

socialist

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Future

BLAIR BACKS DEADLY FOOD

NEW LABOUR is secretly trying to shove genetically-modified (GM) food down consumers' throats, despite growing fears about health risks.

The government's backers in Monsanto and other multinational corporations, are desperate to get more GM food in the shops despite mounting resistance by shoppers. A number of supermarkets have already withdrawn some GM items from shelves.

But GM soya beans, found in the most common processed foods like biscuits, ready-made meals and drinks, have appeared in shops all over the world without any safety tests.

Scientists say that tests which would have shown up any side-effects were not carried out by Monsanto. One said: "It is extraordinary that the only tests Monsanto were required to carry out were on unsprayed beans which

are not available for the human food chain." At the same time, the British Medical Association is warning that some GM products could weaken human resistance to antibiotics like penicillin. Genetic modification involves the insertion of genes from one organism into another and the technology is used to alter certain properties of food crops – with uncertain results.

Despite this, the Blair government has set up a secret Cabinet committee to try and "sell" GM

food to the wary public. Environmental pressure group Friends of the Earth responded by accusing the government of trying to "spin GM foods down our throats".

New Labour clearly supports the interests of multinationals like Monsanto and Zeneca who control the GM industry over and above public safety, just as the Tories did over BSE.

The Movement for a Socialist Future backs all protests against the multinationals over GM food and the destruction of the planet in the name of profits.

Blair and his corporate friends don't fear protests, however. That is why we must go further and aim to bring the food and other industries under the control of consumers and producers.

To achieve that we must turn society on its head. That is the MSF's objective. Join us today! ■

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Wrongfully CONVICTED

THE M25 THREE

Three men – **Michael Davis, Raphael Rowe and Randolph Johnson** – were sentenced to life imprisonment in January 1990 at the Old Bailey after a murder trial lasting six weeks. The victims stated that two white males and one black male committed the crimes of robbery and murder and yet the convicted men were all black. Three prosecution witnesses were known accomplices in the case. Write to: **Michael Davis MP3661, HMP Highpoint, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 9YG; Raphael Rowe MP 3660, HMP Kingston, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 6AS; Randolph Johnson MP3903, HMP Whitemoor, Longhill Road, March, Cambridge, P15 OPR.**



studies in injustice

The British legal system is said to presume innocence unless proved guilty. But here *Socialist Future* highlights just a few of the cases where men and women have been sentenced to rot in jail mainly because they could not afford an expensive legal team and the police needed someone who would fit the frame. With the help of people who have already proved their innocence, their families and supporters are taking on the judicial system to secure the release of these victims of injustice.

JAILED FOR TAKING HOLIDAY

Rana Khalifa, a 25-year-old beauty therapist, accepted a free holiday from an old friend and was arrested by Customs and Excise at Heathrow Airport on her return to Britain. The presiding judge decided accepting a free holiday was proof that she knew that the boxes she was sitting with at the airport contained cocaine. She is currently serving an 11-year prison

sentence. Her appeal was dismissed on March 11.

Write to **Rana Khalifa CF5211, HMP High Point North, Stradishall, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 9YG.**

JAILED ON FORCED STATEMENT

Ishtiaq Ahmed has spent ten years in prison on a murder conviction. The case against him was based on one statement. A Thames Valley inspector visited the chief prosecution witness 32 times before she agreed to testify.

The alibi witness needed by the defence was unlawfully detained by the police and subjected to oppressive and abusive questioning to obtain a statement against the accused.

Write to: **Ishtiaq Ahmed, WV 2288, HMP Coldingley, Shaftesbury Road, Bisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 9EX. Justice for Ishtiaq Ahmed Campaign: c/o 1 Beresford Road, Reading.**

18-YEAR-OLD CRIME

David Feltham was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on a rape charge in June 1998. The offence was alleged to have taken place 18 years earlier. The prosecution team produced no evidence. The alleged victim (his stepdaughter) has a diagnosed history of psychiatric problems, which was not made available to the defence team despite a court order.

Contact: **Free David Feltham Campaign, PO Box 312, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1DS**

MI5 WITHHELD EVIDENCE

Samar Alami and Jawad Botmeh were convicted in 1996 for "involvement" in the planning of the Israeli Embassy and Balfour House bombings in London in 1994. revelations by ex-MI5 officer

