus there was nothing to be done apart from bringing the family through. Such a view denies the role of female fighters in the struggle against fascism on the basis of a pre-formed concept of the peaceful nature of women. Only men, because of their aggressive instinct, could allow themselves the luxury of involvement in resistance. Strobl rejects such views as defamatory and as portraying women as completely apolitical. Her argument is to the effect that such a feminist view is not dissimilar to that of male historians who deny armed female resistance and, if it is reported, portray it as having been confined to 'feminine' tasks: logistics, preparation and organisation of food, organisations of networks and safe passages for refugees. This acceptance of 'natural' gender differences reinforces rather than challenges, existing role definitions. Such understanding fortifies the social-political status quo through an acceptance of the traditional role definition of 'womanhood'. But Strobl's interviewees give it the lie. These

women interviewed by Strobl were not only politically motivated and engaged in 'unfeminine' forms of aggression. They were motivated also by hate and revenge - 'male' characteristics which define men's chauvinist instinct for violence. Women who took up arms did so not only out of noble and honourable emotions. They hated and they sought revenge.

Strobl writes from a radical left and a radical feminist perspective. Her argument is uncompromising and critical in the best possible sense. Her presentation is fresh and challenging. She has made a timely and important contribution to the history of left political practice. Her motivation is political. She deliberately avoids glorifying armed female resistance, a glorification which would result in portraying those who did take up arms as heroines and, thereby, as martyrs. Such an exposition would be contrary to her political thinking and contrary to the characters of the women she presents in her book. They were not martyrs. Rather, they had the courage and the will to be human.

Strobl has written a courageous book on a courageous and denied, past. However, her political motivation is not just to unravel the past. The book is about the present: the radical and uncompromising desire for social emancipation. The history of a radical left political practice lives on. It does so, however, not as a merely contemplative knowledge of the past but, rather, as a source from which to take encouragement in a sober way. It takes courage to confront the political consequences of her work.

George Davie

The Scottish Enlightenment and Other Essays

Polygon, Edinburgh 1991, £5.95

ISBN 0-7486-6069-0

Reviewed by Richard Gunn

Does Scotland have a distinctive philosophical tradition? Is there a set of shared questions and approaches that marks it off from, say, the empiricism of Locke or Mill and the idealism of Hegel? George Davie replies to these questions with an emphatic "Yes", and for over three decades has backed up this answer with a series of articles and books - most notably *The Democratic Intellect* of 1961 and *The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect* of 1986 - in which the rich texture of Scottish thought is illumined from the standpoint of a single, bold, hypothesis. The hypothesis is to the effect that the Scottish 'common sense' philosophy which (for instance) Hume, Smith, Reid and Ferrier all took a hand in developing is not merely highly original and fertile, but supplies a guiding thread which can help unravel the complexities of Scottish culture up to, and including, the present day.

One strength of Davie's defence of this view is his refusal to restrict himself to philosophical commentary in the narrow sense. His approach, which in this sense mirrors and develops the 'generalism' of

his common sense heroes, addresses itself in the same breath to questions of educational policy, social organisation, epistemology and the relation between church and state. This sense of interconnections between areas of culture usually treated as discrete is especially vivid in the selection of essays which is here under review. 'The Scottish Enlightenment' surveys the interaction of philosophical and social ideas in a Scotland whose sense of its membership in the Union was always problematic, and which additionally had to cope with the arrival of 'commercial' society, in Adam Smith's sense. The story told in this essay takes us from the late seventeenth century (and the trauma of Aikenhead's execution for blasphemy in 1697) up to the days of Cockburn and Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh Review* in the nineteenth century's first half. Following upon this comes Davie's Dow Lecture at the University of Dundee in 1972, which develops a powerful critique of the view - one that he imputes to Christopher Smout's *A History of the Scottish People* - according to which the Scots provincialised and marginalised themselves by hanging on to their common sense traditions, and should instead have swum with the prevailing utilitarian and empiricist tide. Davie has no difficulty in demonstrating resonances between common sense philosophy, continental phenomenology and - see, on this, Part III of his *Crisis* volume - the philosophy of our own day. *The Scottish Enlightenment and Other Essays* is then rounded out with a discussion of two nineteenth-century theorists who in Davie's view enrich the common sense tradition by relating it to schools of thought which appear to have grown up independently of it. James

