

INTERNAL BULLETIN NO.31

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Comrades are asked to make a  
contribution of 20p if possible  
towards the cost of duplicating  
and mailing IBs.

Further resolutions, amendments, discussion articles etc.  
should be sent to the centre, if possible typed A4 on  
Banco stencils.

## TWO MISUNDERSTANDINGS: REPLY TO ELLIS

Carolan, Hill, Kinnell

Ellis's polemic (this IB) is based on two misunderstandings.

1. Far from proposing that we drop the paper as a pre-emptive 'subterfuge' against the witch-hunt, we are proposing that we should fight to maintain the paper and continue it for a period even after it is made 'illegal' (if it is). See Carolan's resolution in IB24: "In the event that the Marxists are outlawed by whatever process, my proposal would be that the Marxists maintain the paper and its organisation as at present and also seek alliances to create a new publication..." etc.

2. We do propose that if despite our efforts the paper is made 'illegal', then we should develop another paper capable of organising the left in the LP and TUs. But we took it for granted - and we thought everyone else would take it for granted - that this paper would enable us to express our ideas adequately, and that if certain things could not be said in the paper we would supplement it by magazines, pamphlets, etc (and the 'illegal' paper for a period). All tactics, manoeuvres etc make no sense unless the League can maintain its basic ideological role.

The stress we put on the issue of being ready for tactical manoeuvres on the paper, without sectarian preconceptions, was in response to several comrades arguing that we must maintain the present paper come what may and that, if the witch-hunt won (which they seemed to take for granted) then we should go for 'illegal methods of work'.

## READING ON IMPERIALISM: SOME NOTES

To study modern monopoly-capitalist imperialism is to study the world economy over the last 100 years. A vast range of theoretical ideas and empirical research is therefore relevant. The list below is extremely selective. (Moreover, much of it assumes a knowledge of basic Marxist texts). Even so, it represents a lot of reading. The list may be useful, however, to comrades willing to put some effort into theoretical self-education, and save them from getting completely lost in the mass of relevant books and articles.

The list focuses heavily on Latin America: this does mean, however, that comparison of different theoretical views is sometimes easier because the same country is under discussion from the different views.

### BASIC MARXIST TEXTS

Lenin, 'Imperialism, the highest state of capitalism' (Moscow pamphlet)

Bukharin, 'Imperialism and world economy' (Merlin 1972)

Luxemburg, 'The Accumulation of Capital' (RKP 1951).

### SURVEYS

Tom Kemp, 'Theories of Imperialism' (Dobson 1967). Covers Hobson, Luxemburg, Lenin, Stalinists, and 'political' theories of imperialism: a "scientific dissection of opposing theories" (from a Marxist viewpoint), rather than a positive empirical study.

Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, 'Studies in the theory of imperialism' (Longman 1972). A collection of articles under 3 headings: theories of imperialism (i.e., mostly, Marxist theories); theoretical aspects of contemporary imperialism (Magdoff on 'imperialism without colonies' and Sutcliffe on 'imperialism and industrialisation in the 3rd World'); and 'case studies in the working of imperialism' (Egypt 1789-1882, India since independence, Guinea to 1958, Belgian imperialism in the late 19th century, French expansion in Africa, British capitalism in Latin America before 1914.) (The case studies are sometimes from Marxist, sometimes from decidedly non-Marxist, viewpoints).

Michael Barratt Brown, 'The economics of imperialism' (Penguin 1974). A convenient, short and clear summary of the whole literature (Marxist and non-Marxist), with empirical background. Marxist-inclined.

Ernest Mandel, 'Late Capitalism' (NLB 1975), chapters 3, 10, 11. These chapters summarise some main facts about post-war development and survey a lot of the literature. They can be read separately from the rest of the book.

