JAMAICA: ANOTHER TWO PARTY STATE

Last month Michael Manley of the People's National Party replaced Edward Seaga (Jamaica Labour Party) as Jamaican Prime Minister. Since Jamaican independence, the PNP and the JLP have taken it in turns to administer capitalism on the island. In fact, Manley's father Norman was a major figure in the independence movement and later prime minister, although his opposition to colonisation didn't stop him from calling in British troops to help put down an armed revolt by unemployed youth in 1959.

In the '60s the two parties became increasingly credited in the face of a number of social struggles that took place. These included a strike at the Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation in 1964 (which was supported by strikes by sugar, bauxite, hotel and other workers), violent clashes between slum dwellers and police in Kingston in 1966 and further riots in 1968.

When Michael Manley took over as leader of the PNP in 1969, he gave the party a new "radical" image in an attempt to head off this social movement. PNP's address was in patois rather than the Oxford English of the traditional ruling class, and when the PNP came to power in 1972 coups were thrown to the poor in the form of food subsidies etc.

"SOCIALISM" IN ONE BACKYARD

In 1974 Manley proclaimed "The days of capitalism are over, socialism is running the country now." This "socialism" was later seen to include signing a deal with the IMF under which food subsidies were abolished as part of a series of austerity measures. Between 1978 and October 1979 real incomes fell by 40%, and New Manley sent in soldiers and troops against strikers. In January 1979 there were rebellions in Kingston, Spanish Town and Montego Bay with over 500 barricades being set up in clashes with the police. Since Manley's attempt to manage the economic crisis was clearly failing the 1980 elections were engineered to bring Seaga to power.

"NEW REALISM" MANLEY STYLE

Today Manley has adopted the "new realism" which now predominates on the left. According to the Financial Times, in recent years he has instead "wooed the White House and even won over members of the right wing Her Majesty's Government in London." The Prime Minister's Downing Street hotline and his commitment to "corporatist" approach (attempts to integrate all parts of society into the system) is not new in Jamaican politics, and both parties have attempted to pose the secret machinations of world diplomacy and we cannot be sure what deals are being made behind the scenes. Some things are clear however.

In the West attention has mainly focused on Iran but it is in Pakistan and India that deaths have actually taken place, rather than just being talked about.

In Pakistan Bhutto, the Ochvidge-educated prime minister, is busy trying to shake up her tentative grip on the state. She is purging the army of old pro-Zia brigadiers. In particular she is out to clip the wings of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate. This organisation of 100,000 people was responsible for channelling $1 billion of U.S. aid to the Afghani rebels. They helped organise Zia's coup in 1977 and were involved in setting up the Islamic Democratic Alliance, the umbrella organisation which brought Bhutto old guard, in elections and now runs the Punjab. It is the I.D.A. which has been behind the demonstrations against Rushdie (as well as against having a woman prime minister) as part of its anti-Bhutto campaign.

At the same time the ISI has attempted to swing the Afghani Mujahedin behind the hardline Islamic fundamentalists. Khomeini's fatw (political condemnation) against Rushdie relates to Afghanistan as well as to his own internal problems. The Moscow threat to the USSR's intervention in the crisis. Mindful of the millions of Muslims in southern republics they are anxious to see a weak but stable regime in Kabul.

The commotion has also spread to India where the death toll has increased again in the context of mass unemployment and communal tension. The Indian state has been struggling against both Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism, as well as against the better known Sikh nationalism.

FREE EDITION

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILITANTS

Islamic fundamentalism, as we are told, is a throwback to middle ages fanaticism; Christianity on the other hand has emerged from its feudal "excesses" as modern, tolerant religion. This century however Christians have been directly involved in numerous atrocities. Between 1941 and 1945 for instance over 200,000 people were exterminated by the New Order, while the Vaticans attempt to forcibly convert local Serbs to Roman Catholicism in 1991 was similar. After the Vaticans backed Hitler while the Russian Orthodox Church backed Stalin and Churchill.

Last year 13 people were injured in Paris when tolerant Christians set light to a cinema showing the 'blasphemous' film "Last Temptation of Christ".

One significant policy is the proposal for the 'public participation' in decision-making, including a national advisory council with representatives from trade unions, 'community councils', business, the church etc. Such a "corporatist" approach (attempting to integrate all parts of society into the system) is not new in Jamaican politics, and both parties have attempted to spread their tentacles into the heart of the working class through their control of rival gangs in the slums and trade unions. The JLP was actually set up by the leaders of the BWA and the Trinidad Trade Union in 1944, while the PNP set up the rival National Workers' Union in 1952. Manley himself started out as a bureaucrat in the latter; his activities included working with the bosses of the bauxite plants to blacklist workers.

