



socialist

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Future

GLOBAL WARMING AT CRISIS POINT

GLOBAL WARMING is already threatening the extinction of cod fish stocks in the North Sea and is also behind a dramatic melting of the Arctic polar ice cap.

If the ice continues to thaw, it will quickly lead to a rise in sea levels, severe climate changes and the disappearance of many parts of low-lying Europe under water, scientists warn.

Together with over-fishing, the fear of sea warming led European Union scientists to urge fisheries ministers to slash catch quotas by 40% as a precaution against losing the entire industry.

In the last six years winter sea temperatures in the North Sea have risen by a staggering 4°C. Warmer water means there is less surface plankton for the cod larvae to feed on and so fewer survive. Irish sea cod stocks have already collapsed.

Dr Robin Cook, head of the

BY DAVID LEWIS

fisheries management group at Aberdeen's marine laboratory, said the 4°C increase in six years was measured in the Faroe islands and Shetland channel where the North Atlantic spills into the North Sea, where temperatures there are normally between 5° and 8°C.

He said: "We cannot take the risk that cod will no longer be able to maintain the productivity they once did. If the stock collapsed, we might never get it back."

Meanwhile, scientists have reported that the Arctic ice cap has shrunk by an area bigger than Texas in 20 years. They say global warming caused by human activity is almost certainly to blame.

Computer models confirmed that dwindling ice cover was due to rising greenhouse gas levels caused

by the impact of burning fossil fuels and felling of huge areas of forest.

Other scientists also studied measurements of ice thickness taken by US submarines. They report that the ice over the deep-water Arctic ocean has thinned from an average of 3.1 metres to 1.8 metres, at the rate of about 15% per decade.

Snow and ice help to cool the Earth by reflecting energy from the Sun – up to 80% – straight back out into space. The sinking, cold, dense, salty water which is created as ice forms also helps to drive ocean currents which redistribute heat around the planet.

International agreements to cut greenhouse gas emissions have come to nothing, mainly because the major US multinational companies are refusing to take part in case they lose a competitive advantage. It is a case of profit before the future of the planet. ■

The future is socialist

THE START OF the year 2000 gave billions of people celebrating the millennium pause for thought about the future. Even for just one night, it made them think about where humanity is going.

As the cities of the world thronged and throbbed with people, the millennium night also demonstrated what a potentially explosive social force the mass of the population is when it is on the move.

Equally significant, the way the millennium was marked all over the world reinforced the global consciousness which has been emerging steadily, especially over the last year.

The media was full of speculative predictions about what the future holds. None of them admit the possibility that the future can be determined by the mass of the people. They can only see it as a continuation of rule by the rich and powerful.

But the future is an objective, unfolding, historical process experienced by us in the present. It is *conditioned* by the past, but not pre-determined by it.

History is made by human beings within nature, acting in a socially, interactive way. So it is possible to think and act consciously about the future, and the way we want society to develop.

We do not start in the dark, either. Karl Marx – voted the “thinker of the millennium” in a BBC online poll – discovered the general objective laws of the development of human society for us to build on.

The basis of human society are the relations people enter into for the

immediate process of production. In capitalist society, these are simply expressed as the relations between those who own and control the means of production, and those who work for these owners.

These relations, and the conflict within them nationally and internationally, are the driving force of historical change, Marx showed. At certain times, society has to endure a revolutionary change for it to advance. This occurs when the material productive forces can no longer co-exist with the way they are owned and controlled. It is precisely that period of history we are living in now.

The year 2000 and the immediate future are unique due to revolutions in technology and the production process. This has given people the potential to determine their own future more than ever before. The expansion of production has created conditions where the basic requirements of human beings can easily be satisfied in fields of work, health, food, shelter and culture.

Yet millions around the planet experience in their daily lives, the contradiction between this possibility and:

- intense exploitation at work
- growing poverty within capitalist countries
- hunger and starvation in developing nations

- growing personal debt
- a constant threat to employment
- low wages for many
- growing homelessness
- corporate greed
- environmental degradation
- unbridled power of global corporations
- governments that exist only to serve the corporations
- political disenfranchisement of the majority of people.

Global capitalism is an unsustainable and unstable system. Global warming means that large parts of south eastern England will be under water by the middle of the century unless drastic action is taken now. It contributed to the floods which caused 60,000 deaths in Venezuela last month. Markets are glutted by corporations who have to increase sales year-on-year just to survive.