Ferrier, professor at St Andrews until his death in 1864, projected a synthesis of Scottish common sense and German idealism (in which connection we should note that Davie reconstructed Ferrier's philosophical reputation almost single-handedly); and Robertson Smith, a writer to whom Freud refers (and who celebrates the socially cohesive aspects of sacrifice in a manner anticipating Georges Bataille), linked common sense to the anthropological concerns of his late-Victorian times.

In what follows I should like to pursue just one strand within all of this, viz., the philosophical strand. Notwithstanding his generalism, Davie is far from appealing to unself-reflective or non-philosophical common sense as a sort of populist touchstone. Rather, philosophy is seen as the keystone in the archway of a generalist education and it is through the *interaction between* philosophical and extra-philosophical insights that generalism as such can be secured. As it were, philosophy is the needful relay-station for an interdisciplinary and specialist/generalist - that is, a common sensical - exchange of ideas.

When Davie discusses 'philosophy' what quite often is uppermost in his mind is a traditionally Scottish concern with the interrelation of the five senses, especially the senses of sight and touch. A host of passages in the present volume (pp 21-2, 74-8 are the most explicit references) take up this theme. The basic idea is that the sense of sight is 'holistic' and 'spectatorial' whereas the sense of touch is analytic and 'atomistic', and bound up with questions of 'detail'. At a distance - i.e. in situations where deployment of the sense of touch is impossible - we can (perhaps) take in matters *at a glance* whereas a blind man must needs compose his world as it were piece-by-piece, by touching things in turn. This asymmetry as between the senses of sight and touch is related, by Davie, to the standpoints of generalism and specialism respectively, so that the epistemological question of how we relate to one another the data supplied by sight and touch is *at the same time* the traditional question of common sense philosophy concerning the respective competences of untutored and expert understanding. For example



the "hands on" approach of specialist experimentation in the natural sciences stands in a closer relation to touch than does the detached observation of scientific development by the layperson, which relates more closely to sight. (If a scientist wishes to perform experiments on moon dust, for instance, someone has to go and bring some home.) Therefore when Ferrier, for example, in the 1840s, urges that 'the purely spectatorial sense of vision, far from being secondary to the more practical sense of touch, is actually on a level of equality with it' (Davie's summary, p 77), he is by implication addressing not merely epistemological but also social and educational themes: only an education premised on an interaction between expert and lay, and specialist and generalist, perspectives is able to mitigate the consequences of commercial society's social division of labour which, as Adam Smith saw, threatens to undermine our competence for political judgement *just by specialising us*. (Both the "alienated worker" and the "rarefied expert" are after all defined by their specialist social roles.) Our political competence is sustained not by an appeal from specialism to generalism, or vice versa, but by a capacity to interrelate the two, just as our epistemological competence is sustained by our capacity to interrelate sight and touch. Indeed there is more than an analogy here. In the view of Smith, Ferrier and Davie we are competent to make political judgements only if we are epistemologically competent, and we are epistemologically competent only if (as Smith and Robert Burns had it) we are able to 'see ourselves as others see us' in a politically and socially self-reflective way.

Clearly a reading of Davie's works places us in face to face relation with a major theoretical synthesis. The picture which he presents is one of philosophical questions pressing, insistently and often dramatically, into the field of social and educational and historical and indeed nationalistically-oriented debates. Davie, awkwardly for almost all orthodoxies, devotes himself to spotting philosophical difficulties just at the point where almost everyone else believed them to have been cleared up. The 'nightmare vision' which (p 76) he shares with Ferrier is that of a world caught up in outright instrumentalism and utilitarianism wherein, by means of eclipse rather than answer, all such difficulties are laid to rest.

