

WORLD

Problems of

MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

July 1989 \$2.50

Volume 32, Number 7
ISSN 0043-8642



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Theoretical and information journal
of Communist and Workers' Parties

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is also published in Arabic, Amharic, Baluchi, Bengali, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dari, Farsi, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Kurdish, Lao, Malayalam, Maltese, Manipuri, Mongolian, Norwegian, Oriya, Pashtu, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Singhalese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Vietnamese.

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WMR Editorial Office and Publishing House: Thakurova 3, Prague, Czechoslovakia Telephones: 331-5111, 311-1414, 311-1416; Telex: 123542 WMR

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

How are the communist parties restructuring their activity today in the face of the rapidly changing national and international realities? What are the new elements in their theory, in inner party life, in their political work with the masses, in their relations with allies, and in their approach to the

problems of world development and the working-class movement? We have already published replies from communist leaders in Cyprus, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.¹ Below are the responses to these questions from communist leaders in Luxembourg and New Zealand.

AN OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF THE PROSPECTS

Rene URBANY

Chairman, Communist Party of Luxembourg (PCL)

The concept and policy of the new thinking generated by the CPSU have not only opened a new chapter in international life, but have also brought about active changes in the theoretical and practical activity of the communist parties. One could say that historic successes have been scored in the world arena. Naturally these affect the position and potential of Communists everywhere, and we hope that the present positive processes will continue to develop.

The Communists of Luxembourg have been following with close attention and much sympathy the radical changes in the Soviet Union, which should make socialism more efficient economically and more effective politically. The potential of the new social system has grown in an unprecedented climate of democratic openness and in accordance with the current requirements, thereby demonstrating its capacity for self-renewal while puncturing prejudices and malicious inventions.

During my meeting with Mikhail Gorbachov more than two years ago, I voiced our party's support both for the new political thinking in international affairs and for the policy of perestroika in the Soviet Union, a stand re-affirmed in the documents of the latest, 25th PCL Congress in April 1988.

Class adversaries will obviously try to use for their own ends the new processes in the socialist world and in the communist movement, claiming that they

show everything done in the past to have been wrong. Hence the need constantly to explain everything to the people and pursue a vigorous and optimistic policy. We openly admit to having made mistakes in the past, but on the whole we have always been inspired by correct ideas, sincerely struggling on behalf of the working class, and all ordinary people, and acting for democratic and social progress. *The main thing now is not to exaggerate past mistakes, but to go forward with our new vision, relying on fresh forces.*

In the past few years, such an approach has enabled us in Luxembourg to do a great deal: we have managed to retain our positions and even to increase our influence among the population. Many of our compatriots now have more faith in the Communist Party than before. As for the charges that our assessment of the situation in the past was wrong, we could say as much of our ideological adversaries. For all the mistakes and miscalculations, which we admit, it remains a fact that the political picture of the world is changing in our favour: the Soviet Union is now the mightiest force for peace and social progress.

Let me stress once again what I believe to be a basic idea: *when applying the new thinking and the new approaches in our theoretical and practical activity, and adapting them to the changed conditions in the modern world, we must not lose our optimistic vision of the long term.* Communists don't bemoan their lot—their life and struggle have profound

ideological motivations. I am sure that opponents will not be able to undermine our faith in socialist ideals, discredit communist theory, or force us onto the defensive.

Our ultimate goal, says our Programme, is to build a new society on socialist principles. But this will take a long time, in fact it is now clear that the process will take longer than was first assumed. It follows that we have to carry on the struggle within the existing system, adapting ourselves to the existing opportunities and using the available means. Our task is to safeguard our social gains and democratic order. Important concessions can be wrested from the ruling class. *Reforms are significant even when they do not result in the overthrow of capitalism.* The fact is that the contradictions inherent in the system cannot be resolved within its framework.

The French Revolution of 200 years ago established the most just system of that epoch. But how much time and energy were needed for it to take root in the world! It would be equally wrong today to speed things up artificially. If existing socialism is able to exploit its natural potential strengths it can accelerate social progress throughout the world. We hope very much that the current transformations will promote the development of socialism itself and help significantly in our struggle for reforms. I would emphasise, however, that such reforms are *inconceivable without the people's consent and participation.*

We must take a realistic view of things. Many of the new ideas which have appeared recently are based on the perception that capitalism, although in a state of general crisis, has gained its second wind by putting the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution to efficient use. However, it cannot escape crises in its development. Hence the continuing confrontation between the old system and progress. By securing reforms we are not eliminating the contradictions of capitalism, rather we are releasing society's new potential and achieving profound transformations without destroying the system. Clearly, Communists are not the sole driving force in this struggle, but it is our duty to act as catalysts and to produce a succinct analysis of the ultimate, intermediate and immediate objectives and ways of attaining them.

Social progress and democratic change can be won only when the international situation is favourable, when there is no war. If the policy of the USSR and its allies scores more victories, if fear of nuclear weapons and various provocations gives way to mutual understanding and tolerance, then the *conditions for profound reforms will be improved.* Experience will indicate how fast and in what forms these

are to be achieved, but they are undoubtedly inevitable. Of course, socialist society is experiencing difficulties, and our version of socialism will be completely different although *history has not yet shown us any other society capable of replacing capitalism.*

We cannot say what socialism in Western Europe will look like, but we do know that we now have to win over more and more people and spread the new ideas among various strata of the population along two lines: peace and disarmament; social and economic progress. That is the Communists' clearly stated policy, and it seems to me both understandable and attractive. The way to implement it is through day-to-day struggle for the people's interests, not so much by means of correct resolutions, as by practical deeds.

It is no use talking in abstract terms about the prospects for social progress since they admit of almost any meaning. I agree that much remains to be done here. I would point out that Communists have always been convinced that the deep contradictions of the capitalist system will not disappear simply as a result of humanistic declarations, Christian calls to "love thy neighbour", or assurances of good intentions. The harsh reality is that some strata receive vast incomes at the expense of other and more numerous ones, which suffer because of this.

A consensus can be reached—even at national level—on the issues of peace, disarmament and ecology. But when it is a question of the profound transformation of society, it is always at someone else's expense. Capitalists are obviously not going to give up their profits and privileges just like that. They could be forced to make partial concessions, but the system would remain. Thus, I don't think that any hopes of building a radiant future together with the capitalists are justified.

The Communists in Western Europe face formidable problems, mainly connected with the development of the European Community, and here we have substantially reviewed our ideas. We now hold that *economic integration is an objective reality and that it cannot be halted. It meets the objective demands for wider cooperation between countries and peoples.* But there is also the subjective intention of big capital, of the ruling stratum of the bourgeoisie, to use the process, firstly, to step up the exploitation of the working people, and, secondly, to retard the progress of democracy. A number of problems are also being thrown up in relations between nations, especially in a small country like ours. We want broader and stronger cooperation in the economy under certain conditions, but we are flatly opposed to political integration, which would deprive the people of Luxembourg of their right to decide their own future.

If, for example, all legislative power were to pass into the hands of the European Parliament, where our people are represented by 6 deputies (out of a total of 518), we would have no say in the passage of laws to which we would have to submit. This is why we are critical of the illusory "European enthusiasm" of the Socialist Party leadership, whose members largely regard the prospects for integration in terms that are far too abstract. We want to clarify the issue and show the people how they can safeguard their interests.

In so doing, the PCL is not taking up a position of extreme nationalism. However, there is a very obvious urge to find the lowest common denominator for the social sphere in Western Europe. Our people have been able to gain much in the way of democracy, and living standards, which are among the highest on the continent. The rights of the people of Luxembourg are written into the Constitution, and we do not want that anyone should encroach on them. In short, we *must recognise that integration is inevitable, and at the same time defend the people's democratic and social gains.*

We believe that the progressive forces, their parties, trade unions and other organisations need closer and more active unity in order to challenge the monopolies and the big capitalist financial groups, which are strengthening their control over Western Europe. This is the only way to make integration a factor of progress rather than regress. The 1992 perspective calls for cooperation between Communists, Socialists, all those who advocate a left alternative, and those who stand for peace.

The implication for us is that we must put forward new ideas while remaining true to our principles, for if we shed them, we risk losing our own identity and abandoning our historical mission.

The PCL's assessment of the tasks of the European communist movement is based on the incontrovertible fact that internationalisation has been proceeding ever faster and in greater depth in every sphere of life. In the process, the conditions in which the communist parties have to work are coinciding. Despite the competition, big capital in Western Europe is perfectly capable of collaborating in defence of its own interests. Yet the Communists have still not been able to sit at the same table and discuss their multiplying common problems: peace; ecology; the effects of the internationalisation of capital and production; the protection of social gains. These are just some of the problems which affect all our peoples and put discussion and a search for common solutions on the agenda.

The need to tackle the new problems facing Europeans is forcing various political forces to seek cooperation. The Christian Socialists have even set

up a united party in Western Europe, which held its congress in Luxembourg at the end of 1988. There are pronounced differences among the socialist parties, and they operate in fairly different conditions: some are ruling parties, others are in opposition, and they naturally deal with different problems. But this has not prevented them from regularly making common assessments of the major contemporary issues. Even the Liberals, with their general principle of "every man for himself", are finding ways of coordinating their efforts. The Greens help each other, not least during electoral campaigns. The Communists are alone in not yet having managed to get together.

But this crisis, I believe, will be overcome. I do not see any convincing arguments against a comradely discussion between Communists in Europe. Of course, some parties are experiencing complicated internal problems which sometimes produce a feeling of hopelessness. *Communists cannot allow themselves to be pessimistic. Our objectives are clear and noble. Despite all the difficulties, we shall find a way of advancing together to the attainment of our goals.* In those areas where there is a confluence of views action is now possible: elsewhere discussions should continue.

I am tending to concentrate on the problems of the communist movement in Western Europe merely because there are many specific problems in this area arising from the struggle against big capital. Broadly speaking, we remain committed internationalists. There is no other way—after all, Luxembourg in the community of European nations and our party in the polyphony of the international communist movement have a very small independent role to play. It's hard enough for us to solve our own problems single-handed.

We believe that it is not enough to concert the Communists' efforts in Western Europe alone. We must not let our continent be regarded as consisting of two blocs: East and West. The internationalisation of the life of the peoples is a universal process. Hence the fruitfulness of Mikhail Gorbachov's idea of a "common European home". We live together with the socialist countries under something like the same roof, and the activity of their communist parties is of great significance for us. Modern problems—peace, disarmament, ecology, the backwardness of developing countries, energy—are acquiring a global character, and cannot be solved in a divided continent. If only for that reason the *communist parties should consult and coordinate positions within the framework of "greater", united Europe.*

Some would say that the tasks of the ruling and the struggling communist parties are much too different for any common denominator to be found. We

still remember the time when some of us were inclined to exchange critical remarks. But where would we be if Western Communists began to reprove Soviet Communists for "their" socialism, "their" crises, "their" failure to create an exemplary and attractive system—which was, after all, what they were supposed to do? We may have made many mistakes, they could reply, but what have you in Western Europe gained? After all, the Communists in some countries had excellent opportunities after the war to become a major and active national force. Why did you fail to see and analyse the new realities of European and world development in due time, and why did you fail to create a broad front of progressive forces?

But what use are such partisan complaints? Better get together and discuss our common problems; then we can criticise each other face to face and receive direct answers. Some people loudly declaim against existing socialism but refuse themselves to accept criticism, complaining about interference in their internal affairs. It seems I can discuss you, but you cannot discuss me.

I think that the Communists of Europe can talk directly and openly to each other while maintaining their fraternal relations. Disputes, sometimes bitter ones, occur in every family, but as a rule it remains intact. *We recognise the right to criticise each other, but we also have a common responsibility to the peoples and to history.* This, I feel, is a question of one's awareness being up to modern-day demands.

There is yet another aspect of this problem that is sometimes discussed by left-wing circles in Europe. Is the CPSU losing its interest in the communist movement and turning its attention to European social democracy? Our party has never entertained such fears. I personally take pride in the fact that I was the first citizen of Luxembourg to meet with the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov in 1987. In April of this year, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, paid an official visit to Luxembourg. He had many official meetings with our country's leaders, and with high-ranking guests attending the 150th anniversary celebrations of our country's independence. I am a member of the opposition who does not accept the government's policy, but Comrade Ryzhkov made a point of meeting me as well. I regard this as the Soviet Communists' recognition of our party's role.

I believe that the relations between the ruling parties of the socialist countries and the Social Democrats of Western Europe are extremely useful in every respect, since they help to dispel the "enemy image" in the minds of the Western public and advance the cause of peace and detente. The development and strengthening of these relations could well have a positive effect on the dialogue between the

Socialists and the Communists in the West European countries. This is a realistic prospect, I think, and we would be making a mistake if we failed to grasp the opportunity.

A realistic approach to the problems of our day, requiring a review of relations with existing and potential allies, is the element of new thinking we find most attractive. We realised some time ago that we have to adapt our party policy to the real world. I would suggest that this is important for all communist parties, while stressing that we have no right to give advice to anyone: everyone acts the way they believe to be right in their own specific conditions.

Since 1979, the Communists of Luxembourg have made important corrections in their work. We have tried to take account of the profound changes in the country, in the economy, in the production base, and in the population, *concentrating above all on contacts with the new strata, whose role is becoming increasingly significant.*

Almost 90% of those who now have jobs in Luxembourg are wage-earners. Just over half of these are workers, the rest are employees, including civil servants. Both groups occupy a subordinate position in society, typically receiving less for their work than its worth. Therefore, objectively speaking, they belong to the working class, confronted as they are at every turn by the contradictions of a system geared exclusively to profit-making: cutbacks in social spending; untenable economic decisions for which the people have to pay; acute ecological problems; and, most importantly, the problem of preserving peace, on which everything else depends.

The major challenge facing the Communists is to reach out to those who work for a wage, i.e., the overwhelming majority of the population, and to organise them. This is no easy task, because there are important differences in status, pay, living standards, and individual and collective interests among the various strata of the working people. Many of them are materially and psychologically integrated into the existing system. *Success in these conditions depends on mutual tolerance, respect for the views and interests of others, and their coordination for the common cause.*

People tend not to be very revolutionary when they have a stable income and a fair living standard. On the other hand, those who are materially quite well off tend to want more. Beggars, too, rarely become revolutionaries. Those who live in normal conditions want to read more, be informed about what is going on in the country and the world, and take part in social affairs. Inasmuch as their vital requirements are satisfied, they take a broad view of social progress. These people, who are not content merely to eat well, need

new horizons and more spiritual freedom. The Communists offer them a way out, and they have been voting for us even though they do not need their immediate material interests defended.

Public opinion polls show that the PCL has an electoral base mainly among the workers, who are well paid as compared with workers in other countries, and also among members of the middle classes, who are also fairly well off. In the 1987 communal elections, in a district of the capital where there are no workers at all, the number of votes cast for our party doubled. Professionals, civil servants and employees, who accept the Communists' progressive ideas and believe that their interests are not served by a strengthening of the conservative, right-wing trend, voted for us.

There is another factor here. Those who have attained a definite living standard naturally want at the very least to preserve it. In capitalist society, no one knows what will happen tomorrow, and even with a reasonable income the future is uncertain. Many have now come to realise that the house which they have bought for their family and their steady income could at any moment be jeopardised by the reckless policy of some circles in the United States, who continue to brandish the nuclear club, or by a worsening ecological situation and the lack of any consistent policy in this area.

The motives of those who now accept our ideas have changed over time. In truth, modern man does not live by bread alone.

The Soviet Union's policy of glasnost, the new thinking, peace and cooperation, all aid our Communists in approaching various sectors of the Communists and seriously discussing long-term problems with them. This does not mean that Luxembourg is a paradise for the little man. Not a few people here are barely able to make ends meet, particularly old-age pensioners and those on a "guaranteed minimum wage", which in our country is very low. These are people who have a direct stake in the struggle for social progress. Accordingly, we have to orient our work both towards the "successful" and the needy.

Wage-earners are now the productive class and they hold the key to social change. *This change is only possible by means of a combined and skilful use of the potential of the various components of the new labour force.* For instance, the rich political and trade union experience of the workers on the one hand, and the managerial and technological skills of government employees and intellectuals on the other.

The PCL Statutes contain a provision which says that the profound changes we seek in the country do not imply the establishment of a one-party system. The Communists stand for pluralism and believe that the necessary transformations will be put through by

a whole range of forces. We conduct ourselves openly in relations with other political organisations and we have long been cooperating with Socialists in communal-level coalitions, in the trade unions, and in the antiwar movements amongst others.

In this year's June elections to the Europarliament, our party proposed drawing up a common list with the Green alternative, and the left-wing Socialists. The latter figured on PCL lists as independents. Our negotiations with the Greens were unsuccessful because of serious differences within their own ranks, but a joint statement stressed that consultations would continue, along with a joint search for common ground in the future.

We do not regard the Socialists as some kind of monolithic bloc. They comprise leaders and the mass of rank-and-file members, and we regard the latter as the main element. It is with them that we deal in Luxembourg, maintaining constant personal contacts which are more easily established here than in other countries because ours is a small country and everyone knows everyone else. Workers, technicians and employees who are Socialists, and even members of the petty bourgeoisie all want social progress and democracy. We are not only in agreement, but we are prepared to fight together with them.

The policy of the top leadership is a special issue. The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party is part of the ruling coalition, and its leader is the minister for foreign affairs and the national economy in the bourgeois government. He used to be a banker, he feels comfortable in the embrace of big capital, and does not, of course, reflect the genuine mood of the masses.

Predictions are difficult in view of the rapid changes wrought by continual advances in science and technology. The Communists, however, despite their past mistakes and present weaknesses, remain the one political and ideological force whose activity rests on a strictly *scientific basis*. That is why I think *it is unscientific, not to say futile, in the light of present realities to forecast what will happen in 20 or 30 years time.* By then everything will have changed, and our constructs will hang in the air. But I am sure that the course of events will cause all honest Socialists to realise that a radical transformation of society is inevitable.

Just as it was impossible to establish a fully-fledged capitalist order after the French Revolution without eradicating feudalism, so *it is utopian to think that there can be a symbiosis of socialism and capitalism.* The time will come when the leaders of the Socialist Party, who feel comfortable with the capitalists, will have to change or leave. This has to be taken into account when planning the policy of alliances.

In Luxembourg we are trying as far as possible to work with the Socialists and other forces. One should not have any illusions so long as insuperable barriers remain. *The gist of the new thinking is realism—but in saying this we remain enthusiastic and committed to our ideal.* Without such an optimistic vision, it is hard to remain a Communist. An overly technocratic or calculating approach tends to dampen revolutionary fervour.

The Communists of Luxembourg have done much to be an open party. We are working above all at local level, where ordinary people's concerns are felt, and striving to act on a truly popular basis. The human factor—personal meetings and contacts—are of exceptional importance here. For a long time now, our party has welcomed at its headquarters members of cultural and sports societies and groups of citizens, including Socialists, Catholics and Liberals. We invite them to look around our printing works and the editorial offices of our party paper, and then we meet and discuss common problems.

I should like to describe one relatively new initiative, known as "workers' planes". Under an agreement with the Soviet trade unions we have, on three occasions, sent planes to the USSR, each carrying 150 men and women. This amounts to an impressive number of people for a country with a population of 370,000. These groups consist of people with various views, members of left- and right-wing parties, and trade union activists. We also organise coach tours to other socialist countries: the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. In this way, direct contacts are established between the citizens of Western and Eastern Europe.

The whole point of the PCL's numerous and diverse initiatives is to go among the people, to speak their language, to know their concerns and to carry on a constant dialogue. This enables us to correctly orient our political work in order, on the one hand, to defend the differing interests of the various working strata of the population, and on the other, to shape a progressive movement designed to solve the country's problems. This, I think, is the best form of perestroika in our conditions.

Within the party, we seek to *correctly apply the principles of democratic centralism, with the emphasis on democracy.* Fruitful discussions always end with the adoption of decisions, and it cannot be otherwise. Once factions emerge within a party—among the leftists or the Greens in Luxembourg for instance—it loses some of its effectiveness. Discussions are useful, but once a decision has been taken it is time to act. The main thing is not to create a confined space, a political sect, where a handful of people get together and argue amongst themselves. The impor-

tant thing is to be in constant contact with the masses, and to work outside the party structure.

The Communists are trying to strengthen their presence at enterprises, and also among those workers and employees who have hitherto not been adequately affected by our influence. We want to create a solid basis for the party's work in parliament, in the community, on the shopfloor, and in the trade unions and other mass bodies, through a deeper comprehension of Luxembourg's economic, political and social problems, and by formulating and advocating alternative solutions.

The party has been changing as it comes to grips with its new tasks, growing with them, as the resolution of the 25th Congress of the PCL said. The fact that 42% of the present party membership joined our ranks in the 1980s testifies to its rejuvenation and the influx of fresh forces. The Congress expects a further marked increase in PCL membership and an extension of the area of its influence in the near future.

Arguments naturally arise over new approaches and appraisals, but truth, after all, is hammered out in debate. I can say, however, that our party's unity is solid.

While conscious of the fact that *the building of a socialist society in Western Europe is not an immediate prospect, we have no intention of sitting idly by over the next few decades.* We believe that the role of the Communists is to defend, day in, day out, the interests of the working class, and the new strata tending to merge with it, to have a clear view ahead, and to fight for the penetrating reforms that will transform our society.

The demands of the working-class movement in the industrialised capitalist countries are increasingly oriented towards detente and disarmament, the preservation and diversification of the economic structure, improvements in living conditions for the majority, protection of the environment, the development of democracy, and the participation of broad sectors of the working people in management. Capitalism has displayed more stability and a greater capacity to adapt to the new conditions than had earlier been assumed, but, as our 25th Congress noted, we now have a unique opportunity to *force capitalism towards more peaceful, and socially more acceptable, development.*

The task of seizing this opportunity is an historic one, not only for the Communists, but also for all fighters for social progress.

¹ See *WMR*, No. 12, 1988, and Nos. 1 and 6, 1989.

REALISTIC PROGRAMMES, NOT ABSTRACT SCHEMES

Ken DOUGLAS

National Chairman, Socialist Unity Party of New Zealand (SUPNZ); President,
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU)¹

The changes that are occurring before our very eyes in the world economy and in the social structure of industrially developed societies under the impact of the revolution in science and technology are far-reaching, rapid and diverse. I regret that the communist movement has been slow in its analysis of these changes—an analysis which is essential for us to be able to overcome a certain sluggishness in the activities of our parties, of the progressive democratic forces and of workers' organisations.

The scale and the swiftness of these changes have no precedent in the past. They affect both world systems. The words "perestroika" and "glasnost" have transcended the borders of the Soviet Union and of other socialist countries. They express the essence of the transformations launched in the socialist world and the ways leading to their implementation—openness, democracy and the direct involvement of the people which is historically necessary for the renewal of their society.

Capitalism cannot do without restructuring its economy either. It has to rise to the challenge of the scientific and technological revolution and to keep up with the growing internationalisation of the economic ties that exist in the world. Again, capitalism has demonstrated its ability to adapt to changing conditions and to muster new strength. But the contradictions inherent in capitalism do not disappear but are merely allayed. Moreover, new ones are emerging.

Major changes have recently occurred in New Zealand, affecting almost the entire social fabric. They have led to an unheard-of unemployment rate, the collapse of many family farms and small businesses, and the decline of whole provinces. The living standards of most people in New Zealand have deteriorated, and there are now those who are hungry and homeless. The hopes of many have been dashed.

However, as the SUPNZ noted in the documents it adopted at its 8th National Conference in October 1988, fear and despair do not become Communists. The important thing is to outline the scope of the new

tasks without delay and to get down to work, using every available opportunity. This calls above all for an awareness of the *radical breakthrough we must achieve in our own thinking by abandoning outdated thought patterns.*

Despite the losses inflicted on large sections of the population by socio-economic changes, these changes are on the whole helping our society to advance because they are taking place in response to the objective need for improved productive forces. This does not mean that we agree with the specific ways and means of capitalist modernisation: it is being conducted primarily in the interests of capital and at the expense of the workers. We should therefore regard it integrally, using the positive elements present in the changes that are under way and fighting against the accompanying intensification of exploitation.

More than ever before, the labour movement needs to be led with due regard both for the historical mission of the working class and for the objective character of the changes. This means that we must revise our programmes accordingly and gear them to the realities of the present stage in social development. The growth of labour productivity indeed serves the interests of capital at the expense of the workers. But, as Marx noted in his time, *it also creates more favourable conditions for workers' struggle.*

We hold that this conclusion applies to the communist and working-class movement as a whole and, of course, to New Zealand. Naturally, due attention should be paid to its distinctive history, its place in the world capitalist division of labour, the character and the traditions of the country's working-class struggle, the parties and organisations leading this fight, and the political alignment of forces.

In 1894 New Zealand enacted legislation guaranteeing the right of trade unions to exist and requiring employers to negotiate with unions. Women's suffrage appeared in New Zealand earlier than in any other country. State-funded pensions, workman's compensation and regulation of factory conditions go

back a long way too. These are some of the facts proving our very strong democratic tradition.

Since 1984, the Labour government has been pursuing a socioeconomic policy which is at odds with this tradition and which is rooted in the ideology of the New Right. The use of tough monetarist policies and deregulation reduce productive investment and result in the closures of many businesses and in privatisation. All this has put New Zealand on the verge of crisis.

Labour is the first to be affected. Out of our workforce of 1.2 million, 200,000 are unemployed. The crisis has also hit other sections of the population—small businessmen, manufacturers, farmers and low-paid wage and salary earners, including most women. Among the more disadvantaged are the indigenous Maoris (12.5% of the population) and Polynesians (more than 3%) and women workers—all who are overly represented in the low-income range of occupations.

By analogy with other developed capitalist countries we are, unfortunately, witnessing the rise of a "two-thirds society". In New Zealand, not too long ago regarded as a highly prosperous country, one-third of the population has been in fact ousted from the mainstream of socioeconomic life. Growing unemployment is accompanied by a rise in the crime, suicide and family breakdown rates. Forget about this one-third and just make life safer and better for the rest, the New Right says.

Such advice may be accepted somewhere else, but not in New Zealand. Our society has its own vision of equality and justice. Because of the tradition I mentioned earlier, I do not think the New Right has any chance of winning any majority support for its extremist ideas. But we must fight against them because they are cynically trying to appeal to the part of the population they do not care about. Their objective is to *create social and political tensions* and fragment the trade union movement and the democratic movement.

One must note that the ruling Labour Party cannot remain indifferent to these developments and dangers. It was no accident that in December 1988 Finance Minister Roger Douglas, the main advocate of right-wing monetarist policies, was forced to resign. The Prime Minister has also proposed that Michael Moore, the Number Three minister in the cabinet (in charge of overseas trade) negotiate a "compact" with the trade unions at government level. This is a unique development in our national history. A consensus has emerged in New Zealand (including its ruling quarters) about the need to create new jobs, and to check and then reverse the steady growth of "redundancies".

The aggravation of crisis-related phenomena in New Zealand has given rise to mounting public discontent. However, it would be wrong to draw, on this basis, any overoptimistic conclusions divorced from obvious facts. After all, *new thinking—which we see above all as an effort to develop Marxism-Leninism creatively in present-day conditions—requires us to view facts and phenomena as they really are*. This, I believe, is essential if the communist movement in New Zealand, and in the world, is to win back the influence and prestige it is entitled to claim as the vanguard of the working people.