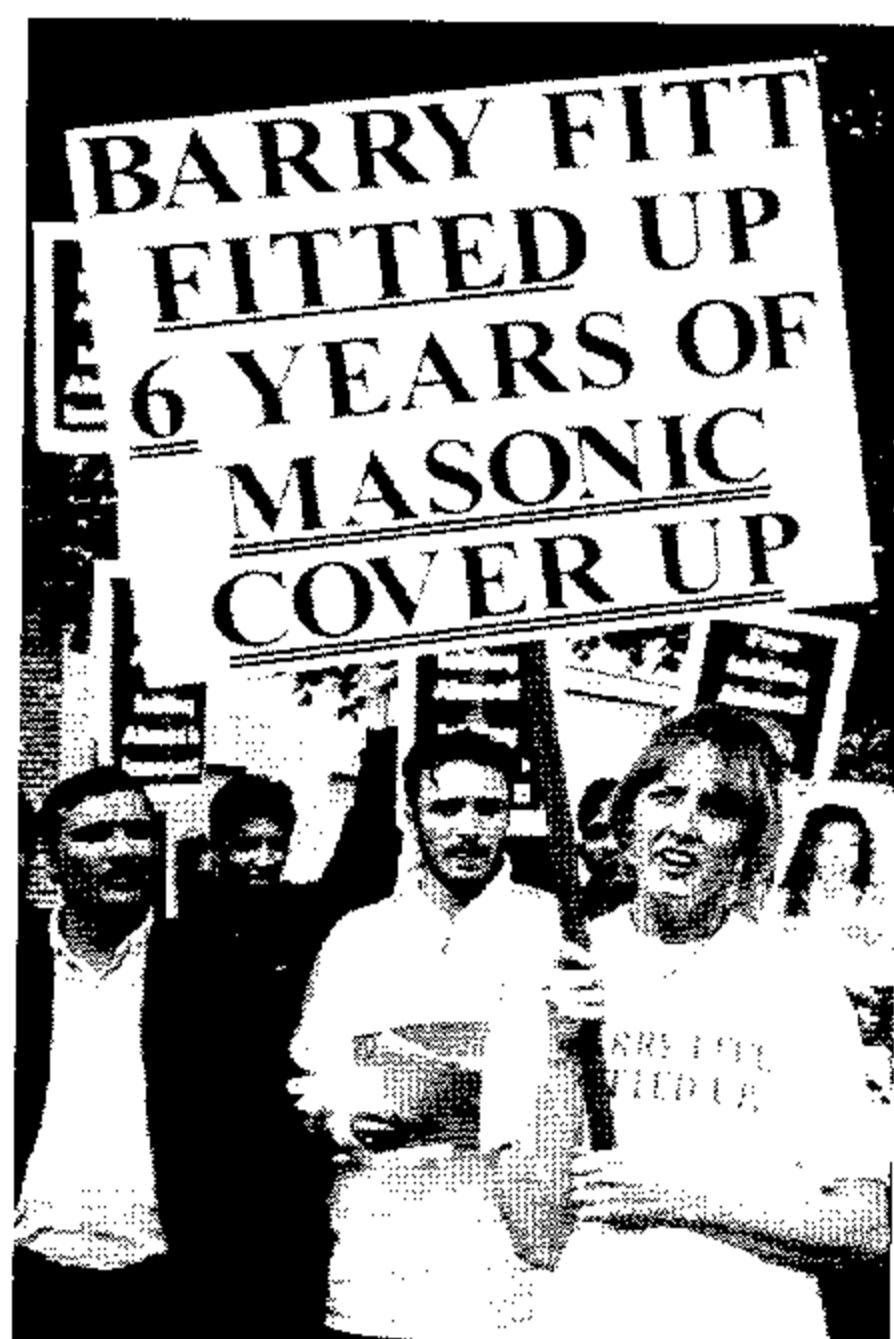
SET UP FOR LIFE

Gary Mills and Tony Poole are being held in prison in connection with the death of Hensley Wiltshire, who actually died in police custody. They are currently appealing to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Contact: **Set Up For Life, 8 Naseby House, Cromwell Road, Cheltenham, Glos.**

11 YEARS FOR NO CRIME

Barry Fitt is serving 11 years on evidence proven to be fabricated. The robbery he was accused of was actually organised by a police informer who made a business out of setting up crimes for the regional crime squad.

Currently in Whitemoor prison, he has been subjected to mental torture, including threats of violence to himself and his family. His case has been taken to the European Court on grounds of non-disclosure. It is under active review by the Criminal Cases Review Commission.



David Shayler showed that the Security Service failed to act on warnings of the bombings, and then covered up the evidence needed by the two to prove they had no involvement. At a Court of Appeal hearing on May 10, they were granted leave to appeal.

Contact: Freedom and Justice for Samar and Jawad, BM Box FOSA, London, WC1N 3X.

Write to: Samar Alami, RL 143F-wing, HMP Durham, Old Elvet, Durham DH1 3HU; Jawad Botmeh, EP 3888, HMP Frankland, Brasside, Durham DH1 5YD.

NO WITNESSES, NO EVIDENCE

Eddie Gilfoyle was convicted in 1993 of murdering his wife Paula, and he and his family are fighting to overturn the judgement. There was a complete lack of preparation by Eddie's former defence. There were no witnesses to the alleged crime; no medical, pathological or forensic evidence supported the allegation. A suicide note in Paula's handwriting stated her intention to take her own life. Eddie was accounted for at work at the time of her death.

Contact: Eddie Gilfoyle Campaign, c/o Heygarth Drive, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside, L49 2P1.

Police corruption is the norm, says ex-detective

LYING BY the police is an essential part of the criminal justice system, says ex-Merseyside detective, **Kevin McMahon**.

Speaking at an Action Against Injustice conference, he said he left the force because he was unable to face the continuous harassment and bullying from colleagues, following his decision to report corrupt senior officers.

"A fundamental principle of policing is that it should be by our consent. Yet none of us consent to police selling information to drug dealers and the falsification and planting of evidence. But that's how it is," said McMahon.

He dismissed the official "one bad apple" excuse for corruption, and revealed that in

secret minutes of the Association of Chief Police Officers, published on the Internet, it was acknowledged that officers were involved in armed robbery, drug dealing and tipping off criminal associates.

It became so bad on Merseyside, he added, that Customs and Excise officers refused to work with the local drugs squad.

"Lying is an essential element of the criminal justice system," he said, and explains why so many are framed for crimes they did not commit."

Michael O'Brien, out on bail pending the formal quashing of his conviction in the Cardiff Newsagents case, told how he had turned the tables on the state while he was in prison. He



Kevin McMahon

had studied law and regularly issued summonses to the warders, governors and even the Home Secretary. "They tried to break me, but there was no way I was going to give in, even though they refused to allow me to go to my father's funeral."

Valerie Davis, sister of one of the M25 Three, spoke about how the target specific sections of the community, especially black, young and working class people. ■

EYE WITNESS IGNORED

When Coventry solicitor Colin Hickman was killed, his wife was present and the man she saw running from the scene bore no resemblance to **Timothy Caines**, who was sent down for the crime. The man she saw was around six foot tall with blonde hair and white skin. Tim Caines is around five foot ten with black skin and hair. Despite this, Tim was found guilty of murdering Hickman.

Contact: Tena or Allan Watson, c/o Action Against Injustice, PO Box 858, London, E9 5HU.

TOLD NOT TO APPEAL

Kevin O'Neill was convicted in 1987 for the murder of Mark Balcombe in a south London squat; he was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment. Due to dyslexia and learning difficulties, he did not understand what actually happened on the night of the murder, nor could he cope with the legal process. He was advised by his solicitors "not to bother to appeal". Write to Kevin O'Neill B80521, HMP Gartree, Market Harborough, Leics. LE16 7RP and Case For Concern, Christ Church, 27 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1.

NATO'S CRIMINAL WAR

NATO'S BOMBING of Yugoslavia, a small and poor country, is called a "humanitarian war" by New Labour.

