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A MORE REAL THING THAN BIG, BIG COKE:

THE NEW INTERNATIONALISM

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Abstract: We are faced with the decline of proletarian and socialist inter-nationalism, the rise of a 'middle-class and democratic' internationalism of the new social movements, the lack of contemporary internationalist strategy and theory, and the necessity to place the new 'shopfloor' labour inter-nationalism in relation to these. This requires 1) defining such terms as internationalisation, internationalism and solidarity, 2) identifying the mass subjects and political purposes of internationalism, 3) specifying the space or field occupied, the strategy, geographical direction and scope, 4) considering forms of organisation and communication, the role of organisers and intellectuals. The new understanding shows promise when applied to contemporary labour internationalism. It raises, however, the question of whether those stimulating internationalism practice amongst themselves what they are encouraging amongst workers.

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Introduction

In attempting to give labour internationalism contemporary meaning we are confronted with a number of problems. These have to do with the long decline of 'proletarian' or 'socialist' internationalism, with the dramatic development of 'middle-class' or 'democratic' internationalism, and with the virtual absence of contemporary Marxist theorising on internationalism. Let us consider this matter further.

Traditional labour internationalism, based on industrial wage-workers, strategically led by socialist parties, theoretically inspired by Marxist intellectuals, is moribund. Whilst some socialists and Marxists still display its symbols and follow its rituals (Hore 1985), others are either mourning its decease (Hobsbawm 1985) or even dancing on its grave (Nairn 1980)! So busy are these all, however, that they fail to recognise the existence or significance of the new worker internationalism.

There has over the last 10-15 years been a growth of 'shopfloor' or 'grassroots' labour internationalism, particularly between workers in multi-national companies, but also in relation to Solidarnosc in Poland, the British miners, worker struggles in South Africa, Chile and elsewhere (Waterman 1984). The meaning, purpose and potential of this remains, however, none too clear either to participants or observers. In so far as there is some theory or strategy coming out of these modest, but rich and varied, experiences, it is largely confined to 'trade-union internat-ionalism', having little relationship to a more general understanding of internationalism either historically or contemporaneously. In my ex-perience, there are even tendencies, amongst those mostly actively engaged in promoting such efforts, to reject attempts to examine or generalise from them. It is as if they believe that the activity is its own justification, that its meaning will emerge spontaneously, that the effort to interpret it represents an external manipulation likely to damage the delicate shoots.

The new labour internationalism cannot, however, be simply understood as a revival of the traditional project. It has to be seen alongside the new middle-class or democratic internationalisms of the human-rights, women's, environmental, peace and solidarity movements (with Poland, South Africa, etc.). And this for two reasons. Firstly because the new worker internationalism is a recent and fragile growth compared with these others. Secondly because of the relationship of the new labour internationalism to these others. Whilst the shopfloor internationalism does have certain roots in factories and worker communities, its most active agents are often university-educated professionals. These often have backgrounds in the other internationalist movements. And - as with the other internationalisms - finance for the new labour internationalism often comes from non-working-class sources such as church or development-agency funds. These, also, are facts that those involved in the new shopfloor internationalism have dif-ficulty admitting or coming to terms with.

The absence of contemporary Marxist theorising on internationalism is somewhat surprising. Marxists seem to be critically and creatively active theorising everything nowadays - even Marxism (Hartsock 1987, Bauman 1986, Stojanovic 1987). Marxist, Neo-Marxist or Post-Marxist theory, indeed, seems to be developing much more energetically than socialist political practice. For example, there has been over the past five to ten years an explosion in Marxist writing about nationalism (see Munck 1986 and its bibliography), with numerous original works exploring it historically, contemporaneously, regionally and theoretically. With one or two notable

exceptions (Brecher 1987, Nairn 1980), there is no such recent work on internationalism. Why there is so much attention to nationalism is not surprising. We are everywhere confronted by an identity, force, related political structures and processes that evidently have continuing purchase on labouring people. To the point, indeed, that nationalism has largely absorbed class identification and converted 'internationalism' into 'foreign policy' (Dzhunusov, Skibitski and Tsamerian 1975, Kuskov, Rumantsev and Timofeyev 1971, Kubalkova and Cruickshank 1980) or 'development policy' (Brandt and Manley 1985, Evers 1982, Healey 1985, Michanek 1985, Seddon 1986).

Whilst labour movements, socialists and Marxists have been otherwise engaged, international social movements and theoretical reflections on these have continued and blossomed (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1984, 1986, 1987; Frank and Fuentes 1987, Waterman 1987). Both the movements and the literature throw new light on internationalism or stimulate rethinking on social protest internationally. It is the purpose of this paper to reflect on the wide range of contemporary literature concerned with one aspect or another of internationalisation and internationalism, whether it uses these words or not. The paper, as it stands, forms part of a not-yet-completed one that must also address itself directly to the implications of the 'new social movement' internationalism for a revived labour internationalism. It is my hope that this paper will nonetheless help us understand what is or could be meant by internationalism today and thus help us understand the meaning and place of a new labour internationalism.

Tentative though this exercise might be, its initial assumptions, recognitions and purposes are more certain. It adopts the classical Marxist stress on international solidarity as the highest value and crucial means for societal transformation in a capitalist-dominated world order. It draws on 'new social movement theory' (for which see Waterman 1987) in assuming the necessity of articulating class and democratic identities and struggles. It understands internationalism as being opposed to capital and state rather than to nationalism - here deviating somewhat from the Marxist tradition. Again deviating from Marxism, it does not assume the proletariat to be the most, or primary, internationalist force. But it does assume the necessity and possibility of a new labour internationalism as an essential complement to other contemporary internationalisms.

It is to be hoped that the exercise will alert others to this problem area and stimulate them to the collective effort necessary for internationalism to be given contemporary meaning. To this end I have added an extensive bibliography to the references at the end of this paper.

In what follows I will deal in turn with 1) some essential definitions, 2) the subjects and purposes of internationalism, 3) its forms, and 4) problems of organisation and leadership. The Conclusion considers the implications of the text for the new labour internationalism and the new labour internationalists.

1. Definitions

Here are some initial understandings and distinctions between key terms necessary to a discussion of internationalism.

1. Universalism: A belief in the oneness of humanity, traditionally religious in nature (Nairn 1980). This universal communion is conceived of in terms of an unchanging universe, and counterposed to an unchanging sin and evil. Like other influential religious or spiritual doctrines, this one

expresses human experience of division and competition, and a desire for community. The traditional religious universalisms - coming out of local and specific situations at different historical moments - were customarily posed against one another: each tended to claim authority for itself and to offer community within a specific faith. Such universalisms also lived in uneasy combination with the state ('render unto Caesar...'), whether this was theocratic or not.

Growing ecumenicism amongst Christian churches, combined with the increasing relative weight of Third-World Christianity, the 'option for the poor' and Liberation Theology, have led certain churches or church instances, to make practical contributions to a non-sectarian internationalism, amongst which that of labour. At a time when most labour and socialist organisations are state-dependent, and dominated by 'economic' and 'political' concerns, the Christian address to moral principles and human relationships allows it to respond to and even sponsor a grassroots internationalism. Like other spiritualistic or humanist beliefs of pre-capitalist origin, universalism lacks an understanding of political and economic processes, or of specific strategies in face of them.