Workers are painfully aware that capitalism is deficient, but they are not prepared to agree that socialism is better just because we say so. People's attitudes are determined above all by their own experience and by the comparisons they can make between conditions at home and in other countries. Political activists—both Communists and left Labour Party members—and trade union leaders (in New Zealand this refers primarily to the SUPNZ) should abandon vague definitions once and for all. We should be much clearer in our perception and in our description to the masses of the *actual prospects for social progress*.

It seems to me that some people expected capitalism to one day collapse by itself and that the people would run into the street asking Communists to come and lead them to build socialism. But then the worldwide stock market crash came in the autumn of 1987. New Zealand was hit very hard because of the scarcity of productive investment and the over-reliance on speculative investment in the non-productive sphere. There were bankruptcies, and vast fortunes were lost, but capitalism still continues to operate because it has a strong self-preservation instinct and sufficient resilience.

This is why, as a Marxist-Leninist party advocating socialism as the ultimate objective, we realise that today we must advance a specific programme for improving the position of workers and of the population in general. A thorough examination of the objective socio-economic circumstances, of the international situation and of the domestic alignment of forces leads us to conclude that we can *advance the struggle for a democratic alternative as a long-term strategy of the working-class movement and of all progressive forces in New Zealand*.

The 8th Conference of the SUPNZ was an important development for our party because it was the first occasion on which we tried to delve deeply into the contradictions of the changing situation in New Zealand, in the world economy and in the international communist movement. We were critical of our earlier understanding of the move to the right in the Western economies, of deregulation, of monetarist policies

and of the implications of these changes for the working class. At the conference we shook off many of our old inhibitions, got our feet out of the mud, so to speak, and took a hard look at the new conditions. It is now a very testing time: *if the party is unable to rise to this challenge, its influence will wane quite significantly.*

Our party is following with great interest the way the international communist movement is tackling the new tasks of the perestroika and glasnost period. Naturally, you cannot simply transplant the Soviet experience to national realities elsewhere. Rather, we should be more critical and self-critical in examining in greater detail our own activities and the realities in our part of the world—in Lenin's words, "take cognisance of real life".² What, then, do we mean today by a democratic alternative?

Economic integration is intensifying throughout the world. Under the present (fourth) Labour government, this trend has been clearly manifested in an effort to accelerate internationalisation. The number of transnationals operating in New Zealand is greater than ever before. Their combined economic power is greater than the economic potential of our entire public sector.

There is another distinctive aspect to internationalisation in our case: under an agreement between New Zealand and Australia, there will in fact be a *common market between the two countries by 1990*. There will be no impediments in respect to business or production activity. In broader terms, further integration of the entire Pacific is envisaged.

How can the working-class movement and the democratic forces counter the sway of the transnationals? First and foremost, we believe that the public has a right to exercise tighter democratic control over the government's economic policies. For its part, the government must act as a sovereign government should, not take orders from abroad. It should require *transnational corporations to be socially good employers in the host countries* and to help ensure creative investment, economic recovery and create new jobs.

The struggle against the adverse effects of capitalist internationalisation also implies that *workers' involvement in economic management should be enhanced drastically*. Objective conditions for this are already on hand: the labour process has become more complex, and this requires not only precision but also a responsible and creative attitude from the worker. However, this attitude is only possible if there is democratic participation in all matters relating to the factory, bank or business in question.

Finally, there is an international aspect to the fight against the transnationals. *If the workers fail to act*

jointly, capital will just play them off one against the other. At the 8th Conference we decided to discuss with the Australian Communists our common response to the impact of closer economic relations between our two countries. We are looking for a common position of the working classes of both countries and for common ingredients of joint action to neutralise the adverse effects of the transnationals' activities.

In today's interdependent world, virtually all aspects of the struggle for a democratic alternative have an international dimension to them.

Thanks to Moscow's new political thinking, the vigorous foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the efforts of all peace-loving forces and countries, the world is now a safer place. That is a fact. But the next question is, what should be done so that people could live better in this safer world? This is the issue of the *quality of life* in all its diversity.

The Chernobyl tragedy not only emphasised the potentially awful consequences of nuclear catastrophe but also prompted people to think about the environment. It is not just a matter of radioactive fallout. It is also that day-to-day industrial activity pollutes water and air and contaminates foodstuffs. Hence the increasingly strong demands that national governments earmark funds to finance environmental protection and expert evaluation by ecologists of economic practices.

Various aspects of the democratic alternative sought by the working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries are *interconnected*. What kind of quality of life can you expect without the right to a productive job? On the other hand, more vigorous ecological activities can produce additional jobs. How can we oppose the anti-social consequences of TNC operation without international cooperation and without ensuring every country's genuine sovereignty in decision-making on issues of concern to the overwhelming majority of the population? This means that national and international factors are closely intertwined in today's world.

We regard the *working class*—which in New Zealand asserts its will through the trade unions, the Labour Party and the Socialist Unity Party—as the main force in the struggle for a democratic alternative. Under the impact of the revolution in science and technology and of restructuring in industry, major changes are occurring in the structure and attitudes of the working class. Deregulation and stagnation of productive investment have led to an obvious decline in the numerical strength of the traditional blue-collar workers.

On the other hand, the recent aggravation of crisis-related phenomena has encouraged a significant

fightback by the white-collar category—administrative workers, the professionals and government employees. Since 1935, it has been compulsory for all hired workers to join unions in one form or another. Previously, many of the administrative workers' unions were unions only on paper, but now many of them are taking an aggressive position and adopting the forms of struggle typical of the blue-collar unions.

Our party has some influence with the trade union movement, but we must admit self-critically that because of our slowness in grasping the significance of the changes under way, we failed to orient the trade unions in the right direction under the new circumstances. For some time, the working-class movement had to play it by ear, without a clear-cut prospect or programme. Today we believe it important to *strengthen and consolidate the trade unions* and to reform them away from the British occupationally-based, craft union system to one of industrial unions. Industrial unions are in a better position to follow specific developments in the economy and to put forward alternatives to stagnation and decline.

The trade union movement was the first to launch a struggle for a nuclear-free New Zealand. Workers fought for their right to determine the nuclear-free status of their workplaces. In particular, maritime workers fought for nuclear-free ports. The campaign soon spread to cover all sections of the population and became truly popular. Streets, towns and cities are being declared nuclear-free. More than 87% of the people support this drive, and they are a powerful force. Within certain limits, they can become the base of the activists advocating a democratic alternative.

We try to act jointly with all democrats and with all those who are concerned about the future of the nation and of the world. It is gratifying that the Labour government is firm on this question in its defence of a nuclear weapon-free status for New Zealand and the South Pacific. This is a practical contribution of our country to the global initiative for a nuclear-free world. We are confident that the struggle against the war threat offers favourable opportunities for cooperation between Communists and Social Democrats at the international level.

Relations between the SUPNZ and the Labour Party have improved significantly in recent years, although not on an official party-to-party basis. But the fact is that our activists and Labour Party activists have been working in a much more cooperative way than they did, say 20 years ago. They are working in common areas, above all within the trade union movement. I believe there are several reasons that explain this.

Firstly, Robert Muldoon's conservative government, which remained in office until 1984, was ex-

tremely anti-communist. The Conservatives accused the Communists of everything under the sun and attacked us with particular vehemence for our vigorous work within the trade unions. Whether it wants to or not, the Labour government cannot do that: its party is itself closely connected with the unions.

Secondly, people are beginning to realise that many of the statements made about the "Red bogey" are not true. By working responsibly in specific areas we have proved that ours is a serious political party capable of making a constructive contribution to the progressive and labour movement. The Red-baiting that was previously a feature of Labour governments' attitude is no longer accepted by the public.

I think that we have the conditions in New Zealand for strengthening practical cooperation between our two parties, irrespective of whether the Labour Party recognises us or not. We are not even raising this question, believing instead that the important thing is to strengthen the working-class movement and promote workers' demands. We do not expect any official acknowledgement of these contacts, but we emphasise that in New Zealand, *progress will be impossible without joint action by SUP and Labour Party members.*

The new situation is making greater demands on our party too. Our 8th Conference noted that sluggishness in our ideological, theoretical and organisational work prevented us from fully discharging our duty to the working class. We are now working to win back the influence we have partly lost. We realise that we cannot accomplish this overnight. Stagnation is not easy to overcome, but we have begun our restructuring effort, and we are sure that it will be successful.

We are working to reinvigorate our party and its political dialogue with other forces. This is not something we are doing for any narrowly partisan reasons. We are aware that our shortcomings create a vacuum in the working-class movement. True, the progressive sections of Social Democracy are trying to fill it, to restore the initiative to the trade unions and have scientific and technological progress serve workers. But the Labour Party does not believe that the system based on the exploitation of man by man should be dispensed with. It takes a Marxist-Leninist party to achieve this goal. The Communists of New Zealand are ready to respond to the challenge of the times.

¹ The NZCTU affiliates trade unions that account for 560,000 of the nation's 700,000 organised workers.—Ed.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 45.

WE BELIEVE IN NEUTRALITY

Vincent TABONE
President, Republic of Malta

■ *In a Maltese government document the intention was expressed to "do away with outmoded concepts of global strategy". What do you mean by these concepts? In this connection, what do you think of the call for a "new political thinking" in the nuclear age?*

Nobody, not even myself, when writing these words two years ago could have realised that one could be so prophetic. Now we see rapprochement between the two superpowers, the value of the INF Treaty itself and even more—the general trend of a change in the approach to problems, the reversal of attitudes. Before, the balance of forces and armaments was at the highest possible levels; now, there is a genuine effort to reduce the level. So even this "star wars" concept may sometime become completely useless. How could we have foreseen a short time ago that it would be a Gorbachov who would change the attitudes of the world? Gorbachov emerged as a man to be reckoned with in the global sphere, and the effect he is having on many things is tremendous. Who could have foreseen glasnost and perestroika? This is a tremendous and positive change.

The liberalisation within the Soviet Union, which I hope will extend and become more permanent in Eastern Europe, has brought East and West closer together. The common approaches to issues of democracy, freedom and human rights are accepted without great difficulty now. The CSCE process in Vienna, in which we are taking a very active part, showed this. The neutral and non-aligned movement to which we have contributed, is becoming a more respectable movement both for the West and for the East. The postwar period of sometimes hot and sometimes cold East-West relations is now—I hope—coming to a close. We cannot look at the Europe of tomorrow with the same eyes as we looked

Dr Vincent Tabone (b. 1913), one of the more experienced and respected figures in the ruling Nationalist Party, was Foreign Minister 1987-1989, took part in many international forums, and has been President of Malta since April 4, 1989.

yesterday. So conventional attitudes cannot be any more applicable. Before, there was one rule: only the strongest may speak. Now we see that other, smaller nations can contribute to world peace by ideas, and sometimes by their neutral status. We made such a contribution in the 1960s by inventing the concept of a "common heritage of mankind". We originally applied this to the seabed, but we hope that tomorrow this concept will be applied to other fields—space, the air that we breathe, the environment without frontiers, etc. Chernobyl was a good reminder of all this.

This was what we meant then. Perhaps it was too ambitious at the time, it still is ambitious, but today, at least, we can see a pattern evolving.

■ *One of the principles of your foreign policy is that limitations of size and resources do not diminish in any way a nation's will towards freedom and sovereignty, or detract from its capacity to play an active role in the community of nations. What is your experience of the practical implementation of these principles?*

I think we can follow those principles with relative ease. The first thing you do in any intercourse is you declare your identity, your objectives in order to make them clear to your interlocutor. So, being a foreign minister, I travelled a lot, I went to the East, to the West, to the UN. I wanted to convey this policy to other governments.

I believe that a small independent nation can only maintain its independence if it is a neutral country. We are attached to a neutrality policy based on the principles of non-alignment. On the other hand, we have some specific ideas with regard to the concept of freedom and democracy. We believe in a multi-party system. We believe in individual freedom and the freedom of everyone to express his or her views and in that respect we are Western-oriented as regards the type of the democracy we follow. But we also acknowledge that we have always been and felt European.

Thus we believe in a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. And this is the unity of Europe we would like to see in the shortest possible time. But we also have our feet on the ground and we cannot but realise that, so far, the continent is separated into two parts—Western and Eastern. Western Europe has an economic community which we believe could be the nucleus of a larger united Europe, to which we really belong. And that explains our intention of joining the European Community as a full member. We are seeking the right conditions for joining the Common Market. We do not want to divide our people upon this issue. We believe we can reach a consensus on it. The reasoning is simple: if the conditions are right, why should there be any opposition? If the conditions are not right, we would not want to join at all.

And that is not an anti-Eastern or anti-anybody's perspective. Within the Community we shall work for openings towards all European states, and towards Eastern Europe. This is the policy we are pursuing within the Council of Europe, where Malta is a member. As president of the Council of Ministers of this organisation till November 1988, I made it my task to help in opening up the Council of Europe to East European States. This I had done before, as president of the Committee of Non-European Member Countries, and I have seen interest in East European countries, particularly in Warsaw, and to a certain degree in Sofia. And I also saw interest within the Council of Europe.

■ *If we take the Mediterranean dimension of this problem (the role of smaller countries in big politics), what is your position on the Soviet proposal for removing the superpower fleets from the Mediterranean?*

We believe that for us the Mediterranean is the most important region of the world because this is where we are. Therefore, we believe in the freedom of navigation in the Mediterranean as one of the world's major sea lanes. I think the proposals made by Mr Gorbachov in Yugoslavia last year are very interesting. But let's be realists: a proposal can only be effective if it is accepted by those to whom it is made—with regard to the superpowers in the Mediterranean, one must consider many factors. The Black Sea is a pouch of the Mediterranean and the Soviet Union itself is in this sense a Mediterranean nation. So when somebody says: We want the Mediterranean free of the superpowers, in actual fact, in my view, they mean they want only one—the USA—to leave. On the other hand, we cannot ignore

the fact that the US was called to Europe by the European states to help them fight the Nazis. In the present phase the presence of American forces in Europe and in the Mediterranean is seen as an important balancing factor in any East-West alignment of military forces. My belief is that peace has been kept in the global dimension since the last war because there has been a military balance between East and West. Balance has been the essence of peace. And even in the very positive reduction of armaments so far agreed between the USSR and the USA—it is *balance* they speak about. Therefore, I feel that shifting this balance is not a step towards peace. This is my view, and therefore I do not subscribe to the request for the superpowers to leave the Mediterranean without ensuring that the military balance remains. If that could be obtained, of course I would be in favour of a Mediterranean free of superpower presence.

This brings me to another issue—nuclear-free zones. I have stated this at the UN as the policy of my government. I expressed the hope—and I am sure it is everybody's hope—that one day there would be a world free of nuclear weapons. But, as a first step, where there are no nuclear forces now, there shouldn't be nuclear forces in the future. In Malta we have none, so it should remain a nuclear-free country. But where nuclear forces are part of a defensive system, you cannot remove them without taking account of the overall balance of forces. So I look forward to a reduction in strategic weapons (50%), and the taking into consideration also of conventional weapons in this balance of forces.

We should also pay more attention to building up additional machinery for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. I think very few countries have paid due attention to this. There is the International Court of Justice, there is the mechanism of the United Nations—and they can achieve results; the Iran-Iraq cease-fire is the most recent example. But the UN has not by itself prevented what is happening in Southern Africa, in Lebanon, between Jews and Arabs, in the Gulf, in Central America, the spread of terrorism and the world drug business. So we need some new additional instruments for the peaceful settlement of disputes. If we do succeed (and I have no formula), then disarmament becomes irrelevant: If you and I were in dispute and preferred to go to an acceptable instrument of peace rather than shoot it out. That is the new projection for the peaceful world of tomorrow.

■ *Lord Palmerston once said that a country shouldn't have permanent friends or per-*

manent enemies, it should have only permanent interests. What do you see as the permanent interests of your country?

The permanent interest of Malta in the nuclear age is to progress in peace—in peace within and in peace without. Our neutral status, properly managed, should ensure the attainment of this aim. If you are neutral, your first task is not to give more advantage to one side than to the other. We showed this soon after taking office at the UN by changing the pattern of our vote and by abstaining on many votes. In conflicts, I can have my own idea of who is right and who is wrong, and I will say so. But when I come to the vote, I will abstain because this is how I understand the function of a neutral state.

We want to see peace around us. And if this peace can be secured by the balance of forces

around us (tomorrow it will be secured by other means—for instance, by the peaceful settlement of disputes), then we would like to see this balance of forces maintained. But we do not try to take part in this balance except by promoting ideas of peace, using the Non-Aligned Movement in the process. This, I think, can be one of the future tasks of non-alignment. Before, we were keeping apart from the big powers; now, as these powers are coming closer to each other, we can try, or hope, to be a catalyst in this process. We can argue whether this is possible, but at least we shall promote the lessening of tensions between East and West. We in Malta want to be friends to all and foes to none, and this will bring prosperity and unity to our country.

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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

200th Anniversary

Professor Guy BESSE
French Communist Party (PCF)

The Eiffel Tower was built to mark the centenary of the 1789 Revolution in France. The official celebration of its bicentenary is less brilliant, but numerous initiatives testify to French interests in the Revolution. Neither the Nazi invaders, nor their collaborators were able to efface from popular memory the year 1789, which Goebbels wanted to "erase from history". Today, prodigious efforts are being made to persuade public opinion that the era of revolutions is over.¹ But nothing can dim the memory of those great days. The attempts, two centuries later, to represent the Revolution as having produced nothing but evil are based on omissions and falsifications. They condemn the Terror, for instance, but do not say that the counterrevolutionary armies

and their allies, above all Louis XVI's supporters, posed a mortal threat to revolutionary France.

An honest and scientific study of the history of the Revolution is not in the interests of those who now deny our people the right to abolish the reign of the financial feudal lords and to build a more just and more humane society. As in the 18th century, the forces of renewal still draw inspiration from the Enlightenment ideas of progress, even in the different conditions of today. Various means are being used to obscure the part Marxist research has played in contributing to our knowledge of the revolution precisely because this research has done much for a bold critical analysis of the processes affecting society.

An analysis of the revolutionary history of France in the light of dialectical materialism warns us against imitation (characteristic of 1848 revolutionaries, who identified with the Jacobins) and a reliance on "models", helping us understand the concrete problems characteristic of any epoch.

AGAINST FEUDAL PRIVILEGES, FOR PEOPLE'S POWER

Neither the thinkers of the 18th century, the "age of criticism" as Kant called it, nor the authors of the catalogue of grievances of the Third Estate, nor even the deputies of the Constituent Assembly were inclined towards abstraction. The Revolution did not try to substitute some fantastic myth for the natural development of the world. In the early 18th century, Voltaire was already asking if France was declining, like Spain after Philip II, or modernising, like England? On the eve of 1789, the crisis of the Ancien Regime became so acute that there was only one way to save the country: to liberate it from the feudal mode of production, and to open the way to the broad development of the capitalist mode of production.

The French Revolution cannot be understood in isolation from the universal process of transition from feudalism to capitalism. The latter had taken shape in Europe by the mid-18th century, with the rise of the bourgeoisie organically linked to commodity production. One needs only to compare the histories of France, England and Prussia to appreciate the many ways of effecting the transition to capitalism. This process originated in Europe and had an impact on all the other continents.

A. Barnave, who played a major role from 1789 to 1791, clearly emphasised in his *Introduction to the French Revolution* the antagonism between the free development of industrial society and the shackles of feudal structures, outdated institutions and regulations: "The new distribution of wealth produces a new distribution of power. In the same way that the possession of lands elevated the aristocracy, industrial property elevates the power of the people." By "people", or "the middle class", Barnave meant the bourgeois strata.

But in the antifeudal struggle the *entire Third Estate, both urban and rural, rallied round the rising bourgeoisie.* In his *Essay on Privileges*, issued in November 1788, the abbé Sieyès denounced the oppression of 25 million French people by 200,000 of the privileged. A pamphlet he issued in January 1789 enjoyed immense popularity, saying: "What is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it been up to now? Nothing. What does it want to be? Some-

thing." The Third Estate spoke for the nation against the privileges, abuses and the arbitrariness. The philosophy of the time gave added impetus to the generally recognised demands, thereby rejuvenating the theory of natural right. It also strengthened the great idea that *every individual is born free and with equal rights.* Social injustice cannot therefore be imputed either to Nature or God.

But there was no a priori solution to the problems thrown up by the crisis of the Ancien Regime. Would capitalist modernisation be accomplished the English way, through a compromise between the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, between the big landowners and those whose power was based on trade, finance, mining and manufacturing? Such a compromise was possible only at the expense of the popular masses, notably the peasantry, which was forced to pay heavy indemnities (in land and money) for the abolition of feudal constraints and seigneurial rights. This was the direction taken by the process of transformations in the first phase of the Revolution. In order to enshrine it in law, the members of the Constituent Assembly refused the right of suffrage to "passive" citizens (anyone who paid taxes amounting to less than three days' work) and assured the king, the chief executive, the right to veto some of the laws enacted by the Legislative Assembly for a period of four years. He used this "suspended veto" to protect the reactionary priests and to prevent the mobilisation of the federal national guard in Paris.

The French Revolution made such a tremendous impact on popular consciousness throughout the world because the innovative action of the people influenced subsequent developments and generated unknown forms of transition to a capitalist society. *To regard such a revolution as no more than a conventional bourgeois revolution is to underestimate the original creative impulse of the working people of town and country.* Without the uprising (July-October 1789), before which the National Assembly quailed, it could not have gained the upper hand over the counterrevolution, which relied on support from feudal Europe and which was prepared to do everything to restore the Ancien Regime. Could the armed reaction have been defeated if the sansculottes had not imposed on the bourgeoisie the alliance that was necessary to save the country and the revolution? Robespierre was aware that the alliance was necessary and even inevitable. The best regular troops in Europe were brought to a halt by a volunteer army at the battle of Valmy on September 20, 1792. The historian Claude Mazauric summarised the result of this period: "The republic would never have overcome the counterrevolution without the

mobilisation of 1792, without the organisation in 'popular societies' of almost a million of those who came from the upper strata of the ordinary people and who belonged to roughly 6,000 Jacobin clubs in 1793." To contrast 1793 to 1789 as the pathological to the normal is to refuse to understand what Napoleon, who had once been a Jacobin himself, never forgot: *it is the revolutionary government which led the citizen nation to the victory of modern France over the forces that denied it the right to exist.*

DARING DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT

The modern advocates of "consensus", the docile integration of France and the French into a "Europe of businessmen", are trying to sterilise that image of the great epoch. Their dream is to derevolutionise the Revolution. But in 1789 the relations between the court at Versailles and the inhabitants of the Paris suburbs who stormed the Bastille were far from idyllic. And was it not the broad, persevering and sustained action by the peasant movement that imposed the final abolition of land rights without indemnities on July 17, 1793? That was a truly revolutionary act in a country where peasants made up 80% of the population, a crucial victory over feudalism, which could not be invalidated by the Bourbons, who returned to the country in 1815 in "foreign army transports". It has had a lasting effect on the history of France over the past two centuries.

The dialectics of the revolution inevitably laid bare the clashes of interest and the class conflicts within the Third Estate. The obstacles erected by the bourgeoisie in its efforts to secure control over and profit by the changes in society were overturned by the sansculottes, so breathing into the Revolution that "daring democratic spirit", which Jean Jaures believed so crucially important. The winning of universal suffrage eliminated the distinction between "active" and "passive" citizens. It is true that, although it instituted the right of divorce, the republic did not go so far as to recognise women's right to vote. This, however, did not prevent them from taking an active part in the 1789-1793 events, thereby accelerating the march of history. When there was a shortage of bread, and when the tricolour, the symbol of the Revolution, was being trampled at Versailles—the heart of the aristocratic conspiracy—it was the women who brought the royal family before the National Assembly in Paris. Their various initiatives in 1793 and 1794 helped consolidate social democracy, which united all sectors opposed to the financial aristocracy denounced so vehemently by Marat.

The famous Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted on August 26, 1789, gained universal recognition, offering individuals and oppressed peoples the prospect of emancipation because *it firmly linked the liberty of every human being and the equality of all.* Article 1 of the Declaration says: "Men are born free and remain free and equal in their rights." However, a large majority of the members of the Constituent Assembly took "civil" equality to mean no more than an equality of "conditions", which would result from the dismantling of the feudal hierarchy. They deplored any desire for social equality. But the Convention, sensitive to popular pressure and to the demands of small peasants, day-labourers, shopkeepers and artisans (both masters and craftsmen) took a number of measures against the appropriation and monopolisation of property in order to prevent an "extreme disproportion in property", which Robespierre said was the "source of many evils and crimes".

"There should be neither rich nor poor; opulence is shameful," said Saint-Just. Thus, firm prices were fixed for the basic necessities; inheritances had to be shared equally; communal services were provided free of charge to citizens, and mandatory public assistance was given to indigents, children, old people, cripples, mothers and widows with children; national welfare funds were set up in each department; under the Ventose decrees, the property of suspects should be shared out among impoverished patriots. It is true, however, that the Convention did not abide by this principle of gratuity proclaimed by Saint-Just.

In a report on public education, Condorcet wrote: "All social institutions ought to aim for the physical, intellectual and moral improvement of the largest and poorest class." Those in France today who subordinate education and culture to the demands of a "Single Europe", a Europe which is not for working people, are definitely not the spiritual heirs to the last of the great Encyclopaedists. And they are certainly not followers of Lapeletier de Saint-Fargeau, who based his "National Educational Plan" on the needs of the "proletarian-citizens, whose sole property lies in their work". The 1793 Declaration of Rights proclaimed society's obligation to "do everything in its power to promote public enlightenment and make education accessible to all".

For the Jacobins, as for Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the best of all possible societies was a community of independent producers in which none "could sell himself or be sold". Albert Soboul remarked that such an ideal, which was that of the sansculottes, accorded with the "economic conditions of the majority of the producers of that day".² But while

the Declaration fully guaranteed the right to produce and to trade, it drew no distinction between the freedom of one who disposed of his "revenues" as he saw fit, and one who put in "his services and his time". Isn't that the free purchase of labour-power yielding an income to industrial capital? The relations of exploitation are presented as an equal exchange between the employer and the proletarian.

Some economists, like Turgot and Necker, who did not examine the substance of the process as Marx did later, nevertheless understood that the exchange on the labour market was not equal. Even in the countryside, which had been irreversibly liberated from feudal rights, the expansion of the market and technical progress favoured the prosperous peasant to the detriment of one who alienated his means of labour and his labour-power in order to survive.

We know the fate intended for the revolutionary government by the bourgeoisie. It would take advantage of the victories over the invaders to appropriate all the benefits of the Revolution. The success of the Thermidorians was facilitated by the growing isolation of Robespierre's followers from the popular masses. Neither further repression, nor the cult of the Republic and the Supreme Being could resist the objective dialectics of commodity production. This is a valuable lesson for the revolutionaries of our century: voluntarist subjectivism is the price you pay for ignoring the conditions in which social relations are reproduced and transformed.

THE FUTURE OF FRANCE AND OF EUROPE

The capitalist mode of production, which was then necessary for social progress, developed through the ever more efficient exploitation of the working class. The victorious bourgeoisie restructured the social fabric in the name of human rights, but for its own benefit. However, the space cleared by the revolution of the survivals of feudalism was not its exclusive domain: the forces of the proletariat, the rebellious child of bourgeois society, awakened in the following century to fight for human liberation and discover the horizons of a world in which the exploitation of individuals and peoples would be no more than a memory.