It was allegedly launched to save the lives of the Kosova Albanians, cruelly forced from their homes and land. Yet as the entire infrastructure of Yugoslavia has come under sustained attack by NATO warplanes, the fraudulent nature of this claim is clear. Hospitals, schools, market places, refugee convoys, foreign embassies, housing estates, even prisons are the targets for "humanitarian bombs".

NATO has dropped cluster bombs and depleted uranium. They have used weapons containing graphite to destroy Yugoslavia's power supply. The River Danube is now seriously polluted with chemicals.

Little distinction is made between Serb and Albanian civilians, or between Serb civilians and Serb armed forces. Meanwhile the deep opposition to Milosevic's regime in Yugoslavia is silenced by the bombs. One outspoken journalist, Slavko Curuvija, was shot and killed, and others live in constant danger.

While many Kosova Albanians support NATO, the military alliance is itself firmly opposed to their self-determination.

in our view

● The Movement for a Socialist Future condemns NATO's crimes against the Yugoslav people and their duplicity over the fate of the Kosova Albanians, who are pawns in the big powers' hidden agenda.

We support the struggle of the Kosova Albanians to assert their right to self-determination through the KLA or any other means.

We are for the right of people to live without fear in mixed communities. We are also for the ousting of Milosevic by the Serbian people while supporting Yugoslavia's right to sovereignty and to defeat NATO forces.

Above all, socialists who are serious about opposing the war must have as a perspective the downfall of the Blair government. New Labour is now the party of old imperialism and deserves not an ounce of support.

Globalised corporations, which are the force behind NATO, want puppet states in the region, subordinate to the global marketplace, with everyone consuming

The cost of the war

COST TO THE US

So far the US government has approved \$13 billion to finance NATO's war in Yugoslavia. This is despite the fact that there is no Congressional legal authority for the war.

ECONOMIC DAMAGE

Damage to the Yugoslav economy is estimated at \$200 billion (£125bn), 12 times greater than Yugoslavia's gross domestic product, and more even than the country suffered in World War II.

WAR DAMAGE SO FAR

- 50 major bridges
- 12 railway stations
- 40 industrial companies
- 6 motorways
- 5 bridges
- Countless roads and railways damaged
- 100 businesses and residential buildings devastated, including Radio-Television Serbia
- Reserves of oil and oil derivatives wiped out

LOSS OF JOBS

The Alliance of Independent Unions says that more than 100,000 people can no longer earn their living.

Coke and McDonalds, and wearing Benetton. It wants Yugoslavia to abandon the remnants of the state-owned economy built before Milosevic came to power.

Meanwhile in Britain, the "targets" for the deeply reactionary Blair government are the disabled, those who need legal aid, people who want a jury trial, the young unemployed who refuse to accept cheap labour jobs and those in professions like teachers. There is no shortage of money to pay for bombers and missiles, and yet libraries, nursery schools, hospitals, universities and schools are starved of money.

Fend for yourselves, become commercial or die, is New Labour's motto.

In both Italy and

Germany, there have been almost daily demonstrations against the war and both governments have begun to totter. In Britain, however, anti-war sentiment is more muted because of the cowardly attitude of most Labour MPs, the silence of the trade unions, and support for the war (and an invasion) from "liberal" newspapers like the *Guardian*. Other former "lefts" such as Labour MP Ken Livingstone and actress Vanessa Redgrave have become champions of NATO.

Even organisations who claim to oppose the bombing, such as the Socialist Workers Party, refuse to call for the downfall of New Labour, or offer support to the Kosova Liberation Army in its struggle against Yugoslav forces. ■

GM crops could cause world famine

by Kate McCabe

THE ATTEMPT by multinational corporations to seize global control of food supplies through genetic modification (GM) will "force the world into famine", says the charity Christian Aid.

They reject claims from companies like Monsanto that GM crops will feed the world's 800 million hungry people. Instead, the crops will only serve to rob small farmers of their independence.

About 80% of crops in the developing world are grown from saved seed, which GM companies want to eliminate through the sale of "terminator seeds".

These leave the farmer with nothing after the crop is gathered and Christian Aid warns that a crisis for humanity would result from their widespread use.

GM crops of tobacco, cotton, soya and maize are already being grown in the US, Argentina, China and Canada; 50 other crops are currently being tested, including in Britain and in 30 developing countries.

The leading GM corporation Monsanto spent more than \$1bn buying Brazilian seed companies and plans a \$550m factory to produce pesticide compatible with its GM soya crops.