### SOME POST-WAR MARXIST MATERIAL

Paul Baran, 'The Political Economy of Growth' (Monthly Review Press 1957). "The principal obstacle to rapid economic growth in the backward countries is the way in which their potential economic surplus is utilised. It is absorbed by various forms of excess consumption of the upper class, by increments to hoards at home and abroad, by the maintenance of vast unproductive bureaucracies and of even more expensive and no less redundant military establishments. A very large share of it... is withdrawn by foreign capital". Baran's book was a pioneer of modern studies on imperialism from the angle of how it 'underdevelops' poorer countries; the basic idea taken over into these studies is that it 'underdevelops' these countries by siphoning off profits from them. The 'underdevelopment' is measured by comparison with what Baran sees as the success of Socialism In One Country in the USSR.

Andre Gunder Frank, 'Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America: historical studies of Chile and Brazil' (MR Press revised edition 1969). This book takes off from Baran's ideas and develops two further ideas:

a) A polemic against the idea shared by bourgeois theorists and traditional Stalinists that Latin American economies are 'dual' economies,

with a progressive capitalist sector alongside a backward feudal sector. "no part of the economy is feudal and all of it is fully integrated into a single capitalist system".

b) Capitalism creates a pattern of metropolis-satellite or centre-periphery relations: primarily internationally but also within countries. Internationally, "the metropolis expropriates economic surplus from its satellites and appropriates it for its own economic development". Thus: "the development of underdevelopment".

Frank has a political conclusion: "The historical mission and role of the bourgeoisie in Latin America - which was to accompany and to promote the underdevelopment of its society and of itself - is finished. In Latin America as elsewhere, the role of promoting historical progress has now fallen to the masses of the people alone... To applaud and in the name of the people even to support the bourgeoisie in its already played-out role on the stage of history is treacherous or treachery".

This is aimed against the Latin American CPs. It should be noted, however, that Frank is not very consistent about his political conclusion. Despite the above he comments, for example, on Brazil before the 1964 coup: "The progressive forces, including Brazilian nationalist business interests, had offered (president) Goulart an alternative... (but) Goulart again tried to put off demands of the progressive forces..." ('Underdevelopment and Revolution' p.346-7).

Harry Magdoff: 'The Age of Imperialism: The Economics of US foreign policy' (MR Press 1969). This sets out to show in some factual detail "that there is a close parallel between, on the one hand, the aggressive United States foreign policy aimed at controlling (directly and indirectly) as much of the globe as possible, and, on the other hand, an energetic expansionist policy of US business".

Ernesto Laclau, 'Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America', in New Left Review no.67, May-June 1971. This is a critique of Frank. He argues that Frank mis-defines capitalism as just a market economy, a system of exchange. But capitalism is a mode of production - and non-capitalist modes of production have been important and still exist in Latin America. Frank, Laclau complains, bundles together centuries of world history into one set of concepts (capitalism, metropolis-satellite), but: "It seems to me more useful to underline (the) differences and discontinuities than to attempt to show the continuity and identity of the process from Hernan Cortes to General Motors". Baran's model (which underlies Frank) is, he argues, "consistently less applicable today to contemporary Latin America." Laclau, however, agrees with Frank in rejecting the 'dual' economy model. The capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production in Latin American countries are closely linked into one - capitalist - economic system.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso, 'Dependency and Development in Latin America', in New Left Review no.74, July-August 1972. Giving facts on post-war development in Latin America, Cardoso concludes: "The idea that there occurs a kind of development of underdevelopment, apart from the play on words, is not helpful. In fact, dependency, monopoly capitalism, and development are not contradictory terms: there occurs a kind of dependent capitalist development in the sectors of the Third World integrated into the new forms of monopolistic expansion". (He especially highlights the shift of imperialist investment in Latin America and elsewhere from raw materials into manufacturing).

(Note: There are many who argue that Cardoso, in retaining Frank's idea of 'dependency' or 'periphery' while opposing the notion that it means across-the-board underdevelopment, is trying to square the circle. See for example ed Ellis's articles in the Internal Bulletin. The arguments against 'dependency' theory are summarised in chapter 7 of Bill Warren, 'Imperialism, pioneer of capitalism', New Left Books 1980. Warren's general views are not necessarily shared by all opponents of 'dependency' theory.)

Bill Warren, 'Imperialism and capitalist industrialisation', in New Left Review no. 81, September-October 1973; Arghiri Emmanuel, 'Myths of development versus myths of underdevelopment', and Philip McMichael, James Petras, and Robert

Rhodes, 'Imperialism and the contradictions of development', both in New Left Review no.85, May-June 1974.