The young Marx already saw the French Revolution as having performed a work that was the prelude to another: the possible and necessary overcoming of everything that divided humanity and opposed it to itself. If the propelling power of this revolution is still being keenly felt in France today, it is because

it finds itself once again, as it did in 1789, at the crossroads (although in different circumstances).

Is there only decline in store for it in the future? Will it be dissolved in a Europe of the Twelve subject to the discretionary powers of the princes of the capitalist world, a Europe of massive structural unemployment, a Europe of the "single market", in which the rights dearly bought by the working people of France, the independence of our nation, the sovereignty of the French state, will be dissipated? This is the orientation the employers and the parties of the right want to impose on our people. Meanwhile, the leaders of the Socialist Party, who claim to be champions of liberty, deliberately avoid the Communists' calls for public discussions, trying to persuade the working people that it is useless to resist the inevitable. The Munich surrender was also claimed to be inevitable.

But the future could be different. The oligarchy of the grasping predators and the arrogant technocrats is not permanent. With all its progressive forces rallied, our country could head for the *French revolution of our day*. For transforming social relations and for the flowering of the talents of our people and every citizen. It could be a free France, mistress of its means and resources, serving the cause of a modern Europe, a Europe of sovereign nations capable of working together for the common good of this and other continents, a Europe giving a lead for peace.

Because the issue is now so crucial, the opponents of a democratic transformation of French society claim that national sovereignty is an archaic concept. Let us recall, however, that our revolutionary ancestors were patriots, and that the aristocratic emigres took up arms against the Revolution and against France. We have not forgotten that over half a century ago the future collaborators of the Nazi invaders shouted: "Better Hitler than the Popular Front!". *The French Communist Party carries both the banner of the Paris Commune and the banner of Valmy*, neither of which is outdated.

It is the French Revolution that turned a people into a nation. If a radically new political order has been established in Europe it is due to the spirit of the *Social Contract* and the common will to action of millions of people. Popular sovereignty is established by the people themselves: their inalienable right then as now. The promoters of a Europe tied to the will of the transnationals want to enslave France, take its future out of its hands. But no one can deny our revolutionary people the right to exist.

The nature of the problems that had to be solved two centuries ago demanded the invention of a new

and fully democratic civil society. The autonomous communes, sections, clubs, popular societies, fraternal organisations and the press all stimulated discussion and generated action. The national army cultivated love for the Republic. The 1793 Declaration of Rights defined insurrection against a government "which violated the rights of the people" as "the most sacred and the most indispensable of duties". The practical democracy of the sansculottes in the second year of the Revolution evolved into direct self-government, and Babeuf, the founder of the first "acting communist party", as Marx called it, said that the Revolution could not be loyal to popular interests and aspirations unless the people themselves were its champions.

Our struggle for a *socialist self-governing democracy* is the source of the renovating public spirit. In a country where the police often sets itself above the law, where the employers defy the latter, this civic spirit reactivates the gains and potentialities of 1789-1793, determining the content of the indispensable rights the French of our day want to have. The solution of the problems produced by the crisis calls for civic activity and the use of every means for raising the level of emancipation and civilisation in society, with everyone creatively participating in the diverse forms of social life. Civic spirit rejects the ideology and practices of the privileged strata, which, as in the United States, for instance, are interested in politically and socially marginalising those who are hardest hit by the crisis. It will not allow a deal with those who claim that politics and morality are incompatible, that public figures have no binding obligations, that openness and truth are not essential for democracy, and that the unscrupulous money-makers are the true heroes of this age.

True to the precepts of the Encyclopaedists, the French Revolution involved scientists in its work and created institutions of high scientific endeavour. A civic spirit consonant with our epoch demands that the working people have *access to knowledge*, without which there is no true independence. Progress, inseparable from the development of economic, sociocultural and political democracy, allows the working citizen to take a conscious part in the governance of social progresses and to influence the organisation and the ultimate results of labour. When those who run the state today refuse to comply with the law and compel the director of the Renault works to reinstate the workers, CGT activists guilty only of defending the French car industry, they merely prove a *contrario* that the "social Europe" is being

erected by the actions of the working people themselves. And it is they who will build the Europe of the peoples.

DEEPEST ROOTS

Towards the end of his *Outline History of the Progress of the Human Spirit*, Condorcet celebrated the time when the peoples would understand that they cannot become conquerors "without losing their own liberty". However, while in the course of the revolution the Constituent Assembly proclaimed the universality of human rights, the section of the bourgeoisie whose prosperity was based on colonial exploitation was strong enough to maintain its domination in the Antilles. It took the "black epic"—the armed uprising by the enslaved peoples—for slavery to be abolished by the Convention of the Mountain on February 4, 1794. It is true that it was soon re-established by Bonaparte, who was guilty of genocide in Guadeloupe. Still, Toussaint-Louverture was quite right when he wrote to the First Consul that the roots of the tree of liberty cut down in San Domingo were much "too deep and numerous" for the tree to perish!

"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", the message of the Revolution, echoed around the world. But such was the contradiction between the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the practices of the French bourgeoisie in the 19th century that one of its most outstanding spokesmen, Jules Ferry, once admitted that it was not worth sacrificing the profits of colonial exploitation for the sake of respecting the principles of 1789, which children learn by heart at school.

Only a class with a vital interest in abolishing man's exploitation by man could give a fresh impetus to the movement for universal emancipation. Scientific socialism and Lenin's critique of imperialism laid the foundations for a clear understanding of the need to unite the struggle for the emancipation of the working people and the struggle for the liberation of the peoples.

The French Communists, who have not forgotten who stormed the Bastille, are firm in their conviction that the future of humanity is being forged by the independent and concerted actions of the peoples for the great cause of their common interests.

¹ See the works of the sociologist A. Touraine, the historian F. Furet, and Prime Minister M. Rocard, among others.

² Albert Soboul, *Precis d'histoire de la Revolution française*, Paris, 1972, p. 327.

LATIN AMERICA: CHANGES IN THE OFFING

Roberto REGALADO ALVAREZ
sector head, CC, Communist Party of Cuba

With the world about to enter upon the last decade of the 20th century, the situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is marked by a sharpening of the economic crisis, the insupportable burden of the external debt, and dangerous social and political instability. There is a widening gap between the transnational bourgeoisie, with its vast profits, on the one hand, and the popular masses and middle strata, which have to pay the price for the consequences of the fashionable neoliberal policy, on the other.

During Ronald Reagan's presidency, the United States stepped up its interference in the region in an effort to strengthen its imperialist diktat, taking a tough stand on economic issues, notably the external debt, from which it strove to extract political dividends and to prevent the formation of a united front of debtor countries by negotiating separately with each of them.

Reagan made use of a hypocritical campaign against drugs trafficking as a means of political pressure, seeking to discredit the Latin American revolutionary movement and to destabilise Panama in order to create the conditions for revising some of the terms of the treaties under which the Canal is to be returned to Panama.

The Bush Administration began its term by trying to adapt the old imperialist policy to the realities of a changing world, but in formulating its policy with respect to Latin America it is bound to be confronted with the contradiction between the narrowly pragmatic and inflexible strategy in the Western Hemisphere and its direct effects: the deepening crisis and the growing instability in the region, which pose a threat even to undivided US domination.

The Central American conflict has deepened because of US attempts to suppress the struggle for revolutionary anti-imperialist and democratic transformations, and to prevent the consolidation of the Sandinista Revolution, the expansion of the military and political activity of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador, and of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. The Reagan Administration's policy in Central America was based on the "doctrine of low-intensity conflicts",¹ including

the imposition of a war of attrition on Nicaragua, and the establishment of counterinsurgency states in El Salvador and Guatemala. However, these US efforts were frustrated by mass action and the resolve of the revolutionaries in these countries, as evidenced by the rout of the Somoza bands in Nicaragua, and the crisis of the regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala.

It is still too early to say what the US administration intends to do about the Esquipulas IV accords,² but it is already clear that it marks a shift of emphasis in the confrontation with Nicaragua from the military to the political and ideological sphere, with the prospect of disbanding the counterrevolutionary forces in exchange for recognition of the power rotation principle in that country.

In this new situation, with Nicaragua devastated by the war and natural disasters and in the midst of the deepest economic crisis in its history, the Sandinista National Liberation Front has continued its struggle against the United States, which has been trying to block foreign aid to Nicaragua. This gives the socialist countries and all the progressive forces of the world another opportunity to make a concrete contribution to peace and social progress.

The prospect of US intervention in Central America has caused the Latin American bourgeois governments to fear a mighty explosion of anti-imperialist action and a rise of the mass movement, with unpredictable consequences for local regimes. Such fears, together with a revival of "Latin American solidarity" under the impact of the Malvinas war, were perhaps the two principal elements which led to the formation of the Contadora Group and the Contadora Support Group, which merged to form the Group of Eight.³

The Group of Eight made use of the experience it gained in the process of Central American negotiations to expand its sphere of activity and to include a number of pressing continental problems, with emphasis on collective efforts to reduce the costs they would have to bear in the event of having to confront the United States individually.

In the last few years, the leading capitalist countries have taken steps to preserve the international financial

system and to prevent the Third World countries from agreement on non-payment of debts.

The states of the Latin American Economic System and the participants in the Group of Eight meetings at Acapulco in November 1987 and at Punta del Este in October 1988 want to pool their efforts, and this is also expressed in the calls to turn the Organisation of American States into a forum capable of discussing the differences between the United States and the other countries of the continent. Many heads of state and other prominent Latin American politicians have called for Cuba's return to the OAS.

However, *solid unity in defence of common interests is still a long way off*. The limited capacity of the Latin American bourgeois governments to resist imperialism can be seen, for instance, in Panama's exclusion from the Group of Eight just when it became the victim of an aggressive and subversive US campaign.

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are now faced with a crisis of the "governability of the democracies", which is reflected in the rapid decline of the prestige of their authorities within months, or even weeks, of their takeover. Since these are, in many cases, right-wing conservative, liberal or Christian democratic parties, they are the ones primarily affected by this process.

The *Christian Democrats* maintain the closest ties with the United States. But they have found themselves deprived of the instruments of power in most countries (with the exception of some in the Caribbean). They recently lost them in El Salvador, and are barely managing to hang on in Guatemala, precisely because they constitute the political facade of the US-imposed "counterinsurgency states".

At the same time, the Christian Democratic Party of Chile is one of the main components of the opposition to Pinochet's dictatorship, while many Christian democratic parties in the Southern Cone are made up of progressive forces or have alliances with them.

The *military dictatorships* are also not immune to the "crisis of governability". Economic difficulties have forced the army to return to barracks in most South American republics, and, temporarily at least, neutralised the putschist elements. The armed forces preferred to supervise the civilian government, which in turn had to pay the costs of the antipopular policies dictated by the International Monetary Fund.

The weakening of traditional political groups and the urge of the masses for change led to the rise of the *social democratic parties*: the APRA party came to power in Peru, the National Liberation party in Costa Rica, and the Democratic Action in Venezuela, while the Social Democrats won the recent elections in Ecuador and Jamaica.

It is quite clear that many Latin American and Caribbean parties affiliated with the Socialist International do not have much sympathy for the doctrine of social reform, but they have felt a need for political and moral support and for an authoritative international forum. One example is the application from the Liberal Party of Colombia for membership of the SI.

The SI has certainly made a contribution to settling the Central American crisis and has been opposed to US military intervention in the region. Even so, its conservative members have been putting pressure on the Sandinista National Liberation Front and placing conditions on aid to Nicaragua.

The prospect of SI parties coming to power in Latin America explains SI's attention to the problems of the economic crisis and the external debt, and its search for ways to restore the "governable democracies" wherever these are led or intend to be led by the Social Democrats. Their model of development, however, also turns out to be impracticable.

The most dramatic evidence of the discrepancy between illusions and reality has come from the victory of Carlos Andres Perez in the elections in Venezuela and the powerful social explosion in the country three weeks later, with hundreds of people killed or injured—the result of his decision to raise the prices of the basic necessities which followed the IMF condition for the granting of new credits.

US intervention in the internal affairs of Latin American countries is another factor in the crisis of the "governability of the democracies". *US ruling circles regard as democratic only those political systems which guarantee the preservation of the capitalist system and subordination to US geopolitical interests*. US imperialism holds any methods to be valid when it comes to maintaining its definition of democracy, preferably a liberal bourgeois democracy, although it relies on military dictatorships in times of crisis. One needs only to recall the 1973 putsch in Chile and the overthrow of the Popular Unity government, which was a *heavy blow at the still unproven theory of a possible peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism*.

Bourgeois democracies are, of course, preferable to repressive tyrannies, if only because they offer some opportunities for strengthening the progressive social forces, but US intervention and the constant threat of military coups hang like the sword of Damocles over the constitutional governments, especially those faced with the contradiction of following the dictates of an unfair international political and economic order, and heeding the demands of their peoples for urgent transformations.

The Cuban people's victory on January 1, 1959, the first socialist revolution on the American continent,

gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary forces by demonstrating that power could be won a mere 90 miles away from mighty US imperialism.

Our revolution was a historical lesson for the ruling circles of the United States as well. Their policy was to isolate Cuba by launching a campaign of antisocialist vilification. At the same time they began to hone their counterinsurgency instruments: the Inter-American Defence Council was resuscitated, the Alliance for Progress set up, and military aid programmes extended. US specialists began to work out methods of assassination and torture, among whose victims were many popular leaders, revolutionary activists and innocent people.

The Latin American revolutionary movement has gained valuable experience, which is already yielding fruit in Central America. The revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua in 1979 dispelled the myth that Cuba was simply an exceptional phenomenon.

No other revolution has succeeded in our hemisphere in the past ten years. Apart from the potential of developments in El Salvador, the left-wing forces of the continent are not yet capable of using the effects of the current crisis to take power, and to start deep transformations in countries where the objective conditions have matured.

This can be explained by the increased US intervention, and by US emphasis on counterrevolutionary, counterinsurgency wars on a global scale. In this way the *United States has raised the price that has to be paid for taking and retaining state power*. There is also the strengthening of some sections of the classes and social strata supporting capitalism, and the inadequate political involvement of the impoverished masses.

In view of the situation in the world and in their own countries, the left-wing forces of our continent are combining various forms of struggle, giving preference in some cases to military-political elements, and in others, to the consolidation of political alliances: the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front frustrated the US counterinsurgency project, and plunged the state power structure in El Salvador into crisis; and the incorporation of the Guatemalan Party of Labour in the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity opens up fresh prospects for the liberation movement.

A special situation has taken shape in Colombia, where the high level of violence and the crisis of the government's authority show that the instruments of power are passing into the hands of the army and the drugs traffickers. Nevertheless, the left-wing forces have set up the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Committee and have intensified the activity of political fronts and coordination centres among the masses

as part of a revolutionary project which answers the national realities. Despite the assassination of more than 700 of its activists in the dirty war, the Patriotic Union has continued to hold high its militant banners.

The situation in Peru has been complicated by a clash between three forces backing three incompatible political projects: those of the Right, of the Left and of Sendero Luminoso. With the approach of the elections, there has been an intensification of the political, social and economic struggle in the course of which the United Left is being consolidated. Its congress in January 1989 re-affirmed its influence on the popular masses and its national and international authority.

The worsening of the economic and social situation in Mexico has dealt a heavy blow at the traditional political system, leading to the emergence of a new political bloc, the Democratic Convergence, consisting of progressive and left-wing groups, which was very successful in the latest elections, leaving the right-wing National Action Party in third place.

There are encouraging signs of an upswing for the democratic movement in South America: the impressive achievements of the Workers' Party of Brazil in the municipal elections; the vigorous activity of the left-wing forces in Uruguay in the electoral campaign, and a referendum on the responsibility of military men for crimes committed under the dictatorship held at their demand; and the re-appraisal of its political line by the Communist Party of Argentina.

The international situation has been markedly improved by the successes in the struggle for peace in Europe and in North America: the signing of the historic INF Treaty, and the constructive arms cuts initiatives of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty states. However, the crisis in the Third World countries has been daily growing into an ever more formidable obstacle to mankind's further progress.

Fidel Castro remarked, in this context, that every three days 140,000 children die in the less developed countries—the number of those killed in the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Strengthening peace is undoubtedly in the interests of the whole human race, but not everyone seems to understand this. How is one to explain to a Bolivian Indian, who has a life expectancy of 33 years, that the main danger lies in a nuclear holocaust. Try explaining this to the slum dwellers of Brazil, to the miners of Peru, to the poverty-stricken peasants of Guatemala, or to the victims of violence in Colombia or Haiti!

It is not easy to find answers to such questions in this extremely complicated world of ours; no handy formula can be devised for solving all the problems of our day. Many people are still unaware that in this indivisible and interdependent world the *critical situa-*

tion in the less developed countries is also a problem in the struggle for peace. In a speech addressed to workers in science and culture in January 1989, Mikhail Gorbachov said: "We now feel that we are behindhand in elaborating the dialectics of the correlation between universal human values and class interests. Science has its work cut out here. This lag leads to a certain incomprehension and even—let us say frankly—to absurd accusations about an abandonment of the positions of socialism, a renunciation of class approaches and of the interests of the national-liberation movement."

In Cuba, a process is now under way to rectify mistakes and negative trends. The construction of socialism requires a policy that accords with our situation as a poor, underdeveloped country virtually without natural resources, next door to US imperialism and thousands of kilometres from the socialist community. The Cubans are a dedicated, hard-working people brought up on the principles of internationalism. The present economic situation makes it possible to assure our people of a fitting living standard, even if it still falls short of European standards.

Imperialism has been using all kinds of inventions and distortions in an effort to generate contradictions between Cuba and the European socialist countries, which are also seeking their own ways of advancing socialist construction.

Those who spread the simplistic notion of Cuba's international isolation ignore the development of its relations with countries on every continent, the recent deepening of our relations with governments and peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the efforts for continental unity.

Our country's activity in the international arena testifies to its resolute support of the principle of settling conflicts through negotiation on the basis of respect for the interests of all the parties involved, above all of those who express the people's true aspirations.

What then is the dialectical interrelation between the struggle for the common interests of all the countries and political forces of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the efforts for social change? In an interview during his visit to Mexico in December 1988, Fidel Castro said: "I ask myself: What has priority? Is it *social change* or *our countries' survival*, independence and opportunities for development? If there are no conditions for independence, the conditions for *revolution* become more difficult. As soon as there is a revolution like that in Nicaragua, there is instant hostility on the part of the United States, an economic blockade, a dirty war and attempts at economic asphyxiation. That is why we say: it is more important

to assure our countries of the necessary conditions, it is more important for the Latin American countries to unite in the battle against the external debt and in the fight for a New International Economic Order. These are the minimal requirements for independence and development, and, one might add, for Latin American integration."

There is also the question of *whether a socialist revolution is possible now in Latin America*. Theoretically, it is, but US domination, the economic dependence and vulnerability of the countries of our continent and the improvement of the mechanisms of aggression and military pressure make it very difficult.

However, what is possible in Latin America today is the *victory of a popular, democratic and anti-imperialist revolution* for the assertion of independence and national sovereignty as the prerequisite for political, social and economic transformations paving the way to socialism. This is amply confirmed by the victory of the Sandinistas.

The possibility of success for the democratic forces in El Salvador and the process of negotiation in accordance with the interests of the revolutionary movement also fit into the overall picture drawn by Fidel Castro. Cuba does not see any contradiction between defence of the common interests of the states of the continent and solidarity with the revolutionary struggle for the rights of the exploited and oppressed masses of the Third World, who bear the burden of the economic crisis and the policies of transnational capital.

Joint action with other political trends, including the Social Democrats, does not exclude ideological debates with them whenever our partners spread illusions about the possibility of curing social injustice without removing its foundations.

There is no contradiction between the interests of humankind as a whole and the needs of the majority, the billions of people subsisting in a state of misery. Fidel Castro was right when he said: "There can be no development without peace, but there will be no peace without development."

¹ See the article by Jaime Barrios in this issue.

² A joint statement by the five Central American presidents on the outcome of the conference in Costa del Sol (El Salvador) in February 1989, mapping out concrete measures for a peace settlement of the Central American conflict.—Ed.

³ Including Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina.—Ed.



NO ALTERNATIVE TO DEMOCRATISATION

Gyorgy ACZEL

Central Committee member, Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and Director of the Institute of Social Sciences of the HSWP CC

The critical reassessment by a number of communist parties of their history and of the experience accrued by socialism in trying to find ways of renewal is a hallmark of our time. It is not an end in itself, nor some fashionable whim, but an essential feature of any revolutionary party. It does not appear automatically but has to work its way against heavy odds. In a sense, we are hostages to our own past, and our evaluations of the present are yet too timid. As a result, problems are accumulating in social life and we are prevented from foreseeing developments early enough and adequately responding to them.

Hungary is sympathetic to the Soviet Union's perestroika, its bold analysis of historical experience and the concepts and practical steps designed to put an end to the Stalinist model of society and lead it to entirely new frontiers. The Hungarians' interest is easy to understand because we have a common goal of *achieving democratic and humane socialism*.

The time of duplication is past. Nevertheless, we think it relevant to relate Hungarian renewal to the experience of Soviet perestroika. New thinking, manifest in Soviet foreign policy, is of special importance to us today and in the future.

EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS AND SETBACKS

Immediately after liberation from Nazism in 1945 the Hungarian Communists initiated national democratic transformations and the rehabilitation of the war-ravaged economy. It was an undeniably heroic period in Hungarian history.

The Soviet Union's postwar strategy was aimed at promoting cooperation among the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition and therefore severely constrained those communist parties and their leaders, such as Tito, who wanted to proceed directly to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Our party sought to unite all the political forces genuinely wishing to create a new state. Following the logic of the people's democratic revolution, we cooperated with dif-

ferent parties, and the coalition system of government proved viable and effective.

Hungary's foreign policy grew out of the accords of the victorious powers on the system of occupation zones in Europe. Our coalition partners recognised that reality in principle, but each of them tried, depending on its social base, to do either more or less than had been agreed upon in order to win broader public support. The initial external conditions favoured the Hungarian Communist Party as a component of the international communist movement led by the USSR, and it even gained a more important role in the coalition than its actual influence on the people warranted.

But it was not external pressure that decided the country's fate: the age-old problems were settled democratically, and the ruling alliance and its left wing enjoyed real popular support. The Communists and the Social Democrats were unanimous on all major issues in the sociopolitical struggle and in the renewal of society. These two political organisations of the working class had overwhelming support, which had a decisive effect on the situation in the capital and major industrial centres.

The task of embarking on the *road of building socialism* was formulated in late 1947. By that time the anti-Hitler coalition had fallen apart, and cooperation among the great powers was replaced with the Cold War, which was fraught with an armed conflict. The ousting of communist parties from governments in Western and Southern Europe was paralleled by the elimination of bourgeois democratic parties to the east of the Elbe. In Hungary, the latter process was carried out in Stalinist forms, i.e., through diktat and coercion. Regrettably, the leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party led by Rakosi wholeheartedly embraced such methods, refused to tolerate any deviation from the dominant ideology, and began to suppress opposition parties. In 1948, a one-party political system corresponding to the Stalinist model of socialism began to be introduced, and the then party leaders zealously pursued a similar line.

A series of political trials were staged in the country: even left Social Democrats and well-known Communists who had returned home from emigration in the West (among them Janos Kadar) fell victim to repression. In 1953, when a "Zionist plot" was "exposed" in the Soviet Union, a similar "case" was trumped up in Hungary.

The Soviet economic model was being copied as well. It could have been imposed through military and political coercion, of course, but mass support could hardly have been secured if Soviet experience had not offered speedy solutions to the acute problems characteristic of backward countries. Stalinist economic policy naturally gave an impetus to industrialisation. Industrial production doubled,

and Hungary rapidly became an industrial-agrarian state. That model of economic development in a way contributed to the implementation of the declared socialist goals, such as social equality and a cultural revolution. The erstwhile division of society into opposing castes was abolished *within the first decade* and social mobility greatly increased. One important feature of that process was that workers and peasants, both young and middle-aged, were promoted on a large scale to posts of leadership in government and public organisations. Secondary education was introduced on a large scale, although Hungary was a generation behind Western Europe in this respect, and progress was made in the organisation of higher schools: the student population grew ten-fold, and there was an especially large influx of worker and peasant children, who had previously had no access to higher education.

But even these remarkable achievements were from the start accompanied by negative phenomena which continued to worsen, holding back and distorting the development process. Tough centralised economic management based on the concept of "primary socialist accumulation" led to the rise of bureaucracy. There arose an administrative-command system which conveyed the orders from a *group of leaders* (rather than from the *leading party bodies*) to party cells, to the whole state apparatus and to public organisations, all of which were denied any independence.

That system and the methods used to mobilise people where not sufficient to push through the "absolute will" of the centre. Coercion (legal and illegal) was then brought into play: there were mock trials, disciplinary actions and threats... Rakosi's rule was marked by more than one hundred death sentences, hundreds imprisoned, over 5,000 interned, 15,000 exiled, and more than 500,000 repressed in the countryside. Bitterness and disillusionment set in among the people for years to come. Political power and society became isolated from each other as a result of administrative-command arbitrariness.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

The deadlock was already obvious by 1952. The changes in the USSR following Stalin's death offered an *opportunity to do away with the deformities*. But even after the 20th CPSU Congress, Rakosi held back on long-overdue reforms. His demotion in July 1956 came too late, and his successor as First Secretary, Erno Gero, was implicated in the old political course.

The grassroots, meanwhile, had gone much further than the timid and indecisive party leadership in a search for new ways of development. The need for change constantly manifested itself, though in simple forms: people closely studied the programmes that were put forward and listened to the more vociferous demands of small groups of intellectuals. As they entered active politics, people were confused and had differing aspirations, but at the same

time they were resolved to achieve change for the better. This political "explosion" also divided the party: rank-and-file members demanding renewal turned against the conservative leaders, who continued to cling to the seemingly inviolable old methods. The party as a mass vanguard force was paralysed. On October 23, 1956, a mass rally was held in Budapest, and later that day an uprising flared.

The question of whether it was a *revolution or a counter-revolution* has again become the focus of lively debates. Was it a popular uprising or a coup started by reactionary forces who had deceived the people and led them out into the streets? There is as yet no definitive answer to these logical questions. The important point was that the composition of the participating groups and their demands changed as developments gathered momentum. *The renewal of socialism and drastic democratic reform* were the main demands of the mass demonstration on the night of October 23. The following fortnight saw a merging of various forces and goals. Along with slogans of renewal, there were calls for a return to the people's democratic system of government established after 1945. The supporters of the *old regime, overthrown more than 10 years previously*, were also active: they sought to turn the clock back, though with a slightly modernised form of Western-type parliamentary democracy. In addition, there were *extremists*, such as conservative nationalists, arch-rightists, anti-Communists, Christian-Nationalist followers of Horthy, and even criminals, revanchists and *déclassé* elements.

Along with demands that public ownership be preserved and that democracy be harmonised with socialism, attempts were made to deny the realities in Central and Eastern Europe. These realities were recognised by the US which, while continuing to conduct provocative propaganda, did inform the Soviet leadership about Washington's position, pointing to the dangerous developments in Hungary.