In a desperate bid to overcome its problems, capitalism claims to have invented a “new economy” based on the Internet. This encouraged a stock market frenzy in 1999. But in the first days of the 21st century, shares in companies like Amazon – which reported growing losses not profits – plummeted. In London, the stock exchange recorded its largest ever one-day fall. This bubble will burst completely, wiping out many small investors overnight and precipitating a deep slump.



The ability of people to participate in a mass way in making history is enhanced by the changed circumstances of working lives. Most people work within complex socialised production systems which are planned, linked up and controlled by information technology. This technology itself is the product of socialised labour at many levels.

It is socially uniform and cuts across age, national borders and language barriers in a totally unprecedented way. For example, you don't need an ID card or a passport to surf on the Internet! All you need is a computer and an Internet service provider.

The rapid globalisation of the world economy is producing a global reaction, most sharply seen in the United States, where super-exploitation, jobs instability, and environmental degradation led tens of thousands to protest in Seattle on November 30.

In the wake of the June 18 protest in the City of London, what we now see is the emergence of a global consciousness, fuelled by the revolution in communications technology, in response to the rule of the multinationals.

Those who gathered in London, Seattle and in other cities around the world last year had a variety of reasons for protesting, not all of them "socialist". But while a variety of grievances may bring people together, when they do gather, a



new social awareness arises. We must seize the time to build on this and take it forward. For the first time workers and young people are targeting the capitalist system as a whole, not simply chipping away at aspects of it.

This itself is a leap forward in consciousness. The Movement for a Socialist Future's own event in London on November 21 showed that this idea is beginning to gain strength, not only as a protest, but as a *movement* striving towards an alternative society.

Capitalism is being rejected by millions, which enables the MSF to show how social co-operation and ownership of the means of production, including global

corporations is the only democratic alternative to the profit system.

Attempts by capitalism to overcome its own problems have created not only the possibility but the necessity for a transition to a socialist society.

Its very success in increasing and extending production mean that natural resources are being used up at a rate which spells destruction of the environment we all depend upon for life itself. The future, if left in the hands of the multinationals and their governments like New Labour, is growing trade/military conflicts and wars and countries ruled in an authoritarian manner.■

Photographs from Seattle Nov.30
Internet sites www.tradewatch.org;
www.seattle99.org;
www.seattlewto.org;
www.ifg.org

New Labour brings back Poor Law

PLANS TO cut the benefits of mothers of young children if they breach court orders are a return to the Poor Law, say probation officers.

Ministers are planning to punish those who fail to obey community sentences by introducing new "hardship payments", which will barely cover subsistence.

A leaked Department of Social Security document states: "The effect of this measure on a lone parent with one child aged under 11, receiving income support, would be to reduce benefit entitlement by 40% of the single adult rate – a reduction of £20.55 per week."

Offenders with no children could lose all their £51.40 jobseekers' allowance, while people with seriously ill dependants would lose

20% of benefits. After two weeks, people would be entitled to apply for a "hardship" allowance of just £30.85 a week.

Harry Fletcher, secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said the plans smacked of the 1834 Poor Law. Under this, minimal cash payments were made to the destitute while the poorhouse was the option for those unable to work.

"The fact that the hardship fund has been established shows that the government acknowledges that the provisions will cause financial problems."

Lawyers say the plans breach the European Convention on Human Rights because they amounted to punishment before any trial. ■

CAMPAIGN TO FREE MUMIA

LEADING US educators and writers, including Noam Chomsky and Toni Morrison, have demanded a new trial for condemned African-American journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has spent the last 17 years on death row in Pennsylvania.

In an advert in the *New York Times*, they say: "His writings have galvanised student learning in new ways, especially in low income communities and among people of colour, whose economic and educational needs are being subordinated to the increased funding for more prisons to warehouse our youth, and for police forces."

Abu-Jamal has written two books and published over 400 columns since his incarceration.

His supporters say: "Abu-Jamal's execution would constitute the ultimate censorship of his eloquent and powerful exposure of criminal injustice in America. It would allow politicians and elements of law enforcement to think they can narrow the scope of education in our

society, and limit our writers' freedom of expression."