2.   Internationalisation: The global spread of modernisation in a capitalist-dominated world, in terms of the following: industrialisation, commoditisation, proletarianisation and capital concentration; bureaucatisation and statification, nationally and internationally; particular gender, sex and family patterns; cultural centralisation and standardisation (Connell 1984).

The most dynamic process is that of capital accumulation, with, as its most dynamic institutions, the multinational production, trading and - increasingly - financial concerns (Cox 1981, Elson 1986, Junne 1982, Krippendorff 1975, v.d. Pijl 1982, Resnick, Sinisi and Wolf 198?). The processes of industrialisation, commoditisation, proletarianisation and capital concentration are - given the world of nation-states capitalism itself creates - uneven and incomplete. We thus get proletarianisation without the creation of a classical proletariat, de-industrialisation and de-proletarianisation, peasantisation and re-peasantisation, etc. These processes of capitalist internationalisation create and recreate intra- and inter-state differentiation, insecurity, competition.

Bureaucratisation, allied with specialisation and technocratisation, removes power from or denies it to the masses, separates and professionalises knowledge. It centralises these first nationally, then internationally. Whatever the power of inter-state agencies to limit nation-state sovereignty and regulate disputes between states, they simultaneously reproduce bureaucratisation, remove decision-making even further, and reinforce the system of nation-states (pace Brecher 1987). They also obstruct the creation of genuinely supranational organisations (Vogler 1985:30).

The bourgeois family model (nuclear household, waged male breadwinner, housewife, school-socialised children) is propagated alongside competitive, commoditised and dehumanised sexuality. This propagation continues in the face of the breakdown of the nuclear-family norm in the more-industrialised countries and its virtual unrealisability in the less so.

Cultural industrialisation (Horne 1986) means the global spread of North-Atlantic norms and forms, including the cult of possesive individualism and an instrumental attitude towards both humanity and nature ('human resources', 'natural resources'). The repeated commoditisation of

local and popular cultural products, which are then industrialised and centrally distributed for mass consumption, not only prevents the direct cultural dialogue of equals but also burns up and destroys the orignal creative impulse. The new information technologies, electronic mass media and industrialised/commercialised/statified sport and recreation increasingly colonise the intellect, body and 'free time', obstructing physical and mental creativity.

Given the intimate relationship between the most powerful multinationals and the most powerful states (which may change over time), it may be misleading to talk of an 'international capitalist class'. For analogous reasons it may be misleading to talk of an 'international ruling class' (for these or related terms, see: Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1984, 1986, 1987; Connell 1984; Cox 1981; Krippendorff 1975). This is not to deny the existence and increase of organs of capital and state that are to a considerable extent beyond the control of the individual nation-state. These inter-state or transnational organs are also increasingly able to influence and control nation-states. As immensely powerful, wealthy and undemocratic concentrations of wealth and power they and their agents also represent an increasingly important enemy and target for popular movements. Their existence also indicates a new terrain of struggle - one that popular movements must enter, but armed with their own democratic and collectivist alternatives.

Given that the spread of capitalism requires the nation-state, given that national-community formation appeals to and reflects popular aspirations, given that nation-state development has been commonly accompanied by liberalisation and democratisation, the internationalisation of capital has witnessed the simultaneous, interpenetrating and mutually-determining development of class and national identities (Vogler 1985). Internationalisation does not, therefore, 'give rise to' internationalism. Internationalism cannot complete an internationalisation that capitalism is unable to fulfil (compare Bauer 1978). Internationalisation does not create an internationalist subject in the global proletariat (for a classical statement of this classical position, see Mariategui 1986). Internationalisation 'leads to' internationalism only through the self-creation of popular non-territorial identities and their combination into a self-conscious and self-activating internationalist subject.

3. Cosmopolitanism: A political or cultural universalism, giving priority to world order over that of a specific state or nation. A word of Greek origin, expressing the global view and aspirations of Greek traders, travellers and philosophers. It was revived forcefully as the expression of a pre-industrial European intellectual elite, responding to the mercantile phase of internationalisation, and considering states as obstacles to the advance of civilisation. Cosmopolitanism thus implied the domination of the world by European bourgeois liberal values and structures. We could apply the word to any elite internationalism that ignores popular national feelings and attempts to impose on them 'universal' values and structures that represent its own self-interest or worldview. It might be useful to conceive of 19th century liberal internationalism under this head. The American doctrine of 'interdependence' is an outstanding contemporary example. It might also be useful to talk of 'socialist cosmopolitanism' in the case of socialists who see themselves as possessing the most advanced 'international' ideology/organisation/strategy and wish to remake the world in this particular image. Such a 'socialist cosmopolitanism' is distinct from the concealed but crudely statist 'internationalism' of the Soviet Union (Kubalkova and Cruickshank 1980), which has always inveighed against 'bourgeois', 'Zionist' or 'rootless' cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism, in its original sense, clearly overlaps with religious universalism and an anti-capitalist internationalism (see Claeys 1985). This is most evidently the case with the bearers or articulators of all three doctrines - European or Europeanised intellectuals sharing both the ancient and modern values of the cultured, linguistically-skilled and travelled elite. The world order of cosmopolitanism is as much one of culture and learning as of politics, expressing both an existing reality and a future aspiration. Official intellectual anti-cosmopolitanism (whether in Germany, the Soviet Union, China or Argentina) has repeatedly been defeated or collapsed.

The other face of cosmopolitanism is most evident in the case of those outstanding 19th-century internationalists who were themselves cosmopolitans. These were the revolutionaries who changed their countries more often than they changed their shirts. They were educated or self-educated (Emma Goldman), often emigrants or exiles, bi- or multi-lingual. They belonged to an international community of European or Europeanised socialist intellectuals and activists (Peru's Mariategui), with which they often felt more identity than the citizenry of 'their' nation-state.

4. Internationalism: Classically a critique of the nation-state and of capitalism. A recognition that the capitalist nation-state was too limited to deal with social problems and human needs. Positively, the urging of cross-national, global or non-territorial solidarities, communities and organisations of an egalitarian and democratic nature. Internationalism emerged out of the experience of capitalist industrialisation and the construction of centralised, modern, elitist states. These were destroying old loyalties and communities without providing the masses with any satisfactory new one. Internationalism developed particularly out of the relationship between cosmopolitan socialist intellectuals and the new artisan-based labour movements (Nairn 1980, Hobsbawm 1985, IISH Seminar 1985). The influence of liberal cosmopolitanism and religious universalism is usually ignored but should be allowed for.

Given that class and national consciousness amongst workers are mutually supportive rather than contradictory, given that socialists did not understand this, socialist and proletarian internationalism have declined - with the partial exception of areas or moments in which the 19th-century European conditions exist or appear. Even at its peak, the internationalism of socialists and proletarians may have been more on national and democratic issues than on specifically proletarian ones. The increase in the internationalisation of capital, the increasing rapidity of capital and labour transfers internationally, seem to have increased rather than decreased working-class appeal to and dependence on the nation-state in industrialised capitalist societies (Vogler 1985). The effect appears also in peripheral capitalist societies (Waterman and Arellano 1986), although the causes maybe somewhat different.