It is a major shareholder in India's largest seed company, and invested

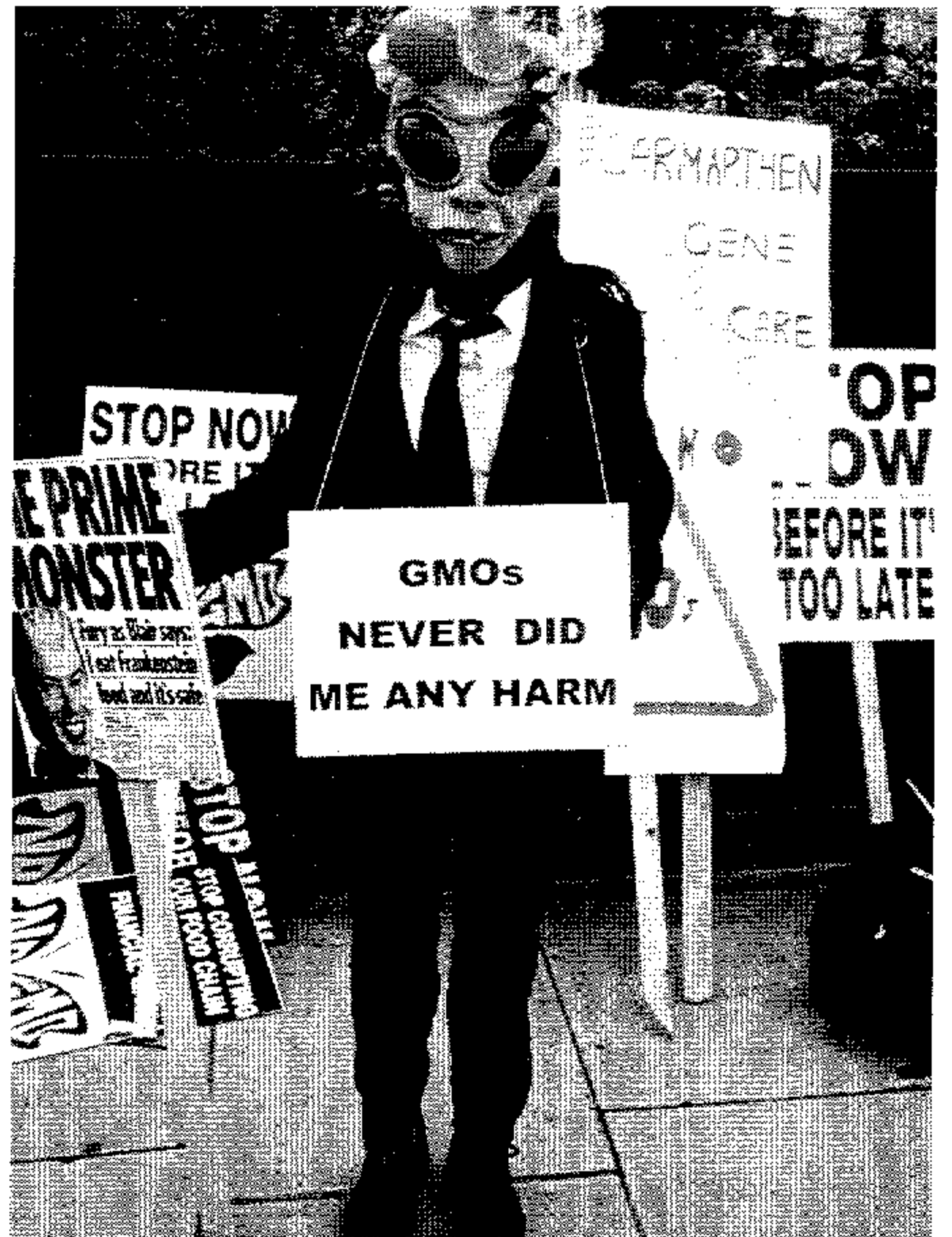
more than \$20m in a leading science institution. It also paid more than \$1bn for the internal seed operations of Cargill, the world's largest grain company.

The big five GM corporations have patents in more than 90 countries on different versions of terminator technology. The US department of agriculture owns one version of the gene and predicts that "it will be so widely adopted that farmers will only buy seeds that cannot be regerminated".

Meanwhile, there are fears that GM plants containing anti-biotic resistant genes could cross over into humans, making antibiotics useless in fighting bacterial disease.

There are specific worries about maize containing the bla gene, which can affect meningitis bacteria, and cotton containing the AAD gene, which can affect gonorrhoea. The bla gene could make meningitis bacteria immune to penicillin and other cures.

Meanwhile, US research shows that gene-altered crops designed to kill pests also kill butterflies. In an experiment, Monarch butterflies were damaged by the pollen from a GM maize that contains an insecticide to

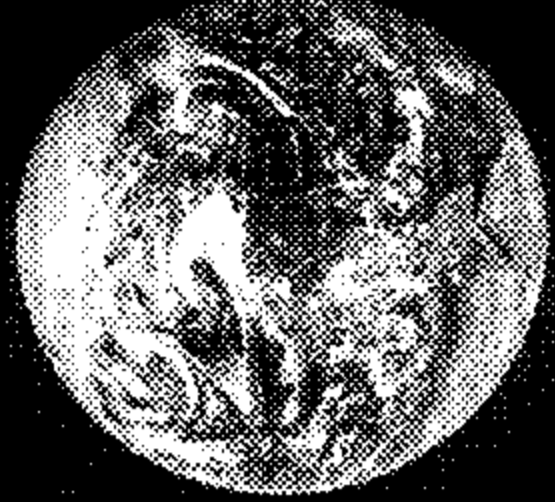


A recent demonstration against GM

kill a grain boring insect. Monarchs are a "flagship species" for conservation. They thrive in a diverse countryside, and where they are wiped out, it means the whole food chain is probably being affected. The effect of the pollen on Monarch caterpillars was to destroy their gut, allowing toxins they would normally excrete, to leak into the body. Within four days, 44% of caterpillars were dead. British scientist John Beringer, a former chairman of the British

committee monitoring GM crops, says the research proves large-scale planting should be banned. Another route to pass on genes could be from eating meat from animals fed on a GM grain. Animal feed comes into Britain unmarked and farmers have no idea if they are feeding their animals on GM grains. Even more simply, the antibiotic resistant gene could simply jump to bacteria in the gut of the person eating the GM food. ■

SPECIAL REPORT
ON GLOBALISATION



**SPECIAL REPORT
ON GLOBALISATION**

GLOBALISATION - YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

By Paul Feldman

Q Is globalisation a new type of capitalism?

a No. It is a new form of existing monopoly capitalism but its essence remains the same: production for profit. A few multinational corporations (MNCs), which operate transnationally, now dominate the global economy. MNCs have the ability to shift production worldwide and a new international division of labour has emerged, with workers in Asia producing components for computers assembled in Ireland. The international economy is now more integrated than ever before.

Q What else is new?

a A revolution in information and transport technology has helped create rapid globalisation, enabling firms to co-ordinate production and distribution across continents. Management techniques have changed in response to allow the workforce to develop forms of co-operative working on an international basis. The new technology is also behind the globalised financial system of currency, bond and futures markets.

Q Is globalisation a new "lease of life" for capitalism?

a No. It has created tremendous conflicts within the system itself.

Automation and new technology has increased output rapidly. But cheaper goods mean constantly higher sales are needed to break even. As a result, the world markets are now saturated and a slump is emerging. Because of globalisation, a crisis spreads quickly from one region to another. The collapse in East Asia then took in Russia and Latin America. Now American companies' profits are in sharp decline.

Q Don't people generally benefit from higher production?

a Yes. But because the system depends on making a profit, the consequences are unpredictable. People lose their jobs suddenly as a result of decisions on the other side of the world. Global warming, BSE and genetically-modified food are all, in one way another, the result of uncontrolled global market forces at work. Globalisation is also undermining local culture and identities and forcing millions of people to migrate to cities and other countries and destroying the sources of raw materials.

