

Key to give humanity a decen

THE WORLD of the last decade of the twentieth century is one in which it appears that everything that could possibly go wrong is going wrong. Or, to be rather more accurate, there are two worlds, each organised according to different principles, and each going wrong in its own way.

In the one, namely North America, western Europe and those of its former colonies that are as yet untouched by, or have successfully resisted, revolutionary socialist movements according to the philosophy of Karl Marx, there are chronic and worsening unemployment, poverty, homelessness and varying degrees of crime.

Here we have the failure of 'capitalism', a misnomer, since it obscures the essential difference between capital in the true sense, that is to say wealth (goods, in fact) in the process of exchange, or set aside to assist in the process of creating more wealth, and land, created by no man, but a free gift of nature from the very beginning.

In the other world, typically the U.S.S.R. and its former satellites, a mistaken idea of what to do about the same two economic categories led to public ownership of 'the means of production', and the attempted conduct of both production and exchange by departments of government.

True, the people responsible recognised the difference between land and capital, as Marx had done before them; but, after a short experiment with the soundest of Marxian doctrines, as expressed in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1847¹, that rent should be tapped for public revenue, they abandoned it, and conferred the use of land as a free gift to users, deriving taxation from other sources.

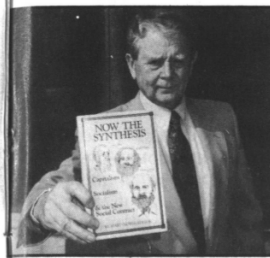
The results of all their efforts have been widespread inefficiency, gross shortages of consumer goods, and the creation of a privileged class based, no longer on land-ownership, but on communist party membership and official status.

To cap it all, mutual antagonism and fear have induced both groups of governments, not only to pile up stocks of nuclear weapons, but also to develop and expand their supplies of so-called conventional ones. To make matters even worse, they have encouraged a growing export trade in arms with the former colonies and protectorates, first for reasons of political affiliation, but later for almost purely commercial ones.

The horrifying possibilities of this situation have been demonstrated recently by the annexation of American- and European-supported 'capitalist' Kuwait by U.S.S.R.-supported socialist Iraq, and the consequent overwhelming defeat of Iraq by a mainly American and British force.

Iraqi casualties after six weeks of virtually unopposed aerial bombardment, and one of ground war, have been estimated at 100,000, while those of the allies are barely into three figures. Before their retreat, the Iraqi forces first pumped vast quantities of oil into the Persian Gulf, then set fire to about 600 oil wells. The scale of the ecological damage can only be guessed at for the time being; but it

Richard Noyes (editor) *Now The Synthesis; Capitalism, Socialism And The New Social Contract*, Shephard-Walwyn (London) and Holmes & Meier, (New York), (£14.95).



Richard Noyes and new book

By David Redfearn

will be hard to set limits to it. At this rate, the future of humanity looks like being a short one; what can be done to stop the rot?

RICHARD NOYES' book *Now The Synthesis*, with its cryptic title derived from Marxian dialectic, provides an answer based on sound reasoning rather than the emotional abstractions that are all the politicians have so far been able to come up with. The "synthesis" or "putting together", is the final step in the progression "thesis" in this case "capitalism" and "anti-thesis" or the full swing over to socialism. It embraces the best of both worlds - individual freedom from the first, and the freedom from monopoly of natural resources that is the most attractive characteristic of the second.

Despite this all-pervading abstract theme, the method followed throughout the book is far from being a theoretical one with illustrations from historical and current affairs. Instead there are multiple starting points from within problems causing general concern, for example, the pollution of the environment, the world-wide phenomenon of the maldistribution of wealth, and the continuing economic disadvantage, despite formal freedom, of the former colonies and protectorates, popularly known as the Third World.

Each of the contributors, an expert in his own field, shows how the first step towards improvement must be the land reform hinted at by Marx in the *Communist Manifesto*, and given full logical and moral justification 32 years later by Henry George², namely the use of rent for public revenue. True it is that war is not one of those starting points - this will be the subject of a further book from the same publishers, in association with the Centre for Incentive Taxation -

REFERENCES

1. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967, p. 104.
2. Henry George, *Progress and*

Poverty (1879), New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1979.

3. Henry George, *Protection or Free Trade* (1886), New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1980.

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IT IS not, of course otherwise known, but also inflicted by so-called is convincingly ultimately self-de are inescapable w teed prices.

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