The mobilisation of sections of the poor in support of rival parties in Jamaica has been an effective means of divorcing any potential real opposition on the island. During the 1980 election over 700 people were killed in violence between supporters of the two parties; this year "only" 12 died. Whatever the difference in their rhetoric, the PNP and the JLP all have to offer is more of this feeding, exploitation and poverty.
Despite the rhetoric about reducing "waste in government", there is a blurred line between "necessary" government expenditure and "waste". Indeed, unions have always recognised that the government's role is to protect their interests and those of the workforce. The increase in the size of the British police force and the increase in the number of police officers shows the extent to which the government sees itself as a force for social control. The government has made it clear that it sees the police as the key agency for maintaining social order and preventing crime.

As capitalist competition increases, it has become necessary for businesses to reduce their costs, and this has led to an increase in the use of technology and automation. The government has encouraged this trend by providing subsidies and tax breaks for businesses that invest in new technology. However, this has come at the expense of jobs and the living standards of workers. The government has also been accused of cutting back on social services, which has led to an increase in poverty and inequality.

In the context of education, an assault on "education" is being made by the government. The government has been accused of reducing funding for universities and colleges, which has led to an increase in tuition fees and a decrease in the number of students who can afford to go to university. This has led to a decrease in the quality of education and an increase in the number of students who drop out of education.

In conclusion, the government's role in society is to maintain social control and to ensure that the interests of the wealthy and powerful are protected. The government has been accused of using the police as an instrument of social control and of reducing funding for education and social services. The government has been accused of making decisions that are in the interests of the wealthy and powerful, and that have a negative impact on the lives of ordinary people.
Despite the rhetoric about reducing "welfare dependency", the NIESR's report is at odds with the findings of an independent study by researchers at the University of Birmingham, who found that the increase in the size of the British prison population and a number of changes in the way the social security system works, which stands in the way of economic efficiency, have been accompanied by a dramatic increase in the involvement of the police and other state agencies in the control of the population. The report also focuses on social control, which it defines as "the phenomenon of people being targeted by the state in order to control them and prevent them from engaging in certain activities." The report argues that social control is not just about the state's efforts to control criminal activity, but also about the ways in which the state influences the behavior of individuals and groups through various means, such as education, welfare, and law enforcement.

The report also examines the role of the private sector in social control, arguing that the rapid expansion of the private security industry has led to a situation where the state is increasingly delegating the task of social control to private companies. The report cites examples of private security companies being involved in a wide range of activities, from monitoring and controlling student behavior in universities to providing security for banks and other financial institutions. The report argues that this trend is part of a wider shift towards a market-based approach to social control, where the state is increasingly relying on private companies to provide services that were previously the responsibility of the state.

The report also examines the role of technology in social control, particularly in relation to surveillance and data collection. It argues that the use of technology in social control is not just about monitoring individuals, but also about the ways in which the state collects and uses data to influence and control the behavior of individuals and groups. The report cites examples of the ways in which the state uses technology to monitor and control social movements, such as the use of social media surveillance tools in policing protests.

In conclusion, the report argues that social control is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon that involves a wide range of actors and institutions. It calls for a more nuanced and critical understanding of social control, one that takes into account the ways in which social control is used to maintain social order, but also the ways in which it is used to maintain social inequality.

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In the ’60s the two parties became increasingly distrusted in the face of a number of social struggles that took place. These included a strike at the Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation in 1964 (which was supported by strikes by sugar, bauxite, hotel and other workers), violent clashes between slum dwellers and police in Kingston in 1966 and further riots in 1968.

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“NEW REALISM” MANLEY STYLE

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One significant policy is the proposal for the “public participation” in decision-making, including a national advisory council with representatives from trade unions, ’community councils’, business, the church etc. Such a “corporatist” approach (attempting to integrate all parts of society into the state) is not new in Jamaican politics, and both parties have attempted to spread their tentacles into the heart of the working class through their control of rival gangs in the slums and trade unions. The JLP was actually set up by the leaders of the BHWI in 1944, the PNP set up the rival National Workers’ Union in 1952. Manley himself started out as bureaucratic in the latter; his activities included working with the bosses of the bauxite plants to blacklist workers.

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NONE SHALL ESCAPE

Radical perspectives in the Caribbean
by Fundi

This pamphlet was written by a revolutionary from Jamaica and includes a description of his involvement in strikes by meatpackers and sugar workers in 1967/8. From: News From Everywhere, Box 14, 136 Kingsland High Road, London E8 2NS (90p + A5 S.A.E.)

continued from front page

"IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL MATTER OF FREE SPEECH" (Thatcher)

"Free speech" is a myth in Britain and everywhere else. All states have attempted to suppress discussion, ideas, publications etc. when it suits them. In 1981 a Bondi man was jailed for 3 years just for giving out leaflets supporting riots. The New Official Secrets Act will make it easier than ever to jail government employees for exposing state secrets.