In late October—early November there was the real threat of another wave of "white terror", like the one which had swept the country after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919. The Nagy government was unable to cope with the difficult situation: its partial concessions were no answer to the numerous demands and only added fat to the fire. A defeatist mood began to spread: "If the mob wants fascism, let it have fascism." The course of events gave no reason to believe that "bad socialism" was going to be scrapped and "good socialism" built instead. The opposing concepts of counter-revolution and "corrective" revolution were lumped together in tempestuous ideological debates because the nature of the necessary changes had not been clarified in earlier discussions. The leaders still believed that a renunciation of the Stalinist model of socialism would be taken as a betrayal, as the abolition of socialism itself.

The formation of a revolutionary workers' and peasants' government and its request for Soviet military assistance was thus a forced but inevitable move. Before

long the danger was contained. Military force was not the decisive factor, as was shown by the unexpectedly swift consolidation of the people and by the popular support for the government.

ABANDONING STALINISM

By 1956, the social, economic and political system created in Hungary, the leaders' blind belief in it, their lack of will, daring or ability to change the situation, and ideological stagnation had led society into a pre-crisis situation (to use Mikhail Gorbachov's term), and the only way out was to introduce far-ranging reforms and carry out a drastic overhaul.

As an active participant in many important events over the past 30 years, I think that historically the HSWP deserves great credit for both preserving the earlier achievements of socialism and putting an end to the more crude distortions of the 1950s.

A distinctly *Hungarian practice of developing socialism* took shape. Our experience is specific and not a model to be emulated. Essentially, the HSWP relaxed its monopoly of power, modernised economic management, introduced democracy in social life, and secured broad popular support through a policy of alliances.

Changes did not come fast and easy, and there were quite a few difficulties and retreats. To begin with, the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government had resolutely to repulse those forces which wanted the restoration of the bourgeois system. On the other hand, the attempts of Rakosi's followers to regain power could not be disregarded either. Fighting "on two fronts", as it were, the party responded to every shift in the balance of domestic political forces, and eventually excluded both extremist political movements from public life.

As early as 1957, the HSWP and the government had already made plans for a series of reforms. The party's blueprint for a basically new agrarian policy was very important. Agriculture was restructured gradually and on a voluntary basis, and the new model effectively harmonised collective and household production. The results were good indeed: agriculture became an important and competitive economic sector.

Much effort was put into building a modern structure of the socialist economy. A new system of economic management, introduced in 1968, gave broader rights to enterprises. At the same time it was planned to encourage market relations and increase their role, but that process was limited, primarily because the political superstructure remained unchanged. Certain ideological fears and old dogmas also held back the reform. Social and economic problems, which changes do not create but always aggravate, could not be disregarded either. We should therefore have been ready to resolve them, to foresee any deterioration in foreign trade.

The keynote of the development of the *political system* over that period was the broadening of independence at

every level. The new law on the local councils enabled them to take an independent stand and made them more representative. Two laws were passed to democratise the electoral system. The party renounced the postulate that public organisations should be its adjuncts, but in practice continued to control them out of fear of a split between the rank-and-file Communists and the leadership, or between the people and the party. In short, democratisation was real although its success was limited.

Our policy of alliances has changed drastically over the past 30 years, and especially so in the 1960s. The catchword was "He who is not against us is with us" and a cultural policy based on tolerance and the principles of humanism was evolved. Freedom of scientific research and artistic expression was broadened, the party ceasing to interfere or lay down the law here, something which greatly encouraged workers in science and the arts.

Living standards rose consistently throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, and both real wages and consumption trebled. It was a unique period in Hungarian history.

Hungary today is an open country with 17-18 million foreign visitors every year, and 5 million of its citizens travel abroad annually. Our state has gained a certain reputation within the international community as a reliable partner. This list of our real accomplishments is far from being complete but the problem is how we are to retain and augment them.

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

World economic shifts that began in the 1980s affected socialist as well as capitalist economies. The new challenges demand an analysis of the factors which prevent our countries from adapting to the new world realities. In other words, the question is *whether the crisis has hit socialism in general or one of its models?*

As our party sees it, not socialism but the system we call Stalinism or post-Stalinism is in crisis today. Its features are well known, but it seems worthwhile mentioning here the things we should get rid of in Hungary. First, we should drop the illusion that socialism can be built in countries isolated from world capitalism, and that a special "world socialist economic system" can be created. Next, the concept of running the economy from a single centre and the simplistic interpretation of socialist property as only belonging to the state must be scrapped. Finally, the one-party political system which has no room for parties, movements or organisations other than the communist party is not viable.

Since 1956, Hungary has taken resolute steps away from Stalinism. Until recently, however, this historical development was merely preparing the ground for changes in the political system, its ideological underpinnings, and in approaches to foreign affairs.

Economic problems are especially grave today. The production structures and mechanisms created in the country as a result of one-sided orientation to the CMEA

do not meet today's needs or make for effective participation in world development processes. The task of stage-by-stage conversion to the market economy was set in 1968, but the process was halted and then, in the early 1970s, it began to be reversed. International developments, including increasing stagnation in the USSR, affected the Hungarian reform as well.

Departures from the policy of reforms stopped in 1978. But by that time foreign debt had grown considerably, the competitiveness of some traditional types of Hungarian production had waned and so on. The adopted "emergency measures" were short-lived and half-hearted and failed to give the desired effect. And basic changes were not forthcoming from the 1984 resolution of the HSWP CC, which was aimed at setting up a qualitatively different mixed economy based on market mechanisms, because the political prerequisites were absent. It was not until after the 1988 party conference that a situation conducive to further radical reforms began taking shape. As a result, a new law has been adopted on associations and amalgamations, expanding the possibilities for attracting foreign investment, the banking system has been changed, and the order of the day is to restructure the state budget and to take other measures.

The low efficiency of the state enterprises is an obstacle to the country's economic progress. Ways of raising it, through a transfer of public property to joint-stock societies, cooperatives and holding companies, for example, are now being worked out. The development of a mixed economy involves difficulties and problems, of course. Many of the measures now being taken are unpopular because the costs of the reform are already affecting the living standards of working people. Inflation, bankruptcies, unemployment and their negative social repercussions will have to be dealt with in future years. These are unavoidable, but preparations should be made in advance in order to keep economic restructuring on course.

There are political tensions as well because economic transformations necessarily involve political ones.

From the 1960s, *movements* that were autonomous from the government were able to function in Hungary. In practice, however, there was excessive supervision of their activities, which in the early 1980s the public organisations began to resist, formulating alternative demands, while some informal associations opted for uniting into political parties. The traditional model no longer contributed to social stability and integration.

The one-party system actually ended with the emergence of new political organisations and the recreation of some former parties (such as the Independent Party of Small Farm-Holders and the Social Democratic Party, which participated in the government coalition after 1945). But an effective and law-governed multiparty system has yet to take shape. Recent legislation on public organisations has effectively legalised it, and the situation and role of the HSWP has changed accordingly.

Our party is *revising its attitude to society and the state*. It intends to continue to offer its own development programme to the people, but will not directly supervise state bodies. In our view, they could coordinate the activities of political organisations themselves. Hence the need for a coalition government which could pull the country out of the crisis through democratic reforms and socialist development.

The party leadership considers political pluralism to be an important precondition for broader democracy, but it does not see pluralism as simply a multiparty system or view the latter as a sufficient guarantee for democratic development. There is a certain amount of confusion as some Communists are worried about the fate of socialism, the emergence of a multiparty system and a possible loss of power.

One of the reasons for the imminent *social reform* is growing social differentiation and the limited legal and individual possibilities available to people. Roughly 20% of Hungarians are low-income, about 5-6% belong to the "elite", and 75% comprise the "middle stratum". However, the situation of a large segment of people—about 15% of the total—may worsen. The need for radical change in the social sphere is obvious, but money is scarce because the economy needs fresh investments. In addition, the policy of social reform often comes into conflict with the programme of economic rationalisation: while the former aims at removing inequalities and differences between social strata, the latter relies on the principle of distribution according to production performance and depends on investment, and so on. It follows that, as the efficiency of the national economy is increased, ways must be found to minimise unnecessary expenditure, to avoid excessive property inequalities and to secure genuinely equal opportunities for all the citizens.

An *ideological crisis*, a crisis of confidence closely related to social difficulties, has undoubtedly been provoked by the simplistic interpretation of socialism and belated cultural and intellectual renewal. There are many interdependent and intertwined reasons behind it, of course. For example, under the old system of economic management, no one ever really took any responsibility for economic blunders or for the failure to take the right decisions on time, thus causing dissatisfaction with the authorities. A reform of this system is the key to overcoming this crisis of confidence.

There is a degree of alienation between the leadership and the rank-and-file. Most of the latter are not at all happy at having to share responsibility for previous mistaken policies which they took no part in drafting. That is why the *promotion of openness and democracy* within the party brooks no delay. We think this should be the main thrust of the reform of the political system. Although the economic problems and other difficulties are real enough, we expect the democratic renewal of the party to lead to a broad social consensus among the forces for renewal.

Remedying the crisis phenomena will be a long, dif-

difficult and painful process. There is the danger of extremism and attempts to turn to "benevolent capitalism" as a way out. Advocates of the latter course keep silent about the economic, social and human problems of today's bourgeois society, at the same time ignoring the achievements of socialism, something which worries not only those within the party. Other sections of the community are concerned about the maintenance of law and order.

We hope that the current discussions will make it possible to lay the ideological foundations of a *new model of building socialism*. The following questions are now the most pressing in Hungarian society:

- What should we retain from our past, and from the experience of other socialist countries, and what should we borrow from Social Democracy?
- How are the new international trends to be taken into account?
- To what extent can we experiment and take risks without creating new difficulties?

- Do we want to be a working-class or a people's party? What is our social base in late 20th century Hungary?

- Is democracy equivalent to political pluralism? What are the possibilities for social self-government and direct democracy?

- How is the leading role of the HSWP changing in the new circumstances? How can it be preserved? What are the chances of a left coalition? What is new in the policy of alliances?

- How can the economic crisis be overcome and the conflicting demands for economic modernisation and social stability be reconciled? What is the way to a market economy and more efficient relations between state, cooperative, private and foreign property? Is the market or state regulation more responsive to new world realities?

Social renewal has confronted the HSWP with difficult problems involving many unknown factors. The only way to resolve them is for Communists to ensure that the reforms lead to a democratic and humane socialism. There is no alternative to this process.

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WMR QUESTIONNAIRE

SOCIALIST IDEALS: A PERSONAL VIEW

We continue with replies to our international questionnaire. The questions are:

- *What do you regard as the supreme value in the life of your country, and what do you object to?*
- *What topical issues do you think should be tackled in the near future?*
- *What does the socialist status of your country mean to you personally? Do you have an opportunity for direct involvement in the assertion of common objectives and interests? What are your proposals and forecasts with regard to closer cooperation among the socialist countries?*

In this issue we present replies from Czechoslovakia.

WITH A WAVE OF THE MAGIC WAND?

Karel NOVACEK
worker at a heating plant, Strakonice

I have found myself thinking again and again about our supreme values, and at first glance they appear very ordinary. Many people tend to forget just how much effort it cost entire generations to gain them. After all, in many

countries the right to work, social security and peace cannot be taken for granted.

He who has eyes to see, let him see. Much has changed over the past 40 years. In our district town, for instance, we now have modern housing estates, supermarkets, modernised plants and enterprises, new sports facilities, medical centres and other institutions.

I fully appreciate the policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which is always in the forefront of social change and strives to create the most favourable living conditions for the working people. I believe the party's strength lies in the courage it has displayed in pointing out the weaknesses and shortcomings that have prevented us

from advancing even further. The policy of restructuring and democratising our society opens up a wealth of possibilities for all honest citizens, at the same time prompting them to work hard for their own good. I have used the word "hard" purposely. It is no longer enough simply to voice one's support for restructuring; there must be a commitment to it in the workplace.

One thing worries me. The majority here understand and support the idea and course of restructuring. There are, however, many people, some of whom I know, who would like everything done with a wave of the magic wand. There is at times a lack of discipline, with so-called objective difficulties used as an excuse for poor work. Answers to difficult problems are often sought everywhere but in one's own work.

Restructuring offers broad horizons, especially for the young, by encouraging originality, instilling confidence and presenting opportunities for self-expression in return for creative thinking and innovative approaches. These things always appeal to the young. That is why I am very worried about the passivity among some young people, their indifference to social affairs, and their unwillingness to "show what they have to offer" as it were. Nevertheless, I have faith in the young generation. The fact is that older people, above all the Communists, have to be able to speak openly to the young, to win their trust and to give them a chance. If we complain that young people want everything on a plate, that they seem unwilling to join in the struggle, then we are also reproaching ourselves. Young men and women must be at the centre of events, they must take on a share of responsibility, and they must be able to appreciate the moral and material value of their work.

Upbringing and education are vital here, and this problem was covered recently at a Plenary Meeting of the CPCz CC. I realise, of course, that school isn't everything. As parents and families we should devote more attention to our children. You have to be able to stop and think whether to see to the car, the country cottage or the hobby, or whether to spend more time with your sons and daughters.

Our task today and over the next few years is to complete the restructuring. This means improving administration and management. The point here is that everyone should be doing the right job, in the central offices as on the shopfloor. I know from my own experience at the heating plant what it means to have an efficient manager. Our director is not only a fine and experienced specialist, but also a politician who is genuinely respected in the collective. He is able to act promptly and make the right decisions in complex situations, and to respond swiftly to new requirements, making no secret of our difficulties, and always asking advice from the collective on how to overcome them. In short, he is the kind of Communist who matches my idea of a leader in the restructuring period.

I have been working in the power industry for a long time, and so I am well aware that we have at the same time

to build up capacities and stop polluting the environment. Equipment for trapping noxious emissions is now being installed at our heating plant, but I feel that society as a whole should be more consistent in tackling this problem. It's time to create an efficient system for protecting the environment, for looking after our health. I think that our government was well advised and far-sighted in proposing that representatives of neighbouring states meet to solve ecological problems.

I believe that the socialist countries will continue to be united by common interests and objectives in the future: the fullest possible satisfaction of working people's vital requirements is everywhere important. It is in our common interest to further perfect socialism in order to prove that it really is the fairest and most efficient system in history. And we have always worked together for world peace, a joint effort which is increasingly significant today. *

The experience of our friends has always been useful and our comrades, especially those from the Soviet Union, have repeatedly rendered us selfless assistance. The restructuring naturally affects relations between us, and there is now much more sincerity. There is no longer the tendency unthinkingly to rely on their experience, which is not always necessarily effective or applicable elsewhere.

We are still as one in our fundamental interests and objectives, but the ways and means of effecting them tend to change. After all, each socialist country somehow differs from the others, be it in national traditions, historical development, economic structure or political system.

The most important thing that unites us is our conscientious work for the sake of common interests and objectives, since the overall mosaic, as it were, is made up of the tiny but brilliant pebbles each of us puts into it. And I believe it is up to each one of us to make the overall picture more colourful, varied and attractive.

I feel that cooperation between the fraternal countries has great prospects before it. I would lay emphasis on exchanges between work collectives, and not only in the form of official delegations. Short-term training courses for workers, technicians and managerial personnel at enterprises in other social countries are bound to encourage a better understanding of progressive experience.

THEY PUT THEIR STAKE ON TRUST

Alois SVRCHEK

Chairman, Mir Agricultural Cooperative, Prace

I could say that I have always had to work in the face of harsh realities, and they have taught me that life in all its innumerable forms is the only true and abiding value all over

the world. Since human beings are the most highly organised element of life, logic suggests where the priceless values are to be found. That is why we are committed to that system of views and that society, whose main aim is people's well-being.

There have been many periods in history when all values, material and spiritual, were in decline, and when human life itself was of no value, entailing sacrifices and suffering for millions. That is why we place the highest value on a *life of peace*. People in our country, as all over the world, have warmly welcomed the new spirit of relations between states and peoples which has awakened hopes for the preservation of the supreme humanitarian values.

But the hopes are also accompanied by new fears.

The recognition that we, as members of the older generation, are in some way to blame for the fact that these values have been devalued or counterfeited is a bitter pill to swallow. In the turmoil of everyday life and revolutionary battles we tended to neglect the education and development of the rising generation. The revolutionary fervour, so vital in the school of life, gave way to pedantry. We assumed too much in thinking that the new society, with its social gains and guarantees, would automatically be able to instil in people a socialist consciousness.

Have we, perhaps, forgotten our precise geographical location? People in Czechoslovakia, especially those who lack experience, are constantly subjected to many confusing and disorientating influences in the form of demagogic slogans about "boundless freedom" and about democracy with maximum rights and minimum duties.

I don't mean to overestimate this influence, but it would be wrong if we failed to recognise it; even worse if we did nothing to counter it.

It is no easy task to solve the problem of education for the whole country, for society as a whole. We are now looking beyond mere declarations, and this strengthens my optimism. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is not only offering society, particularly the younger generation, prospects and guarantees, it is also putting forward a realistic programme. This means restructuring, and the building of an advanced and efficient economy capable of creating and multiplying our material resources, and the establishment of a political system providing greater scope for human self-realisation.

Take, for example, Czechoslovakia's agriculture and food industry, where I work. This year we began to reorganise the management mechanism so as to broaden the rights and responsibilities of worker collectives. The first few steps have already shown how difficult it will be to put the planned measures into effect consistently: the colossal strength of bureaucracy has once again made itself felt. Bureaucracy has been replicating itself, in another form perhaps, but its old workings continue to operate with equally undesirable effects.

There is another problem. Is the preservation of peace sufficient to ensure our survival? Doesn't the uncontrolled growth of civilisation and its consequences pose a new danger? Could we find ourselves in a position where the greatest danger to life is life itself? I don't think any definitive answer has been found to such questions. As a farmer I am most worried by the fact that while on the one hand we grow what is needed to survive, on the other we continually threaten nature. Our scientists have an obligation here to marry intensive agriculture with ecological security.

My own experience has taught me to be an optimist. I am not inclined to moralising, false modesty or to making facile comparisons between the past and the present. Nevertheless, it worries me that some young people, and members of the older generation, disparage values like patriotism, respect for national history, for the major figures in Czech and Slovak culture, and respect for parents and older people. Many people have become unduly self-confident, convinced of their own infallibility, while others are neglecting their intellectual development, and sometimes their health.

As a member of the CPCz, I am also concerned at the urge to align the party's strategy with an alien, administrative line, the main aim of which is certainly not to consolidate the independence and self-supporting nature of enterprises, not to strengthen self-financing, equitable remuneration and initiative. The bureaucracy is seeking to concentrate as much money and as many powers as it can in the centre in order to be able from on high to apportion everything and accept or reject requests, thus determining the fate of enterprises and work collectives.

I believe that the most vital task is to overcome these tendencies and, politically and economically, to pursue in undiluted form the strategy of the Communist Party.

I think that relations between members of the socialist community have been developing successfully. This manifests itself in the greater unity of views on basic international issues and in the new political thinking, which is helping in the search for a stronger socialism.

Of course, it's not all wine and roses. Frankly, we won't be doing the socialist countries any favours if we erect artificial barriers and invent new formalities instead of expanding contacts and allowing people to get to know each other.

Unity and friendship, and the might of the socialist community, do not lie in rhetoric, but in genuine activity, particularly that which brings us closer together.

Our Mir Collective Farm has been so successful precisely because we have relied on concrete action, not on rhetoric and pious hopes. The basis of our cooperation is a contract on direct ties with the agro-combine Dniester in the Lvov Region of the USSR. We have also worked to extend our partnership with other enterprises. There are still formalities to be overcome and rules to be formulated, but we have recognised each other and there is mutual

understanding. This is the way to expanding fruitful relations.

Trust and an awareness of our common goals must, I think, have top priority in the hierarchy of socialist values, for they add strength both to the restructuring and to our attempts to strengthen peace on the Earth.

OUR UNIQUE MISSION

Lubomir MIREJOVSKY

General Secretary, Christian Peace Conference,
Prague

The renewal and improvement of socialism now under way in some countries is a remarkably diverse process. The changes in Czechoslovakia are a component part of this historical movement, and I believe that our transformations have a special value in that our restructuring is conscious and democratic, relying on our experience, cultural traditions, and on our economic requirements and potential. I also regard highly socialism's capacity for solving new problems and finding new ways, without merely repeating established formulas.

A two-fold objective is now taking shape, one side of which lies in giving full scope to *socialist democracy* so that the greatest number of citizens take part in decision-making and control, the other in *reorganising the economy* on the principles of efficiency and self-financing. But I don't think I'm alone in fearing that any improvement could be drowned in a sea of words and good intentions. After all, attempts in the past to revive the economy of this country did not yield the desired results because they came up against the barriers of the bureaucratic apparatus. People who were genuinely interested in change were not even given a chance to take part in decision-making. This gave rise to disaffection and indifference and at the same time to exaggeratedly sharp, even confrontational, criticism. The present stage of comprehensive restructuring must not be allowed to choke: it must be carried forward to the end, to a radical renewal of society.

A revival of our people's political and civic activity is particularly urgent. It is not difficult to open up and provide information, something which naturally allows for discussions in the press, on television and in work collectives at every level. A new constitution which meets the requirements of contemporary society will mark another step forward. We hope that it will reflect the values created by our peoples and the basic ideals of socialism.

As a Christian clergyman (a member of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren) I want to find out how the restructuring processes will influence the life of the churches in this country, and how they in turn, together with

the religious associations, can give more help to socialist society. I don't think the assumption on the part of some of the founders of socialism that the Church had already completed its historical mission, that new society no longer had any need of it, stands up. Believers in Czechoslovakia are still contributing constructively to society. The peace efforts of the churches and the moral stand of most believers have gained international authority.

However, a clear-cut and straightforward attitude to socialism has not yet taken shape in Church circles. Some churchmen still assume, in accordance with the so-called Constantine model,¹ that the Church should play a dominant, "autocratic" role. Such views were often stimulated by fearsome distortions of socialism. The relations between the two world outlooks—religion and scientific atheism—are a very delicate and intricate sphere, and under socialism they should not involve any confrontation.

The present stage of the restructuring offers broad opportunities for dialogue. In this way past mistakes could be overcome and valuable experience consolidated in law. Thus, a component part of the restructuring effort could be the regulation of relations between the various churches and the socialist state in order to prevent misunderstandings and an undesirable polarisation of social forces.

The fact that this country is a part of the socialist world is for me both a source of satisfaction and a challenge. Satisfaction because this system has succeeded in guaranteeing basic human rights: the right to work, housing, education, medical care, and so on. Our republic has attained a high degree of social security. What is encouraging is that the socialist countries are leading—not in word, but in deed—the peoples' efforts towards disarmament, the relaxation of tensions, and international cooperation. Czechoslovakia herself has provided various stimuli to the strengthening of confidence and security in the heart of Europe. And what about the challenge? I feel that much still remains to be done to make socialism an attractive example for the peoples craving independence, progress and justice. They are looking for someone to rely on.

As a participant in the peace movement, I regularly take part in international meetings and consultations designed to mobilise public support for aims common to the people in the socialist countries and in the rest of the world: disarmament for the sake of universal security; development on a new and solid basis; justice for the sake of freedom and respect for human beings; and, of course, the preservation of the environment.

I am not going to make any predictions for individual countries. The diversity of social structures and political systems, the peculiarities of historical progress, national and cultural traditions, and, finally, the ways in which social requirements are satisfied, all have to be considered. However, these circumstances ought not to be an obstacle to the constant dialogue which is needed for strengthening

solidarity and the general desire to preserve the basic ideals of socialism: social justice, humanism, equality and mutual respect among people irrespective of education, social status or belief.

Obviously, this problem cannot be solved without hard work, dedication and responsibility. But for people who

consciously act and think in socialist society this is exactly the unique mission they are called upon to perform.

¹ Named after the Roman emperor who adopted Christianity as the state religion.—*Ed.*

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ALBANIA LOOKS FOR NEW APPROACHES

The course steered by People's Socialist Republic of Albania for many years is now undergoing change. Judging by reports from Tirana, the country has begun looking for ways towards renewal, not least in the economy. This review of the Albanian press looks at the progress being made.

"Improved people's well-being is the party's supreme goal," writes Chairman of the State Planning Commission Niko Gjyzari in the *Zeri i Popullit*, organ of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour (APL). Over the years of people's government, aggregate social product and national income have grown significantly faster than has the population. Therefore Albania, which over 50 years ago could not support its population of around 1 million, today supplies three times as many with basic foodstuffs.

At the same time he stresses that the country's economy is not yet capable of ensuring adequate consumption in quantitative and, particularly, qualitative respects. The market supply of individual consumer goods is not always satisfactory. Further prosperity growth undoubtedly depends on everybody's contribution to target fulfilment in all fields of the economy.¹

The country's leadership reportedly sees the basis for this in consolidating national economic potential. Its development prospects were the focus of a People's Assembly session at the end of last year. In a speech to the deputies, Minister of Finance Andrea Nako noted the successes in nonferrous metallurgy (copper, ferro-nickel) and coal mining. He acknowledged that the 1988 budget revenue plan had reached 91%, and profits from agricultural cooperatives 81%. Farm difficulties had complicated food supplies to the population. In such key areas as oil, chromium and electricity exports, the targets had also not been met.

The APL CC and the government intend to take a num-

ber of steps to raise industrial production. As before, growth will be ensured mainly by new capital investments, with priority accorded to oil extraction and chromium-ore mining and beneficiation. This year oil and gas output is expected to increase by 16%. Chromium output is targeted for a 20% rise to offset plan underfulfilment in 1988. The mines will be improved with imported equipment, mainly from West Germany. Intensification will continue, and new facilities will come on stream.

Albania's power engineers are seeking high growth rates. Their estimates show that the hydro-electric plants can be better provided with water resources by using these more rationally. According to *Zeri i Popullit*, completion of the station on the Devolli river promises higher electricity exports. This hydro-electric plant will become Albania's third largest.²

Looking at the prospects, one cannot help but notice an entirely new trend for Albania—the use of economic levers. Press reports show that the main emphasis today is on providing plants with greater flexibility in meeting plan targets. A recent article in *Rruga e Partise*, the APL CC's theoretical and political organ, called for central planning to be aligned with cost accounting and economic and financial independence for plants. It particularly stressed: "There is no longer any reason to concentrate all profits from state enterprises in the budget. Instead, these should be used to expand production as an internal source of plant financing. In other words, we have to think over whether we have any cause to continue excessively centralising our budgetary receipts."³

Greater independence for plants is being substantiated by the need to limit the functions of central planning. For example, the newspaper *Bashkimi*, organ of the Democratic Front of Albania, has criticised the assumption that having more plan targets eases their coordination: "Such views have resulted in our ministries drawing up and fixing output plans for bootlaces, lentils and peas... Centralisation of this kind not only impairs ministry initiative (since ministries have to concern themselves with trifles) but also forces plant managers to expend tremendous efforts on dovetailing each of the targets. This reveals why state and economic bodies often tend to be passive."⁴

To modernise the economy, the party is trying to use both intensive and extensive factors. Its approach was

succinctly expressed in *Rruga e Partise*: "We have never viewed the priority of intensive growth—so important to us with only a small (in per capita terms) area of workable land—in isolation from extensive."

These two methods are combined in the current five-year plan. According to the press, 45% of the increment in social production will be ensured thanks to its intensification. In agriculture higher yields will account for 90% of the growth in field-crop output. Larger herds and new trees will increase livestock production by two-thirds and fruit yields by three-fourths.