The generalisation of commoditisation, bureaucratisation, militarisation and other modernisation processes, nationally and internationally, have meanwhile created numerous global social categories (teachers, housewives, students, ethnic and regional minorities), and increasing social problems of an increasingly global nature (nuclear arms race, AIDS, Chernobyl, debt crisis). Increasingly, also, these problems are being dealt with in international as well as inter-state fora, the interests are expressing themselves in internationalist terms.

A contemporary internationalism - based on recognition of the interconnections between capitalism, racism, sexism, statism - would need to be

at least implicitly critical of all of these. It would also - recognising the distinction between nationality and statism - need to at least implicitly favour nationality and other cultural identities. The reason for the re-specification of the meaning of internationalism will become clearer when discussing solidarity below.

The most active agents in the new wave of internationalism are in the wage-earning or wage-dependent intermediate strata. These are strata that are historically descended from the 19th-century educated middle class and that are intermediate - and mediate - between the masses (workers, peasants, petty-producers, women, 'ethnics') on the one hand and the ruling/owning elites on the other. It is thus not too misleading or contradictory to call this a middle-class and democratic internationalism.

Given that internationalisation processes operate within, and create, different national or bloc conditions, the particular local syndrome will differ, as well as the priority of problems and the nature of the internationalist forces (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986, Frank and Fuentes 1987). The 19th-century socialist model of worker-worker solidarity, based on 'immediate economic' self-interest of the class and the common 'longterm political' interest of society, is not the only or even the typical one today. Contemporary internationalism is highly complex and differentiated in nature. It is commonly from the industrialist capitalist West, or by the intermediate strata here for the masses there, or between different sorts of movements (most recently, the Western peace movement and the Eastern human-rights movement). Whilst the absence of mass (worker, women, peasant, ethnic-minority) internationalism remains a problem, the multiplicity and diversity of internationalism represents a considerable potential. It is, indeed, essential today, even if it was possible to deny this previously, to talk of internationalisms in the plural. And to recognise the pluralism as essential to the meaning of a contemporary internationalism.

5. Solidarity: A community of interests, feelings and actions. This is the more general ethical value and human relationship underlying internationalism. Solidarity (compare Vos 1976) should be taken to mean not only an expression or striving for human identity (with the danger of exclusion of unalikes or of reduction to uniformity), but also reciprocity (mutual advantage), affinity (shared feelings), complementarity (differential contribution), and substitutionism (taking the part of the other). Solidarity has customarily been understood in terms of identity, principally that of an oppressed and divided class or category in opposition to a united oppressing force. The connection with universalism is evident. So also, with the third term in the French Revolution's lay trinity - Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (the sexist nature of which is significant). If the bourgeoisie and liberalism prioritised political liberty, the proletariat and socialism have prioritised economic equality. For the first solidarity was understood primarily in national terms, for the second in class ones. In both cases solidarity was subordinated to the other term and was exclusionary in practice, if not in doctrine.

It is significant that the term should have been revived and popularised internationally by the Catholic working class of Communist Poland. If liberty refers to the political order and the state, equality to the economic order and ownership/income, solidarity refers to a human social relationship. Whilst Solidarnosc addressed itself both to state authoritarianism and economic privilege, what it prioritised was the creation of a new social relationship over and against the state and the economy. And whilst Solidarnosc originated with and was based firmly on the urban working class, it organised or appealed to the intermediate strata and

peasantry also. Solidarity's solidarity was of class, citizenry and nationality. Whilst not particularly internationalist in word or act, its leaders and members have come out also in identification with the peoples of Eastern Europe and workers in other parts of the world.

The specification of solidarity in the five ways listed above enables us to recognise aspects of, or contributions to, internationational solidarity by movements or projects of such diverse natures as have been mentioned earlier. In so far as a developed internationalism would combine all these properties, the specification also enables us to identify any one-sidedness in a particular international organisation or activity.

It is, of course, the term solidarity that provides us with a positive, democratic and humanistic linkage between internationalism, nationalism and local or specific communitarianisms. The five-point specification does not include competition, hierarchy, authoritarianism or coercion. It is, im-plicitly, in opposition, or an alternative, to these. A Soviet, Jewish or women's solidarity that expressed the five values in its internal practices and external relations would either itself be, or be consistent with, internationalism.

2. Subjects and purposes

1. <u>Mass subjects of internationalism:</u> There are no natural, spon-taneous, economically-determined subjects or vanguards of internationalism. Proletarians may have been, may be now and might be again. But whilst internationalisation processes show the growing significance of the interna-tional sphere, and suggest or provoke internationalist responses, they evidently do not encourage or force them. In the face of internationalisa-tion processes, options other than internationalism are clearly available. For labour today these options include the continuation of traditional reformist strategies...and a a conservative and isolating protectionism, chauvinism, racism or local sectionalism (Gordon and Reilly 1986, Picciotto 1984, Peijnenburg and Ridgers 1987). Could it not be that it is precisely because of their central role within the internationalisation of global capital that multinational workers could be both those most aware of the necessity for internationalism and those who have most difficulty in realis-ing it?

Let us move away from production and consider the social practice of consumption, the capitalist shaping and re-shaping of this, its social definition as a problem, and organised national and international responses to this problem over time.

The first consumer movement was the cooperative movement of the in-dustrial working class, taking collective action against the adulteration of foodstuffs and the bad quality of other necessities. This was a class option, with cooperatives linked organically to the rest of the labour movement. Already in the late-19th century there was formed a cooperative international (Gurney 1985). But this movement, nationally and internation-ally was increasingly affected by the 'divisions of labour', with unions, parties and cooperatives separated, and separately institutionalised and incorporated. Cooperative internationalism took increasingly liberal and bourgeois forms, whilst remaining linked to a 'labour culture' (Horne 1986:166-74) of a subordinate nature. The consumer movement of the 1950s was of middle-class origin and liberal-democratic inspiration but addressed to the problems of a developed capitalist society. It was initially con-cerned with overcoming 'abuses' and it took a pressure-group form nationally and internationally. In so far, however, as whole populations and the whole

world have been subjected to industrialised and multinationalised mass-consumption goods, the new phenomenon has taken on certain mass movement characteristics, with connections being made to international strategies of multinational companies, to worker health and safety, to environmental issues, to the special position of women. To what extent this is or could be an internationalist (anti-capitalist, anti-statist) movement, a mass movement, and one that moved from defence or amelioration toward the offering of alternative consumption models, is a matter for investigation and engagement.

Whilst, evidently, socialists and the labour movement were deeply involved with the traditional cooperative movement, one is not aware of their specific presence within - or even in alliance with - the contemporary consumer movement. It is a feminist who has reminded us of consumption as an international problem requiring an internationalist response (Mies 1986), although without consideration of existing consumer movements, national or international. Self-recognition as a consumer, the nature of that self-recognition, the manner in which this self-perception is expressed nationally and internationally, the connections between the self as consumer and the self as worker or woman, the alliances made with the Third-World or union movement, are all matters to be settled by those engaged. So is the question of whether the movement seeks solutions within or amongst existing nation-state and social models or proposes an alternative one.