Jamal's demand for justice and a new trial is supported by an international campaign which has won widespread support, as well as by American artists, scientists and trade unions. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union closed down west coast ports for the day last year in his support.

The 1982 trial that convicted Jamal of killing a Philadelphia police officer has been challenged by leading legal analysts and scholars.

Jamal's lawyers have presented compelling evidence that key witnesses were intimidated or coerced to provide false testimony, that a purported "confession" was fabricated by police, and that vital evidence pointing to his innocence was withheld from the defence. A judge is due to consider his latest appeal in the spring.

There are over 3,500 people on death row in the USA, the majority of them black. ■

Big Brother state is on its way

New Labour is pushing on with its plans to build an authoritarian state, with new laws aimed at radical protest and Internet communications. Civil liberties groups have condemned the Prevention of Terrorism Bill, which gives the government the power to ban organisations – and membership of them – which are considered a "threat". To speak at meetings of such organisations will also be a crime.

The Bill defines terrorism as "the use or threat, for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause of action which involves serious violence against any person or property" or which creates a "serious risk to the health or safety of the public".

Clearly New Labour has militant protesters against its rule in mind in framing this law, rather than terrorists. Protests planned against global capitalism could easily be swept up by the new laws on the ground that violence could result.

John Wadham, director of the civil rights organisation Liberty, said the Bill "risks infringing the rights to a fair trial, to freedom from unlawful detention, to freedom of speech and freedom of association".

Meanwhile, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Bill will strengthen covert surveillance and provide for state access to encrypted data.

The government sneaked this in, after dropping similar proposals from another Bill on electronic communications. ■

Dam projects punish the people

FROM INDIA to the Philippines, Brazil to Uganda, indigenous peoples are organising resistance to the construction of big dams and challenging the dubious science behind these multi-billion dollar projects.

Land, water and forest has been seized by governments from peoples who have lived there for thousands of years, but who have no ownership rights as far as the states are concerned. For example, it is estimated that some 30 million Indians have been displaced by dam projects since independence.

But the dams are failing to deliver the promised fresh water and irrigation. The only beneficiaries are industrial processes, which waste and pollute water, and the middle class living in cities.

Dams have helped India meet its targets for power generation, but because of the expansion of cities and industry, 80% of Indian villages are still without electricity.

In this special report, **KATE MCCABE** explains how indigenous peoples lose their land, rivers and forests to projects promoted by the World Bank and big construction companies

Any benefits are short-lived, as the reservoirs behind big dams, and riverbanks upstream, immediately begin to silt up. Because of the absence of proper drainage, the land irrigated by dam canals then becomes waterlogged.

Natural drainage and aquifers are destroyed, preventing water extraction by less drastic means. The sea pushes further inland from disrupted river deltas, causing salination of formerly productive farmland.

And yet governments, desperate to compete in the global economy,

continue to build these monsters, mainly with money borrowed from the World Bank, and paid to giant Western construction conglomerates.

The biggest-ever dam project is the Narmada Valley Project in India, which proposed to build 3,200 dams along the length of the Narmada River through the North Western states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

The series of dams would force the river to make a 90° right turn flowing into a network of canals. If the scheme is completed it will affect the lives of 25 million people, and destroy 4,000 square kilometres of natural broadleaf forest. In total half a million people are threatened with displacement by the reservoir, the 47,000 mile canal network and associated works.

The key to the project is the Sardar Sarovar Dam, which has become the focus for world-wide opposition, and has given rise to ☺

TURKEY

BLAIR BACKS DAM IN KURDISTAN

New Labour is pushing ahead with plans to support construction of a dam in south eastern Turkey, though it will destroy Kurdish land and may be in breach of international law.

Construction giant Balfour Beatty asked the government to back the building of the Ilisu dam project with a £200m loan from the British taxpayer.

Under the United Nations convention on shared rivers, Syria and Iraq would both have to agree to the dam. Neither country was consulted and both have objected, as has the Arab League.

The plan is to dam the Tigris river 40 miles from Turkey's joint borders with Syria and Iraq. The dam will flood 15 Kurdish towns and 52 villages, leaving 16,000 homeless. It will inundate the Kurds' ancient cultural centre and the city of Haenkeyf, one of the best-

preserved medieval cities in the world. The local population was not consulted, in breach of human rights conventions that Britain is signed up to.

Even the World Bank refused to touch the project, but New Labour claims to be satisfied that proper environmental and human rights safeguards are in place.

Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman Menzies Campbell revealed that the decision is being forced through against the advice of Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott and Trade Secretary Stephen Byers.

"I don't know if it was the Prime Minister's personal intervention, but it is clear that No.10 has become involved in this and that the misgivings of these three senior Cabinet Ministers have been set to one side." ■

Adivasis (tribal people) of the Narmada Bachao Andolan go on fighting to defend their homes even as the waters rise

a powerful movement of Adivasis, tribal people, who are determined to save their homes and their land.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) has been fighting the project for 15 years and four years ago obtained a Supreme Court ruling that no more work should be done on the dam. By that time it had reached 80.5 metres.

A further 3 metres were permitted last year, flooding more land and villages. People refused to leave their houses, but were removed by police and severely beaten.

The Indian government's justification for the project is its claim that drought-stricken regions of Kutch and Saurashtra in Western Gujarat will receive water for drinking and irrigation.

The sharp differences between those who are fighting the dam, and the Indian middle class who support it as necessary modernisation, were revealed at a meeting in London



recently. Medha Patkar, a spokesperson and founder of the NBA, was repeatedly accused, by students and representatives of the Indian High Commission, of lack of patriotism for speaking out against the dam project. She was also accused of not caring about the drought-stricken farmers of Gujarat.

But there is no conflict between the poor of the Narmada valley and those living in the drought-stricken

regions. Only 1.6% of cultivable land in Kutch comes under the command area of the dam. In Saurashtra the figure is 9.24%. And even here, the water will arrive only if the dam reaches the capacity claimed by the government. Most experts now agree its figures overestimate the volume of water in the Narmada river.

Meanwhile, simpler, more local initiatives which could improve

PHILIPPINES

DAMS ARE WRECKING TRIBAL LANDS

The Government of the Philippines is planning a total of 14 hydropower dam projects between 1999 and 2005, mostly located in territory belonging to the country's traditional indigenous peoples.

The biggest is over the Agno river, which provides the cultural heritage and the livelihood of one of largest tribes, the Ibaloy. For thousands of years they have grown rice, grazed animals and fished the river. Their ancestral burial grounds are on its sloping banks.

The Ambuklao and Binga dams were built across the Agno in the 1950s. They have caused devastation, waterlogging and submerging farmland and preventing access to the river because the banks are silted up. Many of the Ibaloy's cultural sites have been destroyed.

Some families were resettled, not to give them an alternative, but to suppress their opposition to further dam building. Some were removed to the uninhabited island of Palawan, which proved unfit for habitation. Others were dumped on land that actually belonged to other indigenous peoples. Now a plan for a third dam over the Agno has been resurrected. If built, the San Roque dam will be the biggest in Asia – 200 meters high and 1.13 kilometres long. It will cost about \$1.19bn and will require huge international loans.

American and Japanese multinationals are lining up for the construction contracts. Meanwhile, the power generated by existing dams has benefited industry, offering cheaper fuel for corporations, but left the people of the Agno river valley without power or fresh water. ■



irrigation and provide drinking water are not funded in the drought-stricken areas because all the state of Gujarat's water and irrigation budget is being spent on the dam.

Apart from water, the dam will generate electricity, but it will consume more power than it produces. Booker prize-winning novelist Arundhati Roy, in her essay against the dam, *The Greater Common Good*, declares that dams

are "a brazen means of taking water, land and irrigation away from the poor and giving it to the rich".

Since the Supreme Court ruling, the World Bank and some large companies have withdrawn from the project, though the German-based transnational Siemens is still involved and has asked the German government to give it a \$133m export credit loan guarantee to cover any losses.

While the Indian government backs the Narmada project, the Ugandan government is finding out what happens when developing countries try to pull out of dam building. It has now decided that the dam proposed across the Nile at the Bujagali Falls will simply add to its foreign debt, destroy an important tourist attraction, and that the only body certain to gain from it is an American construction company. But President Museveni told the Ugandan parliament that the US

government has warned that failure to approve the dam would threaten Uganda's relationship with the US.

The international dam construction industry is worth \$20bn a year to global capitalism. The World Bank offered a \$450m loan to build the Sardar Sarovar, before any environmental or social impact study was carried out. Most of the affected people did not even know such a plan was being discussed.