Q How has globalisation affected national governments?

a The MNCs and the major financial institutions like pension

funds and insurance companies have become more powerful than national governments. Their influence over economic and financial affairs is extremely limited as a result. This tension is undermining the function and purpose of the state in modern capitalism. The MNCs pay few taxes so the funding of welfare programmes is undermined and privatisation is the norm.

Q But hasn't capitalism been able to develop new international organisations?

a Yes it has. But agencies like the World Trade Organisation, the European Union, NATO and the United Nations cannot overcome the basic conflicts within capitalism itself. An inter-regional trade war is developing between America, Asia and Europe as the slump bites. The UN is more and more sidelined while NATO's "unity" over Yugoslavia is just words.

Q So you are saying the contradictions of capitalism have reached bursting point?

a The conflicts between the *global* and the *national*, between *private ownership* and production for profit and the complex, *social* way the economy functions, between the revolution in technology and the way it is used, between market

forces and the social needs of people – all these have combined to produce a deep social and political crisis.

Q How has this affected politics?

a Political arrangements are breaking down. The mortal crisis of the Tory Party and the end of the old Labour Party are good examples. New Labour is merely a “management team” of globalised capitalism, having given up on trying to influence the economy. More and more people reject the rule of the multi-nationals and have no faith in existing political institutions like parliament, the police, the legal system or the monarchy. New forms of democracy are clearly needed. But before that can happen we have to challenge the fundamental issue of ownership and control.

Q Does this mean that socialists oppose globalisation?

a What we reject is the way in which the process is dominated by profit-hungry MNCs and the claim by governments like New Labour that there is no alternative. We oppose the imposition by the MNCs of their corporate identities on people in every country.

Q What is the way forward then?

a The revolution in technology and the inter-relation between workers in different countries will be the basis of a new society based on co-operation not profit. We could use the technology to increase standards of living in every country, reducing the working week and allowing people to develop their abilities and talents. A new socialist society would have mass, democratic ownership and control of production and distribution as well as financial resources. People themselves would control the state and its institutions like the police. ■

GLOBAL GIANTS RUN THE SHOW

MULTINATIONAL corporations (MNC) which operate across the globe find their origins at the very dawn of capitalism.

The British East India Company, established in 1600, defended and increased Britain's control over trade in the region and the Dutch had similar enterprises.

What is distinctly new, however, is the extent and power of the modern MNCs in what has become known as globalisation.

This is the emergence in the last 25 years of an intensely inter-connected global economy and financial system which, in turn, has had a major impact on politics, culture and the environment.

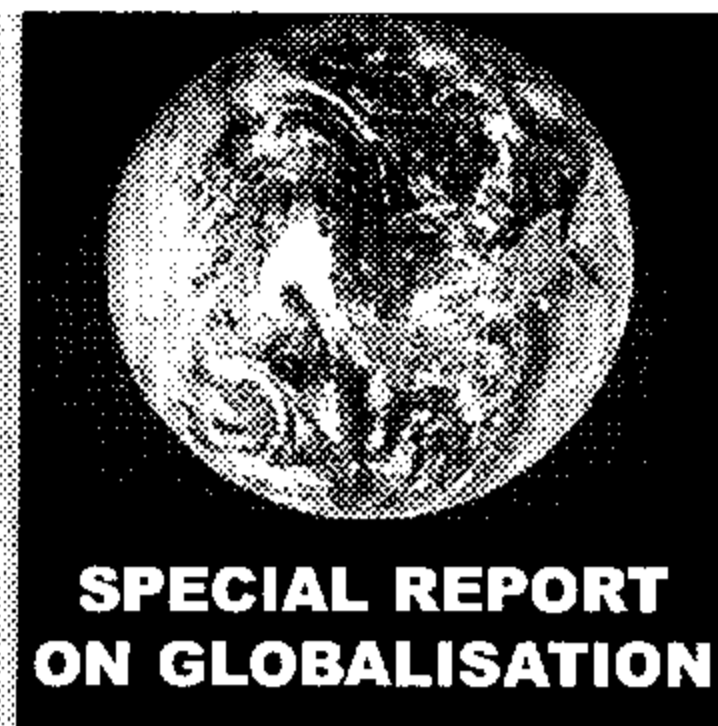
Regions like East Asia have, for example, been transformed from economic backwaters into an integral part of the world economy.

Today a handful of MNCs dominate world markets for oil, minerals, food and other agricultural products. Each month their numbers fall through take-overs and mergers.

A hundred or so play the leading role in the globalisation of manufacturing production and services, using foreign direct investment (FDI) to control and manage subsidiaries in a number of countries outside its home base.

Together, the largest MNCs control about 20% of global foreign assets, employ six million workers worldwide and account for two-thirds of world trade.*

Beneath them are thousands of smaller enterprises which are utterly dependent on the MNCs for their survival.



They are integrated into the production and distribution networks as junior partners, producing cheap, high-quality goods for their masters.

Technological development is essentially in the hands of the MNCs. They account for about 80% of world trade in technology and the majority of private research and development into areas like cloning, for example.

Their huge capital demands and large cash surpluses makes them key figures in international financial markets.

Of course, the MNCs are just as significant when it comes to the globalisation of culture, which inevitably means the mass culture of Hollywood and the big media empires of the United States.