The above reflection suggests a certain orientation to existing or potential subjects of internationalism. The notion of migration as an internationist force (Galtung 1980) is one of the most startling propositions and one that cannot be fully explored here. Migration is thought of primarily as an important effect or process of internationalisation. It is a typically capitalist project which, like so many others, is now being uncritically adopted - if in typically statist form - within the 'world socialist market'. The bearers of this process, the immigrants, are customarily seen as noble but tragic victims (Berger and Mohr 1975) or defined as a social problem. Thus, in typical nation-statist discourse, we have not a 'racist problem' but an 'immigrant problem'. Traditional labour movements, whether of Marxist or Social-Democratic inspiration, consider that these foreign, semi-proletarianised workers have to be naturalised and then absorbed into the existing national labour movement (Castells 1979). That the decision to migrate is a choice (even if a forced and painful one), that immigrants successfully struggle, individually and collectively to survive, that they are in certain countries and at certain times more radical than local labourers, does not usually lead socialists or labour movements to recognise their potential to liberate the native labour force from its nativism. It would seem to me worthwhile exploring the potential of immigrant workers as internationalist subjects, given that they combine within their persons, positions and life trajectories the Third-World labourer (often rural), the First-World worker, the discriminated ethnic and the trans-state national.

Let us consider another case, that of the international human-rights movement (Eide 1986). This is surely the most powerful and influential internationalist movement today, capable of forcing concessions from the world's most powerful and most repressive regimes. The Soviet Union's release of dissidents must be understood as a concession to this movement, albeit as mediated by the United States government. What, who, is the subject of this movement? I would suggest that it is the citizen (compare Nerfin 1986). Self-definition as a (would-be) citizen means a demand for the 'priority of free and public political activity over other types of human action' (to borrow Feher and Heller (1987:3) on republicanism).

Although the citizen is originally the literal subject of the city-state and later that of the nation-state, this is a universal subject with a universalisable demand. Self-definition as a citizen seems to me evidently different from self-definition as a national, with its inbuilt particularism or exclusionism. I have elsewhere suggested that labour internationalism was most effective when it was least proletarian. What this recognition leads to is the idea that citizen consciousness was highly-developed amongst workers. Or, more likely, that a combination of a worker with a citizen subjectivity gave the latter a particularly sharp cutting edge. International labour movement divisions, between those subordinated to 'the free West' and those subordinated to 'the socialist states', meant that internationalist citizen movements (Amnesty, etc.) were, again created on a middle-class, Western and liberal basis. As Feher and Heller (1987:31,43-7) argue, the British Trade Union Congress, and various other Western socialist politicians and publicists, were either unsupportive of or hostile towards Solidarnosc. Whilst national and international trade unions of a Social-Democratic plumage are working closer with the human-rights movement, a reconnection between a citizen and working-class internationalism still seems quite distant.

It is not possible to discuss all the present or possible subjects of internationalism. There has been a Green International of peasants (Wilczynski 1981) and I see no reason why it might not revive. There exist international organisations of 'indigenous peoples' and linkages between regional independence or separatist movements (IRA of Ireland and ETA of the Basque country?). But it does seem to me that these can be effectively internationalist only in so far as they act, or see themselves, as part of a citizen internationalism. Whilst, further, their territorial identity might seem to lead them towards micro-nationalism and micro-statism, they do represent a current critique or denial of nation-statism (Williams 1983). In so far, therefore, as they propose inter-territorial relations between non-state communities, they undermine nation-state sovereignty and increase the plurality of inter-territorial relations.

One can imagine the appearance of new mass internationalisms, as common problems are identified, common interests declared and effective forms of national and international communication and organisation found. What of the possibility of the development of schoolchildren's internationalism (van Dorp 1982; Demmers, Lackamp and Wertheim 1986a,b) into an autonomous children's internationalism?

2. Purposes or aims: I want to here talk about ends in a manner that does not reduce the matter to listings nor over-generalise in terms that are losing their capacity to explain, inspire and move anything or anybody. The binary oppositions 'utopian:scientific' or 'reformist:revolutionary' neither explain, nor excite, nor even frighten very much any more. But the totalising projects or worldviews behind them (for even the infinitely plastic, pragmatic and opportunistic Social Democracy represents such) seem to have had the effect of frightening off. The new internationalisms are marked not only by their plurality but by their often self-limited fields and purposes. The classical example might be Amnesty, with aims, structures and procedures that allow it considerable effectivity but within a limited field. But we also have other new internationalisms with a worldview. This is particularly from certain ecologists (Brecher 1987 to some extent) and feminists (Mies 1986 to a considerable extent). It might be in the spirit of a holistic approach to recognise the complementary role of both the narrow, limited, pragmatic and the broad, general, imaginative internationalisms. The problem with the competing traditional international labour-movement or socialist ideologies lay not in their opposition but in

the institutionalisation of their worldviews in parties with hegemonic pretensions, and the reinforcement of these with all the carrots and sticks that the modern nation-state has at its disposal. In so far as the worldviews of the contemporary internationalists are opposed to capital, state, racism and patriarchy, then even the most wide-ranging, far-reaching and compelling worldview or utopia can come over only as a contribution to a dialogue, and will have to meet the hard-nosed pragmatism of the little internationalisms.

Having said this, I will put in a plea for more internationalist utopias, by which I mean imaginative and comprehensive models of a world order constructed on radically different principles from our existing one. Galtung (1980), Mies (1986) and Brecher (1987) make efforts in such a direction. These utopias are necessary not only because of the stimulation to thought and and the inspiration for action that they provide. But also because of the necessity to provide some general guide or framework for the - possibly conflicting - internationalisms of, say, the women's and the workers' movements.

3. Forms

By forms I mean four different aspects that internationalist impulses can take. These are 1) the space or field in which they occur, 2) their strategy and tactics, 3) their geographical direction and scope.

1. Space, field and target: I think it may be useful to distinguish a specific space or level of internationalist activity and to then recognise the specificity of the field and the targets at which it is aimed. We cannot simply think in terms of levels (local, national, international). I would suggest distinguishing between at least three different spheres at these levels: the socio-cultural, the political and the economic. Action in the socio-cultural sphere is addressed to citizens, is intended to change attitudes and behaviour and to increase social power. Action in the political sphere is addressed to the nation-state, inter-state and other statified organs. It is aimed at officials and representatives and is concerned not simply with changing their attitudes and behaviour but at democratisation - de-statification, de-bureaucratisation. Action in the economic sphere (where separate from the state) is addressed to capital, particularly to its most powerful instances and agents.

The sphere of political action at international level is clear. This would be action within-and-against the inter-state organs. Forcing, for example, the Food and Agriculture Organisation to get rid of the TNC lobby. The sphere of what I have called socio-cultural action is exemplified by Greenpeace, addressing itself to and creating international public opinion by dramatic activities covered by the international media. The sphere of economic action would, for me, mean action within production, exchange, distribution and consumption. Thus, not simply a campaign within the FAO (political) targeting TNCs, nor a film concerned with environmental pollution (social). But action, for example, within TNCs, aimed at decentralisation, increased worker rights, better working conditions, socially-useful and environmentally-friendly products. The different spheres and levels, it should be understood, are determined by capitalist modernisation and are therefore themselves instruments of division and control. Popular activity is aimed at breaking these down. 'Economic' action within the sphere of consumption is thus, also, a 'socialisation' of consumption and a critique of consumptionism - or of an economistic under-standing of consumption. But recognising a presently existent economic

sphere enables us to recognise the specific and essential role of workers, particularly those within TNCs, if the corporations are to be controlled.