If Cardoso represents a cautious and selective critique of the Bar Frank underdevelopment theory, Warren represents the most extreme all-out assault on it. He argues that empirical evidence shows that "a major upsurge of capitalism is taking place in the Third World", and that on the whole imperialism is likely to promote capitalist development in the Third World. The 'underdevelopment' theory is likely to make socialists dupes of Third World bourgeois nationalism. (Warren's book mentioned above is a longer development of the same argument).

Emmanuel is the author of an influential book ('Unequal Exchange', New Left Books 1972), which analyses imperialism in terms of exchange relations favouring rich countries (i.e. they get high prices for their products) and exploiting poor countries (i.e. they get low prices). (His political conclusion is that "the contradictions between classes within the advanced countries, which still undoubtedly subsist, have nevertheless become historically secondary. The principal contradiction, and driving force for change, are henceforth located in the realm of international economic relations").

He concedes to Warren that there has been a 'wave of industrialisation' in the Third World, and "an improvement in the bargaining position of host countries vis-a-vis foreign resource companies", which some have wanted to deny out of dogmatism. He agrees that: "The mere arrival of foreign capital in a country... enslaves or develops the country just as much as any other capital, neither more nor less". But he argues that Warren exaggerates his statistics - and that world capitalist inequality is self-reproducing because new capitalist investment will generally flow more to richer areas.

McMichael and others also criticise Warren's use of figures. They conclude that: "Capitalist development in the Third World today means dependent growth in a small proportion of countries, for the benefit of a small proportion of the population".

Ruy Mauro Marini, 'Brazilian "interdependence" and imperialist integration', in Monthly Review, December 1965; 'Brazilian sub-imperialism', in Monthly Review, February 1972. These are a pioneering study of sub-imperialism - defined as "the form which dependent capitalism assumes upon reaching the stage of monopolies and finance capital" - in Brazil following the 1964 military coup.

Andre Gunder Frank, 'Crisis: in the world economy' and 'Crisis: in the Third World', both Heinemann, 1980/and 1981. These books give a bulky, but vivid and readable, introduction to the crisis of the 1970s, with a lot of factual material. The scrapbook-type style makes them quite suitable for dipping in and reading individual chapters and sections.

Walter Rodney, 'How Europe underdeveloped Africa', Bogle-L'Ouverture 1972. Rodney was a black Guyanese Marxist, assassinated by political enemies in 1980. This book is of course outside the Latin American focus of the rest of this list; but it is a detailed and closely-argued exposition of the 'development of underdevelopment' through a historical account from the 15th century to the end of the colonial period. Its political limitations are indicated by the fact that a final section was provided by a minister in the Tanzanian government.

September 1982

Cunliffe  
Kinnell

PS: This list is limited, of course, not only by our concern to keep it short, but also by our ignorance. It would be useful if comrades who want to recommend to our special attention books or articles not mentioned above (or want to argue that some of these mentioned above do not deserve attention) would write in, so that their suggestions can be circulated.

P.S. Comrade Traven has recommended to us, as a book giving a useful introduction and overview:

Anthony Brewer, 'Marxist Theories of Imperialism', RKP 1980

From its beginning in the early 19th century the police has always been a class weapon of the bourgeoisie. This is evident in its functions (since even the impartial protection of private property means the protection of the ownership of the means of production by a few capitalists and the expropriation of the mass of the population). It is evident in their control (since even the most accountable systems of policing have reserved key areas of control for a state machinery that exists beyond the will of the people themselves). It is evident in their internal organisation (since the very relations of hierarchy and authority which the police express are one aspect of bourgeois domination). The struggle for socialism is a struggle for the abolition of all 'special' forces elevated above society and for the performance of policing functions through the self-organisation and self-activity of the working class.

However, the relation between the police and society is not static. While the police are always an instrument of the ruling class, the nature of this instrument changes, depending on relations between the classes. It is obvious that the police under bourgeois democracy and the police under fascism are not the same thing, even though they are in each case an instrument of the bourgeoisie. The ruling class does not exist in a vacuum. It stands to definite relations to other classes. The type of policing which exists is one expression of this relation; changes in the character of policing express changes in the nature of these relations.