Intensification means, above all, *productivity gains*. Here an important role is allotted to mechanisation, which is still unfortunately woefully inadequate. *Zeri i Popullit* notes that "in construction only 3-4% of the work is done by machines; the available technology is not being used and a lot of farm machinery is idle".⁵ Flawed labour organisation, increased absenteeism, and insufficient incentives also keep productivity from rising.

Generally, Albania now attaches great significance to material inducement for workers. The use of personal incentives is one of the most reliable means of improving economic performance. In particular, the government has adopted decrees on "The Wage Stimulation of Production Growth" and "The Criteria for Assessment of the Financial and Economic Activity of Socialist Enterprises".

These steps, explained *Zeri i Popullit*, "aim to raise the interest of workers, above all in key industries, by economic levers, thus achieving a better mix of the interests of society, the collective and the individual".⁶

Relevant measures have brought wage additions for many—from 15 to 30% in agriculture, for example. A special incentive fund for plant staffs is also being set up: 30% of the money, according to *Zeri i Popullit*, will be used for rewarding inventors and rationalisers; the same amount for those who fulfil and overfulfil plan targets; and the rest will go to meet the general sociocultural needs of the factory staff.

Albania focuses primarily on its agriculture. In February, Ramiz Alla, First Secretary of the APL Central Committee, told a special CC plenary meeting that "agriculture was and remains our chief industry".⁷ It engages about two-thirds of the republic's population.

Over the last 10 years, noted the plenum, Albania has become fully sufficient in grain and 85% sufficient in basic foodstuffs. Processed farm products account for over 40% of all exports. Each year 1.3 billion leke is allocated for expanding agriculture. This is about one-third of all investment.

However, recent party documents stress the difficulties and look for possible solutions. Thus, the resolution of the

plenum contains a set of measures designed to strengthen the material-technical base, improve the cooperatives' socialist relations, and *encourage initiative*. A new form of reward for farm work is to be developed. The party documents insist that blending social and personal interests is vital in agriculture today.

Launching small livestock units run by teams has become a widespread practice in Albania over the past 2 or 3 years. In this way team members can provide their own families with food. Speaking of the importance of this initiative, Ramiz Alla observed that "this has boosted animal husbandry—something only made possible by the fact that teams and cooperatives now handle much of the work and production organisation. If we want to boost production further, we shall have to follow just this path. It would be a great mistake if planning authorities or cooperative boards tried to limit this process to various programmes and normative indicators."⁸

It is team-run livestock units that must help in solving the main task, which is to increase the cattle population in the current year to 95,000, i.e., by 5,000 more as compared with the 8th five-year plan target.

"We are dialecticians in theory, but we also need to be dialecticians in practice," says Ramiz Alla. "The evolution of objective factors in the economy and social life undoubtedly requires change, improvements in the operating rules and mechanisms. What becomes outdated loses its inspiring role and must be replaced with something new which better matches the conditions obtaining. There is nothing bad in this: it is important only that any change should be effected in line with Marxist-Leninist theory and the interests of socialism."⁹

Aurelio GIACOBazzi

¹ *Zeri i Popullit*, 17 Shkurt, 1989.

² The two previous ones, *The Light of the Party* and *the Enver Hoxha*, have capacities of 500,000 kw and 600,000 kw respectively. —Ed.

³ *Rruga e Partise*, No. 8, 1988.

⁴ *Bashkimi*, 21 Prill, 1988.

⁵ *Zeri i Popullit*, 5 Shkurt, 1988.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5 Mars, 1988.

⁷ *ATSh*, 7 Shkurt, 1989.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 30 Shtator, 1988.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 7 Shkurt, 1989.





50 YEARS SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR II

THE HARD ROAD TO A COMMON EUROPEAN HOME

WMP submitted the following questions to representatives of Europe's three political movements—Communists, Socialists and Christian Democrats:

1. Which of the lessons connected with the outbreak of World War II do you believe to be particularly relevant now?
2. What new aspects of today's international situation do you regard as significant? What ideas would you like to get across to the public in this context?
3. What do you gain from dialogue with other political forces?

OBJECT LESSONS

Etienne MANGE

Bureau and Executive member,
Socialist Party of Belgium (Flemish)

1. The experience of those years makes it clear that of all things human war is the most abominable. But despite the harsh lessons of World War II, the world is still under permanent threat of war. The runaway arms race is both the cause and an effect of this threat.

It is therefore gratifying that Mr Gorbachov has advanced a series of constructive proposals designed to curb this deadly race by reducing and controlling armaments. Our party believes that after agreement is reached on conventional arms cuts, Europe can advance towards a non-nuclear status.

I also think there is a lesson to be learnt from both pre- and postwar Stalinism—an intolerant attitude to views other than your own, a pervasive "enemy image" and the division of the world into the "good guys" and the "bad guys". The Socialists, the Communists, and Eastern Europe, where people were allegedly living in hell, were all denounced as bad in the West.

The socialist countries, on the other hand, depicted communism as the most universally benevolent system. The idea was that if nations were liberated from capitalist oppression they would all be in heaven. But forcing people to be happy against their will and trying to impose something on them only leads to confrontation. We are now beginning to understand that there are distinctly national features in the development of every society and that

people on both sides of Europe want security and prosperity. The ends are similar, I believe, even though the means are different. It is becoming clear to us in the West that the Soviet Union really wants to create a truly democratic society. We, too, are changing, working for security and peace on the basis of mutual trust—the only thing that can guarantee the viability of a "European home".

There is another lesson we should learn from the prewar years: that security should be *mutually* assured—and not only through restrictions (even in the highly dangerous military sphere). By promoting *fruitful cooperation*, Europe can set an example for other continents and encourage the world to heed the call for joint action to enhance peace and security.

2. We have reached a historic juncture at which the present types of armed forces and military doctrines should be superseded by the concept of nonprovocative defence with a view to devising a universal security system. The door is open thanks to East European initiatives. Our party is building on these basic attitudes together with the SPD. When the socialist and social democratic parties of the NATO member countries met in Rome last November, a document aimed against the modernisation of tactical nuclear weapons was drafted on the basis of the above-mentioned concept. This position on the part of the Socialists and popular actions such as the 75,000-strong April demonstration in Brussels have prompted the Belgian government to voice its reservations about the modernisation of tactical missiles. It was decided that an open debate on this issue would be held in parliament before NATO's Nuclear Planning Group convened its session.

As for the economic aspect of the matter, by 1992 Western Europe is supposed to complete a kind of restructuring of its economic relations in order to increase labour productivity and ensure further economic growth. We Socialists are therefore opposed to protectionist barriers (let alone bans) in relation to Eastern Europe. We advocate cooperation, not confrontation between the continent's two economic structures. Economic growth on both sides should be qualitative, not quantitative. In other words, we are calling for a different quality of life and for a new (or perhaps the "forgotten good old") attitude to the environment.

3. I think the "common European home" concept is somewhat clearer now. We have agreed that this home should be safer for everyone living in it. We need economic and environmental cooperation and extensive cultural exchanges, and, I might add, we must oppose the Americanisation of European culture.

But there is so far no unanimity about the ways of achieving this objective. For example, the position of West European Socialists and Social Democrats (in Spain, the FRG and Belgium) on the issue of security is similar to the Soviet stand. But we differ with the Christian Democrats who advocate nuclear rearmament.

However, the most important thing we agree on is that all European initiatives are useful only if they are followed up—like the Helsinki process.

THE RESPONSIBILITY IS MUTUAL

Vadim ZAGLADIN

Central Committee member,
Communist Party of the Soviet Union

1. Fifty years ago, the forces of reason did not work together: concerted actions were few and far between. Attempts at promoting cooperation did not yield any results: in an atmosphere of confrontation, any attempt to extend and invigorate relations, let alone ensure cooperation, between countries belonging to different social systems appeared suspicious and even dangerous. It was only when Nazism in Germany and militarism in Japan had threatened dozens of nations with enslavement and even extinction that a radically new entity appeared—a coalition against the aggressors. *Efforts to overcome the spirit of confrontation and to ensure mutual understanding (despite the existing differences and contradictions) are therefore essential to a durable peace.*

There is something else that provides food for thought. Only three or four major powers actually tried to change the dramatic course of prewar events. Other countries were simply objects of great-power diplomacy.

The enormous advantage of today's all-European process is that it involves *all the nations of the continent on an equal footing and with an equal share of responsibility*. It is not by chance that when the final document of the Vienna Meeting was worked out, the neutral and non-aligned countries were seen to have played a vigorous and influential role. Today, they are active free agents on the European political scene. They have proved that the greatness of a country depends on the policy it pursues in world affairs and not on its size.

West German peace activists have launched a campaign under the slogan "Modernise Policies, Not Weapons". Weapons have indeed been changing and improving since the war, but then so has the political process.

Cooperation among all countries and a desire to settle disputes jointly and avoid confrontation is the best way of averting a disastrous war that would indeed be the war to end all wars—and all life.

2. I believe a new *contradiction has arisen* in Europe. On the one hand considerable progress has been made towards the construction of a "common European home". The Vienna Meeting was an important step and a major incentive in this sense. The talks now taking place between 23 NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries and the negotiations between 35 nations on confidence-building measures are another significant step. For the first time, the agenda comprises conventional arms reductions (a regular request but only now being earnestly considered). The two military alliances are establishing official contacts, a move long urged by the Warsaw Treaty countries. Also one can expect the confidence-building measures to gain scope and depth.

In other words, the process is gaining momentum and becoming increasingly meaningful. Changes have also been witnessed in economic and environmental cooperation, in the approach to human rights and in information exchanges.

Unfortunately, the opposite trend, the one aimed at *confrontation*, still persists, most obviously in the current plans to "modernise" Western nuclear capability. In this way militarist quarters are seeking to offset their "losses" under the INF Treaty. Certain new military concepts are being drawn up, and there is continued reluctance to discuss the naval aspect of the issue—a sphere in which the West has an obvious advantage.

In the final analysis, the future of Europe and the durability of universal peace depend on the outcome of the struggle between these two trends.

3. The issue of *dialogue* is a question of key importance. A joint effort to tackle problems of war and peace calls for a much better knowledge of each other's stand. This will promote trust and facilitate the search for mutually acceptable solutions. Dialogue is what leads to this better knowledge.

We can consolidate peace only guided by a shared

understanding of the legitimate interests of every nation belonging to the international community: if each furthers only its own interests, no agreement will ever be reached. It is only through dialogue that we can find common ground.

The West is voicing various concerns about the stand and the moves of the socialist countries, and vice versa. Dialogue is the way to identify the justifiable elements of these concerns, balance them and find out how to remove them.

Today, dialogue is a way of understanding you partner and enabling him to see your point. It enriches both sides and prompts them to think harder and more inventively and produce fresh ideas. We therefore believe that frank, direct and constructive dialogue is essential to any effort aimed at advancing the universal and profoundly progressive cause of peace.

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER

Jean-Marie DAILLET

Vice-President, Christian Democratic International

1. The years that led to World War II were very difficult. France, Britain and the Soviet Union were unable to stop Hitler, whose rise, like that of Bertolt Brecht's Arturo Ui, was resistible. Together, the British and the French—the guarantors of Czechoslovakia's independence—were stronger than Germany, but they capitulated at Munich. After 1939, too, the Europeans could not achieve unity in their fight against Nazism. The lack of dialogue and authentic information both before and after the war led to mutual mistrust and tensions.

For all that (and this appears to be another of history's reminders), the Christian Democrats never negotiated with Hitler or Mussolini, just as later they rejected contacts with Franco's Spain or Salazar's Portugal. We sought concord with those forces and groups of people who had ideals and sociopolitical structures similar to ours and who shared our concept of democracy. Founded after the war, the Christian Democratic International affiliates some 50 parties, mostly from Western Europe and Latin America.

2. Europe is a treasure-house of great artistic, philosophical and scientific values, while the store of political experience its nations have accumulated is perhaps the richest and most diverse in the world. Europe is where all possible mistakes have been made and where many good things of importance to civilisation have been invented—from the concept of democracy to the mechanics of integration. Things would be even better if *we could work together to create structures for the world of the future.*

Freedom and respect for human rights would be the

fundamental features of this world and it is therefore gratifying to see that universal human values are now being restored. Every human being is unique, and the distinctive personality of each should be respected. All of us have aspirations that we share, even though you prefer Marxism while we profess the Gospel.

We need a discussion on the political aspects of building Europe. In proposing the creation of a common home for some 30 nations, Gorbachov is being realistic in acknowledging that the West has significant achievements to its credit. The 12 countries of the EEC have already constructed their own house, as it were, in order to put an end to all conflicts between them. And we have contributed to peace by eliminating the possibility of a conflict between Germany and France that led so often to war in the past. And now perhaps some aspects of the Western experience in settling the problems of different nationalities will be of use to the USSR and other East European countries.

We are, of course, aware of the considerable differences between the two social systems. We also recognise that perestroika and glasnost in the Soviet Union are having a beneficial effect on the expansion of human rights and, consequently, aiding a rapprochement between the two systems.

Our International champions religious freedom and the freedom of religious instruction. We oppose persecution for political reasons, and we condemn racism and xenophobia because they are anti-Christian. We are committed to universal solidarity and believe in a responsible attitude towards the poorer countries. We realise that these issues affect our security too. When people are so "poor" that they have nothing to lose, a demagogue like Hitler might well provoke them into making war on the rich: the "poor" South may rise against the "wealthy" North, for instance. The problem cannot be solved with the help of bombs or invasions, nor by simply throwing money at it. This is something for all Europeans to think about. Up to now we in the EEC have done little for the Third World. I think that *all-European* programmes for vocational training, better cultivation and irrigation techniques, basic medical instruction, and literacy would make a sizable contribution to projects in the developing countries.

3. In Prague recently, I had a chance to discuss quite frankly our common problems with statesmen and civic activists from Eastern Europe. There was criticism, but there were proposals too. I suggested that our meetings be continued. The objective is to make the public see that we should *study* "the other Europe", visit its countries and invite their schoolchildren, peasants and workers to visit our nations. I came to Czechoslovakia with my children so they could see for themselves the country's realities, talk to the young people and learn about the nation's culture. Exchanges are very important for grasping that which unites us and adding to our common heritage.

I believe we have yet to assess properly the peacemak-

ing potential of some countries. Does a country like Switzerland need its armed forces? The country is in no way under threat, yet it has a well-trained and well-equipped army. Perhaps it could play a mediating and monitoring role in areas of conflict. And what about Austria? Neutral states should be *vigorous intermediaries* and disinterested arbiters in the disarmament process.

Although Christian Democrats do not accept Marxism, this does not rule out contacts or exchanges of views. However, discussions should be conducted with those wielding real power, particularly when they are ready for such a debate themselves. To my mind, the parties of our International are more prepared to discuss various issues with the Communists of Eastern Europe than with the communist parties at home. This may be a subjective view since I specialise in international affairs and therefore prefer to talk to foreigners rather than to certain of my fellow-countrymen.

A COMMON HOME BY THE PEOPLES AND FOR THE PEOPLES

Jacques LE DAUPHIN

1. Both world wars broke out in Europe, and we know now much suffering they brought to its nations. This tragic experience prompts us to look for such forms of relations between states as would be able to ensure peace and mutually beneficial cooperation in Europe and beyond. The threat facing us all stems from the character and scope of modern armaments, nuclear weapons in particular. This is the most important reason for drawing the attention of the public and rallying it to the struggle for disarmament. After the last war people in many countries recognised this need: one of them—the French scientist Frederic Joliot-Curie who became the first President of the World Peace Council—noted in this regard that "it is impossible for any nation or individual to secure protection from war acting in isolation. This objective can only be attained if all nations pool their efforts."

2. A major challenge is confronting the European continent and the world as a whole. It concerns the survival of the human race itself. The hitherto dominant type of international relations is now in crisis. Its contradictory nature is accentuated by our increasing interdependence. The main question, therefore, is whether relations based on self-destructive competition will continue forever (with some adjustments, of course), or whether there will be a common dynamic of security and development, something all Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals has a stake in?

I think the relations of peaceful coexistence and mutual benefit that are being built at the European level (and that are to assume a global scope later) will offer an answer to

this question. In other words, the problem of common security and cooperation should be solved. Today's situation overwhelmingly favours the advancement of the process launched at the Helsinki Conference. I think that the concept of a common European home also lies within the mainstream of this trend.

Having said that, for all the difficulties that may arise, it should be a common home for all Europeans, we should continue to reflect on some issues which are, in our view, of fundamental importance. Who will be the landlord—a community of rival powers and competing states or the peoples? How will irreconcilable antagonisms be dealt with and how will the concomitant disputes be negotiated? What principles should underlie this common occupancy? Finally, and most importantly, who will build this home and how will it be built? We hold that it is the peoples who should build it. But how will they go about it?

The problem of security has never been more acute. The main—nuclear—threat confronts us everywhere, particularly in Europe. The urgent need is to settle this problem by nonmilitary means, not by deterrence based on force ("mutual threat") or confrontation. We must abandon the logic of rival military blocs. The concept of a universal threat which increases mutual insecurity should be replaced by a concept of security for all.

Disarmament is an essential component of this. The 1987 INF Treaty has made history by showing that progress is possible if popular action—something that largely helped bring this evolution about—grows instead of contracting. But it is equally likely for those hostile to disarmament to try and offset their "losses": witness the results of the NATO summit meeting in Brussels and the debate on the French military program act.

The movement of the peoples is now the main motive force behind the development of international cooperation. This can ensure acceptance of the new concept of security to which mutually beneficial cooperation, not mutual intimidation, is central.

Imagine the potential that will be instantly released if decision-making and military spending are reoriented to promote mutually beneficial cooperation between countries belonging to different social systems. That is the way to combine the two imperatives—disarmament and development.

3. The workshop held in Prague was very useful in that the continent's major political parties and different political and philosophical currents were represented there.

The open exchange of views was also a very good thing. Everyone retains his own views, and it is only natural for polar concepts to clash over principal issues such as security and cooperation. These are not only East-West clashes: they also occur between different West European countries and between political parties within the same nation. For example, as a French Communist I could not accept the concepts of security expounded in Prague by the other two French delegates representing the Union for French Democracy and the Socialist Party.

CONFIDENCE, NOT WEAPONS

Conditions for Conventional Disarmament

Erwin LANC

President, International Institute for Peace;
Board member, Socialist Party of Austria

According to Steven G. Ledogar, the US representative at the European conventional arms negotiations, the Warsaw Pact system enters the new Viennese conventional arms talks with an announced removal of 12,000 tanks, 9,100 artillery pieces and an unspecified number of armoured troop carriers from the area the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe will cover. But in his opinion this still leaves the Warsaw Pact with a more than 2 to 1 superiority compared with NATO. Their objectives for the new negotiations were formulated by the NATO foreign ministers on December 8, 1988:

- * a limit on total holdings of those armaments most relevant to offensive action at substantially lower levels, with parity in these forces between the two alliances;
- * a limit on the holdings of such armaments by any country set at a fixed percentage of the total holdings of the two sides in Europe;
- * ceilings on such armaments held by forces stationed outside the borders of their country;
- * effective and rigorous verification, including mandatory inspection of the exchange of detailed information on military forces.

This focus on the positions of both pact systems explains the difference in approach to the conventional disarmament talks. Significantly, at the recent talks on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR) every side was arguing about the real strength in troops and arms of the other side. One of the few results of MBFR is that the figures of the other side became more and more realistic. The concrete promises of the Soviet Union and its allies to reduce arms and troops have opened up the importance of this subject. This may lead to the wrong conclusion that all doors are now open for a balanced solution in a comparatively short time.

Seen historically, the imbalance in conventional armaments and troop numbers was equalised by nuclear armament. Both conventional threat and nuclear deterrence are children of the inability, for whatever reasons, of the USA and USSR to cooperate or, at the beginning, even to coexist. While a balanced nuclear disarmament can be achieved even without a principled change in political relations between East and West, conventional disarmament

can only be achieved by the combined action of disarmament talks and a new policy of all-European cooperation, not excluding Soviet Asia, the United States and Canada. Substantial changes in the size and location of conventional forces of both pact systems are only thinkable in a Europe of non-confrontation.

That means practically a new European order.

The creation of a mutually acceptable defensive strategy in both military systems, which would be accepted as such by either side would involve, at the very least, Soviet troops leaving the GDR and Czechoslovakia, with American troops being resettled from Germany to the West.

The US forces in Europe have to maintain the dominant role inside NATO, guarantee the postwar balance in Europe and serve as a turntable to preserve the global interests of the USA. A total US retreat from Europe would mean a substantial change in the balance of Europe, a loss of US leadership in NATO, a weakening of the "preventive effect" of NATO and a change in the zone-power calculation of NATO, all this revealing NATO's geopolitical and geographical disadvantages. And it would have a tremendous impact on the defence budget of the United States. Such a substantial cut in the budget could not be easily reversed. All proposals for conventional disarmament affecting the US military strategy in Africa and the Middle East, therefore, must cause American resistance.

Many experts were of the opinion that there was no solution to measuring the balance of conventional armament. Experts carefully noted that Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, in his speech at the opening in Vienna of the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe, mentioned the reduction of armed forces not in terms of absolute figures, but of a percentage of the present NATO level. Apart from the quantitative and qualitative aspects of fighting power, there are at the same time other, more important, factors which have to be considered carefully: the cost; mobilisation time; reinforcement time; terrain; dislocation in times of peace; sustaining power in battle; degree of military training; efficiency of command communications systems; quality of equipment; reliability of the allies etc.

The network of these and other factors in connection with a useful model for verification may be more important than qualifying a NATO tank as having 1.2 or 1.6 of the fighting power of a Warsaw Pact tank or vice versa.

While Warsaw is in the middle of the European landmass (which extends beyond the Urals) the West European defence system, not by accident called the North Atlantic Pact system, backs onto the ocean. Behind Paris and London is water. The possibilities for conventional warfare in Western Europe are therefore limited. Deterrence was designed to combat this geostrategical disadvantage. If middle-range missiles are destroyed in accordance with the INF treaty, and if Western Europe is no longer able to count on US intercontinental missiles, is

Erwin Lanc (b. 1930) is a prominent Austrian public figure. He served as Federal Minister for Transport 1973-1977, as Interior Minister 1977-1983 and as Foreign Minister 1983-1984.

there a chance of deterrence on the basis of conventional armaments? Not in my opinion. The nuclear threshold behind a conventional defence war is still popular, particularly among those who are not likely to suffer from tactical nuclear weapons. They even want to modernise this system. But the fact is that this kind of short-distance nuclear war would be absolutely fatal to both German states. Short range missiles with nuclear warheads in positions in southwest Germany are there to prevent Warsaw Pact troops entering Germany from Czechoslovakia along the rivers down to the Danube, but they can be used only if the tens of thousands of inhabitants of these valleys are evacuated. Otherwise they all will be killed. Who is being deterred from whom?

Deterrence as a whole is a fiction. But as long as governments and pact systems believe in it, it works. Do governments and pact systems still believe in it? As far as tactical battlefield weapons are concerned, I have my doubts. But the question remains: Is deterrence at this level necessary? This, in turn, leads directly to the issue of verification. Verification of conventional weapons and troops demands a network of control precise enough to make a surprise attack no longer possible. In the West the fear remains that an infringement on the negotiated limits will not be enough to get public support for a rearmament. Today, who can be sure that in the future similar reactions are to be expected in the East?

Generally, tanks and aircraft with first-strike capability against targets like airfields, command centres and air-defence installations, as well as short-range missiles, are called offensive. Interceptors and planes, providing support for ground troops and knocking out tanks, are deemed defensive. But many weapons can be considered neither offensive nor defensive. Thus combined reductions in these fields are thinkable. But it is difficult to keep the balance because the greater technical aspect, the more quantification will be overlapped by qualification. Starting from the present situation, the most promising way to negotiate would be to arrive at asymmetric reductions in arms and troops. To realise it as a first step would be a confidence-building measure in itself. Negotiating further steps would then be much easier.

In Europe, approximately 50% of arms expenditure is on conventional armament. President Reagan wanted to bleed the USSR white in an arms race. High US arms spending was to have been financed by the effects of Reaganomics. However this was not as profitable as had been hoped and therefore Reagan was forced to enter a disarmament process. This is an example of the economic limits of the superpowers. Producing arms and maintaining the military system involves an important part of their economies. Disarmament starts with troops and weapons, but it filters through to production and employment in industry. Whoever wants to disarm sensibly, must solve the problem of jobs for those employed in arms production. It starts with generals and corporals and ends with engineers and workers.

Consequently, both pact systems have to develop not only plans for disarmament but also plans for restructuring their economies. Otherwise, resistance from within society and politics to disarmament would become insurmountable.

The West qualifies the Warsaw Pact doctrine as primarily defensive politically, although it is regarded as offensive in terms of military strategy. This refers to the oft-used formula that an enemy (which can only be NATO) "must expect a destroying removal". This formula is interpreted in the following way: In case of war, one not only defends one's own territory but one should try to destroy the West. As long as the USSR believes in maintaining its ability to stop any enemy advance on its own or allied territory by pushing deep into enemy territory, as long as aggression is seen as bound to end in the destruction of the aggressors, NATO can hardly accept the present condition of "defence sufficiency" of the Warsaw Pact. Of course, static defence is not enough. But the defenders' ability to be offensive must be confined to a small area, to the theatre of operations. The ability to be offensive in a strategical sense, which means the whole pact system, will always be perceived by the opponent as a constant danger. NATO fears further disadvantages from its supposed longer mobilisation terms. Neutral countries like Sweden, Switzerland or Austria, whose defences are based on the militia system, have the same problem.

The Vienna Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe agreed upon tightening stability and security in Europe in order to build up a stable and secured balance of conventional forces (including conventional weapons and equipment) on a lower level. The removal of present imbalances should serve this aim. First of all, removing the possibility of a surprise offensive or the introduction of large-scale offensive activities should be negotiated. Quick results would be rather surprising. All measures of disarmament must avoid destabilising the situation. Even with the best will in the world, the evaluation and qualification of conventional power relations produces many practical problems. The same applies to verification measures. The superpowers cannot be expected to give up substantial parts of their global interests for the sake of conventional disarmament in Europe.

Contrary to some assertions in the West, the newest disarmament proposals from the USSR, GDR, Poland, Hungary, CSSR and Bulgaria are not unimportant. If it is proved that one-sided troop reductions can be realised, this would mean a significant change in strength. And the proposals should be welcomed unreservedly. They provide a promising start for the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe without any loss of face. In order that these do not go the same way as the talks on mutual and balanced force reductions, which problems must be solved in Vienna?

*To stop surprise offensives, wrong estimations and miscalculations, the disclosure of the aims of security and

military policy must be included in the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures In Europe.