2.   Strategy and tactics: I here make no distinction between strategy and tactics, wishing to simply refer in general to the means by which internationalist subjects can achieve the kind of purposes mentioned above. It is evident that in distinguishing our understanding of internationalism from the traditional labour-movement ones we also need to develop means consistent with the new definition.

I think it would here be useful to distinguish between four types of organisation at international level. These would be the transnational (restricted to the TNCs), the inter-state, the inter-non-governmental (differing from the definition in Galtung 1980 by the exclusion of TNCs) and the internationalist (pluralistic in membership, democratic in structure and functioning). This typology is evidently value-loaded, with the most dynamic, conservative and authoritarian type at one end and the most dynamic, progressive and democratic at the other. The spectrum allows recognition of the ambiguous position of the two intermediate types and thus avoids posing either as the centre or goal of internationalist activity. I would want to make the internationalist type the central category, seeking to further its development and acting through such against, or on, or within, the others. We can already, for example, recognise the progressive and dynamic role being played by internationalist worker organisations and networks, contrasting this with the highly ambiguous role played by the dominant international trade-union bodies. The latter even allow themselves to be defined as 'non-governmental', a term which is evidently negative, dependent and which must surely obstruct any surpassing of state hegemony. We do not have to assume the disappearance of the more conservative types for the development of a more-democratic international order. The growth of what I have called internationalist bodies itself already restricts the hegemony of TNCs and the dominationation of inter-statism.

Another useful distinction for internationalist activity is that between coercion, resource-mobilisation and legitimation-mobilisation (Willets 1982), although we might wish to de-code these in terms of military/police/law, capital acumulation/concentration and communication/persuasion. These categories in turn indicate as principle sites or spheres respectively those of the state, the corporations and society. Whether understood in my way or not, we may follow Willets in recognising the existing power of internationalist movements in the last sphere. We might, however, wish to point out that internationalist movements not only act in this sphere, with this weapon, but attempt to enlarge it at the expense of the others. This should not be taken to mean that internationalist movements do or will confine themselves to information provision or persuasion. Armed assistance to democratic regimes (Spain 1936-9), or assistance to armed liberation movements (Hamon and Rotman 1981, Perrault 1987) must be included, when carried out independent of states. So must the attempts to create non-capitalist, non-statist trade relations. But such activity will be subordinated to the effort to enlarge the public sphere and to reincorporate production and decision-making into the daily life of the citizen.

Having recognised that much internationalist activity is initiated by middle-class people and from the West, we must again prioritise the exchange of information and ideas in internationalist relations. This is because of the danger of reproducing the very inequalities it is intended to overcome, or at least of creating patron-client relations between the 'donors' and 'receivers' of international support. This is a problem built into the aid

relationship. In so far as we are concerned with social knowledge in terms of its possession by, or use to, masses, then knowledge at that end (including experiences, beliefs and aspirations) is essential to us and of similar value as ours for them. This is not, of course, to deny existing inequalities in access to, or control over, information but to draw attention to an understanding of knowledge that already finds some expression in the activities and projects of international movements. If they had had the internationally-available information and experience in Bhopal, then maybe Bhopal would not have happened. If we do not learn from Bhopal (including the limitations on the alternative movements there, for which see Visvanathan and Kothari 1985) we will have Bhopals here.

Having prioritised communication, it is only natural to prioritise a dialogical relationship. We could say a dialectical relationship if this word had not been given a sectarian philosophical meaning, since its origin is in reference precisely to learning through dialogue. Dialogue differs from debate in that it is non-competitive and is concerned with self-discovery rather than domination of the partner. Dialogue assumes and furthers equality. It assumes and furthers trust. Given the increasing importance of information to power, given the extent to which we are moving from a commodity society to an information one, the priority of communication for and to internationalism become even more evident.

3.   Direction and scope: The populist imperialist Rudyard Kipling talked of the colonised peoples as 'lesser breeds without the law'. He urged his British readers to 'take up the white man's burden', in respect of them. It is not irrelevant to our subject to point out the extent to which the new internationalism is addressed to those without (without human rights, women's organisations, free trade unions) by those with. Those young French radicals who came to help independent Algeria after the French colonial pieds noirs (black feet) left were quickly dubbed pieds rouges (red feet) by the apparently ungrateful natives. This suggests the crucial importance of axis and direction for the meaning of a new internationalism. If the axis is limited to the West-South one and the direction is only from West to South, then it is likely to be a lopsided international solidarity, inspired primarily by substitutionism (compare the charity motivation behind Western aid activities, as shown in Hart 1987, Simpson 1985). On the other hand, it would be idealistic to insist that we can only speak about internationalism when the activity under consideration occurs between and within all significant world areas. International problems, international awareness and internationalist organisation and action simply do not arise in this way. Yet again, however, 'recipients' of such one-way solidarity are going to be increasingly resentful, suspicious and eventually hostile towards an international paternalism that reproduces the national paternalism of rich and powerful do-gooders. It is therefore necessary to have an ideal or norm concerning direction. The same is true of scope. It might seem that international solidarity between those in a common or similar situation would be the best founded and longest lived. Yet such an international anti-nuclear campaign (European Nuclear Disarmament, for example) runs the danger of appearing to represent a European common interest separate from or even opposed to a wider anti-nuclear or peace movement. Whilst END might well represent a solidarity of identity or reciprocity between those involved, a global norm is necesary. Universal norms, in other words, enable us to identify limitations and suggest a direction for development. Let us consider this further.

Concerned primarily with the traditional liberal rights of opinion, speech, movement, organisation, fair trial and humane punishment, Amnesty is based on the world area where these are best established and addressed

primarily to those in which they are not (although it concerns itself with 'abuses' in liberal democracies also). Recently we have seen this pattern (primarily West to South/East) supplemented by an East to South one as human-rights activists in Eastern Europe come out publicly and forcefully against loans to Chile (letter to New York Review of Books, June 11, 1987). Whilst we might not have seen East Europeans come out in solidarity with struggles against increasing surveillance and repression in the West, we have seen Yugoslav theorists offer a conceptualisation of human rights which treats the Western norms as necessary but insufficient, and which rejects any existing model in favour of an international struggle for a possible and necessary alternative one (Belgrade Praxis Group 1978). This case suggests the manner in which direction and scope relate to purpose or aim. Human-rights internationalism needs to be based on a radical critique of all existing social models, and on a universalisable alternative, if it is to identify common interests and inspire common activity worldwide.

4. Organisation and leadership

Here I want to talk about the role of 1) organisation and communication, 2) leaders and 3) the intelligentsia.

1. Organisation and communication: We must be concerned with the development of an appropriate relational model for a new kind of internationalism. This means certain principles of organisation and of behaviour between participants. Distinctions between types of international organisation (transnational, inter-state, inter-non-governmental, internationalist) are a necessary starting point. But the identification of an organisation as internationalist only sets it off from the others. Exactly how is pluralism and democracy to be expressed and ensured? Surpassal of the principal of representative democracy (one member organisation for each nation-state) is itself subversive of the traditional model (compare Galtung 1980). Another step would be the prioritising of the international movement over the international organisation. In a sense this is already happening, since there are, for example, too many international human-rights organisations for one to monopolise the field. This suggests two more points. The first is that relations between such organisations would have to be primarily cooperative in nature. The second is that there would have to be recognition that the movement is more than the organisations, since unorganised and unstructured activity can and frequently does lead to innovation.