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILITANTS

Islamic fundamentalism, as so we are told, is a throwback to middle ages fanaticism; Christianity on the other hand has emerged from its feudal “excesses” as a modern, tolerant religion. This century however Christians have been directly involved in numerous atrocities. Between 1941 and 1945 for instance, over 200,000 people were exterminated in the New South German camp. As part of the Croatian fascists’ attempt to forcibly convert local Serbs to Roman Catholicism, a young American woman later said that the Vatican backed Hitler while the Russian Orthodox Church backed Stalin and Churchill.

Last year 13 people were injured in Paris when tolerant Christians set light to a cinema showing the blaspheamous film “Last Temptation of Christ”.

All our rulers use religious and other ideologies (with all their fine phrases about morality and justice) to make their rule seem more acceptable. This applies even in the USSR where humanity, but no less religious, slogans are used to doctoralize the proletariat. Dogmas perform this function (e.g. those bombing Afghan villages were doing their “duty to the brotherhood of man”). In the words of a famous revolutionary of the last century: “Everywhere, in short, religious or philosophical idealism...serves today as the flag of military, bloody and brutal force, of shameless material exploitation” (Bakunin, God and the State).

As much as we oppose Islam we also oppose any new Western crusade against Islam. The old cry remains as true as ever: “humanity will never be free until the last priest (and mullah) is hanged with the guts of the last capitalist”.

Peace in the Middle East

Behind the sabre-rattling in the Rushdie affair various factions are pursuing their interests. It is difficult for us to know exactly what is going on. The Frankgate scandal has exposed the secret machinations of world diplomacy and we cannot be sure what are being made behind the scenes this time. Some things are clear however.

In the West attention has mainly focused on Iran but it is in Pakistan and India that deaths have actually taken place, rather than just being talked about.

In Pakistan Bhutto, the Oxbridge-educated prime minister, is busy trying to shore up his tentative grip on the state. She is purging the army of old pro-Zia brigadiers. In particular she is out to clip the wings of the Inter Services Intelligence (I.S.I.) directorate. This organisation of 100,000 people was responsible for channelling $1 billion of U.S. aid to the Afghan rebels. They helped organise Zia’s coup in 1977 and were involved in setting up the Islamic Democratic Alliance, the umbrella organisation which bought those four dead journalists in 1983. She is running the country now”. This “socialism” was later seen to include having a woman prime minister as part of its anti-Rushdie campaign.

At the same time the I.S.I. has attempted to swing the Afghani Mujahedin behind the hardline Islamic fundamentalists. Khomeini’s followers (religious condemnation) against Rushdie relates to Afghanistan as well as to his own internal power struggle in Iran. So the U.S.S.R. is not simply the USSR’s intervention in the crisis. Mindful of the millions of Muslims in southern republics they are anxious to see a weak but stable regime in Kabul.

The commotion has also spread to India where the death toll has increased again in the context of mass unemployment and communal tension. The Indian state has been struggling against both Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism, as well as against the better known Sikh nationalism.

Peace in the Middle East

In Iran Khomeini is using the Rushdie affair to strengthen national unity, both by uniting the divided factions of the ruling class and keeping the lid on wider social discontent.

The ceasefire in the Gulf has not brought peace for the proletariat in Iran. State repression has been stepped up to new heights with more than 500 prisoners being executed in the last few months. This repression has not succeeded in crushing the class struggle that helped bring the war to an end; for instance in December workers at Parshe building company in Jardash started a successful strike for higher wages.

With the war over Rushdie has replaced Iraq as the enemy against whom all must unite. The Iranian poor are being told to forget their own interests and rush to the defence not only of the nation but of Islam itself.

"ABSOLUTE EVIL"

In the demodology of the West it is Khomeini not Rushdie who is the Great Satan-Mitterand has even referred to the threat as “absolute evil”. The western rulers are using the affair as a pretext for a pro-western government in Iran and to mobilise support for the anti-terrorist campaign within Europe (police repression is conveniently justified as a means of defending us from “Islamic terror”). The campaign is also being used to fuel racisim—witness Robert Maxwell’s call for the repatriation of Iranians (Sunday People, 19/2/89), and the Londoner who went to the Great British Way of Life in all the media.

THE WEST IS THE BEST?

President Bush has said that Khomeini’s statements are “deeply offensive to the norms of civilised behaviour”, neatly stating the lie that the West stands for the defence of humanity against barbarism. The governments of the USA, Europe and Iran are all expressions of a single world economic system which daily secures thousands of people to death through starvation, repression, “accidents” at work etc. And the West’s civilised behaviour has been every bit as brutal as Iran’s—remember the sinking of the Belgrano, the shooting down of an Iranian airliner by the USS Vincennes last year, or the French state’s bombing of “the Rainbow Warrior” (there was no question here of New Zealand breaking off diplomatic relations with France for “exporting terrorism to its soil”).