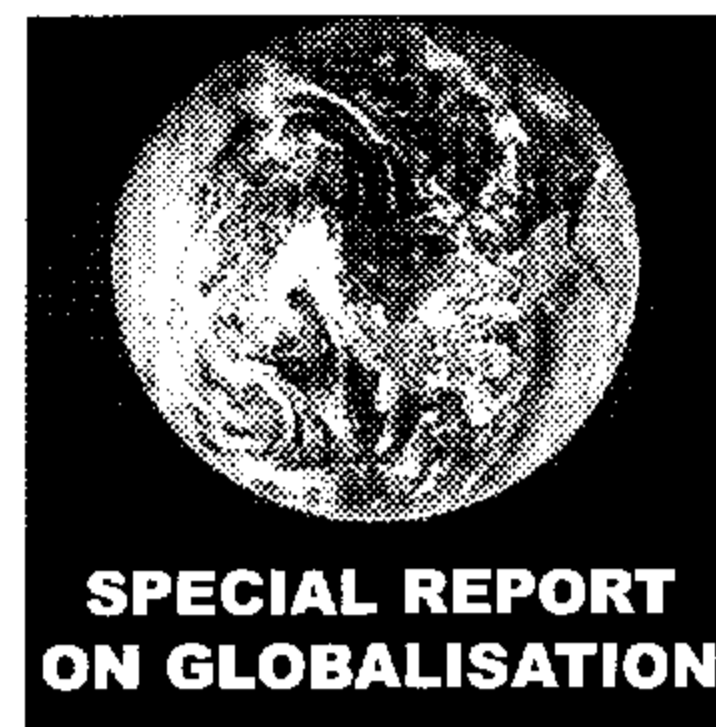
The international chain of production sees Japanese companies producing in Britain to sell in Europe, using raw materials and components from around the world. It has Bombay computer workers employed by British firms and sending data via the Internet.

Global production and distribution networks bring fresh food from East Africa to the shelves of supermarkets and the same software is available at identical prices in every continent, in every town.

In other words, the MNCs and their dependent smaller partners are the world economy. ■

**Global transformations by David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. This is the most comprehensive and thought-provoking work to date on globalisation. Polity Press £16.99*

Euro-plot to tap e-mails



The European Union has plans to tap into satellite-based telephone calls and e-mails

THE GLOBALISATION of communications, which has produced the Internet, has made it much more difficult for the state to find out what its citizens are up to.

This is the reason why the European Union has secret plans to set up a far-reaching eavesdropping system to tap e-mail messages, mobile phone calls and other forms of electronic data.

First suggested in 1995, the revised plans have already won the approval of interior ministers, including New Labour's Jack Straw. They are now on course for approval by heads of government.

Known as ENFOPOL, the proposals were kept hidden from the European Parliament until campaigners revealed their existence recently. Behind these proposals is the hand of the United States intelligence services, which want to dovetail ENFOPOL with the secret ECHELON system.

ECHELON, which is already up and running, is a sophisticated system of monitoring international communications carried out by the National Security Agency in the US and GCHQ at Cheltenham, England, as well as Australia, New

Zealand and Canada. The EU plans are called ENFOPOL 19 and the details are buried deep in the European Commission after the original proposals were revealed by journalists writing for the German-based Internet journal *Telepolis*.

Plans for tapping satellite-based personal communications systems have been separated and are being discussed at a high level in the Commission. The demands that Internet companies provide personal data about subscribers is now included in "other Council resolutions to be adopted". Another requirement will be that Internet companies set up high security interception interfaces inside their premises. A new policy for dealing with cryptography is being dealt with separately.

ENFOPOL 19 also suggests that some tapping systems could operate through a "virtual interface". This would mean installing special software at Internet access points, controlled remotely by government security agencies.

The plan is to smuggle the proposals through in parts to escape scrutiny by Euro-MPs because the parliament is being dissolved for

elections. The real authors of ENFOPOL 19 are, however, in the United States, and have their origin in a secret group created by the FBI in a bid to bypass Congressional supervision. This is called the International Law Enforcement Telecommunications Seminar, or ILETS.

It began life in 1993 in America, when police and security agency representatives met to work out to control the explosion in electronic communications that was just under way. Since then, this murky body has influenced and changed government policy in country after country.

ILETS met in Bonn in 1994 and agreed a joint policy in a joint policy in a document called "International Requirements for Interception".

Attached to the ILETS policy paper was a detailed set of monitoring requirements. In March 1994, the Dutch government proposed that Europe adopt these.

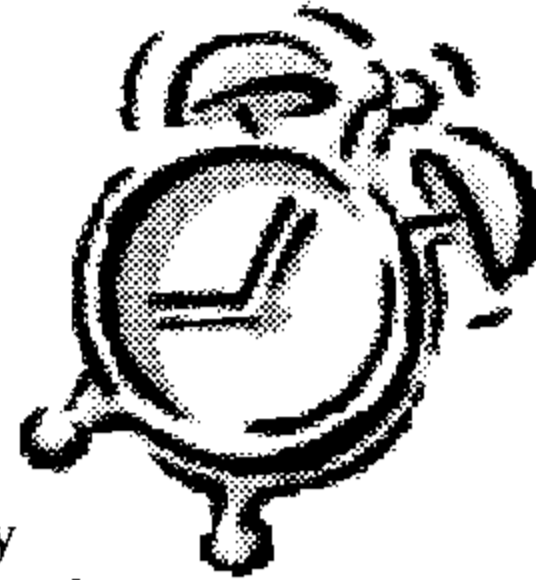
Ministers were not told that the document had been written by ILETS. It remained completely secret for nearly two years, and was not published in the Official Journal of European policy until late 1996.

As the use of the Internet developed at an uncontrollable pace, ILETS expert committees drew up new "requirements" to intercept e-mails and other data. During July 1998, ILETS experts met in Rome to settle the new conditions and the results are now the essence of the secret manoeuvres in Brussels.

Much of the information for this article came from the net magazine Telepolis, www.heise.de/tp

The 24 hour consumer society

Martin Wright examines the claims behind the promise of greater leisure



ONE OF THE AIMS of the Movement for a Socialist Future is to provide a healthier working environment and therefore a more enjoyable lifestyle, two of the main points being:

- A reduction in hours with no loss of pay to end unemployment
- The use of technology to cut the working week

There is much scepticism about how we can achieve this as we were promised a "three-day week" as far back as the mid-1980s. But working life in the 1990s still revolves around shift work and infringes ever more upon the weekend, as retail trading hours have been extended.

Will we ever experience an increase in our leisure time? According to Leon Kreitzman's* research, we are heading towards a "24-hour society", which will give us more flexibility in our lives and therefore a possible increase in

leisure time.

Yet the 24-hour society is the result of our consumer society where we have ended up choosing money over time.

Most retail and service companies are now accessible seven days a week. Although banks are only open on Saturday mornings, they continue to provide a telephone banking service for the remainder of the weekend. While supermarkets are restricted to trading for only six hours on a Sunday, many now open for 24 hours during the week.