Those who have already been moved from the banks of the Narmada have been offered poor land hundreds of miles from their homes, and cash, which is of no use to them.

They become landless labourers and their networks, communities and cultures are destroyed. As Mehda Patkar told the London meeting: "The World Bank enables the government to take from the people their only capital – the land, the rivers, the forest." ■

LESOTHO

WEST BACKED APARTHEID WATER THEFT

Western governments backed the former apartheid South African regime in a scheme to build a dam which will destroy the lives of thousands of its neighbours.

The facts emerged as the government of the southern African state of Lesotho charged some of Britain's major construction companies with bribery. Balfour Beatty, Amec, Kier International, Stirling International and engineering company Sir Alexander Gibbs and Partners, are members of consortia accused of funnelling more than £1.2m into the Swiss bank account of the manager of the Katse dam project. All deny the charges.

The network of dams and tunnels is one of the world's biggest construction projects, and siphons water from Lesotho to South Africa. Lesotho is completely surrounded by South Africa and struggles to maintain its

independence. The project was foisted on it in the 1980s, with the support of the World Bank which has paid £150m of the £5bn cost.

Already communities in the Lesotho highlands have been devastated. Thousands of people have lost their land and no longer have access to fresh water. The water collected by the dam is owned by South Africa and the people of Lesotho cannot use it, even in a drought.

The Observer newspaper obtained documents showing the World Bank knew of the corruption allegations and tried to cover them up. It has also found evidence of a secret bank account in London, where the British, French, German and US governments could deposit funds to support the Katse dam project, without letting it be known they were financing the apartheid regime. ■

The truth behind the terror

FROM 1932 to early 1937, Stalin and the bureaucratic machine which by then controlled the Soviet Communist Party and the state, destroyed all opposition through show trials, mass arrests, purges, and executions.

The publication of this study* sheds new light on the historical truth of that period. It briefly traces the background to Stalin's rise to power, covering the three-year civil war launched by the White Russians against the 1917 Bolshevik revolution; the "Red Terror"; the banning of factions in the Bolshevik party; the New Economic Policy in 1921; the struggle for leadership following the death of Lenin in 1924; Trotsky's campaign against bureaucratism and for increased party democracy; the formation of the New or United Opposition to Stalin in 1926; Trotsky's expulsion from the Party and in 1929 his deportation.

The story that emerges is one in which the party élite, including Stalin, reacted with fear and anxiety to the disastrous position after the 1929-32 period of famine, repression and social upheaval that their own forced collectivisation policies had caused.

Fear of losing control, even of losing power, led them into a series of steps to protect their position and manage the situation. They sanctioned and built a unifying cult around Stalin, stifling even the hint of dissent within the élite.

Ranks were closed around a rigid notion of party discipline and the party-state apparatus embarked on a programme of centralisation in everything – from administration to culture.

The painstaking process of historical research uses recently released documents, mostly from the former Central Party Archive of the Soviet Communist Party. Their contents, including secret transcripts

Recent research sheds new light on the mass persecutions carried out by the Stalin regime which governed the USSR in the 1930s, writes ROBERT KNIGHT



Stalin in 1932 with Kirov (left) and Mikoyan (far left). The murder of Kirov in 1934 was used by Stalin as a pretext for the purges.

of the Central Committee and Politburo, caused one of the authors, J. Arch Getty to revise many of his previous beliefs: "The sources show neither a master plan to carry out the terror nor a 'liberal opposition' that tried to stop it...the various initiatives that collectively preceded the terror were often ad hoc, reactive, and mutually contradictory. As such they no longer can be seen as parts of a single plan.

"Stalin worked assiduously towards the goal of enhancing his power and centralising authority in Moscow. Even when he was not the author of events, he was master at turning them to his own personal and political advantage.

"But even in Stalin's office, there were too many twists and turns, too many false starts and subsequent embarrassing backtracking to support the idea that the terror was the culmination of a well-prepared and long-standing master design. Stalin was not sure exactly what kind of repression he wanted nor how to get it until rather late in the story. He seems not to have decided on a wholesale massacre until early in 1937. But when he did, his uncertainty was replaced by a fierce determination to root out all sources

of real or imagined disloyalty."

