unemployment, peace, democratic rights, women's equality and women's liberation, the encouragement of links and alliances between these struggles and movements in a non-opportunist manner, and the application of Marxist analysis and organisation to these struggles, along with the stimulation of conscious Marxist discussion and debate." (p.199)

Apart from the omission of any mention of struggles around the control and organisation of the economy (presumably to avoid the remote possibility the author may fall into the trap of economism) this manual is essential only for its vacuous timeliness. It could have come straight out of the 1977 edition of the British Road to Socialism: so much for the radical impresssion of Thatcherism on all aspects of political life!

What is, above all, notable about the book's strategic conclusions are their lack of radicalism (in relation to the depth of the tasks implied by its analysis). A provocative, and audacious task lay before the entire left in seizing the people away from Thatcherism and onto a road of democratic peaceful advance. It can be achieved, provided the left builds its socialist vision with realistic estimates of the power situation and there is the genuine unity and cooperation among all the progressive forces and movements. Yet it is for Blunkfield concludes his article, hardly a high note on which to end such a book. Hall and Jacques in the introduction similarly conclude that what is required is, first, the 'transformation of the economic movement' (p.64) by which they appear to mean 'a major political, social, cultural, ideological movement' (p.63). Secondly, the conclusion by the labour movement of the broader possible set of alliances against Thatcherism involving, in the initial instance, possibly quite modest objectives (pp.63-64). Hardly the kind of clear and confident line of advance that is likely to convince waverters that there is an alternative in Thatcherism marks out her second term of office.

STEVE KENNEDY is a member of the Editorial Board of International.

The future for Pakistan

Brendan O'Leary


"Can Pakistan Survive?" represents the answer that the demise of Tarq Ali's home state is a consummation devoutly to be wished. Ali tells us why Pakistan ought not to exist. Born amidst the slaughter of independence and partition, the scarred and child of the imperialist-influenced Muslim League of Jinnah, Pakistan has never been truly a nation - never a real nation. The state does not exist. The West and the East were divided by 1,000 miles of Indian territory and, until the establishment of Bangladesh, culture a quasigovernmental repression of the Bengalis was stopped by a much needed, if self-interested, Indian invasion the West pillaged the East in a manner worthy of their British predecessors. Not the West, of course, but rather the dominant class of the Punjab, the bureaucratic-military landed power elite that Ali demonstrates to be one of the most philistine and unashamedly blind of parasites ever to preside over a state. Pakistan even after the secession of Bangladesh did not possess linguistic, ethnic or territorial unity only the legacies of the British Raj and the war and abuse of Islam gave the state coherence.

In a book well written narrative Ali takes the reader through the origins of Pakistan, the first decade of independence, the military dictators of Ayub and Yahya, the civil war, Bhutto's popular debacle (1971-73) and finally the military fall in an Islamic-glorified, now a comic but awful General Zia-ul-Haq. Perhaps the weakest section of the book is here, because, unlike elsewhere, a lot is presupposed of the reader. Ali writes with the vision of a South Asian internationalist in the best Marxist tradition, and the readers may very well have ended up critically supporting their own parts from the political stage in situations only marked by the comity of Pakistan's general, well documented.

Ali's final chapter on Pakistan's geo-political position is a useful overview of recent developments in Central and South Asia. And yet it is not clear that Ali's picture of Pakistan's perpetual crisis, within sight of being defended from the mags, is feasible. The USA and India both "need" Pakistan. That "backward, nomadic, Baluchistan, should have produced a dedicated and interna-tionally cadre all should equal in contemporary Pakistan" (p.191) in some, perhaps, an index of despair rather than hope. Ali holds to his revision, of a vision which is an entirely worthy one: a voluntary federation of South Asian Republics. This is the same vision of the unshakable revolutionary, the militant refusal to accept the accomplished fact. Yet, I am left with a more somber view, "could it be that History has something else in store?" the amoralists general of South Asia, balanced with formed imperialist medias, try to beat each other to the nuclear draw?" (p.195)

BRENDAN O'LEARY is an active member of the Labour Party. He is currently researching into Marxist theories of Indian history.