The people who are employed at supermarkets and telephone call centres to work these irregular shifts, then generate a further demand for products and services.

A supermarket worker who finishes at midnight may want to rent a video on the way home, so the

video store stays open longer. A mother who works on a Sunday morning needs to leave her child with a childminder. So the childminder needs a launderette that opens early to get the chores finished before work begins.

Everyone ends up working unnatural hours but because all services continued to be provided over a 24 hour period, society continues to function.

As barriers, or perceptions, of time are being removed, there are more possibilities available to us. The day begins when public transport starts running and the days ends when the white dot appears on television. The sunrise and sunset are now outdated indicators of time.


Communications technology has also removed barriers of time. Instantaneous world-wide communication is now possible irrespective of time zones. A fax or an e-mail sent from one time zone will be processed in another, while the sender sleeps.

With the advent of new working patterns, so new job vacancies are created. A role that may have previously required one person becomes a job share for three people. Companies no longer need to assemble all their staff in one location to provide a productive working environment.

The distributed office of today can include multiple offices and multiple homeworkers all contributing to the same work.

The potential for increased leisure time is patently there. How we begin to understand that time is more precious than money, and bring about the changes we need, is more difficult. ■

***The 24 Hour Society**
Leon Kreitzman, Profile Books, £16.99



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art and artists

East Asia *not* through Western eyes

by Corinna Lotz

THE LATE 20th century has seen the rise of mega-cities throughout the world. The speed of city formation in east Asia over the last two decades is the most rapid ever seen in history.

The rise of these metropolitan centres is due to the rapid economic growth of the 1980s, which attracted millions from the countryside. The search for a better life is the force behind this astonishing expansion.

In China, the scale and momentum of such migration has given rise to a special word: *mengliu* or “blind flow”.

The vast social turmoil, which is contemporary east Asia, can be experienced without travelling further than London’s South Bank. The combination of growth and decay throughout the region dominates every part of *Cities on the Move*, which is brilliantly shoe-horned into the Hayward Gallery.

This joint project involving over 100 artists, architects and film-makers, not only from east Asia but also Europe and America, has created a microcosm of chaos, energy, creativity as well as anguish and destruction.

What the exhibition reveals in a dramatic way is the nature of the transformation taking place in urban centres in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam and Japan.

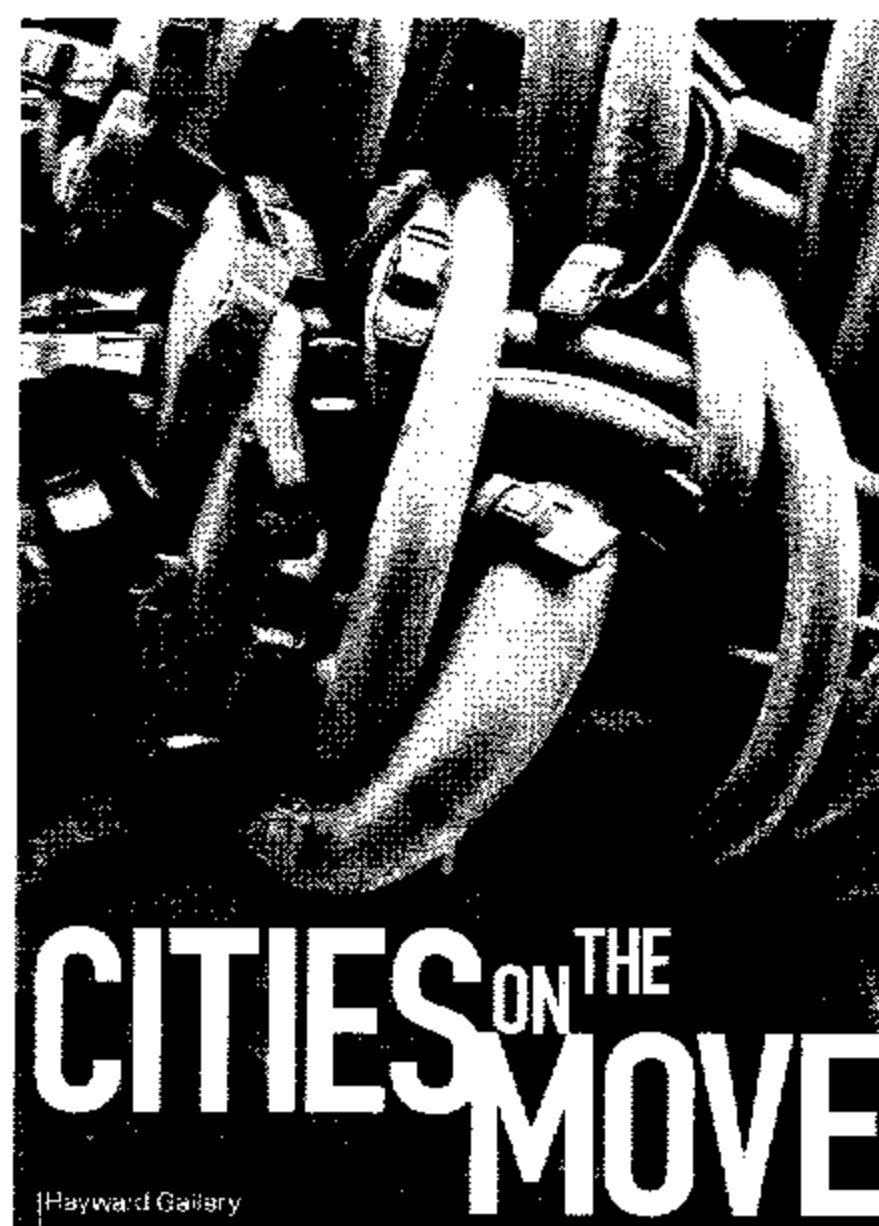
Changes are viewed through the eyes of highly self-conscious artists who are not shy about highlighting the human cost of globalisation and the despotism of autocratic regimes.

Densely packed spaces are full of images and objects that catch the eye at every turn, with installations,

videos, and participatory experiences. Most refreshing is the combination of energy, ironic comment, quality of execution, and often remarkable aesthetic sensibility.