The authors found no evidence, aside from some small discussion circles, that there was any significant organised political opposition after 1932. There were no internal threats to justify the scale of the repression which then unfolded, rather a sense of nervousness, even frequent panic. "Unlike the competing discourses about control and centralisation in 1932-37, the 1937-38 terror was centrally authorised chaos. It was the negation of politics."

In the end, the Stalinist bureaucracy was unsustainable in historical terms, as Trotsky had maintained. It broke up in the 1980s under the impact of the political revolution led by Mikhail Gorbachev.

In seeking to answer the question "how was all this possible", the authors importantly help undermine the myth that Stalinism was the inevitable product of the Bolshevik Revolution. ■

**The Road to Terror, Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939*, J Arch Getty and Oleg V. Naumov, Yale University Press. New Haven and London 1999. £22.50

Why America keeps secrets from itself

US SENATOR Daniel Patrick Moynihan sees himself as a "liberal anti-communist" who believes that government secrecy is the biggest threat to American society today and its "democracy".

Moynihan's fear of a right-wing coup in America is expressed in relation to the illegal mining of Nicaraguan harbours by the CIA and supported by President Reagan.

He is in agreement with Theodore Draper, who in his book on the Irangate scandal, said: "If ever the constitutional democracy of the United States is overthrown, we now have a better idea of how this is likely to be done."

In his introduction to Moynihan's book, the historian Richard Powers says: "It was a brush, almost a collision, with disaster, all brought on by the ability of the national security agencies (here the CIA and the National Security Council) to keep their activities secret – not from the enemy, which was well aware it was being mined, shot at, and otherwise discomfited, but from elected officials in the United States with the constitutional right and duty to know what was going on."

Moynihan experienced this first hand, and is well qualified to write a book on secrecy. He was on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and was,

A new book examines the secrecy of America's state within the state.

JOHN EDEN reports.

"among the few to whom Director of Central Intelligence William Casey was supposed to unveil his secrets".

For the author, "global communism" has been defeated, America alone is the world super power, and free market capitalism is the natural system of human relations. The implication of his outlook is that the interests of the

workers and the capitalists are the same and therefore there is no need for any government secrecy in a liberal democracy.

The book throws some light on the historical growth of intelligence agencies in America and their murky past and present. But because Moynihan is an anti-communist he only deals with those secrets that the intelligence agencies withheld from the American public and in some cases even the President.

Official secrets, the author claims, created a deep schism in American society, from which it still suffers today. This arose sharply after the end of the second world war, and the beginning of the

cold war against the Soviet Union.

The hunt for Soviet spies, led by the House Un-American Activities Committee, was seen by many Americans as an attack not on Soviet spies, but on loyal Americans who held different political ideas. Moynihan argues that if the facts about Soviet spying had not been kept secret, the distrust between the public and executive could have been avoided.

The book gives some insights into historical episodes of secrecy, and will undoubtedly be ignored by the American ruling class!

**Secrecy* by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Introduction by Richard Powers, Yale University Press £16.95, paperback £6.95

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An art world Schindler

IN 1918 MAX BECKMANN painted a disturbing scene of horror and upheaval, called *Night*. It was his reaction to the first world war and revolutionary upheavals which followed.

Night had a huge impact on a young art dealer called Günther Franke. He was to keep it on his study wall for many years.

At his Munich gallery at 46 Barerstrasse, Franke specialised in displays of first-class modern European artists such as Picasso, Braque, Ernst, Kandinsky, Klee, Leger, Masareel, Corinth, Munch, Van Gogh and Nolde during the 1920s and early 1930s.

Franke, who had an unassuming, modest personality, appreciated Beckmann's ability to express the harsh realities around him, whilst still retaining a poetic artistic vision. Beckmann dared to say shocking things in a bold, confident way. He was a master of the visual metaphor, an early magical realist.

As the Nazi horror grew in Germany, Franke found in Beckmann's interpretation of reality a kind of mental and emotional comfort. In turn, during the Nazi period, Franke ensured that Beckmann's work survived and provided the artist with an income.

Today, for the first time, thanks to the work of Friends of Beckmann Archive Society, the Bavarian State Gallery of Modern Art has acquired 300 letters between the artist and his dealer during the Hitler years. A selection of their correspondence, along with 29 paintings, will be on view in Munich for the next few months.