- * In the frame of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe a centre for crisis management must be established. There any CSCE member or pact system must be able to speak freely and openly, at any time, about anything that is of concern.
- * In practice, there exists a zone of undisputed defensive defence in Europe, consisting of Switzerland, Austria, Yugoslavia, Sweden and Finland. It should be enlarged without restriction of defence ability.
- * The WP forces are structured in 3 categories of readiness. A regrading of one degree would be an important factor of stabilisation.
- * Troop numbers should be reduced to a level just high enough to permit the build-up of a coherent defence in the event of attack.
- * Both pact systems must distribute their troops in such a way that an offensive could only be started after significant transfers of troops.
- * As numbers of military personnel are hard to verify, figures should be for units and formations. These should be tied in with regular exchanges of information on the strength and distribution of military formations.
- * Operational and training units have to be distinguished apart.
- * The question of conventional arms modernisation, which is often discussed in today's NATO, could be influenced in favour of those in NATO who do not want to "modernise" any longer, if the Warsaw Pact were to remove the older of their arms.
- * Both pact systems will have to bear in mind the superpowers' interest in keeping operational reserves for use outside Europe.
- * This problem can only be solved between the USA and the USSR, subject to the development of their bilateral relations.
- * A list of conventional weapons which pose threat to either side must be compiled and one should try to fix an upper limit for the density of these types of weapons per area unit. It is also necessary to avoid any modernisation of these categories of weapons. This would amount to a common policy in the area of armament.
- * During the first phase of the talks on conventional forces in Europe the political status of the present member-states of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (pact members, neutrals, non-aligned) must be kept unchanged.
- * Since the military doctrines are the foundation of all military operations, both pact systems, after serious discussions, should decide upon new written military doctrines which must be reflected in concrete regulations.
- * This could be the beginning of the end of half a century of military confrontation in Europe, and the follow-up to half a century of peace as well. The new peace period would be based on confidence and not weapons.

LOW-INTENSITY WARFARE: REASONS AND RATIONALE

Jaime BARRIOS

Central Committee member, Communist Party of El Salvador

When the Santa Fe Document¹ was released, some of its assertions, such as "...World War III is almost over", or "Latin America and Southern Asia are the scenes of strife of ... World War III", alarmed many people. Subsequent developments have demonstrated that the North American imperialist strategists have put into effect a doctrine of low-intensity wars and conflicts in order to suppress the striving of the dispossessed millions for revolutionary social and national liberation. Some of the progenitors of the concept, and commentators upon it, have made statements which give us a good idea of what it means in practice.²

Events in Central America are often referred to in Washington as a "low-intensity conflict", which is unlike either a conventional or a nuclear war. Some experts even say in all seriousness that it is neither war nor peace but an elusive and complex blend of diverse phenomena, something like the Cheshire Cat, which used to disappear when looked at, leaving behind its broad grin.³

An objective analysis of the conflicts in the region indicates that they are rooted in the internal contradictions of each particular country. These contradictions arise in the course of the class struggle and as they become increasingly aggravated they help shape objective conditions for a radical turn in the nation's historical development, when revolution ceases to be a distant prospect and becomes something tangible and impending. If at this juncture the democratic forces can count on a reliable vanguard, the opportunity will not be missed. Again and again, one is prompted to repeat the well-known truth that revolutions have definite causes, develop in line with objectively operating laws and cannot be exported.

Acute social conflicts sometimes flare up almost simultaneously in several countries of the same geographical area, and this is what has happened in Central America. In such cases these conflicts assume a regional dimension, even though each particular conflict remains, in essence, purely internal. The "domino theory" invented by US strategists is an attempt at an extremely biased and oversimplified explanation of this coincidence—an explanation devised for the gullible.

When movements for national liberation and social emancipation gain ground, imperialism uses any pretext and a variety of techniques to intervene in the course of events. Then the forces at the head of the democratic process have to fight both against the local rulers and

against the foreign power that is there to help them. If revolutionary action in a particular country has a broad social base and a reliable political leadership, the struggle inevitably becomes protracted. Further on I will show that this is what the present US strategy is based on.

Many US theorists doctor facts in a bid to blame the guerrillas and the revolutionaries for low-intensity conflicts. In actual fact, these wars are a direct result of the counter-revolutionary strategy of counterinsurgency.

Former US Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger is one of these "accusers". According to him, the term "war of national liberation" is ill-suited to low-intensity conflicts. A similar idea is propounded in the report entitled "A Strategy for Latin America in the 1990s", which political scientists have christened the "Santa Fe Document II".⁴ Specifically, it refers to the "growing danger" of "weak democratic regimes" being drawn into these conflicts, as is alleged to have happened to most of them in Latin America. A similar view is held by a commission for integrated long-term strategy which, in January 1988, submitted a report entitled "Discriminate Deterrence" to the US President. We hold that the term itself—low-intensity conflict or war—is merely a euphemism for *counterrevolutionary war against national liberation movements*. The Latin American researcher Gregorio Selser is quite right to note that the same phenomenon may well be described as "limited war", "cheap war" or "violent peace".⁵

The fundamental postulates of the doctrine in question are still being tried and tested in the main proving ground of Central America. Washington is finding out whether the new strategy can help it control socioeconomic processes in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala and curb the rising popular struggle in Honduras and Costa Rica. Naturally, a related objective is to teach the revolutionaries in Latin America, and in the Third World as a whole, an object lesson and to prove the immutability of the United States' global might.

As President Reagan said in his time, "if Central America were to fall, what would the consequences be for our position in Asia, Europe, and for alliances such as NATO? If the United States cannot respond to a threat near our own borders, why should Europeans or Asians believe that we are seriously concerned about threats to them? If the Soviets can assume that nothing short of an actual attack on the United States will provoke an American response, which ally, which friend will trust us then?" Toward the end of his statement, the then US President exclaimed dramatically that the "national security of all the Americas is at stake in Central America. If we cannot defend ourselves there, we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere."⁶

There are two key aspects to the imperialist doctrine of low-intensity wars: a tactic of counterinsurgency and a political pattern to be introduced into the countries comprising the theatre of operations.

The strategists of such wars maintain that recourse to armed force should be strictly controlled, with troop

strength and firepower much lower than in traditional warfare. Under the Reagan Administration, the United States regarded this type of conflict largely as a war of attrition in which the time factor was not really important.

US troops are not supposed to be involved in the hostilities as a warring side. However, the possibility of a lightning strike is not ruled out under certain circumstances—for example, when the puppet counterinsurgency army of a US-backed regime is about to be routed. Such is one of the lessons Washington has learned from its defeat in Vietnam.

While drawing up a US Third World strategy for the next two decades the authors of "Discriminate Deterrence" said that US troops would not be directly involved in armed clashes except in an emergency.⁷

This does not mean that the Pentagon will simply sit back and relax. First, it oversees combat training and controls the armies in the countries that receive US aid. Second, intervention has assumed the form of frequent, protracted and large-scale war games in the occupied territories (in Honduras, Panama, etc.), offshore and in the air space of the country to be intimidated. These shows of force are a *means of psychological pressure*.

An important role has been reserved for the special forces trained in counterinsurgency operations. Members of these units are selected as instructors and advisers on logistic support, intelligence, terror and reprisals.

However, it is not only the quantitative or purely military aspects that prevent us from classing this type of conflict with conventional, regular warfare. A definition given by Colonel John Waghelstein, former head of US military advisers in El Salvador, merits attention: he described low-intensity conflicts as "total war at basic level".⁸ What exactly does this mean?

Washington has failed to present the Central American insurgents as "bandits". It has proved impossible to defeat them on the battlefield or to eliminate them by state terrorism. It was necessary to look for other ways of achieving the strategic objective of undermining the revolutionary policies of the forces the US found objectionable. "*Total conflict means not only military operations but also vigorous political, diplomatic, economic, social and ideological action*". Hence the interpretation of these wars as primarily a clash of two opposite programmes, and only then as hostilities between armies.⁹

The US researcher Deborah Barry singles out "three fronts" of low-intensity wars: hostilities involving political and military organisations within a particular nation; actions of similar US organisations; and finally, the impact on public opinion within the nation in question, in neighbouring countries and in the United States.¹⁰ The constant development of concerted action on all three fronts makes it possible to describe low-intensity wars as "total".

It is a major element of the strategy under review that various agencies (both private and officially autonomous but actually dependent on the US government) take part in the *open or covert financing of social organisations*—

trade unions, cooperatives, political parties, universities, newspapers, periodicals, etc. Multimillion-dollar injections are designed either to win them over to the side of the counterinsurgency project or at least to neutralise them. This "aid" is also used to destabilise triumphant revolutions politically and economically.

Let me mention a few such agencies from the long list of donors: the American Institute for the Development of Free Labor, Friends of the Americas, the Council for National Policy, the National Defense Council, the World Anti-Communist League and the National Foundation for Democracy. The list also includes associations of social scientists who prepare recommendations for the White House—for example, the Heritage Foundation.

The counterrevolutionary political programme for low-intensity wars posits several models for different situations. In some cases, the objective is to *overthrow progressive regimes* (Nicaragua, Angola, Afghanistan, etc.) and in others, to counter the ongoing revolutionary struggle (specifically, in El Salvador and Guatemala) by an *alternative project* which has the broadest possible social base and is designed to *suppress the national liberation movement*.

In El Salvador, a "nation-building" programme was adopted to create stable institutions capable of ensuring "national security" and to deny mass support to the revolutionaries. That was the goal of various civilian programmes, local development projects, indoctrination and the like. The ruling quarters tried to demonstrate the feasibility of a "new nation" and a "new state" that differed radically from the model advocated by the insurgent organisations. Among other things, these schemes were reflected in the Plan of the Commission for the Repopulation of Areas (1982) and in the "Unity for Reconstruction" counterinsurgency campaign (1986).¹¹

The "nation-building" drive called for *controlled elections*, civilian rule and a subsequent reshuffling of government agencies; even the enactment of a new constitution was not ruled out. This legitimisation of a patently illegal regime with the help of an electoral process—a fetish that casts a spell on US public opinion—is an integral component of the whole political project of low-intensity wars. The "assertion of the people's will" takes place amid a reign of terror and is accompanied by scandalous cases of fraud. Against the background of protracted class struggle, the counterinsurgency programme is oriented on the centrist quarters, implying the isolation of both the Right and the Left.

A certain *modernisation of dependent capitalism* is also planned. An agrarian and banking reform was implemented and foreign trade was nationalised in El Salvador under the Christian Democratic government. As a result, the oligarchy lost some of its economic power and some of its influence with the armed forces, which were managed by advisers from the Pentagon—even though, after the suppression of the popular uprising of 1932, the oligarchy had put the army in control of politics (the

military had the decisive say in the selection of every president) and quietly lined its pockets under army protection.

In an effort to win back the ground lost in recent years, the oligarchy set up its own party—the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). This political group gradually came to dominate the legislative assembly and the Supreme Court and, in March 1989, won the presidential elections. The reforms that had been implemented turned out to be superficial and illusory. Besides, they were never really carried through so as not to aggravate the contradictions either within the ruling class or between it and US imperialism. Yet again, populism has demonstrated how little it is worth.

The failure of the low-intensity wars strategy in El Salvador is also confirmed by some US army officers. Scathingly critical of the Salvadoran military from a "professional" angle, they conclude that an ability to see things as they really are is essential to the success of future military interventions. We cannot, they say, deceive ourselves with innocuous phrases like "nation-building" or "internal defence and development", or let ourselves be confused by the pedantic definitions of "insurgency" or "national liberation". They urge recognition of the fact that what is involved is much greater than simple support for a doctrine named after one of the US Presidents. They call for a broader attitude to the tasks in question—not just assistance in assuring security, training personnel or providing advisory services. "Let's call it a war because that's what it is," they say, "and act accordingly."¹²

The doctrine of low-intensity wars has been drawn up with due attention paid to US foreign policy and military failures in the Third World. The historic victory of the Vietnamese people forced the military strategists of imperialism to modify their old policy. The neoglobalist Reagan Doctrine is in fact an updated and adjusted version of the old strategy of intervention in the world's flash-points. An attempt to *roll back* the social and political processes that allegedly threaten US "national security" and "national interests" is one of the major "innovations" introduced into a policy inherited from previous US presidents (which emphasised efforts to strengthen the allies and to preserve what was left of the United States' global dominance—which took a severe beating during the 1970s).

Washington is aware of the intricate and complex nature of today's world, but it refuses to give up its old course even as international tensions are being eased.

As Fidel Castro noted, it is important to understand "how imperialism interprets peace and peaceful coexistence". There is justifiable concern that, as happened many times in the past, imperialism may be ready to accept "peace between the great powers, while reserving the right to intimidate, oppress, exploit and launch aggression against Third World countries".¹³

The fact that various regional conflicts are being settled politically *does not mean that Washington has given up*

low-intensity warfare. Every conflict of this kind has its own logic of settlement. There is no common yardstick here.

US Imperialism is increasingly demonstrating its disdain of the treaties it signed or was party to. Often, these agreements soon turn into scraps of paper. Witness the developments in Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Angola, where the United States is blatantly violating its obligations. Washington still aids and abets the opposition in Afghanistan, the contras and the UNITA thugs. It frequently appears to regard negotiations as a way of playing for time and continuing with its old "containment of communism" strategy.

There is no reason to hope that imperialism will change its spots and become decent of its own accord. This view is borne out by the doctrine of low-intensity wars. Therefore, the enslaved nations will continue to fight for national independence and uphold their right to a better life by using the forms of struggle they themselves find necessary.

¹ The report "A New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties", submitted to the US President in 1980. See Narciso Isa Conde, "The Decline of the Santa Fe Policy", *WMR*, No. 3, 1988.

² See Sara Miles, *La verdadera guerra: conflictos de baja intensidad en America Central*, North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), Report on the Americas, April-May 1986, Vol. XX, No. 2; Deborah Barry, "Los conflictos de baja intensidad el caso de Centroamerica", *Cuadernos de pensamiento propio*, Managua, February 1986; "Nicaragua: pais sitiado [Guerra de baja intensidad: agresion y sobrevivencia]", *Cuadernos de pensamiento propio*, Managua, June 1986.

³ See *Proyecto conjunto sobre el conflicto de baja intensidad. Reporte final*, Fort Monroe, Virginia (USA), August 1, 1986, p. 13-14 (Mimeo).

⁴ Drafted, like "A New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties", by the Committee of Santa Fe (see: *Envio*, Instituto Historico Centroamericano, Managua, 1988, No. 90; *Voz*, Bogota, January 12, 1989).

⁵ See Jorge Hernandez Martinez, "El pensamiento estrategico norteamericano y los conflictos regionales: ideologia y subversion", *Revista Univesidad de La Habana*, No. 231, p. 191.

⁶ *Department of State Bulletin*, June 1983, pp. 4, 5.

⁷ See *Discriminate Deterrence*, Washington, 1988, p. 23.

⁸ See John Waghelstein, *Conflicto de baja intensidad en el periodo post =Vietnam*, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, 1985.

⁹ See "Conflictos de baja intensidad", *ALAI*, Quito, 1986, No. 86, p.11.

¹⁰ See Deborah Barry, *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹¹ Classified document entitled "Campana de contrainsurgencia 'Unidos para reconstruir'", San Salvador, 1986.

¹² See A.J.Bacevich, James D. Hallums, Richard H. White and Thomas F. Young, "El Salvador: una evaluacion militar estadounidense", *Centroamerica-USA*, No 4, 1988, San Jose, Costa Rica, p. 14.

¹³ *Granma*, January 7, 1989.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GLOBAL SECURITY

Bilal Al-SAMER

Iraqi Communist Party (ICP)

Two centuries ago the French Revolution proclaimed for the first time the inalienable rights of man to honour, dignity, liberty and resistance to oppression. Time passed, and these noble ideas were recognised by the entire world community, which then enriched itself with an *effective document that now makes it possible to defend the social gains of humanity, to work for their consistent and universal development, and to repulse imperialist oppressors and dictatorships*: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948. It embodies the desire of the world's peoples for a worthy life of independence, democracy, and peace.

The underlying idea of the document is the recognition of the most important right of man—the right to life—without which all others are meaningless. One cannot fail to appreciate the conceptual perspicacity of the Declaration's authors as they interlink freedom, social justice and world peace. Democracy appears as a coherent notion, broad enough to encompass political, economic, social and other components.

The document refers to everyone's right to freedom of conscience, of opinion and expression, of peaceful assembly and association, equality before the law and the presumption of innocence, personal immunity, the sanctity of the home, and privacy of correspondence. Torture, cruel treatment, arbitrary arrest are prohibited. The Declaration outlaws all discrimination (based on sex, race, colour, national or social origin, religion, political or other opinion), as well as slavery: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

The document confirms the right to work and just remuneration, social security and education, and free entry into marriage. It prohibits the forced exile of a person from his/her country, and proclaims the right to a nationality, freedom of movement and residence. Finally, the 1966 UN International human rights covenants based on the Declaration recognise the principle of the self-determination and free development of all peoples, big and small, and thus the right of any of them to defend its independence and security.

Despite all these International conventions and agreements, in a number of instances freedom, democracy and national sovereignty are still being violated, mental and physical torture is still being applied, and the principle of the law's supremacy is still being breached. There have appeared governments and regimes which defy the elementary norms of human conduct. Of what right to life could there be any talk during the Cold War? And now, in

the midst of local conflicts inspired by imperialism, how is this right to be guaranteed?

Retreats from democratic norms and violations of individual freedoms also occurred in a number of socialist states, a fact now admitted by their leaders. Yet such deformations are basically alien to the nature of the new system, designed as it was to ensure a better, humane life. We also remember the prolonged Western campaigns so massively conducted against the socialist states, when sincere demands for human rights were accompanied by hypocrisy and self-interest.

The humanitarian legal problem is as important as universal peace and security, the non-military settlement of regional conflicts and a new international economic order.

The "human dimension" is now increasingly recognised as an indispensable characteristic of the international processes. This is not the whimsical theorising of individual humanists or movements but a fact of life. Violations of human rights and freedoms, particularly on a large scale, do not just threaten the moral health of mankind; a lack of stability in one area can jeopardise security in other areas—such is the nature of an interdependent world. This makes it everyone's duty to protest whenever human rights are being violated and is the only way to uphold the universal human values of civilisation, which craves deliverance from violence and wars.

Everything indicates that a new stage, characterised by a *relaxation of tension*, is beginning in world development: the Cold War clouds are gradually dissipating, and the principles of peaceful coexistence are establishing themselves in the relations between states with different social systems. Nuclear disarmament talks are proceeding more effectively, new efforts are being undertaken to save mankind from apocalyptic nuclear or conventional war, and regional conflicts have begun to be settled by peaceful means.

However, the favourable international situation is incompatible with the existence of dictatorships which defy the times and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And it must be said that conditions are ripe for people to mobilise in defence of these principles. This is because, firstly, an interlacing of new and traditional factors of historical development is taking place; secondly, antidictatorial actions and the movement of international solidarity are expanding; and thirdly, the antipeople regimes, torn apart by deep internal contradictions, are finding themselves increasingly isolated on the international scene. Finally, more realistic approaches to the paths of social progress are being affirmed.

Even a cursory glance at the situation surrounding the reactionary regimes which engage in terror and repression and violations of the international rules of conduct reveals that the peoples can win a victory over them. This has already occurred in Pakistan, where the effects of General Zia ul-Haq's autocratic rule are still being dealt with. I am confident that serious democratic changes are also in-

evitable in South Korea, Haiti, Chile, El Salvador, the Israeli-occupied Arab territories, and Iran.

This also applies to our country, Iraq. Significantly, the dictatorship in Baghdad, which we regard as fascist, is looking for ways to circumvent the will of the popular masses and national patriotic forces. It seeks to mislead the world community, which has sharply condemned the terror, and the use of chemical weapons, against the Kurds, whose national rights are not recognised by the Iraqi authorities. The recent statements by Saddam Hussein about a "general amnesty" and "pluralism" are an attempt to blunt the protests abroad, and proof of the dictatorship's inability to prolong its days by force.

Of course, the struggle against regimes violating the humanistic principles of community life is, by and large, a task for the peoples of these countries themselves. However, in the conditions of an integral world there arise additional new opportunities for activating and speeding up the democratisation of both intra- and inter-state relations. What do I mean?

A new tendency is growing: the *creation of universal guarantees for the observance of human rights*, above all through existing international organisations.

The concept of the "common European house" is finding ever greater understanding and support. It has to be realised, though, that this is but one of the planet's five "houses". As a result of advances in science and technology in the nuclear age the Earth resembles nothing so much as a densely-populated block. A fire in one "flat" can easily spread to the others.

No one can deny the existence of highly diverse political and class contradictions within particular states and in the relations between them. It is hard to imagine that world reaction will ever desist from seeking control over "flats" and even "floors" in these large "houses", from destabilising the situation or fuelling local fires, or from imposing dictatorships where its neocolonialist interests are threatened. Essentially unchanged, imperialism has not abandoned its aims.

But how can these new international realities help us propagate the values of freedom and democracy and turn them into a regulator of both foreign and domestic policy?

There are two forms of democracy in the world today—bourgeois and socialist. The basic difference between them lies in the nature of the opposing social systems. But there are also common criteria, developed throughout the centuries and confirmed in the international human rights covenants, the 1948 Universal Declaration and the Helsinki Final Act. The nations of the world are now demanding that this common standard be applied in order that people may live in peace without constant fear. They want this issue to be the focus of attention for the UN, for international, regional and national organisations, and for governments and parliaments. Without broad solidarity and joint efforts, without a global awareness of human worth, it is hard to put an end to encroachments on personal life and

freedoms or prevent the dangerous consequences for civilisation.

Speaking at the UN, Mikhail Gorbachov declared himself for a world community of states with foreign policies and an attitude to human rights based in international law, and proposed that the UN be the framework for a common understanding of its principles and norms. The key to persuading states to conduct themselves in accordance with the *highest norms and laws of civilised relations* lies, according to the Soviet leader, in the new method or function of international law in the nuclear era: the reliance on a balance of interests between states, rather than on force and coercion.

The concept of general security implies resolving disputes by political means and according respect to individual and collective rights in order to strengthen the humanitarian-legal foundation of the new world order. The final document of the Vienna meeting of European states involved in the Helsinki process underscores the shared East-West concern over human rights violations wherever they occur. It is also a kind of impulse, an example for the Third World, and a factor of constructive joint pressure on those regimes which are committing crimes against their own peoples.

Until the international community decisively supports efforts to restore freedoms and fundamental rights, any call to the oppressed peoples and liberation movements for an end to certain kinds of struggle will go unheeded—not because the fighters for freedom and democracy refuse to heed the voice of reason, though this is sometimes the case, but because they have to defend themselves as best they can against reactionary circles and ruling classes who are the first to resort to violence and brutality. Paraphrasing one of Newton's laws, we shall say that *for every sociopolitical force there is an equal and opposite force or reaction*. Just as there exist exploitation, social oppression and injustice, so the movement for working people's interests retains its potential; the class struggle will proceed in varied forms and employ diverse means.

Between ordinary people's cares and concerns and common human interests there is a basic interconnection which the working people can only understand and sense in concrete actions. This is precisely what Gus Hall was talking about when, in the pages of *WMR*, he linked the struggle against exploitation and for jobs and better conditions with the strengthening of world peace and security.¹

Peoples have an inalienable right, confirmed in UN General Assembly resolutions, to seek independence, national sovereignty, freedom and democracy, and to use (with regard for objective and subjective conditions) the necessary means to achieve these things. "Unconditional observance of the United Nations Charter and of the right of peoples to sovereignly choose the roads and forms of their development, revolutionary or evolutionary, is imperative for universal security. This also applies to the right

of maintaining a social status quo, which is exclusively an internal matter."²

The proposal addressed by the Soviet leadership to Washington on the creation, under the UN aegis, of a joint commission of experts to monitor the observance of human rights in both countries reveals the importance the Soviet Union presently attaches to dialogue on this issue. The USSR will broaden its participation in UN supervisory mechanisms, and also within the European process, and has recognised the jurisdiction of the International Court in the Hague with regard to applying human rights accords. All states are being invited to undertake joint creativity and voluntary self-restriction.

This idea would be promoted by the establishment of an *international body to verify human rights observance on a global scale*. Expressing the will of the world community, it would be empowered to guarantee the implementation of its resolutions, recommendations and suggestions. For despite the measured success of the last session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the present system has not so far, in our view, achieved any significant changes—perhaps because of its limited terms of reference, methods of work, or structure.

The supervisory committee is envisaged as being able to:

- *demand from any government detailed information about any acts that run counter to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, regardless of where they are being committed, and pass on this information to the mass media;
- *ensure the free movement of working groups for the study of human rights violations, and publish detailed factual reports;
- *oblige all governments to make freely available information on political prisoners;
- *maintain contacts with and assist Amnesty International;
- *activate the international movement for the release of all those detained on ideological, political or religious grounds or by virtue of racial or national discrimination, and work for the return of deportees to their native places;
- *denounce campaigns of illegal arrests, genocide and torture, and publicly declare solidarity with the victims of lawless acts, wherever committed;
- *publish a journal and bulletins on a regular basis, obliging a number of governments to reprint material from them, and issue special books and pamphlets for public education;
- *hold international and regional symposiums and conferences on human rights.

We believe these proposals to be fully consonant with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference; they are very remote from the aims of interference in the internal affairs of states and are in the mainstream of efforts to create real guarantees for a secure future.

Undoubtedly, such actions will help convince broad-

based national patriotic forces that the international community genuinely supports human rights and utterly condemns terror and repression. They will also arouse compassion and sympathy in people who live in relative calm and security, enabling them to help the victims of lawlessness and terror by publicly declaring their solidarity with them. We recognise that some of the people and the national liberation movements in several countries have lost a certain amount of faith in the international community's readiness to understand their problems and in its ability to end crimes against humanity.

International cooperation for the defence and advancement of the values of freedom, democracy and individual and national rights will be expressed in vigorous actions to uproot racism, chauvinism and all forms of discrimination, and in joint solutions to the problems of ethnic

minorities, refugees and immigrant workers. In turn, solidarity with the struggle in the developing countries for freedom, democracy and human rights will bond their peoples with the rest of humanity, and promote their awareness of global problems. This will create a favourable atmosphere for the humanisation of international relations and a steady advance towards universal peace and security, towards the renewal of Man.

¹ See Gus Hall, "The World We Preserve Must Be Livable", *WMR*, No. 5, 1988.

² Mikhail Gorbachov, "Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World", *Pravda*, September 17, 1987.





THE PEOPLE WANT THE COMMUNISTS TO BE UNITED

C. Rajeswara RAO
General Secretary, National Council,
Communist Party of India (CPI)

The 14th Congress of the Communist Party, held at Calcutta from March 6 to 12 this year, was a big success on various counts. After intense debates and some amendments, the Political Review Report of the National Council on national and international developments and our party's activities since the 13th congress, the political resolution for the coming period and the organisation report were adopted unanimously.

46 delegations from fraternal parties and national liberation movements participated in the work of the party congress. The highlight of this participation was the presence of the delegation of the Communist Party of China for the first time at a CPI congress.

A mammoth rally was held at the end of the party congress, showing the mass support our party enjoys and showing as false the claims of some press organs that the CPI was being torn apart by contradictions and could not play any significant role at the present crucial juncture.

A redrafted edition of the Party Programme was also to be adopted by the Congress. It was decided, however, to hold a special congress for the purpose sometime in 1990, after a thorough and full-fledged discussion of the draft inside the party. The party also has to take into consideration the new positive developments on the international scene caused by new thinking. Its bearing on the Indian situation has to be carefully assessed in formulating the Programme.

The political review report of the National Council assessed the political and mass activities of the party during the three years since the last party Congress. The party and the mass organisations led by it have grown significantly and become more mass- and struggle-oriented in this period. It was admitted, however, that much more sustained effort would have to be exerted in this direction.