This being so a certain temerity must attach to the raising of critical questions concerning Davie's work; and yet critical questions there are. *Does* the relation between generalism and specialism correspond, even approximately, to the relation between sight and touch? Experimentation for instance can be seen either as a "hands on" or a "hands off" approach, depending on one's viewpoint; that is, it can be seen either as a sort of surgical cutting-into its subject matter or it can be seen as a species of phenomenological bracketing whereby precisely the (spectatorial) observer removes his or her own presence as far as possible from what he or she sees. Does not, therefore, the "hands on" conception of experiment already concede too much to the utilitarian pragmatism which common sense wants to oppose? Further, *is* there more than an analogical relation as between the epistemology of sight/touch and the social considerations of generalism/specialism? And, if so,



does Scottish common sense philosophy advance beyond an analogical, and therefore a merely external and comparative, relation when it seeks to link epistemological to political competence? If it is the case that a republic of the senses (sight, touch and so on) is *merely like* a republic of independent citizens, then a difficulty arises, namely, that common sense stands paralysed in the face of all those utilitarian and instrumentalist and Rational Choice theories which say that in order for sociality to obtain there *need be no* public competence on the part of its members at all. (All that is required is a competence in grunting, and in wondering what to do next.) More than an analogical relation is wanted if - as is surely desirable, and as the common sense tradition has sought to stress - the only worthwhile republic is one whose citizens are critical and self-critical and self-reflective. Deepening analogy into intensivity would therefore seem to be the main task which, building on Davie's pioneering arguments, common sense

philosophy has now to carry through to the end.

Davie himself enunciates, or hints at, answers to all of the questions just raised. His approach is less a head-on addressing of such issues, abstractly stated, than a historical and hermeneutical enquiry into the cultural and social conditions which throw them into relief. On a superficial reading this can look as though a history of ideas and of institutions is being substituted for philosophy, *strictu sensu*, and indeed Davie has always refused to articulate common sense in a "systematic" as opposed to a historical way. One is reminded of the Frankfurt School 'critical theorists' who, likewise, resisted the temptation to systematise their critique of instrumental reason; and also of Ferrier, whose *Institutes of Metaphysic* of 1854 was as systematic as anyone could wish, but which said both too much and too little and which threatened to be the death-knell rather than the renaissance of common sense. Perhaps

common sense can be articulated *only* informally. An informal articulation, however, need by no means lack pungency. The present reviewer learnt this the hard way. Once upon a time (in *Cencrastus* 27: Autumn 1987) I asked Davie why the Scottish common sense philosophers were not more bouyant and revolutionary and optimistic. The answer came almost by return of post: the senses of sight and touch abut on to nature, and nature (Davie in *Common Sense* 5) keeps 'springing surprises', some of which are 'very unpleasant' indeed. Arguably, holistic systematisation tends to gloss all too easily over these bleak surprises. This may or may not be so, but what is certainly the case is that Scottish common sense philosophy, traditionally guided by what Davie calls a 'secular Calvinism', finds itself - as in Robertson Smith's reflections on sacrifice and cannibalism, cited earlier - well able to reflect upon the darker side of life.

Werner Bonefeld and
John Holloway (Editors)

**Post-Fordism & Social Form:
A Marxist Debate on the Post-
Fordist State**

Capital & Class/Macmillan Series
ISBN: 0-333-54394-7

Reviewed by Brian McGrail

In October 1988 Marxism Today published its "Manifesto for New Times". It was a political declaration

about social and economic changes being made in Britain and other major capitalist states. Still espousing "Marxism" at that time, the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), who published the magazine, wished to emphasis that they did not see these changes as being directly and simply brought about by New Right governments (such as Thatcher's) at the purely political, or "super-structural" (as they would call it), level. This was the socially and culturally accepted view of bourgeois social science. It was, however, an approach too crass for the "Marxists" of Marxism Today. Instead the Manifesto for New Times was based upon a theoretically deeper understanding of the processes at work. What they saw as changes in the 'very nature' of British politics (ie. the third election defeat of the Labour Party) and the movement away from the two-party mixed-economy politics of the post-war period were due to fundamental changes in the labour process, that is, the answers to and explanation of Labour's defeats lay in the area of current developments (especially technological ones) in production itself.