To describe a bourgeois-democratic police as if they were a fascist police only obscures the issue and in particular obscures the need to resist moves in this direction.

In the recent period (under Labour and Tory governments) there has been a significant increase in police powers. This has taken the form, for instance, of: more financial and manpower resources; more arms; provision of special riot equipment (gas, rubber bullets, high-speed land rovers, shields, armoured cars etc); centralisation of the police into larger and more integrated units; the growth of special units like the SIG, the ISUs, the Special Branch; growth of computerised control systems (like the London National Computer); automated eaves-dropping equipment (system X telephone system); etc. Ireland has provided the cutting edge for many of these developments.

At the same time there has been an extension of police powers in law. The PTA has given the police power to arrest and detain anyone suspected of 'use of violence for political ends'. The Scottish Criminal Justice Act and the current Police Bill are increasing police powers of arrest, detention, search and interrogation. The courts have through common law minimised the right of suspects to stay silent while under interrogation and have sanctioned the use of evidence by the police even when it has been improperly or forcibly extracted.

Political control over the police by open and democratically elected bodies has been eroded. There has been a move away from a degree of accountability to elected representatives of local government to, on the one hand, Chief Constables, who have become local potentates, and on the other hand, the Home Office, shielded from any public intervention beyond the turnover of Home Secretaries and the occasional question in parliament. The powers of Police Committees are far less than the old Watch Committees, though Simey has shown in Merseyside that they can be effectively used (at least for propaganda). Even their limited powers are too much for the police who are campaigning for their abolition.

The police have been increasingly mobilised as a political force. Chief Constables, the Police Federation, the Ass. of Chief Police Officers have shown an active political presence and have vocalised their extreme right wing views on everything from picket lines to hanging.

Within the police itself there has been opposition to these tendencies. The liberals (like Alderson) campaigned under the banner of community policing, but they have generally been squeezed out. Their 'community policing' ideas have been appropriated as an adjunct to the 'reactive' policing of the right-wingers, offering both a soft face for public consumption and a kind of Fifth Column in the community.

These facts point in the direction of a major change in the nature of policing, from one characteristic of bourgeois democracy to one characteristic of Bonapartism. This process is not yet complete, but unless active steps are taken by the labour movement to stop it, it will proceed further and constitute a major setback for the labour movement and for all democrats.

This changing form of repression comes packaged in a changing form of ideology. The increase in police powers is presented as a practical necessity in the face of rising crime rates; the undercutting of political and legal constraints on the police is presented as necessary for police 'impartiality'; military-style operations against black communities are justified in blatantly racist terms (e.g. 'black-mugger' scares). This ideology is totally irrational: more power and less accountability have made the police worse, not better, at crime prevention and detection and they have led to a more overt, right-wing partiality. The 'black-mugger' scare is entirely fictitious. Yet this Thatcherite ideology is effective: not so much inside the labour movement but among the petty bourgeoisie radicalised from the right and a section of workers and unemployed disaffected from the labour movement.

It is wrong to characterise this shift as one from 'consensus' to 'repression' as the CP tend to do. This implies that increased repression automatically leads to loss of legitimacy by the police. But the state does not carelessly surrender the legitimacy it has built up. Socialists have to break the ideological grip of the state in this area as in any other; the state will not do our work for us.

### Working Class Responses

The right-wing leaderships of the LP and TUs have been anxious to show that they are no less committed to law and order than the next conservative. They have sought to deflect the issue of police powers and racism by focussing on wider social, economic and political questions, like bad housing, unemployment & Thatcherism. They have hidden behind the coat-tails of Scarman, calling for more police-community liaison & consultation, the aim of which is to create an aura of 'community-backing' for police operations. This was effectively done after recent police raids on 'squatters' in Brixton and is the fruit of Scarman's intervention.

Radical democrats (CCL, most left Labour) have fought against current moves to erode existing levels of accountability and for the introduction of increased levels. Some are more radical than others, but their demands include: extended powers to