

# **BETWEEN GLOBALISM AND NATIONALISM**

**S O C I A L I S T  
R E G I S T E R  
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**Edited by RALPH MILBAND and LEO PANITCH**

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## PREFACE

This thirtieth issue of the *Socialist Register* opens with a survey of its direction, policy and output since its first appearance; and this is followed by John Saville's recollections of his work with Edward Thompson in 1956. Like countless people in Britain, America and elsewhere, we mourn Edward's death. He was a friend of the *Register* and we were privileged to publish some outstanding essays by him, notably *The Peculiarities of the English* (1965) and *An Open Letter to Leszek Kolakowski* (1973). Rather than add to the many obituaries which appeared when he died, we thought it would be of interest to our readers to have an account by John Saville, who worked closely with Edward at the time, of the events which led to their break with the Communist Party.

The essay by Norman Geras challenges Richard Rorty's **anti-universalism** by examining the motives of the 'righteous' in saving the lives of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe.

The main theme of this year's *Register* – 'Between Globalism and Nationalism' – deals with the ever-greater global reach of capital and its impact on the policies of nation-states. The conventional wisdom on the Left has been that the internationalization of capital means that there is now very little space for national governments to adopt policies which run counter to the logic of international capital. We think that the *Register* is performing an important service in probing and challenging this assumption. This is the burden of the essays by Leo **Panitch**, Manfred Bienefeld, Arthur **MacEwan** and Gregory Albo. They demonstrate the dangers and limits of the practice of 'competitive austerity' into which even social democratic governments in the developed capitalist world are drawn by virtue of their acceptance of the logic of global competitiveness; and their essays advance the case for left strategies based on more inwardly-oriented and democratic economic alternatives, while avoiding the pitfalls of parochial and undemocratic nationalist reactions to globalism.

Although the rhetoric of 'free markets and democracy' infuses the ideology of globalism, the strategic dilemmas facing the Left in one country after another invariably centre on the incompatibility between

progressive advances and global markets. This is the central theme of John Saul's essay on the dilemmas facing the African National Congress as it moves towards power in South Africa; and Gerard Greenfield's account of the development of capitalism in Vietnam under the auspices of the Communist Party demonstrates how dismal are the results of market fetishism. This is followed by a survey of the state of the Left in South East Asia by Kevin **Hewison** and Garry **Rodan**; and an essay by Poul Funder Larsen and David Mandel discusses the state of the Left in **post-Communist** Russia. Patty Lee **Parmelee** discusses the position of workers and intellectuals in the former German Democratic Republic under the Socialist Unity Party; and Eric **Canepa** analyses the nature and significance of the transformation of that party into Germany's Party of Democratic Socialism today.

Among our contributors, John Saville, who was for many years a co-editor of the Register, is Emeritus Professor of Economic and Social History at Hull University. Norman Geras teaches politics in the Department of Government, Manchester University. Manfred Bienefeld is in the School of Public Administration at **Carleton** University, Ottawa, and Arthur **MacEwan** teaches economics at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Gregory **Albo** teaches in the Department of Political Science at York University, Toronto, as does John Saul, who is also Professor of Social Sciences at **Atkinson** College, which is part of York University. Gerard Greenfield is a doctoral candidate at the School of Humanities, Murdoch University, Western Australia. Garry **Rodan** is Senior Lecturer in Politics, also at Murdoch University, and Kevin **Hewison** is Professor of Asian Languages and Societies at the University of New England, New South Wales. Poul Funder Larsen is a Danish journalist and film-maker presently living in Moscow and David Mandel teaches politics at the **Université du Québec**, Montreal. Patty Lee Parmalee, an independent scholar and writer, and Eric **Canepa**, a harpsicordist and musicologist who is also editorial associate of the journal *Socialism and Democracy*, are both organizers at the New York Marxist School

We are very grateful to all our contributors, but we must once again note that neither they nor the editors necessarily agree with everything that appears in the following pages. We are also very grateful to Martin Eve and Julie Millard, of Merlin Press, for their indispensable help in the speedy production of this volume.

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R.M.  
L.P.