Characterising what went before as Fordism the manifesto understood the present as being Post-Fordist. The definition having been made in theory it was then time to start labelling each characteristic or point of difference between these two productive systems - the old and the new. Under Fordism workers were collectivised into large urban based factories making mass-produced goods for a levelled down consumer in 'a fairer and more equal society'. Under Post-Fordism workers (if they can even be called this any longer!) are dispersed both temporally (part-

timers) and spatially (i.e. using information technology H.Q. may be London whilst manual work is carried out 100s if not 1000s of miles away) in "green field" sites making specialised goods or supplying private services to a new class of privileged consumer in 'a more competitive society' which was "facing up to the future" realities of the world market and another term of conservative government.

The Manifesto was clearly pitched in terms of the inevitability of a Post-Fordist future and with this implication it also invoked a certain theory of the capitalist state. It gave an image of an new all-powerful political arena (the "Post-Fordist state") with a preset agenda based upon and determined by advanced technologies which had been used to defeat the power of the working class. The Manifesto therefore, in the best subversive tradition, suggested that the only possible and plausible route left for the working class to follow was compliance with this agenda. This view being held in the hope of an upsurge in working class militancy at a later date, namely, an increase in the anti-Tory vote at the next general election (4 years away) with the intention that "the next Labour government" could harness and introduce the new technologically advanced beast of capitalism without the deprivation and harm its introduction was creating for the working class under the Conservatives.

Now, after a 4th consecutive Conservative victory in Britain, it is interesting to return to the debates of that period and ask after the fulfilment of Marxism Today's promises. What has happened to the Post-Fordist state? Does it or did it ever exist in such a concrete

form as the CPGB theoreticians dared to suggest? If it did exist, has it not failed also, just as the so-called Fordist or Keynesian state did before it? The battle over its empirical proof still rages as if what is being "discovered" is a "New World" or a "Dark Continent" - what counts as "proof" of its existence is mapping the contours of what is a statistical desert in the middle of a sand storm.

After the 1987 election Marxism Today, in a sense, gave the Conservatives 4 or 5 years to build the Post-Fordist state. Indeed some headway seems to have been made. As John Major pointed out during the election campaign of 1992 Britain has the highest percentage of people in work within Europe - this, of course, being due to that fact that it has the highest amount of part-time, low paid women workers in Europe. Yet, this image still does not fit either the Marxism Today nor the Conservative images of the future from 1988 since the highly skilled advanced technology jobs that were supposed to go along with the "peripheral" economy have not been created. The "proof" as opposed to the "hope" of Post-Fordism has been moved to the European stage in which Britain, as a whole, appears as the "periphery" to a new and highly technically concentrated united Germany, but this necessarily means that if there is a Post-Fordist state it is a "super-state" - a phenomenon not even considered never mind analysed by Marxism Today in 1988. Other ways of looking at the present situation offer us more fruit with regards to understanding the mid to late 80s Post-Fordist state debate. In essence, we either believe that the Post-Fordist state can still be constructed, in which case the Conservatives still appear as the only

"electable" builders of such a state (even though they are supported by a minority of the electorate) and have been given another 5 years in which to do it, or, we believe that the adherents of Post-Fordist technological determinacy have reached crisis point - the Post-Fordist future is not a future, and along with such a thought we can see the spectre of fascism raise its ugly head once more. Four years after Marxism Today publishes its "Manifesto for New Times" the British National Party carry the slogan of "The future belongs to us".

Yet, it is only by considering the very last of these possibilities that one can begin to see the actual implications of the Post-Fordist state debate, despite the difficulty at times of concepts involved, and its relevance today. Essentially it is a debate about the future and how the working class can theorise about that future - it is a battle to keep the future open despite attempts to close off alternative routes out of the crisis of Fordism (i.e. the present crisis of capitalism per se).