A lot of attention had to be concentrated on the fast-changing political situation in this period. Rajiv Gandhi's government has been broadly pursuing the country's progressive foreign policy despite certain vacillations on some issues. Our party has fully supported this policy while fighting the vacillations. But the government's

retrograde economic and internal political course has aggravated all the crisis phenomena in the country and led to a further deterioration of the people's living conditions.

The government policy of preference to monopolists, liberalisation of imports, denigration of the public sector, gradual privatisation, open door to multinational companies, indiscriminate computerisation in the name of modernisation, and introduction of imperialist corporations into the defence industries, is *not only increasing unemployment and the miseries of the people, but also eroding the country's self-reliance*. Already 150,000 big, medium and small enterprises have been closed, and 30 million people have been registered as unemployed. Even more alarming is the decline in agricultural employment which cannot even be accurately quantified yet.

These economic policies are giving rise to acute discontent among the people.

The positive factor in this otherwise bleak picture is the comprehensive, widening and deepening economic cooperation between India and the Soviet Union which has played a decisive role over the years in building a powerful public sector and laying the foundations of an independent economy. However, this cannot offset the retrograde impact of the overall economic policies of the government.

In India today, while the central government is run by the Congress-I, several state governments are run by regional parties or by the Left. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi pursues a policy of discrimination and arbitrary interference in the affairs of these non-Congress-I state governments, particularly the left-led governments. This is aggravating the relations between the Centre and the states and harming the federal structure of the country. The government is increasingly resorting to anti-democratic and repressive measures against the struggles of the people. Peasants have been fired upon. Workers have been victimised for their struggles. Draconian measures are enacted and are used against political opponents in an attempt to silence them.

Rajiv Gandhi has adopted a soft and opportunist approach towards religious-communal forces. This is bringing grist to the latter's mill. The Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communalists today are emboldened to openly call for Hindu, Sikh and Muslim states respectively, i.e., a demand to change the secular and democratic character of the Indian State. All types of communal and religious fundamentalist and secessionist forces are seeking to utilise the growing mass discontent, projecting retrograde and reactionary slogans. They strive to disrupt the unity of the people and the country.

On top of it all, corruption scandals have broken out throwing up a question mark as to the involvement of the

highest levels of the government in them. Government spokesmen have not been able to clear the doubts about them.

In sum, a situation is developing where Rajiv Gandhi is fast losing his influence with the masses, and a political vacuum is being created. This is evidenced in the defeat of the Congress-I in the state assembly elections of West Bengal, Kerala, Hariyana and Tamilnadu and in by-elections like in the Allahabad Lok Sabha constituency. There is growing intensification of internal dissensions and factional struggles in the ruling Congress-I party.

In this developing situation, with the forthcoming general elections to the parliament already on the horizon, the bourgeois opposition parties have begun to project an alternative to the Rajiv Gandhi government. The successive defeats of the Congress-I in the recent elections have increased the confidence of these parties to make a bid for power at the Centre. A new political party called Janata Dal has emerged which consists of some of the old bourgeois opposition parties and a prominent group of former Congressmen who recently defected from the Congress-I. The Janata Dal and some of the more prominent regional parties like the Telegu Desam Party (TDP) of Andhra State, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhakam (DMK) of Tamilnadu and the Assam Ganatantra Parishad (AGP) of Assam and some others have come together into a National Front. Many of these parties are running governments in their states. The formation of the Janata Dal and the forging of the National Front have involved zigzags and revealed many weaknesses, shortcomings and internal bickering. Also, certain prominent individuals with rightist, pro-imperialist and anti-secular tendencies are present in some of its constituent parties—even though most of them are broadly democratic and secular in outlook.

Assessing these crucial developments, the 14th Congress decided that the party should take a *positive attitude towards these formations and actively intervene to influence them in favour of radical programmes and progressive policies*. We, of course, have combated the urge of the National Front to forge an alliance with the Hindu Communal Bharatiya Janata Party. The left parties, particularly the CPI and the CPI(M) have conducted a sustained campaign to isolate the BJP and the other communal political parties. We urged on the secular bourgeois opposition parties the necessity of keeping out the communal parties from their front. So far the Janata Dal and the National Front could be persuaded from entering into a deal with the BJP. But the danger is still very real. Some of the leaders of the Janata Dal and the National Front have declared that they want to enter into seat adjustments with both the Left and the BJP in the coming Lok Sabha elections.

In that context, the Front's relations with the BJP may not remain confined to seat adjustments, but may lead even to a sharing of power at the Centre. This is not acceptable to the CPI. The BJP's entry into the central government would be a severe blow against the secular-

democratic set-up in the country and a threat to its unity. The Hindu semi-militaristic organisation Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), the BJP's mentor, has already openly and unashamedly been running a campaign for declaring India a Hindu state. It is calling for the scrapping of the Minorities Commission (a body that looks after the legitimate interests of Muslim and other minorities) and for the deletion from the Constitution of an article which confers certain special rights on the Muslim majority state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The National Front itself has no clear perception of policy issues. Its understanding of foreign policy is confused and even retrograde. Its economic policy hardly differs from that of the Rajiv government. The CPI has drawn the attention of the Front to the weaknesses in its programme. Besides, some of its constituents are running state governments with a record no better than that of the Congress-I governments in such vital spheres as land reform. This applies, for instance, to the TDP state government in Andhra Pradesh. The Political Resolution of the 14th Congress therefore emphasises that the state governments run by the constituents of the National Front must implement specific pro-people measures, observe democratic norms and forms in their functioning and must fight corruption, if their credibility is to be established with the people as a better alternative to the Rajiv government.

However, the policy orientation of the Janata Dal, the main constituent of the National Front, is considerably better. Through dialogue with the Left, it has shown inclination to accept an anti-imperialist, democratic and secular framework for its programme. At a recent convention, they adopted a programme which, on issues such as foreign policy, secularism and minority rights, is in the right direction.

The 14th Party Congress has thus formulated our general approach to the emerging bourgeois opposition to the ruling Congress-I. But it has also explicitly spelt out that the *present crisis cannot be overcome within the existing socioeconomic framework*. The replacement of the bourgeois Congress-I rule by a left-democratic and secular alternative on the basis of a clear-cut programme is the requirement of the situation. It is recognised, though, that this cannot be realised in the immediate future.

In the middle of 1987 we proposed such a draft programme to all the left parties. After some initial reservations, the CPI(M) came to the same stand. Since then the CPI and the CPI(M) have begun to intervene in the political field with visible impact. The two communist parties, together with the other left parties, foiled the attempt of the bourgeois opposition parties to get the Rajiv Gandhi government dismissed by the former president Zail Singh. That would have been a coup against the Constitution and the parliamentary democratic setup of the country. Again, our two parties through active intervention frustrated the attempt of the reactionary forces to put up the very same Zail Singh to the post of president a second time.

Three significant events of Communist-Left intervention

of those months need special emphasis here. The massive, million-strong historic march before Parliament in Delhi organised by the Left parties and several mass organisations on December 9, 1987 concentrated on the urgent demands of various sections of the people and also called on the Rajiv Gandhi government to seek a fresh mandate as it had lost the confidence of the people. Later, a successful Bharat Bandh¹ was organised on March 15, 1988. And in September of the same year extensive rural mass actions followed. These country-wide mass actions have projected the Left parties prominently on to the political scene of the country. In all of them our party played a vital role.

In the present critical situation, the two communist parties can not only play a crucial role on a national scale but also, in a number of states, they can effectively intervene to influence the political situation. They can attract a vast reserve of democratic allies. In fact, large sections of the democratic forces and the masses look hopefully to the unification of the communist movement in the country. It is in this context that the CPI has raised the question of unity of the two communist parties. This is an objective necessity. And it is a matter of happiness that new possibilities have arisen under the changed conditions of today for uniting the communist movement.

The relation between CPI and the CPI(M) have improved in general in recent years through more or less common views on major international and internal questions and through joint action and struggle. However, this process is not advancing as it should due to the negative and sectarian attitude of the CPI(M) to communist unity. For our part, we will continue to exert every effort for unity between the two parties on a principled basis.

The Congress also considered our approach towards the communist groups, popularly known as Naxalites² in the country. There are 17 such groups today. Most of them are in the process of changing their wrong positions not only because of their hard practical experience but also because of the changes that have been brought about in China by the present CPC leadership. Our party will do everything possible to bring these groups into the mainstream of the communist movement in India. In fact we have already begun succeeding in drawing some of them into common mass movements in Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and elsewhere.

The 14th Party Congress paid specific attention to certain disturbing features of the political situation in the country. The Punjab problem continues to defy solution.³ The Central government is dithering and is really not purposefully searching for a political solution through a national consensus. It continues to treat the terrorist problem as a law-and-order problem to be solved mainly through administrative measures despite the failure of this barren approach during the last several years.

Our party has consistently called for a political solution to the conflict. It urges the Rajiv Gandhi government to convene an all-party meeting to build a national consen-

sus in the spirit of the earlier Punjab accord which Rajiv Gandhi had arrived at with the late moderate Akali (Sikh) leader Longoval but which the Prime Minister has not implemented. We have campaigned in Punjab and at the national level for the problem to be tackled simultaneously from all angles—administrative, political, psychological and economic. The government has largely ignored this approach.

The CPI in Punjab has continued to rouse the people steadfastly against the terrorists. We have conducted a sustained campaign on our own and in cooperation with the CPI(M) and other parties to make the people realise what a threat the Khalistani separatists represent to the unity, national integrity and the secular democratic setup of the country. We took the initiative to send armed propaganda squads into the villages to counter Khalistani extremists. Several peaceful state-wide Bandhs have taken place at its call. It organised a massive demonstration in Chandigarh, the Punjab capital, and one in Delhi with the help and cooperation of the neighbouring state units of the party. What is of particular significance about these demonstrations is the fact that the major part of the participants in them were Sikhs indicating the weakening of the terrorist influence over them. It has been no easy campaign. By now, over seventy of our comrades have fallen victim to the bullets of Khalistani assassins for our uncompromising stand for unity of the country. The CPI(M) and some groups of Naxalites have also lost many valuable comrades.

The CPI Congress underlined in its political resolution that the situation in Punjab called urgently for a political solution through active mobilisation of the masses and involving them in the struggle against separatism and terrorism and for national integrity and communal amity.

During the period covered in the report, the communal situation in the country has worsened. All sorts of religious and fundamentalist forces have reared their ugly heads, endangering the nation's secular democratic setup. They are seeking to divert the people's rising discontent into communal chauvinistic channels and fratricidal conflicts.

Over fifty communal riots have taken place in recent months, mainly in the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP). The incidents in the city of Meerut were particularly grave as the Congress-I state government and its armed police force colluded with Hindu communal forces in attacking the Muslim minority. What happened shocked the whole country. In Meerut, elsewhere in UP, and in the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, our party concretely intervened at the time of the actual attacks to protect the minority from the rioters, give relief to the victims and demand punishment of the organisers and instigators. However, experience has shown that the party and other secular democratic forces must do much more on this score. Our party congress has underlined that it is not enough to intervene after the riots have broken out. We should be able to run a sustained campaign as in Punjab and to prevent communal incidents. Our units

must be ready to protect from communal forces those areas where the party has considerable influence.

The immediate cause of the aggravation of the communal situation is the eruption of the so-called Ram Janam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid⁴ dispute between Hindu and Muslim communalists. The Muslim communal organisations have been vehemently agitating, demanding that the Mosque should be "returned" to them, though of late, they have somewhat moderated their stand. The Viswa Hindu Parishad, a front organisation of the RSS consisting of Hindu religious leaders and retired officials, have begun an intense country-wide campaign threatening a mass march of Hindus to the spot to forcibly pull down the Masjid and construct a Rama temple there. If this is allowed, a religious communal flare-up, especially in the north of the country, is a real danger. It is a serious threat to the unity and integrity of the country. Naturally, the party Congress paid considerable attention to this developing menace and the urgency of combating it.

Without mincing words, it pointed out that the ruling Congress-I has contributed to the resurgence of communalism by its indulgence and appeasement of religious fundamentalists belonging to the majority and minority communities. It is also true that many bourgeois opposition leaders have chosen to keep quiet on communal danger out of opportunist electoral considerations.

Our party is absolutely clear that there should be no compromise with any form of communalism, whether of the majority or of any of the minorities. These communal forces of Indian reaction are allies of imperialism in its diabolical plans to destabilise the country. And they are aided and abetted by the feudal and semi-feudal forces. At the same time, we consider that the increasingly aggressive attitude of the Hindu majority communalists which has assumed new dimensions of late, constitutes the main danger today.

So, *combating communalism and religious fundamentalism is a crucial task of the coming period.* In this struggle we will strive to unite all secular forces including those in the ruling Congress-I. We will draw upon the ideas of secularism that are part of the rich heritage of our freedom struggle, as well as on the ideas of religious tolerance that arose in our country in the Middle Ages.

The 14th Party Congress analysed the far-reaching positive turn in the international situation. It noted that thanks to the new thinking and bold and imaginative initiatives of the CPSU leadership and its CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, and of other socialist countries, a new approach to international problems has emerged with a profound worldwide impact. Despite the stiff resistance offered by the imperialist circles, the momentum created by the INF Treaty towards nuclear disarmament negotiations is being sustained. New unilateral military initiatives by the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact have augmented this thrust. Regional conflicts are taking a turn towards negotiated settlements.

Perestroika in the Soviet Union has given a new

perspective and a new optimism to all the progressive and democratic forces of the world. Our party is convinced that the main direction of these reforms is correct. We support it. The restructuring of the economy on a democratic basis will make socialism more dynamic and attractive. And *new thinking will give an opportunity to the world communist movement to adopt a bold, imaginative and creative approach to the solution of problems.*

The struggle for peace and disarmament waged by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is finding increasing support and cooperation worldwide, particularly in Europe at the popular level and among Social Democratic parties. The Non-Aligned Movement and the Delhi Group of Six have been playing a vital role here.

It is true that the neo-colonialist policies of imperialism persist. The massive external debt of the developing countries is defying solution. Trade barriers, protectionism, TNC penetration, pressures against the public sector and World Bank policies are choking development in the Third World. Gorbachov's proposal on the foreign debt in his UN speech has found wide support in the Third World. A search and struggle for solutions to these problems and for a new international economic order has to be intensified today.

India's immediate external environment has also improved in this period. The emergence of SAARC as a nucleus of regional cooperation, the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan, the advance of democratic movements in Bangladesh and Burma and the new developments in Sri Lanka are positive features in South Asia. India's relations with China have entered a new and welcome phase of friendship and cooperation with the visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China. The party also welcomes the process of normalisation of relations between the Soviet Union and China as a matter of decisive importance.

We consider that broader and closer cooperation, including trade relations, with neighbouring countries can be used to stimulate a big campaign for a new international economic order. Improvement of relations with Pakistan and China can enable India to reduce its defence expenditure and lead to a relaxation of tension in the region.

India's foreign policy of anti-imperialism, non-alignment, peace and support for national liberation movements and its positive role in international economic forums have been consistently pursued in this period. Its policy of close friendship with the USSR and other socialist countries has further consolidated. We consider the Delhi declaration signed by Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachov on a nuclear-free and non-violent world as an expression of the global dimension of Indo-Soviet friendship.

During this period our party, the mass organisations and the peace and solidarity movement together with the left and the anti-imperialist forces, including those of the Congress-I, have carried on campaigns on issues of peace and solidarity and for strengthening and consolidat-

ing India's foreign policy. The Party Congress has enjoined us to pursue this course energetically in future as well.

Briefly the political line that has emerged at the 14th Party Congress can be summed up as follows:

- Since the Rajiv Gandhi government has failed in running this country efficiently, it must be replaced.

- The uncompromising fight against the communal, secessionist and chauvinist forces should be intensified. They should be isolated from the people.

- A better alternative to the Congress-I government at the Centre—of left, democratic and secular forces with a clear-cut programme—should and can be built through militant economic and political struggles and movements of the masses.

The Party Congress has reminded the party that in a vast country like ours with all its diversities and unevenness, this general line will have to be applied very flexibly.

Taking the present political situation into consideration, the states in India may be broadly divided into three categories: (1) the states where Congress-I is ruling; (2) the states of West Bengal and Kerala where left-led governments are in power; and (3) the states where non-Congress-I, non-left parties have formed the state government.

In the first and second categories of states on the whole, the application of this line is less complicated. In the states where the non-Congress-I, non-left governments are in power, these governments also are pursuing anti-people, anti-democratic policies. These policies will have to be and are being fought against. Focussing on this question, the political resolution of the Congress underlines that this necessary and inevitable struggle will

have to be carried out by the left parties "in a manner that they strengthen left, democratic and secular forces and help isolate the Congress-I".

We repeat: the CPI knows very well that a left and democratic alternative would emerge out of mass movements and struggles. Hence in the coming period it will concentrate on them both on its own and in cooperation with other parties and forces that are prepared to cooperate. The party will project its policies and reorient its practical activities with a view to attract, mobilise and draw in vast democratic masses in the Congress-I and other national and regional parties into these struggles.

¹ A specific Indian form of struggle. It combines a general strike and ceasure of all normal activities. *Bandh* literally means closure. In this case it was an India-wide action.

² Naxalites are left extremist communist groups who split away from the CPI(M) in the late sixties influenced by the then Maoist leadership of the CPC. They are split into several groups. The name itself is derived from the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal where this group made their presence felt in a peasant struggle for the first time.

³ For the background of the Punjab problem see Avtar Singh Malhotra's article in *WMR*, No 5, 1988 —Ed.

⁴ The gist of the controversy is this: there is a centuries-old mosque near the city of Faizabad in UP state. The Hindu fanatical communal elements claim that it was built on the exact spot where Rama, the mythical hero of the ancient Indian (Hindu) epic of *Ramayana*, was born and hence the locality should be returned to Hindus. The place was under lock and key since 1949. A couple of years ago it was unlocked by the Congress-I state government of UP with the connivance of the Central government. This has engendered the latest communal tensions fanned by both Hindu and Muslim fanatics.

SOVIET-CHINESE PARTY RELATIONS RESTORED

After a break of three decades, a General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee has paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China. A normalisation of relations between both governments and both parties has been the main result of the Soviet-Chinese summit. The leaders of the Soviet Union and China have agreed on the need to put the ties linking the two biggest socialist countries on a sounder and more stable footing, one based on the universally recognised principles of international relations—mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, nonaggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. It has been decided not to return to the relations that existed during the 1950s and, at the same time, to free

them from the confrontation of the 1960s and 1970s.

Statements by the CPSU and CPC leaders and the final document reflect their views and concepts, and their attitudes to the character of interparty relations. These, according to the Soviet-Chinese communique, will develop in line with the principles of independence, complete equality and mutual respect.

As Mikhail Gorbachov noted, the CPSU and the CPC act as political vanguards in their countries and, naturally, links between them will help promote overall Soviet-Chinese relations because they are ruling parties. Comparing the restored ties to relations between other communist parties, he stressed that "broad cooperation on all the problems we are discussing today is possible with other com-

munist parties too. I think the things that have now become firmly established in relations between communist parties will also be common."

Foremost attention will be paid to a joint effort to analyse what has been accomplished and to offer a scientific forecast of the new quality of socialism. Both sides agreed on the need for interparty contacts, not only at the highest level but also between party organisations at economic enterprises where reforms are in progress. By incorporating the expertise of party organisations and worker collectives into interparty exchanges, each party will be able to add to its experience and gain a clearer insight into the positive and negative aspects of their work.

THE AIM IS SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Tserenpiliyn BALHAAJAV
Secretary, Central Committee, MPRP

The features of the present historical stage of socialist development in Mongolia are such that a careful analysis of our party's tasks in ideology, theory and practical endeavour is in order.

For decades our people have been building the new society under MPRP leadership. Indeed, this period has seen a basic transformation of national life. But the way has not been smooth. A superficial progress analysis, and inconsistency in the consideration of objective factors often led to a dash for social change, and to the accumulation and worsening of negative phenomena.

As a result, important theses in the 1966 Party Programme, such as the calls for a modern industrial infrastructure and an industrial-agrarian state, remain unrealised. Mongolia is still a raw materials producer, and weak technologically. Social and human problems are not properly reflected in either the party's Programme or practical work. Certain stages of MPRP history need to be critically and truthfully reassessed.

That was why our Central Committee at its 5th Plenum (December 1988) voted to *recast the Party Programme*. It was a decision prompted by life: the yearning for change and renewal had long been felt. With a downgraded role of democracy and openness, the command-and-administer system, in the economy in particular, had become a brake on its development.

Today's problems cannot be viewed in isolation from the past. Most of the deformations we are talking about stem from Horloogiyn Choybalsan's personality cult.¹ Our party's return to this question, and the present critical reappraisal of his successor, Yumjagiin Tsendenbal, are an imperative of socialist construction, not mere political expediency. If we have really adopted openness, it must also extend to history.

Choybalsan was a founder of the Mongolian People's Party and a leader of the 1921 Revolution. But we have no reason to gloss over his subsequent errors. In the 1930s he seriously breached the revolutionary law by repressing numerous party, government and economic personnel. The party and people sustained an irretrievable loss. Stalin's cult also played a sinister role in this ruinous process: in Mongolia both leaders commanded equal worship.

The period when Tsendenbal headed the party and state is marked by successes as well as by a whole series of deviations and deformations in the field of state and party leadership and cadre policy. Democracy and openness

were extremely limited, and the command-and-administer methods, bureaucratism, subjectivism and voluntarism still prevailed, as did a dogmatic, mechanistic approach to the useful experience of the Soviet Union and other sister nations. All this had far-reaching negative consequences.

Long captive to stereotype notions of socialism, there is no longer any excuse for our retaining these outdated views on social development now that the spirit of restructuring permeates every sphere of our life. This explains the party's singular focus on a *critical reassessment* of many of the concepts formulated in the past.

It's now a matter of unfolding the potential of society, of our most humane and democratic order. A natural product of history, it is also a constantly evolving, self-renewing organism. Social justice, the security of the working people, their unlimited power and the living creativity of the masses—this is the source of its vitality.

Historical lessons give us a deeper knowledge of socialism, and let us work out the appropriate theoretical and practical guidelines at each particular stage of development. Our people's fate is inseparably linked with that of socialism.

Having grasped the need for an innovative view of socialist change, the Mongolian Communists have profoundly analysed the qualitative state of society and outlined their concrete practical tasks. The 19th MPRP Congress (1986) laid the groundwork for economic and political reforms in the country.

We must scrutinise the past in order to predict the future. Only thus can we overcome the distorted or simplified perceptions of our near- and long-term aims. In the *economic field* we feel it particularly important to take the dialectics between productive forces and production relations into account, to introduce scientific and technological achievements, to exercise flexible control over property relations, and to improve the structure of the national economy. Our *political system* needs a more perfect democracy and methods of administration. In the *social domain*, a socially active individual must be encouraged, our socialist way of life affirmed, and the people's working and living conditions improved.

The party and people are now concentrating on the implementation of a series of closely related measures. In particular, we have started actively carrying out our food programme, tackling the social problems of the countryside, raising production efficiency, and shifting to the commercial levers of economic management. In coping with tasks of this scale, differences of opinion naturally emerge in relation to the modern common criteria of socialism, the most promising areas for its renewal, our potential and its limits. All this is a constant discussion theme among scholars and among the public. We want the truth to be born out of comprehensive analysis and counterposed views.

To build socialism, we need mass activism and initiative. So our prime task is to more fully release the energy

of all our social forces—the working class, the cooperative arats, the intellectuals.

Young people constitute over half Mongolia's population, and the party now especially stresses the use of their creative potential. Sufficiently educated and trained, they are drawn towards everything that is new. What they most need at present is our trust, and the creation of the best conditions for their self-realisation and for the translation of their youthful aspirations and hopes into life.

The party's policy towards the *intellectuals* also needs rethinking. It was during the personality cult that we formed a biased and at times even scornful view of our cultural and scientific workers. In the mid-1950s, instead of finding out in a civilised and open manner how just were the considerations and requirements of some intellectuals, they were hastily—and undeservedly—accused of being nationalists and nihilists. Predictably, such peremptory shouts led inevitably to inertia and lack of initiative among the most educated part of Mongolian society. Now both the party and the masses firmly believe that socialist advance in Mongolia must go hand in hand with a further enhancement of the intellectuals' role. To heed their opinion, to rely upon scientific conclusions in working out the questions of party and state building is an urgent requirement of the day.

The party's course for reinvigorating all the spheres of life is inspiring the Mongolian people. They are freeing themselves of apathy and estrangement. For example, sharpness and candour marked a recent discussion of the MPRP Central Committee's document on the tasks of renewing the political system of society. Polemics, until recently only formal in character or absent altogether, now precede the adoption of many important decisions.

Contact with people, regard for public opinion and the basic interests of the various sections, and attention to critical remarks play a decisive role in framing MPRP policy. Ideological, scientific, cultural and educational institutions are drawing up specific work-restructuring programmes and submitting them for public scrutiny. We are eager to create an atmosphere of openness and publicity, and we are in favour of a socialist pluralism that will encourage dialectical thinking and a joint search for the truth through exchanges of opinion. Collective discussion is important in any undertaking, especially when considered opinions and findings are required.

The tasks of shaping public consciousness are the focus of the party's ideological work and include, above all, the following:

- *through effective propaganda and the clear explanation of the aims of the reforms, to ensure that the ideas of restructuring become a firm conviction of the masses and that the people see the Communists as their political vanguard, understand the significance of full government by the people, and recognise the vital need for democracy and openness;
- *to mobilise the Communists' wisdom and creative ef-

forts in unfolding the country's spiritual and intellectual potential and affirming the socialist way of life;

- *to create a healthy moral climate in society, cleansing it by consistently promoting criticism and self-criticism and by creating conditions for free expression of the will of each person and respect for his or her dignity;
- *to educate working people in the spirit of historical truth and social justice, and to ensure the unity of words and deeds, of the national and the international in ideological and political work;
- *to objectively inform the masses about all aspects of our reality, and about party and state affairs, so that they can more actively participate in administering the country.

The achievement of these aims is guaranteed by the *vigour and efficacy of ideological work*. The vital requirements of society are causing us to change its forms radically. Working people seek a deep understanding of the idea of renewal, of its course and the place and role in it of party and state leadership, and are doing their best to promote restructuring. And in order to grasp what it is all about, "people have begun to read far more than previously, to reason and inquire, and to freely express their opinions," General Secretary of the MPRP Central Committee Jambyn Batmonh told its 5th Plenum. "This is an important and, I would say, unprecedented innovation which has recently been investing our ideological life."²

Political studies by party members and non-members alike have been boosted by the awakened masses' interest in the changes that are occurring. The party has suggested that such studies should be arranged more flexibly and released from all kinds of schematism and scholasticism. Its primary organisations now have the right and responsibility to decide when and how to educate the public on the issues involved.

We consider it particularly vital to achieve *imaginativeness in this work*, and to discard the formalism that marred our past endeavours. An ability to convince people, to conduct a dialogue, to draw the broad sections of the population into social life—these are the qualities that an ideological worker requires now if he wants to be believed and to be followed. Party activists are beginning to realise how important it is not only to assess what has been done promptly and objectively, but also to see the inhibitions on reform. Without this one cannot find a common language with the masses.