The development of the kind of openness and flexibility suggested above is favoured by the primary activity-type mentioned earlier – that of communication. It is further favoured by the new information technologies and the increasing centrality of information to social life. Networking is the traditional and primary form of human communication, continuing to exist today despite the increasing structuring, separation and hierarchisation of human relationships. Informal networking continues within, between and outside organisations, which, indeed, cannot be understood in terms of their formal structures and rules. Whilst those who developed and sell the new electronic media are concerned primarily with control and consumption, the technologies have possibilities that subvert these intentions. The democratic and decentralising potential of these means of communication are infinitely greater than those of the railways or air transport, both of which imply centralisation and concentration in ownership, production and power. The democratic possibilities of the new electronic media are not confined to 'alternative' media uses, although internationalist movements are actively promoting these. It is a matter of the state- or capital-controlled mass media also. It may, for example, be thanks to the

capitalist and state media that Peruvian labour activists have to make up their own minds about Solidarnosc in Poland, since much of the Left media in Peru has been engaged in rather ideological concealment or packaging exercises with respect to Poland (Waterman and Arellano 1986). It is difficult, to take another example, to imagine Greenpeace having any significant international impact without the services of the dominant international media.

Alternative organisation cannot, of course, depend on piggy-backing the dominant media. It requires movement-developed and movement-controlled means. Examination of the international campaign around Bhopal would show the extent to which this depended on rapid, flexible and cooperative networking between individuals and groups, using movement media as well as those of capital and state (telephone, telex, mail, etc.). The attempt to develop a standard for the manual and computerised recording and transmission of human-rights information is inspired by the attempt to increase both coordination and decentralisation. So are the experiments to create an international computer network for grassroots-oriented groups and movements (for both of the above see Waterman 1985).

In prioritising internationalist organisations we must not forget the non-governmental ones (Nerfin 1986). This is not simply because the two types obviously overlap at the edges. But also because of the extent to which NGOs express, stimulate or support internationalist feelings and activities. I think we need to recognise the dramatic growth of the international NGO phenomenon as an expression both of the failure of state and inter-state organisations to directly dominate society and an attempt to indirectly do so. The ambiguity of the NGO phenomenon provides an opportunity for national and international social movements. Just as we can conceive of a movement from a charity and aid (Simpson 1985) to a solidarity relationship (Muto 1983) on the North-South axis, so can we conceive of a movement from an NGO to a social-movement type of organisation. Some international organisations combine the characteristics of not simply internationalist and inter-non-governmental organisations but, possibly, of inter-state organisations too. The International Organisation of Consumer Unions includes state-financed consumer councils, independent consumer organisations and others. It represents consumer interests to inter-state agencies. In the Asian/Pacific area, and in Malaysia in particular, it takes on movement-type characteristics.

In discussing organisation it is also essential that we talk about money. The ideal, of course, is activity totally financed by the movements and individuals concerned. But self-financing, which may be typical for, let us say, Trotskyist internationalisms, is no necessary guarantee of solidarity as we have defined it. A Dutch Third-World aid and solidarity organisation may be totally independent of state funding and still reproduce characteristics of state-dependent aid agencies. On the other hand, there may be organisations, networks and publications that are largely dependent on subsidies from churches, aid agencies and even state or inter-state agencies. This does not necessarily prevent them from developing internationalist activities. Here the crucial issue is honesty and openness about sources of funding. Some Third-World NGOs dependent on Western agencies are prepared to talk openly about their funding. This is some guarantee of responsibility. Admission of financial dependence on NGO or state funds may also be an admission that one is involved in internationalism for workers or women rather than workers' or women's internationalism. But such an admission at least points one in the direction of a solution.

Honesty about funding raises the question of openness in general. There is a powerful 19th-century conspiratorial tradition that still effects

some internationalist activity. Conspiratorial activity is inevitably that of an elite or elect. It reproduces the practice of dominant elites, the major communication strategy of which is not 'manipulation' (which all communication inevitably implies). It is denial of access to full or crucial information. A non-international case - but from a formally socialist and internationalist organisation - makes the point. The British Communist Party provided neither the public nor its own members with full information about its Executive Committee meetings. When reconstructing a podium in its headquarters it discovered a radio transmitter that must have been placed there several years earlier. The British state security (and possibly its American cousins) had the full and detailed information about EC meetings. Only the party membership and public were denied this. An ideal or principle of openness does not mean one ignores the necessity for confidentiality or even secrecy. What it does imply is that the areas and types of restriction necessary to protect organisations and individuals in danger are defined and justified. And that energy is primarily directed toward enlarging the possibility for public operation.

2. Leaders and organisers: We should here distinguish middle-class membership of international organisations and movements from middle-class leadership of - say - working-class or women's internationalism (compare Mies 1986, Mitter 1986). The nature of the problem that such leadership represents depends on the form of organisation chosen, the leadership strategy, and the honesty and openness - again - with which middle-class leaders are prepared to speak and act. The new organisational form that leadership of mass internationalism takes is that of the general resource-group - or the specific media or education - role. Adoption of such a role by professional or technical specialists is customarily a conscious rejection of the role of Leninist vanguard or Fabian elite. In so far as it is such an option, middle-class leaders will provide technical expertise but refuse to act as spokespersons, organisers or representatives. They will concentrate, further, on consciousness-raising, skill-creation and self-empowerment amongst those they are working with. This is, of course, still an intermediary role and often a crucial one. Resource groups can, in practice, reproduce the traditional elite roles, substituting for the masses, speaking in their name. It is probably therefore helpful if we distinguish between the internationalism of socialists (who tend to consider themselves as labour-movement leaders even when they have few if any followers) from the internationalism of workers (Hobsbawm 1985, Waterman 1986b). Similarly with feminists and women. This is evidently not to disparage either middle-class, socialist or feminist internationalism. It is a matter of recognising the difference of position and interest between middle and working classes, socialists and unionists, feminists and housewives. In the case of Bhopal, internationalism was largely a matter of communication and support between middle-class leaders or intermediaries. If there have been any international contacts between rank-and-file activists from Union Carbide plants or communities, they have not come to international attention. On the other hand, international labour resource groups have managed to set up meetings and networks of factory-level leaderships within certain industries or particular TNCs. Such experiences require full recording and analysis.

3. The intelligentsia: It might seem invidious to distinguish intellectuals from organisers - who often anyway have a university education. This is not a matter of denying the intellectual role of organisers, nor the capacity of ordinary women, workers and citizens to generate knowledge and understanding autonomously. It is a matter of recognising the division of labour within which are created specialists in thinking, specialists in specialisation, specialists in generalisation. It is also to recognise the

possible role of intellectuals as a socially-critical and independent category - the meaning of the 19th-century Russian word, 'intelligentsia'. The major institutional base for such people today is in waged work within increasingly commercialised and industrialised education and research institutes. This differentiates them from their largely self-employed 19th-century forebears and brings them marginally closer to other working people. In so far as these intellectuals do not confine themselves to the production of ever more specialised and isolated pieces of information (Horne 1986:38-42,76-81), and in so far as they do not <u>confine</u> themselves to creating national or racial meaning (Scottish nationalism, Black nationalism), their vision will be historical and international. Even arch-anti-internationalist Tom Nairn (1980) concedes the international nature of culture and the necessity of internationalism for intellectuals. It seems likely that in the contemporary Soviet Union the most internationalist force is an intelligentsia starved of the information and dialogue necessary to liberate its society from the stultifying effects of nationalist, collec-tivist, autarchy. Solidarity between foreign and Soviet intellectuals is probably more effective than any other solidarity apart from that with Jews as an ethnic community and certain Christian religions or sects.