"Post-Fordism and Social Form: A Marxist Debate on the Post-Fordist State" is a collection of articles published between 1985 and 1991 which deals with the "drastic transformation of society and the state: Fordism becomes Post-Fordism" (backpage abstract) which has been a massive attempt by the ruling class to attack the working class and close off and determine the future. In doing so the book not only brings out differing Marxist perspectives on the future, especially with regards to any new capitalist state, new working class movement, new technologies and labour processes, etc., but also brings into

question the very role of "Marxist state theory" itself by reviewing the "reformulation" of state theory which took place during the period of the present crisis. As a debate about the nature of the capitalist state it makes a logical continuation from the first book in the series "The State Debate", edited by Simon Clarke, but moves along a more immediate vein from the first book's more general analysis of the capitalist state. As Bonefeld puts it in one of his own contributions to the book, "The Reformulation of State Theory", "The analysis of Post-Fordism is thus [referring to the German reformulation of state theory in the 80s] part of the imposition of Post-Fordism itself" (page 65). Thus the gauntlet is laid - does state theory itself 'impose' the state? - and the implications of accepting this statement are far reaching.

For a start it meant that the debates in this volume had to go beyond the Post-Fordism debate as outlined in the terms of Marxism Today by demonstrating that the rise of Post-Fordism as a conceptual and "realist" future rested upon established Marxist notions and understandings of the past. Hence, the concept of "Fordism", which had become an accepted and orthodox way of conceiving the modern capital relation, had to be re-analysed. As a consequence a whole section of Marxist literature based upon the Fordism "model" also became questionable (eg. the Regulation School).

The starting point in the debate is therefore an article which stood at the crossroads between the death of Fordism in both theory and practice and the gap that stood in its place. Around about the

same time as Stuart Hall (a leading theorist of the CPGB) was writing "Realignment for What?" (which appeared in *Marxism Today*, December 1985) as part of the intellectual runway to the manifesto, an article in which he talks of "the inescapable lines of tendency and direction established by the real world", Joachim Hirsch wrote "Capitalist development, which takes place through crisis ridden historical breaks, is not without alternative, not even within the limits of the capital relation. The force of the crisis levels the ground for the construction of a new model of accumulation and society, but it also produces new contradictions and conflicts. The alternative cultures which have arisen in recent years and the 'new social movements' will play an important part in these conflicts. Themselves children of Fordism and its crisis, they remain of course shaped by its contradictions. It is still not clear whether they will finally prove to be just a vehicle for the 'passive revolution from below' or whether they can so alter the social and political relation of force that humane forms of crisis resolution get a chance" as his conclusion to "Fordism and Post-Fordism: The present Social Crisis and its Consequences" which Bonefeld and Holloway have chosen as the opening article in "Post-Fordism and Social Form" (pages 8-32).

The debate then develops in the following three articles - "The Reformulation of State Theory" by Werner Bonefeld, "Regulation Theory, Post-Fordism and the State: More Than a Reply to Werner Bonefeld" by Bob Jessop, and "The Great Bear: Post-Fordism and Class Struggle. A Comment on Bonefeld and Jessop" by John Holloway - over the positive and

negative effects Hirsch's thesis has upon the actions and strategies of the working class (whether it is seen as being 'redefined' or not), the nature of the present crisis, and the relationship between the capitalist state and class struggle. The arguments are more refined than those found in *Marxism Today* where the working class is seen as being completely passive in its relationship to both technology and the state. In this debate all three participants want to say that the working class is active and has a role to play and interpret Hirsch to have stated this. Therefore Jessop writes about Hirsch, "Thus Hirsch and Roth (1986) argue that the old working class movement can no longer play a revolutionary role and that new sources (rooted in civil society and the state) and new forces (new social movements) of resistance have emerged" (page 69). Here Jessop talks of "forces ... of resistance" - the working class is therefore 'active' - but the debate is not about its 'activity' as such, rather, it is about whether or not, or how, this 'activity' is structured by the capital relation and how it is autonomous and even pro-active on behalf of the working class. The main question is then: Is the future only open to more, continued struggle (struggles preset by the steam-roller functioning of capital) or is it open to the possibility of working class victory?