Unusually for a major London venue, there is a politically critical approach to current regimes and the whole process whereby “modernisation” destroys old cultures and traditions, and replaces them with kitsch and the identity of multinationals like Macdonalds.

The images created by Bangkok artist **Manit Sriwanichpoom**, for example, are cunningly constructed. The first shows an elegant man in a suit holding a gun to the temple of another man. It has a familiar feel,



this close-up of an ad hoc execution – an ironic update of the shocking picture of a National Liberation Army fighter in Saigon being executed by a South Vietnamese army officer during the 1968 Tet offensive against US imperialism.

In today’s world, it is not only



Tuk Tuk (1997), a Thailand motorized three-wheeler, decorated with accessories and advertising.

Opposite above: Still from the movie *Chungking Express* (1992), by Wong Kar-Wai, born in Shanghai, China and now working in Hong Kong.



men in uniforms, but representatives of corporations wearing Armani suits who kill people on behalf of global capital, it seems. The artist shows a group of frightened yuppies running on a railway line, carrying Chanel and other designer label bags. It is a pastiche, based on the notorious photo of a naked young girl trying

to escape napalm bombing in Vietnam. This time a corporate Western businessman is hunting down the victims.

The third image shows a gagged young man, the cloth over his mouth has "civilisation" written on it, and designer names are strapped across his brow. Direct colonial rule has been superseded by the rule of

the multi-nationals and enslavement by artificially stimulated fashions.

These black and white photos hang opposite **Hoy Cheong Wong's** glass case installation symbolising the Malay judiciary – judges' wigs and police batons made out of dung. Next to them is a row of bicycles mounted with cannons pointing at demonstrators.

We move on to **Surasi Kusolwong's** gaudy street market – all day-glow plastic buckets, umbrellas, inflated beach toys, baskets and clothes pegs. A long wooden display table is mounted on plastic tortoises.

A dragon-like beast snakes overhead as we descend from architectural models into a labyrinth of bicycle inner tubes crawling with thousands of toy cars. This is perhaps a metaphor for the vanquishing of pedal power by automobiles. It is by **Zhen Chen**, a Shanghai-born artist who makes Britain's David Mach look tame.

From the "heaven" of the street market, we are plunged into the red light district – a Dantesque inferno. Above, winged cherubs emit chitter-chatter from transmitters. As we squeeze through narrow alleyways, blond prostitutes display their breasts, flashing empty grins.

Their bland "Western-ness" contrasts with tender images of female beauty – a young woman assembling radios, schoolgirls in their immaculate dresses delicately picking their way across a vast rubbish dump.

The photographs are sensitive and moving, rather than exploitative, so we are left with a sense of corruption and decay, but of people who manage to rise above their circumstances. The neat but desperate shacks, home to jobless Tokyo construction, workers send the same message. ■

Cities on the Move: urban chaos and global change – East Asian art, architecture and film now. Hayward Gallery, until June 27. Adm. £6/£4. Open daily 10-6; until 8pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Free flow through space

MOLTEN, ragged shapes surge through Paul Tonkin's latest paintings. They have been described as "sonorous, brooding images. . . as though the forms were engaged in some kind of slow but temporarily suspended dance" (curator Cuillin Bantock). The heavily encrusted acrylic paint twists and turns in burnt oranges, browns and reds made more intense by swirls and highlights of contrasting greens, violets and blues. Go and see *Chromatic Scale*. Until July 3 at the deliBar (next to Smithfield Market) 117 Charterhouse Street, EC1



Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Saturdays 10am-6pm. Tonkin's paintings are also at www.artoffthewall.co.uk

Corruption rocks the 'Celtic Tiger'

Frank Hayes reports on a groundswell of public anger over corruption at the top of Ireland's political élite

BIG BUSINESS has bankrolled leading politicians in Ireland through write-offs, back-handers and dodgy deals, a series of revelations has confirmed.

The complete corruption of the political establishment is documented in a number of official tribunals now investigating how multi-millionaire businessmen bought off high-ranking politicians and were able to influence government policies on tax laws.

Tax amnesties were used to write off millions owed by big business and super-wealthy individuals who have evaded and avoided paying their proper share. At the same time, public spending on hospitals, education, welfare and other vital services are under attack by a chorus of rightist voices claiming that Ireland cannot afford these costs.

As the June Euro and local government elections approach, a

groundswell of anger is building up across the island over the dual standards which are now clearly exposed. One tax system for the rich, a different one for ordinary citizens. One law for the powerful, a different law for the majority.

While the capitalist media has trumpeted the strength of the so-called "Celtic Tiger" economy, they also call for continued "wage restraint" among workers.

Latest is the IT sector where employment has trebled in a decade. Employers complain about global competition in this saturated market and threaten workers with closures if they do not remain "competitive".

But more and more workers are now joining the queue, demanding a share of the capitalist spoils. Teachers, nurses, retained firemen ... even the police force have said they will not settle for more wage restraint. The much-troubled coalition government of Bertie Ahern is facing a summer of discontent on the wages front. Meanwhile, the corruption of capitalist politicians has spotlighted their subservient client relationship to the ruling class.

The recent outing of former

Taoiseach (prime minister), Charles Haughey, by his mistress has highlighted a lifestyle of massive self-indulgence bankrolled by big business. A second former Taoiseach, Garret FitzGerald, was exposed after receiving a massive write-off of money he borrowed from a bank to gamble on the stock market.

Another former minister has been caught taking bribes to arrange planning scams for big builders. Now there is a growing list of new evidence being sent to the tribunals and new witnesses are listed as the process extends.

The hypocritical "outrage" of the capitalist press in highlighting the activity of a few individuals can no longer mask the fact that Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Progressive Democrats, Labour and Democratic Left have been bought and paid for by big business over and over. Yet they try to foster the illusion that they represent an independent element standing over society.

Born in the revolutionary ferment of struggle against colonialism at the beginning of this century, these parties now try to hide behind the skirts of the transnational ruling class and its military cliques in mortal terror of what the working class will do when the illusion of the "Celtic Tiger" is shattered.

Regardless of the weather forecast, it looks like being a very hot summer in the Irish Republic. ■

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