Even if culture is more international than capital and class, even if intellectuals are the most internationalist and the most effectively so, this is no guarantee that they will contribute to an internationalism of peoples rather than an internationalism of the intellect and intellectuals. But they could do so. And the organisers and leaders should invite them, or cajole them, to so do.

Conclusion

The body of this paper was completed before a short visit to Britain in July 1987. It was there possible to try out the ideas presented on various friends and colleagues engaged in studying, organising or communicating internationalism. This happened at the Conference of Socialist Economists, as well as in informal discussions with people concerned with general labour organisation, communications and internationalism in Hong Kong, the Philippines and worldwide, or with the internationalism of women or motor-workers specifically. Since this paper is in part addressed to such people, I want to build my dialogue with them into the Conclusion. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to return to the purpose of the paper as set out in the Introduction.

1. Implications for a new labour internationalism

It is not customary for socialists of the Marxist tradition to set up the middle class and their values and organisations as models for emulation, or even as experiences to be learned from. It is, however, consistent with what has been said earlier that I should come out, full-frontally, as a White, Western, Male, Middle-Class, Cosmopolitan, Academic internationalist. And then, of course, in this voice speak to others. I am naturally doing so in recognition of a number of points, most of which have been made explicit earlier. These are 1) that the middle class referred to is a wage-dependent one, sharing certain experiences and interests with working-class wage-earners, even if these are expressed in non-wage-earner forms, 2) that reference is evidently to a small internationally-active and inter-nationalist minority of the middle class, 3) that a middle-class, or middle-class-led, internationalism is that of an elite and is largely excluded from mass struggles against internationalisation not only within TNCs but also within nationalised industries and public services (de-industrialisation,

privatisation). I am focussing on this phenomenon, moreover, in recognition of the fact that what we are looking at, or hoping to learn from, is better understood as the internationalism of the new social movements that are questioning ever-more areas of oppression and alienation in our contemporary world. I am, finally, doing it in recognition of the extent to which the new internationalism reproduces certain inspirations and aspirations of traditional proletarian and socialist internationalism.

Since the form of the text is that of definitions, propositions and reflections, any summary would seem redundant and any conventional conclusion premature. What is now necessary is further work, implying 1) an extension of the exercise to the literature on labour internationalism and 2) an application of the understanding developed to the investigation of specific cases. We may here combine the exercise, in nutshell form, to get an impression of how contemporary labour internationalism might appear through our new spectacles. The case is that of international solidarity with Guatemalan Coca Cola workers; the literature is the first English-language report which gives an overview of the affair (Gatehouse and Reyes 1987). The case is thus summarised on the back cover of the booklet:

> For nine years the 450 workers at the Coca Cola bottling plant in Guatemala City fought a battle with their employers for their jobs, their trade union and their lives. Three times they occupied the plant — on the last occasion for thirteen months. Three General Secretaries of their union were murdered and five other workers killed. Four more were kidnapped and have disappeared.

> Against all the odds they survived, thanks to their own extraordinary courage and help from fellow trade unionists in Guatemala and around the world. A huge international campaign of protests and boycotts was central to their struggle. As a result the Coca Cola workers forced concessions from one of the world's largest multinational food giants, and kept the Guatemalan trade-union movement alive through a dark age of government repression.

We will consider this case under the main and sub-heads of my paper.

Firstly, then, let us see what mileage we can get out of the definitions and distinctions. Universalism: It was certain US churches that in 1977 began the international campaign, thus reminding us of the ancient sources of contemporary internationalism. Internationalisation: Coca Cola is, surely, the best-known symbol of capitalist internationalisation, economically and culturally; it is one of the world's top 100 companies, operating in 155 of the world's 168 countries, controlling 44 percent of the world soft drinks market. Cosmopolitanism: That of Coca Cola is self-evident, less so that of, for example, Dan Gallin, Romanian-born, US-educated, Geneva-based and multilingual General Secretary of the International Union of Food and Allied Workers Associations (IUF), who played a key personal role in the solidarity campaign. Internationalism: Although the solidarity campaign was primarily a union and worker one, it was the US churches that initiated it, and Gallin first visited Guatemala as a member of an Amnesty – not a union – delegation. Solidarity: The concern of both Western middle-class and working-class supporters of the campaign was, presumably, to take the side of, or stand in for, the Coca Cola workers – i.e., to substitute for them; in the case of the Mexican Coca Cola workers who took action we can assume identification.

Secondly, subjects and purposes. Subjects: The major mass actors at both ends were proletarians, but the issue was first taken up in the West as a citizen (human-rights) one; whether the Swedish and British Coca Cola workers considered themselves to be acting as workers, as citizens, or both, would be an interesting matter for investigation; even if the main mass actors were proletarians, there is certainly no explicit socialist organisational or ideological note evident. Purposes: the aim of securing liberal human and union rights for the Guatemalan workers seems simultaneously broad and narrow; broad in its transformatory implications for Guatemalan society, relatively narrow in those for Western workers and societies (though evidently broader than action restricted to wages and conditions within the company or industry); within the West the energetic and effective union action represents a labour claim for recognition as a force for general human liberation internationally.

Thirdly, forms. Space: The Western unions acted forcefully at local, national and international (TNC) level; they also acted in all three earlier-noted spheres, addressing themselves to public opinion (using union-made films), to the Guatemalan state ((threatening arms, aid and tourist boycotts) and to the company (hitting production through strikes, and sales through consumer boycotts). Strategy: The main international actors were such non-governmental organisations as the IUF and Amnesty, the presence of what I have called 'internationalist' ones not being prominent; action in the economic (TNC) and socio-cultural spheres predominated. Direction: the axis and direction was West-South; Western union and solidarity organisation funds (War on Want) were evidently essential to the Guatemalan workers, but so were solidarity messages and union visits to the occupied plant (i.e. communication); there is no evidence that the Western unionists involved have gained anything from the Guatemalans, that they even have in their minds the same questions which the action raised in the admiring but puzzled mind of Ron Todd, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union in the UK:

> How did the Coca Cola workers in Guatemala, against all odds, manage to win substantial concessions from a giant American company? Why did they receive so much support from other workers in their country? How was international solidarity action mobilised, and why was it so effective? (Gatehouse and Reyes 1987:inside front cover).

Fourthly, organisation. Organisation and communication: The campaign suggests effective exploitation of the dominant (as well as of alternative) media, national and international networking between concerned individuals and organisations; it suggests that where such networking involves mass mobilisation it takes on social-movement characteristics; whether the costs of the campaign were directly contributed by individual unionists and others, covered from organisational funds (and whether these were member-donated) requires investigation. Leaders: We must recognise the initiating role of the middle-class church and human-rights organisations, as well as the extent to which initiative and control remained in the hands of fulltime international or national union officers; within Guatemala and in exile, Coca Cola union lawyers (two being seriously injured, one having her daughter raped by state thugs) played a crucial supporting role in the international campaign. Intelligentsia: Miguel Angel Reyes, co-author of the report, is not only a former legal advisor to union and Indian organisations but author of a longer Spanish work on the case, a university professor, and is currently a graduate researcher in the UK.