Bonefeld and Holloway want to argue against what they see as Jessop's separation of "structure" from "struggle" which allows the analysis of capitalism and its crisis to take place at a functional level. If the capital relation does develop due to a functional logic and all the working class can do is 'react' to this logical movement then we end up with what Hirsch describes as "the passive

revolution from below". If this is the case then class struggle is nothing but a part and parcel of *capital's* strategies and not those of the working class itself. As Holloway argues, "The question of the relation between structure and struggle thus goes far beyond a specific critique of the Reformulation debate: it is the central question in any attempt to understand the current development of capitalism and the perspectives for class struggle. Jessop's reply to Bonefeld ... failed to deal with this central point adequately, making, as it did, an extraordinary equation between class struggle and capital strategies" (page 93).

The problem, however, remains of how else to conceive the structure/struggle relationship during this period of massive social transformation in which capital appears to be setting the agenda and making great strides forward. "The black picture painted by Hirsch of current developments is correct in very many respects" (page 101). It appears to be the case that only capital has strategies. The answer supplied in the next two articles, "Over Accumulation, Class Struggle and the Regulation Approach" by Simon Clarke and "Learning to Bow: Post-Fordism and Technological Determinism" by Eloísa Pelaéz and John Holloway, is to stop conceiving the structure/struggle (and thus state/working class) as an "external" relationship. Firstly, Clarke demonstrates the unrecognised weakness of capital after the Crash of 1987 and therefore shows the real dependency capital has upon the working class no matter how much its theoreticians try to ignore the role of that class as if capital is separate and "socially neutral", or external from struggle. "The Crash of 1987 revealed the limits of the analysis

of the New Right" (page 104). He then moves on to demonstrate the failure of Regulationist analysis for much the same reasons. For example, the Regulationist belief that wages were controlled and regulated under the post-war regime of capital accumulation is shown to be untrue. Thus capital is both unable to either regulate or ignore working class demands. Clarke summarises "The state does not stand above these struggles, as the guarantor of the functional integration of the 'regime of accumulation', for the state is an aspect of the institutional forms of capitalist class relations, and so is itself the object of struggle. Thus the state does not, and cannot, resolve the contradictions of capital, but reproduces them in a political form" (page 127). Secondly, Pelaéz and Holloway assert that technology, like the state, is not external to the class struggle and therefore class strategies, including the strategies of the working class. As they point out, at one time Marxists (never mind bourgeois thinkers) saw technology as being socially neutral, however, since the 1960s it is now custom and practice within educational establishments and professional bodies to accept the opposite thesis as being nearer the truth, notably that technology is *not* socially neutral, that in fact it is 'shaped' by society and that in turn it 'reshapes' society. There is indeed a technology/society relationship. Yet, this relationship is still understood to be "external" as "society" shapes "its" technology, and although technology is thus no longer socially neutral it is "class" neutral. The relationship that is to be examined is "society" to "technology" - society is still distinct from technology. However, if one examines society itself, that is, the class

relation within, society can no longer be seen as being distinct from the technology of the dominant class, the technology which reproduces that society. Hence, state, technology and capital itself *are* class struggle.

There then follows a reply by Jessop in which he claims that Holloway misinterprets the Regulation Approach, and a final comment by Holloway on Jessop's criticisms.

Finally, the volume finishes with two pieces, "Crisis of Theory in the Contemporary Social Sciences" by Kosmas Psychopedis and "Marxism, Metatheory and Critique" by Richard Gunn which examine the history and methodology of Marxist approaches to social/state theory. Whilst Psychopedis analyses the Gramscian Structuralism

which underlay the Reformulation debate Gunn looks at Roy Baskhar's work on Critical Realism as a philosophical background to Jessop.

There is far more meat in the volume than the carcass I have provided here. Indeed, what I have provided here is only an outline of one way of seeing *one* chain of arguments in the book. Although at times complex in language and concepts it is well worth putting effort into reading through the book as Bonefeld and Holloway have selected and ordered the articles well, if perhaps biased against those with Regulationist sympathies. Many of the articles are available elsewhere but would not be so comprehensible as they are when side by side, whilst the book is well worth reading for the new articles alone. One failing, however, is the price - £14.99!

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