Like many of the modern school of painters in Germany, Beckmann was viciously persecuted by the Nazi regime. It wanted only art which satisfied its needs. For the public it wanted heroic figures which perpetuated racist myths or sickly sentimental kitsch. Privately

In this exclusive report, CORINNA LOTZ tells the intriguing story of an art dealer who went on selling prohibited art under the noses of the Nazi high command

Right, Max Beckmann
Dance Bar Baden-Baden 1923
Next page left, Franke
in front of Beckmann's
**Self-Portrait in grey dressing
gown with sculpture** 1941,
right Beckmann in his
Amsterdam studio 1938.



the Nazi leaders stole great art from war booty for their personal use.

One top German art collector, Lilly von Schnitzler, had big canvases by Beckmann on the walls of her home, where she frequently entertained guests from the Nazi élite.

In 1937 work by artists who painted in an Expressionist style or belonged to the New Objectivity movement was confiscated from public collections. It was paraded before the public in the notorious "Degenerate Art" show held in Munich, by that time the capital of the Nazi movement.

Anything which did not conform to the most boring and safe traditional styles was held up as "evidence" of how people were being duped by curators who were wasting public money on them. Gallery directors and artists were

denounced as Jews or foreigners who inflicted corrupting and worthless objects on unsuspecting Germans.

The art works shown at Munich's Haus der Kunst (Art House) were either burned or sold in Switzerland to boost the foreign reserves of the Hitler dictatorship. A long list of people were banned from showing their work.

Dr Christian Lenz, head of the Beckmann archives, told *Socialist Future* how on September 19, 1937, the day after "Auntie Emma" (Beckmann's ironic nickname for Hitler) denounced the "degenerates" at the Haus der Kunst, Beckmann and his wife left Berlin for Amsterdam. He was never to return to Germany.

Despite the Nazi terror, Franke found ways of saving the work of the artists he admired. Through Dr

Photo Hugo Erfurth 1942



Photo Helga Fietz



Hetsch, an official in the Berlin Ministry of Propaganda, he negotiated the exchange of "forbidden" canvases for more acceptable works by Romantic painters.

He continued to deal in forbidden art in a back room of his gallery. He now had his premises in Briennerstrasse, a stone's throw from the Nazis' new mausoleum-style headquarters. Franke and his assistants displayed "safer" work in the window and front areas as camouflage.

Beckmann's son Peter, a Luftwaffe officer, brought back canvases from Holland to Berlin using military vehicles. Other paintings were transported to Germany by art historian and critic Bernhard Degenhart.

Only trusted friends were invited to Franke's summer house on the Starnberger Lake, south of Munich, to see the paintings and prints, and could make purchases.

If anyone had betrayed him, his gallery and business would have been shut down, but no one did. Indeed, except for a short period in 1940, when Franke was drafted into the army but soon dismissed as unfit for combat, he continued to retain contact with Beckmann and other artists in his stable.

Early in January 1941 Franke travelled by rail to see Beckmann in Amsterdam. He returned to Munich

with three paintings "rolled up in the luggage rack". He sent payments for these and other works, including one instalment of 1,000 Reichsmark.

In February 1944, the ever-loyal dealer celebrated Beckmann's 60th birthday with a private exhibition at his lakeside retreat. The war over, Franke decided to transport a lorry-load of paintings to a new exhibition space – only to be arrested by the

US military authorities and sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment for unauthorised transport of art works.

Finally, when he succeeded in staging the first major Beckmann show in Germany, in the summer of 1946, he was rewarded with success, as 45,000 visitors passed through the small gallery.

In a final ironic twist, Franke's donation of 30 Beckmann works was ceremoniously handed over to the Bavarian state in July 1973 at the Haus der Kunst, where 36 years earlier, Hitler's diatribe, transmitted by radio, had condemned the artist to exile. ■

Selected correspondence and documents from the Beckmann archives plus the 30 art works donated by the Franke Foundation are on view at the Bavarian State Gallery of Modern Art, (January 20 until April 2). Thanks for background information are due to Dr Christian Lenz of the Max Beckman Archive Society of Friends.

World Music nights

London Spanish-style restaurant group *Bar Lorca* hosts free world music nights, featuring folk, traditional, soul, African and Latin music on two nights a week at its venues in Stoke Newington (Wednesday 9pm-1am, 175 High Street) and Brixton (Sundays 9pm - midnight, 261 Brixton Road).