I fear that the condensed analytical exercise above robs the case of its horror, its heroism and its human qualities more generally. There are also elements in the brochure which cannot be handled by the concepts so far developed. There is, for example, the particular vulnerability of Coca Cola as product and company (Gatehouse and Reyes 1987:16). There is the fact that this was a campaign on essential human rights, not on union rights or worker wages and conditions more narrowly. The handling of these and other elements probably requires theory drawn directly from the literature on labour internationalism historically and contemporaneously. Finally, of course, we are dependent on a very brief report. The case demands detailed examination using the kind of conceptual apparatus indicated here. I hope, however, that this thumbnail sketch already suggests some potential for the new approach.

2. Implications for the new labour internationalists

By 'new labour internationalists' I mean, quite simply and frankly, those people who are putting a good part of their energy into the stimulation of a new kind of internationalism amongst labouring people, in the first place amongst wage-earners. Those I met in Britain included academics, the editors of International Labour Reports, a part-time resource person of the Transnationals Information Exchange's motorworkers' network, a fulltime worker for the Centre for Labour Education, Action and Research in the Philippines, and a specialist on low-cost international computer communication techniques who works for the Asia Monitor Resource Centre in Hong Kong. Apart from one session at the academic conference, most of the meetings were brief and informal. They were also, however, both stimulating and sobering. The stimulation was from the exchange of ideas, attitudes and information with people involved in the same general project but in such different ways or places. The sobriety was due both to recognition of the still-low level of internationalist activity and to the lack of systematic communication between us. Let me specify.

The academics: Here I have to enlarge the net in order to include colleagues interested in an international socialist response to the internationalisation of capital but not in labour internationalism as such (v.d. Pijl 1987). This apparent disinterest was, indeed, the issue I raised, since I did not see how one could talk of such a response solely in terms of an alliance between Third-World and Communist states. The discussion took place in an open, friendly and supportive manner. But it was evident that we draw from such diverse Marxist traditions, have such different disciplinary backgrounds, that the process did not go beyond this friendly exchange.

The editors: These are people who have committed themselves to a low-paid, high-risk, occupation in taking over from its founders the barely two-year-old effort at producing an independent but committed international labour magazine. They have little or no background in journalism, magazine production or the international labour movement. Over the three years or so of its existence the magazine seems to have been feeling its way forward and avoiding the adoption of ideological positions that would either cut it off from potential readers and supporters or block its further exploration of a wide, complex and bitterly-disputed terrain (for its handling of international unionism, see ILR 1987). ILR is being taken increasingly seriously by national and international union organisations, with the consequence that some interested leaders have been commenting privately on particular items or on its general coverage. It seems that the editors are now feeling the necessity to define their position to themselves and their readers. There is a feeling, further, that there needs to be public discussion on internationalist strategy. What is not clear to the editors or to myself is

whether ILR - as a popular news magazine aimed at labour activists - is a suitable vehicle for this.

The international motorworker networker: He was recently back from a Sao Paulo consultation on 'Protectionism and Internationalism', involving national or shopfloor motor union organisations from 15 countries, half Third-World, half First-World (Peijnenburg and Ridgers 1987, Resistencia Internacional 1987). Whilst I had expected the conference to produce some general declaration on this strategic issue, he explained that the activists themselves had added to the agenda a number of other issues of importance to themselves: it is their network, not his. I got the impression that the motorworkers were less interested in declarations of principle than in such practical issues as 1) exchange of information and experiences, 2) the coordination of national demands on issues of common concern - shorter hours, new technology, union rights, etc. 'You,' he concluded, 'are far in advance of them'. Meant as a compliment, I took this rather as a warning against producing academic texts unrelated to workplace realities. A further warning came, this time about my over-optimistic expectations concerning even such practical relations between motorworkers as were dealt with in Sao Paulo. My friend had received a request for an exchange relationship with Polish motorworkers but, despite his own sympathy, experience and contacts, he could not think of anyone likely to immediately respond to this. It is not that there exists no interest within the network. On the contrary, it had already recognised the lack of contact with East European workers as a problem to be overcome. But there does not yet seem to exist the kind of ready-made and well-developed structures for internationalism between workers that there are for women. It would take effort and time. The internationalism of workers is a rare, young and delicate bloom. Contact between workers - even within the one firm or industry - is still rare and infrequent. There is little or no connection between these workers and us academics. There is little evidence that the over-burdened organisers, such as my friend, have time to play an articulating role between the two parties.

The Philippines-based resourcer: He was briefly in the UK, where he had attended the conference of the National Union of Mineworkers, visited pit communities and was looking for partners for Filipino miners. In the Philippines he has contacts with the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU). The KMU, which during the late-Marcos period won increasing support within the Philippines, and increasing respect from Social-Democratic unions and others internationally, is now trying to come to terms with the post-Marcos situation. This is one in which it, and its affiliates, are being wooed by international Communist organisations and threatened by a local social-democratic union supported from Western Europe. Although the KMU has identified itself with the underground National Democratic Front and is associated with the new Bayan party the Front supports, it is subordinate to neither of these. The impression I got was of the KMU-linked miners seeking international solidarity relations on an equal basis and without the traditional ideological strings attached. It struck me that they are possibly in a similar position to the Peruvian and South African mineworkers. I suggested that the Filipinos might even put their heads together with - for example - the Peruvians, since the latter had in 1984 actually drawn up a statement on internationalism with the miners of Bolivia and Chile. This was evidently not an idea which had occurred to the Filipino union. We thus see militant and autonomous miners' unions in the Third World trying to develop a new kind of internationalism - but in national, if not nationalist, isolation from each other!

The computer-communication specialist: He is one of the initiators of a major experiment in low-cost computerised networking between grassroots-oriented movements and resource groups internationally. Set up on the basis of NGO documentation and communication centres in the First and Third World, this project is beginning to attract the interest of certain international trade-union organisations. This is even more impressive when one takes into account the failure of an earlier union-based initiative for an international computerised databank. Such experiments evidently require intensive effort, an enterprising spirit, and the ability to take advantage of the small spaces within existing organisations, the modest subsidies or contracts available from a variety of state, church, union or NGO sources. What is not clear to me, however, is how this particular project fits - or is seen by its promoters to fit - into a more general understanding of international labour communication or the democratisation of international communication.

We thus return to the beginning of this paper, with the problems identified in the first paragraphs: the failure to think strategically about the new labour internationalism, the failure of the internationalists to reflect on their own practice, the failure of socialists to develop internationalist theory. Would it be going too far to say that the new internationalists do not yet practice solidarity amongst themselves? That the internationalist communicators are still failing to communicate internationally? That the academics are still involved in interpreting the world rather than changing it? Are we not continuing to reproduce in our activities the individualism, specialisation, division, competition and hierarchy promoted by international capitalism? It is, in any case, evident that we lack both a common meeting place and a common language for the coordination and discussion of our efforts. These would seem to be urgently required if we are not to become disappointed, exhausted, marginalised or incorporated. Let's look at the matter more positively. We have before us the case of solidarity with the Coca Cola workers in Guatemala. Presently it must be considered a brilliant exception. How do we make it the general rule?

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