

FINANCING CONOMY

More than lending to small businesses and
renaissance, says JONATHAN WHITE

THE single largest manufacturing employer in Britain is food and drink processing, with around 400,000 employees.

The industry is dominated by a handful of monopolistic supermarkets oriented overwhelmingly towards boosting shareholder value.

As revealed in a recent report by the Centre for Research into Economic and Social Change (Cresc), most supermarket chains use aggressive supply-chain management to squeeze as much money as possible out of farmers and processing companies.

The horsemeat scandal is just one of the consequences.

But there is another way. Cresc's report showed that Morrison's has developed less adversarial relationships with suppliers and focused on integrating retail with a directly owned subsidiary in processing, achieving better employment relations, greater profitability and a more socially responsible business in the process.

The implicit conclusion is that social ownership of a major retailer and integration with food processing could be used to restructure the entire industry, even promoting the use of larger co-operative farming enterprises.



The way forward...

SO, THE strategic use of public ownership can be used to radically restructure an industry, sheltering it from the damaging imperatives of shareholder value and enabling investment in its long-term development.

But it's also vital that the publicly owned industries of the future leave

behind many aspects of those of the past, which simply aped the worst features of monopoly capitalist firms.

Instead, public ownership can and must be used to increase social and democratic control of industry and work. This will include devolving decision-making by increasing trade union membership and collective bargaining, as well as promoting real involvement by workers in management and planning.

It will involve publicly owned enterprises planning and negotiating with local, regional and national democratic bodies to ensure the needs of all citizens and communities are addressed.

Using public ownership to democratise new industries can promote the wider interests of the working class. It increases the general level of social control over capital and reduces the influence of the speculative financial sector.

It generates new, larger manufacturing concerns that can act as foundations for collective ideas and fulfil a wider social function.

Properly used, public or social ownership in industry can also devolve power to working people, giving them experience of controlling and administering their work.

In this way an industrial strategy can help rebuild an active, self-conscious working class which is experienced in running productive industry — and the economy itself.

INJUSTICE: Our economy is grossly weighted in favour of the City

JUSTICE

Guilty till you're proven innocent

JONATHAN FARLEY says we shouldn't rush to assume the alleged marathon bombers are guilty



ONCE I was on a train in Boston. The doors opened and about six policemen came in and grabbed my arm, escorting me off the train.

The police said I resembled a bank robber.

On the platform, I shouted that I was an associate professor of mathematics at MIT, repeatedly, so that passengers could hear.

This may have been the only reason I avoided being taken into custody, or worse.

If you believe the media, the US consensus is that the two Chechens the Boston police called "armed and dangerous" are in fact the marathon bombers. I'm not so sure.

There are conspiracy theories that turn out to be true. For example, COINTELPRO — the counter-intelligence programme between 1956 and 1971 where the FBI infiltrated "subversive" groups such as communist or civil rights organisations. Or Operation Northwoods, which proposed that the CIA should conduct terrorist attacks on US soil and blame Cuba to justify a war.

Someone who knows what happened on December 4 1969 — when Black Panther Fred Hampton was murdered in his sleep by security forces — would use Occam's Razor.

The only evidence the police have against the Tsarnaev brothers is a short video of two men wearing backpacks — really suspicious.

The police claimed they had unreleased video footage. But if they have other footage, why not show it? I can't help remembering "we know where [the weapons of mass destruction] are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat."

Of course I imagine a video will turn up soon, showing a bald eagle attempting to pick up the bombs.

But if the men were innocent, why did they run?

Innocent people do run. How about Angela Davis after she was accused of involvement in judge Harold Haley's murder in 1970.

The "man on the roof" seen seconds before the bombs went off, who caused such a Twitter storm, is entirely innocent according to the police's current theory about who committed the attack. Yet he never came forward.

We do know the police come in guns blazing. Police killed an innocent 89-year-old woman in March 2013, an innocent 92-year-old woman

in 2011. In 2005 police shot each other in the US, while in London police shot an innocent Brazilian seven times in the head following a terrorist attack. The list goes on.

As detective Mark Fuhrman said on tape: "Where would this country be if every time a sheriff went out with a posse to find somebody who just robbed and killed a bunch of people, he stopped and talked to them first? They shot them in the back. We still should be shooting people in the back."

The suspects' friends and families agree that there was nothing suspect about them. "It was just regular old Jahar," an acquaintance of the suspect told ABC News.

"We had a typical conversation (after the bombing), he was not startled, he was not scared..."

In other words, if someone acts like a non-terrorist, talks like a non-terrorist and walks like a non-terrorist, he's a terrorist. The settlers in Salem were more rational — at least it was possible to prove you were not a witch.

I am quite certain police will find bomb-making equipment in the suspects' apartments exactly like the sort used in the attack, along with fingerprints. But remember Los Angeles policeman Mark Fuhrman? When asked: "Did you plant or manufacture any evidence in the [OJ Simpson murder] case?" he invoked his Fifth Amendment right to remain silent to avoid incriminating himself.

The surviving Chechen suspect may confess, of course. But I live in a country that tortures people.

A hip-hop quoting, allegedly pot-smoking Muslim master bomber with no escape plan, calmly tweeting right after the attack "stay safe people"?

A Muslim terrorist who is sceptical that Muslim terrorists were behind the September 11 2001 attack?

A suicidal bomber who is not a suicide-bomber but a trained life-guard and medical student? That's someone who saves lives?

It doesn't add up. And I'm a mathematician.

■ Dr Jonathan David Farley wrote *How Al-Qaeda Can Use Order Theory to Evade or Defeat U.S. Forces: The Case of Binary Posets, in Advances in Network Analysis and Its Applications, Evangelos Kranakis (Ed.), Vienna, Austria: Springer Verlag.*