Performers are mostly unsigned song-writers, singers, poets, percussionists and dancers from as far afield as Japan, Ghana, Brazil, and Grenada. Organiser Freddy Macha, himself a noted musician and poet from Tanzania, says: "Most of these musicians are not fanciful acts for a short-term market, but produce quality work that respects tradition, digs the roots, is groovy with soul – lots of soul and raw energy. And entrance is free."

Sun 16 Jan *new funk with attitude* Nigerian singer Lola Olasifoye & keyboard player Gabriel Olegavich

Wed 19 Jan *jazz night "chill out"* jazz with Carlos, Heinz & Hasegawa

Sun 23 Jan *oriental soul* Japanese singer Mina with Ugandan multi-instrumentalist Kaz Kasozi

Wed 26 Jan *Caribbean & Central American night* music & poetry of the Afro-Caribbean ladies "lioness chant"; Latin American with Ivan from Ecuador

Sun 30 Jan *Afro-Caribbean night* "lioness chant" with Grenada musician Emmanuel Callestus

Wed 2 Feb *two performers from Ghana* master percussionist Asabre Quaye from the Ga region; singer-songwriter Rose Dede Tete

Sun 6 Feb *rhythms night* the drums of Asabre Quaye with guests; Winston's - soul, reggae, folk from the UK

Wed 9 Feb *from Grenada* singer-songwriter Emmanuel Callestus & Sadaka

For more info ring Freddy Macha 0171-5029814/ 0961-833040 or Bar Lorca 0207-2758659 / 0207274-5537

Chechen fighters thwart Russia

PRIME MINISTER Vladimir Putin is building his Russian presidential ambitions on the bones of thousands of Russian soldiers, Chechen fighters and hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians.

The second Chechen war launched by the IMF-backed Kremlin regime has devastated an entire country and reduced its capital, Grozny, to ruins. It has produced a nationalist reaction in Russia and what some have described as a "creeping coup".

Yet the barbaric attacks launched by Russian generals have met stiff resistance from Chechen guerilla fighters, who have inflicted heavy casualties on the invading forces as they did in the first war in 1996.

Chechyan academic and analyst Dr Aslambek Kadiev told the BBC: "There are two main reasons for the two wars which Russia has launched against Chechnya. The first is economic: Russia wants to control the Caucasus oilfields and pipeline routes.

"The second is connected with the political situation in Russia, and particularly inside the Kremlin.

"The political purpose of the first Chechen war was to increase Boris Yeltsin's popularity and get him re-elected president in 1996.

"The main aim of this



MSF members joined a demonstration in London demanding Russian troops out of Chechnya and self-determination for Chechnya and the North Caucasus.

second war is to ensure that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, a former spy and Yeltsin's anointed heir, becomes president at the next elections."

Moscow blamed the Chechens for a series of terrorist bombs placed in residential districts of Russian cities, and used this to justify the invasion. Since then, captured intelligence agents are said to have admitted to Chechens that it was their secret organisations that planted the bombs, to provide the authorities with the pretext to invade.

"Russia must get a clear message: it cannot continue the war in Chechnya because this is a war against civilians and the Chechen people. Russia is contravening the Geneva Convention by committing a mass

violation of human rights," says Kadiev.

"It is a war that is dangerous not only for Chechnya, but also for Russia itself, as it could affect the way the country develops. Will Russia remain a democratic state or will it become another nationalist or fascist state?"

Russian soldiers have given unprecedented interviews to the media about the heavy casualties they are suffering at the front. They described truck-loads of dead and injured coming back across the border.

Frontline soldiers speak of the Chechens keeping up a fierce counter-attack with machine guns and mortars, and say the real number of Russian dead is much higher than official figures admit. ■

GM PROTESTERS COME TO TRIAL

Twenty-two people were due to appear at Lincoln magistrates court in January charged with aggravated trespass following a protest at a GM crop trial site. In July last year, 48 people were arrested and charged with conspiracy to cause criminal damage after action was taken at a local GM maize site. Since then, half those arrested have had charges dropped while the remainder had their charges reduced to aggravated trespass. ■

MEMBERSHIP GOING UP

Trade union membership rose in 1999 for the first time in 19 years. Returns from unions show current total membership of 6.76 million, compared with 6.63 million a year ago. The increase is largely due to new affiliations. Figures show membership of existing unions has stabilised, with the number of women members increasing most sharply. ■