The MPRP is paying great attention to the fostering in each citizen of *socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism*. Experience shows that these constitute a single and coherent system of views, complementing and enriching each other. At the same time, if either side becomes too cumbersome and shears away from the other, this will adversely affect public consciousness. A nation's spiritual world can only develop when there is a mutual enrichment of cultures. Disrespect for another nation's customs and traditions will rebound on one's own national

feelings. But it is equally wrong to ignore the cultural legacy of one's own people, as we did in the past.

It is clear now to all that inter-state relations do not fit into the narrow frame of their ideologised treatments. Whether we take economic, trade, scientific-technical or cultural ties, the interaction of progressive national traditions or person-to-person contacts, internationalism, just as patriotism, has common human characteristics and, consequently, differs in its profound content and diversity of forms. Of course, we still have to expose any attempts on the part of bourgeois researchers to vilify the socialist system. The party, however, believes that the offensive stance of our ideology should not be opposed to the processes of de-ideologisation and humanisation in relations between states.

One of the main conditions for the effectiveness of our educational efforts is the unity of organisational party and ideological work. However well-organised, neither agitation, nor propaganda can mould a harmonious person committed to socialism unless we more fully satisfy the material and cultural requirements of the working people. Only by closely linking the educational measures with so-

cial and political practice shall we succeed in enhancing the prestige and the real efficacy of ideological work, and in wiping out the declarativeness, window-dressing and idle talk that still linger here.

The tasks of spiritual restructuring are making entirely new demands on the party's ideological cadres and scientific institutions. It is only natural then that the Central Committee should have discussed recently the need to study socialism with all its contradictions, to restore the historical truth, and to draw lessons for the future. Hence the decision to rewrite, from a scientific standpoint, the history of the Republic and the MPRP.

The Communists and all working people of Mongolia are confident that we shall achieve a qualitative renovation of social life, including its spiritual realm.

¹ Horloogiyn Choybalsan (1895-1952)—one of the organisers of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party; Prime Minister of the MPR, 1939-52.—*Ed.*

² *The 5th Plenum of the CC MPRP*, Ulan-Bator, 1988, p. 61 (in Russian).

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GRASSROOTS EXPERIENCE

IN THE UNDERGROUND

One in four of the fraternal parties in the non-socialist part of the world has to act nowadays, on the threshold of the 21st century, in clandestine or semi-legal conditions. Hostile forces have tried to portray the communist organisations as hermetic, almost terrorist sects without anything like democratic procedures. But the fact is that the parties which have to carry on the fight in the underground are practising Lenin's ideological and organisational principles and seeking ways to prepare the masses for the decisive battle against reactionary and dictatorial regimes.

The survey below was prepared by the *WIR* Commission on the International Communist Move-

ment and Exchanges of Party Experience on the basis of reports received from the fraternal parties of Guatemala, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Chile and South Africa.

"Could you tell me if there is a second-hand bookshop anywhere near here?"

"What sort of book are you looking for?"

"A comparative history of the peoples."

The password and reply are followed by a smile and a handshake.

Many meetings between Communists working underground begin in similar fashion. They are always thinking about security, scrupulously observing the rules of secrecy, for the police and other oppressive agencies of reactionary regimes have many skilled agents in their pay. However, it is easier to evade a human sleuth than an electronic one. A favourite method of keeping "suspects" under surveillance is to bug their telephones. By means of a remote-control device a police agent can dial a number, switch on the telephone bug and record all the conversations in a flat.

There are a great many other eavesdropping devices. One of these involves a piece of a laser equipment which uses vibrations on windowglass to decode conversations in a room. Police agencies also use computers which can

furnish details of a person's behavior, views, and personal life at the touch of a button.

Naturally, all this makes it much harder for Communists to maintain secrecy, but these traps can be avoided. Reports received by WMR stress that *Communists working undercover are not inclined to exaggerate the enemy's potential*. They refuse to let the threat of arrest weigh them down. They can even use modern technology to turn the tables on their opponents: special devices are used to "disinfect" buildings, cars, and telephones infested with electronic bugs; there is equipment that can disrupt laser pulses; and Communists now use computers to store party information.

New security techniques are combined with classical conspiratorial methods and the revolutionaries are imaginative and resourceful in inventing cover stories for meetings and in shaking off police surveillance.

Experience shows that clandestine organisations can function without serious failures, and that the arrests of activists are often the result of their own mistakes.

There are no universal rules for undercover work, and *it is impossible to use the experience gained by other comrades mechanically. What worked yesterday may not work today; and what was effective in one place may not apply elsewhere.*

MAIN SOURCE OF STRENGTH

For Communists working underground, the masses are what the Earth was for Antaeus: they are the party's mainstay and source of strength. Well-organised work among the population both invigorates and protects the party. There is the old popular saying that there is no better place to hide a tree than a forest.

Party organisations in constant contact with the masses are less at risk of isolating themselves from the daily concerns of the working people. This is why the fraternal parties resist the temptation to seclusion and sectarianism so strong in clandestine conditions.

The structure of an underground organisation depends on the overall political and social situation in a country, the working people's level of consciousness, the traditions of the popular and revolutionary movement, the maturity and organisation of the party itself, the scale of the repression, and so on. This structure is usually built from the "top down", from the leading core to the grassroots units, and as these develop and spread (organisationally and geographically) intermediate elements emerge. However, relations between the leadership and the cells are not determined by any definitive system of contacts. They may be maintained via comrades working legally, or exclusively through underground activists.

The primary organisation is the soul of the clandestine party, and it is more than just a handful of Communists casually banded together. The cell is the living thread

linking them with the party as a whole. *It functions simultaneously as an autonomous party core and as a part of the single organism.*

It is very hard to abide by the principles of *inner-party democracy in clandestine conditions* because life itself often demands that greater emphasis be laid on centralism at the expense of individual initiative, elections and discussion. Steps are nevertheless taken to ensure free expression of opinions by rank-and-file underground workers on every question of tactics and strategy, by means of regular reports from primary organisations on work done, for instance. In the process, every member of the cell has the right to express his view and make critical remarks on various aspects of party life and activity.

The *South African Communist Party (SACP)*, for example, is attempting to ensure the fullest participation of primary organisations and individual members in decision-making by involving them in discussions of reports and inner-party bulletins, as well as central committee statements and documents.

Preparations for the 15th Congress of the *Communist Party of Chile (PCCh)*, held in secret in May this year, involved thousands of Communists democratically exchanging opinions on proposed drafts, and also the election by secret ballot of the leadership. Nevertheless, *improvements in inner-party democracy remain on the agenda and occupy an important place in illegal publications.* Significant numbers of underground party members work in trade unions, youth associations, women's groups, cultural societies and sports clubs.

Chilean Communists consider civic organisations fundamental to developing the mass struggle for basic demands and the overthrow of the dictatorship. Members of various parties and independents join these organisations because they see their common interests as more important than sectarian attitudes and approaches. This is the area where the PCCh works to set up party groups and direct their activities.

There was a time when the *Portuguese Communist Party¹ (PCP)* set the Communists the task of winning over members of fascist trade unions and joining their governing bodies. Despite the authorities' manipulations in the course of trade union elections in 1945, a unitary leadership, including Communists, was elected in dozens of unions. Party structures were set up in local, regional and national union branches which combined every form of activity to coordinate and target the trade union struggle. Sometimes this struggle swept along on a grand scale, at other times it wavered, but it never ceased altogether.

As a result, by the beginning of 1974, a powerful movement with a core of experienced and capable leaders, Communists and non-Communists alike, had taken shape in Portugal by using the fascist unions as a base. This became one of the key elements in the consolidation and defence of the April Revolution.

The SACP is an organic component of the revolution-

ary alliance for national liberation headed by the African National Congress (ANC). This national liberation struggle involves numerous mass democratic organisations, such as trade unions, women's, youth, and student groups, religious associations and the budding popular administration bodies. The ANC and the SACP are coordinating the concerted action by a broad front of forces in factories, residential areas, schools, universities, farms and villages.

Although the SACP was banned in 1950, its principles and strategic objectives are known to the oppressed and exploited masses. Communists are actively involved in the work of the ANC, the people's army Umkhonto we Sizwe and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. One of the most urgent tasks facing the Communists is to build and strengthen the underground structures of the SACP and the ANC, and the fighting efficiency of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Reports received by *WMR* show that only if both organisations are strengthened, expanded and consolidated can the revolution in South Africa be victorious. It is an interdependence which springs from an alliance between them based on common goals. However, the SACP believes that the present stage of the national-democratic revolution and the transition to socialism require a vanguard party that is a highly disciplined organisation, and that is guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism as applied to South Africa.

Splits within parties do much harm to mass organisations, and in the underground they can have disastrous consequences for the party's existence and its influence as a whole. The *Guatemalan Party of Labour* (PGT), for instance, has some negative experience in this context, having experienced splits in 1978 and 1984. Comrades have been working to overcome the ideological, political and organisational consequences by joining the *Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity* (URNG), which is conducting an armed struggle against the regime while demanding that the government and the army should take part in national talks involving all democratic forces without exception to negotiate a common solution to the deep political, economic and social crisis that has gripped the country.

THE MOST MATURE AND RELIABLE

Replies to *WMR* enquiries indicate that party work in broadening its ranks is unusually involved in clandestine conditions.

In Chile, so-called "open" cells operate from time to time. They invite to their meetings people who have made their mark in political action for the people's interests, and activists from trade unions and other mass organisations.

Cell members visit neighbourhoods to circulate leaflets

and explain the party's programme and objectives, taking note of those who show particular interest. Some time later the most mature are admitted to party groups. Communists work the same way at factories and plants, in work collectives and public bodies, and among every stratum of the population. By opening the party doors to everyone prepared to fight for freedom, independence, democracy and the social good, the PCCh avoids isolating itself from the masses.

The *Sudanese Communist Party*² and the *Communist Party of Saudi Arabia* largely consist of believers or those who were brought up in a religious atmosphere. Many of them went through the primary school of political struggle in progressive denominational movements. The statutes of these parties require of their members not atheism but active struggle for political objectives.

Groups of friends of the party form around grassroots organisations in some countries. In the Sudan, for instance, they are called the "circles of friends of the newspaper *Al Maydan* (Forum)", the organ of the SCP. Most of them are young people who are members of civic organisations. Discussions have been held with them to increase their ideological and political awareness; some of them have subsequently applied for party membership. Consequently, new members are attracted not only by the party's authority, but also by its work in the masses.

Education of young party members is one of the basic tasks of the cells. New cell members often lack confidence, uncertain of their abilities and capacities. Membership of a cell is a serious step for them, tantamount to putting your life in the hands of other people. *The maturity and personal example of the cell leader* are highly important, especially at the initial stage. Joint efforts in working out secrecy measures and systems for dispersal in the event of detection help to create a healthy moral atmosphere in the organisation, and foster in the newcomers the belief that it is a professional organisation acting in earnest.

Rigid discipline and complete secrecy do not, however, imply ruthlessness in relation to people who make mistakes since this kind of harsh treatment detracts from good work by causing comrades to fear admitting mistakes, preferring to report that "everything is in order".

The parties give serious attention to *concrete individual assignments*, however minor, such as taking part in demonstrations, party leafletting campaigns, selecting possible meeting places and so on. The important thing is that new comrades should be equal to such assignments. There is nothing worse than vague and unrealistic orders in work with the cadres. The sense of having done one's duty tends to build confidence and increase the desire to work for the party. Assignments for newcomers are most effective when they accord with their age and professional profile.

Ideological and political seasoning is important in educating the new Communists, and in some parties work

with the new members begins when they are still candidates for party membership. They undertake in-depth studies of Marxism-Leninism, the programmatic documents and objectives of the Communists, and their organisational principles. The candidacy period usually lasts from six to twelve months, depending on the social origins of the candidate. In the SCP, for instance, the statutes provide for a period of six months for workers, and twelve months for intellectuals.

DIVERSITY OF FORMS

The shape and direction of party activity depends on the militancy of the anti-dictatorship forces, the mood of the masses, and the overall political situation in the country. Thus, when reaction was rampant, the Communists were forced to concern themselves above all with maintaining the party structure and accumulating forces. Whenever the regime is in crisis, the revolutionary movement tends to become more active.

In *Chile*, after the 1973 military coup, and also in the *Sudan*, where Abdel Khalig Mahgoub, General Secretary of the SCP CC, and many other members of the leadership were executed, the parties were faced with the need to reorganise and adapt to the new conditions. For instance, before the putsch, the PCCh had roughly 200,000 members, and its youth organisation almost 87,000. It was a party with definite experience in underground activity, but it had to learn the hard way the reality of fascism. In the subsequent period, many of the best party cadres, including 17 CC members, were killed. The party had failed to anticipate such a situation and proved unable to resist this brutality. Nevertheless, it managed to re-establish the destroyed structures and reorganise its ranks.

The Chilean and South African Communists believe that *mass struggle and organised action by all the opposition forces* are basic and crucial to the present situation. Forms of protest action such as street clashes with the police and army involving the erection of barricades, power cuts, rough noise and other actions scheduled for definite days and hours, strikes, occupations of educational institutions, etc., involve hundreds of thousands and sometimes even millions of people.

Developing *cooperation with religious forces on a basis of equality* is regarded as highly important by the fraternal parties in their political work in the localities. Communists and people from other sectors, including believers, often find themselves on the same side, sometimes manning the barricades, when acting to demand democracy for the people and respect for their elementary political and social rights. That is what happened in the November 1979 uprising in *Saudi Arabia*, which spread to 80 towns and villages. The basis for militant cooperation was created when religious leaders saw that Communists were prepared to suffer imprisonment and torture, even death, for the common cause, just as Muslims were.

The form and content of party agitation and propagan-

da depends on the size and development level of the popular movement. Besides the traditional forms, such as word-of-mouth propaganda, leaflets, newspapers, broadsheets, wall slogans and posters, etc., increasing use is also being made of cassettes, video recordings and other modern techniques.

By regularly publishing up-to-date materials and slogans which explain current processes at home and abroad, the *communist parties seek to discuss burning problems with people rather than merely tell them what the party line is*. This kind of effort widely involves cells and rank-and-file members.

Despite the harsh conditions of the underground, reports reveal that the *party press* is highly influential, as can be seen from the experience of the organs of the SACP—*The African Communist*, and *Umsebenzi (Workers)*—which are popular within the mass democratic movement in South Africa and abroad.

Depending on the general situation in the country, wherever possible Communists take advantage of the bourgeois press. In this respect the record of press conferences held by the Chilean comrades for representatives of national press and radio is particularly interesting, as is their work with so-called micro-mass media—trade union, student and youth publications, for example. In the *Sudan*, Communists cooperate with progressively-minded journalists to publish reports on the struggle by the people, especially the working class. Well-known Sudanese Communists are members of the editorial councils of some mass media in the country. Specific methods of cooperation with the press are employed in *Guatemala*: underground workers find ways to pressure those who run newspapers and journals into publishing items needed to orient the masses and present the party's view of various national problems.

HOW TO WIN LEGALITY

The struggle for legality is one of the main aspects of communist activity in the underground. In *Portugal* it always accompanied statements against Salazarism and repression, as well as actions for peace, freedom of speech and assembly, for the release of political prisoners, and for democratic elections. In general terms, this struggle was directly linked to the protection of working people's rights and interests.

The Communist Party strove to forge alliances with other democratic forces, setting up legal and semi-legal unitary structures on whose leadership Communists had an important role. Major political battles for the right of political parties and organisations to exist and to be able to act openly also implied a struggle for legalising the PCP.

In 1983, the Communist Party of *Chile* and other left-wing forces set up the Popular Democratic Movement (MDP). Despite the diversity of its component forces, its outlaw status, persecution and arrests, it acted in the open

and found places to hold its meetings. Moreover, its leaders became known to the people. The movement continued to act until the United Left, an actively broader coalition of left-wing parties, was set up on its basis. *In this way, mass organisations working for their own public activity have also helped to legalise the Communist Party.*

In Chile, the party called on its members to vote "No!" in Pinochet's latest plebiscite, thereby intensifying the confrontation between the dictatorship and democracy. In *Guatemala*, Communists do not vote in elections, which they believe to be a governmental mechanism for deceiving public opinion. They stress that genuine legality can be achieved only through a decisive victory by the forces of democracy and progress.

As the material sent to *WMR* indicates, it may seem that the titanic, highly dangerous and precarious struggle of clandestine fraternal parties lacks any prospects, but the record of the international communist and democratic

movement contains enough positive examples to fuel the optimism of the underground workers.

The fascist dictatorship in Portugal was toppled overnight. The reactionary regime in the Sudan was brought down after 16 years of bitter struggle. The Colonels in Greece claimed that they would continue to rule until the end of the century, but found themselves in prison within seven years of the coup! The slogan adopted for its activity by a recently created South African Communist cell is: "The longest journey starts with the first small step."

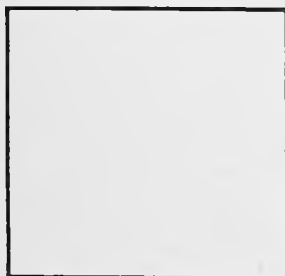
Francisco VILA

¹ Between May 1926 and April 1974, it operated in clandestine conditions.—*Ed.*

² Legalised in April 1985.—*Ed.*

WMR Introduces * * * * *

**VOLODIA TEITELBOIM, GENERAL SECRETARY,
COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHILE**



The 15th Congress of the Communist Party of Chile,

hold underground, has elected Volodia Teitelboim to the post of General Secretary.

Volodia Teitelboim, born at Chillán in 1916, graduated from the department of law of the University of Chile. He joined the PCCh in 1932, worked as a Secretariat member of the Communist Youth of Chile, helped found the PCCh newspaper *El Siglo* and then served as its deputy editor-in-chief.

He was elected to the PCCh Central Committee in 1945 and to its Political Commission in 1950, suffering imprisonment many times during this period.

In 1961 he became a member of the National Congress and was a senator from 1965 to 1973. After the 1973 coup he became an emigré active in the organisation of the Chilean people's antifascist struggle and representing the PCCh at many in-

ternational forums and congresses of sister parties. He was in Chile clandestinely for several months in 1987, taking part in the practical work of the PCCh leadership.

Volodia Teitelboim is a well-known author, and many of his books have been translated into other languages. These include *The Son of Saltpeter*, *A Seed on the Sand*, *Neruda* and others. He has also contributed numerous articles to *WMR*.





BACK TO THE FUTURE?

TOGLIATTI'S YALTA MEMORANDUM AND THE PRESENT DAY

To mark the 25th anniversary of Palmiro Togliatti's Memorandum (August 1964), the WMR Commission on Scientific Information and Documentation sponsored a round table of scholars, among them Giuseppe VACCA, Director of the Antonio Gramsci Institute (Italy); Professor Donald SASSOON of London University (Britain); and Yuli OGANISYAN, Doctor of History and WMR staff member (USSR). The discussion was moderated by the Commission Chairman Jorge BERGSTEIN, member of the CC of the Communist Party of Argentina, and several fraternal party representatives on the journal also contributed to it.

Below is an account of the meeting, which was conceived as a free discussion in which scholars present personal views.

BERGSTEIN. The document known as the Memorandum, written by Palmiro Togliatti at Yalta shortly before his death in 1964, left a deep imprint on the history of the communist movement. It is the incipient processes of renewal in the communist movement which make us turn to the theoretical legacy of the legendary Ercole Ercoli, as Togliatti was called in the Third International. By the early 1960s, the author of the Memorandum had perceived the outlines of our present, and possibly our future, captured the spirit of the time, and formulated several critical ideas and observations of lasting significance.

What worried and puzzled Togliatti as he looked for ways of resolving contradictions in real life and human consciousness confronts us today as well. What are the answers to the questions raised in the Memorandum? Or would it be better to go back to the beginning and analyse Togliatti's ideas with the benefit of contemporary knowledge and experience? Either way, his legacy is relevant both theoretically and politically, and provides ample food for this discussion.

CRITICAL SELF-ANALYSIS

VACCA When the ICP leadership, on Luigi Longo's initiative, decided to publish the text of the Yalta Memorandum, their reasoning was that the document forcefully put across our position on the situation in the international communist movement at the time. The party clearly expected that the publication of the document in the aftermath of Togliatti's sudden death (just before his

scheduled meeting with Nikita Khrushchev, which, judging by the Memorandum, could have been crucial), when emotions were still running high, and especially the depth of some of his views on key ideological and political issues, would draw a broad response from the international communist movement and provoke a critical self-analysis amongst the mass of Communists.

The Memorandum is pervaded with anxiety over the crisis of unity in the communist movement and the sharp contradictions in the process of building socialism which had risen to the surface as a result of the "de-Stalinisation" initiated by the CPSU. Togliatti was concerned about the intense dispute between the Soviet Union and China on the very principles of socialism. He believed that our movement and the socialist countries were a force capable of influencing the world situation as a whole.

But in reality, as Togliatti clearly perceived, quite the opposite was happening: instead of shaping the development of international relations, it was succumbing to their influence. He believed that the main reason for this was subjective drawbacks and that the crisis was predicated on the expansion of the communist movement and on its inadequate understanding of the tasks confronting it. In Togliatti's view, the communist movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s had reached a point where it should not just ponder ways to advance in individual countries and regions but identify and try to resolve problems of worldwide importance. Only as a single whole could the communist movement rise to such a task and build its unity on it, but without translating it into any centralised organisation.

Togliatti formulated a new concept of the revolutionary movement not just for communist parties but also for other, non-Marxist progressive movements. He stressed the need to be in closer touch with reality and to test one's evaluations against it, comparing them with those of both allies and enemies.

The author of the Memorandum gave a new dimension to the question of peaceful coexistence. His concept was substantially different from that of Khrushchev, who considered coexistence to be a specific form of "the class struggle on the international scene". We can say that, historically, Togliatti was the first to point to the need for overcoming the bipolarity of the world and abandoning the policy of confrontation, of the Cold War. According to his concept, peaceful coexistence should rely on the principle of interdependence, presupposing a system of interstate relations based on mutual understanding, trust and competition without war, and on dependable guarantees for the freedom and independence of all peoples.

Togliatti's concept of the communist movement's own international policy was based on the conviction that since the Soviet state had been established and strengthened and had emerged as the leader of the anti-imperialist struggle, which was broadening opportunities for alliances, the communist and working-class movement as a whole and each of its detachments could challenge the enemy for hegemony, which Togliatti invested with an entirely new meaning. He thought that in such a political context interdependence benefited the international revolutionary and working-class forces and served as a dialectical factor of their influence on the international situation.

Togliatti, then, was already looking for answers to the questions which are still on the agenda of world politics: What are the guarantees that the system of interdependence will work? Won't it succumb to the enemy's power logic? And what if the enemy accepts the principle of interdependence merely in order to win and consolidate its own hegemony?

Such guarantees, Togliatti believed, can only be the result of a full understanding of the cardinal changes brought about by the nuclear age. Power politics becomes outdated as soon as the human race ceases to be immortal, and should be abandoned to allow a policy of peaceful coexistence to help overcome global bipolarity with its inevitable ideological, military and political confrontation. That policy should put the interests of the human race above national, imperial, class and all the other interests. The side which is more attuned to the objective needs of world development rather than the stronger one comes to play the leading role in world politics.

With regard to the state of affairs in the communist movement, Togliatti noted the adverse effects of the halt in the process of de-Stalinisation in the USSR and other socialist countries. According to him, one felt there was tardiness, opposition to re-introduction of Leninist standards, and deviations from the policy line plotted by the 20th CPSU Congress. Although the criticism of Stalin had

left its mark, many questions remained unanswered. The genesis of Stalin's personality cult had not been explored, nor had any explanation been offered of how such a thing could ever have happened. Clearly, it was not enough to reduce all the cause-and-effect relationships to Stalin's personal vices. Togliatti was worried that exposures of Stalin's crimes were beginning to sound more and more propagandistic; he must have perceived this as a sign of the reversal of the policy line of the 20th CPSU Congress rather than its further development.

To understand and objectively appreciate the innovative ideas of the Yalta Memorandum, we should ask ourselves why Togliatti considered a democratic reform of the Soviet system to be a priority. Why at that time? It seems that Togliatti aimed not just to draw attention to and, if possible, prevent any departure from the policy line of the 20th CPSU Congress, but more, to stress the need for new forms of democracy, which were germinating both in the East and in the West of Europe.

Togliatti did not limit the new form of democratic and socialist transformation which the Italian Communists were seeking to the concept of a national way to socialism, but broadened it to include a course for Europe that was relevant for East and West alike. He thought it was the right approach to the new tasks confronting the individual detachments of the communist movement. Every party was to make a concrete contribution of universal significance to the common cause.

BERGSTEIN. I have a question for Comrade Vacca which is preceded by quotations from our journal. Luigi Longo, who succeeded Togliatti as General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, wrote in *WMM* No. 11, 1964, that for a long time after the war, in the communist movement "political initiative was at a standstill, and there was stagnation in the elaboration of theory and scientific assessment of the changes in the world as a whole and in the various countries". Almost a quarter century later (*WMM* No. 4, 1988), Meir Vilner, General Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Israel, noted that "for many years it (the international communist movement.—*Ed.*) was late in analysing the changes that occurred in the world and in the conditions of our struggle... There was sluggishness where there should have been political initiative, development of theory and promotion of the Communists's prestige with the masses." The two leaders described an identical state of affairs in almost the same words. So the question is: What do you as a scholar think we should do to ensure that critical conclusions, of which there has never been a dearth, are followed by practical changes in the parties' work so that we should not have to keep raking over our weaknesses and failings in the future?

VACCA. I don't think there is a cure-all. Individual parties working in different circumstances should produce their own concrete answers. But generally speaking, what really inspires optimism is perestroika in

the Soviet Union as a process of renewal and a manifestation of the strategic initiative of reform. It seems to be setting an example and acting as a stimulus for a policy of change and reform in any party or movement.

OGANISYAN. But do you think the communist movement has been developing in the last few decades, or it has been stagnating?

VACCA. There were some processes, of course, but they were crisis-related. Their origins can be traced back to the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict. In the late 1950s stagnation set in, then evolved into a crisis as relations between the USSR and China deteriorated. The crisis grew steadily worse until the mid-1980s. But Communists have developed a new strategy in the past few years. We are still mired in stagnation and crisis, and have not yet produced ultimate answers, but Soviet perestroika, I repeat, inspires optimism.

BERGSTEIN. You have mentioned the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict. Could you comment on Togliatti's article about it in *Rinascita* in February 1964?

VACCA. I personally think that his criticism was somewhat belated since it came 16 years after the split, although the ICP had taken exception to the Cominform's strategy even before that publication. But Togliatti was the first to attempt an analysis of the objective origins of the conflict, and identified as its main reason Stalin's attempt to impose the Soviet model of the social structure, of political power, on other countries. He demonstrated that it was precisely this position of Stalin's which had held back the development of the communist movement and blocked any serious resistance to the Cold War. That "shaping" of socialism, and the interpretation of the people's democracy as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, interrupted the natural processes of differentiation in the communist movement which could have prevented the drift to the right, especially in Europe, and halted the Cold War.

GAMBOA. (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica). The political line of the ICP and that of the CPSU have diverged considerably in the past few decades. What about the situation today? How is Soviet perestroika affecting your party's positions? Togliatti dwells in his Memorandum on the possibility of taking power peacefully at a time when the nature of bourgeois democracy is gradually changing. What is the Italian Communists' stand on this issue today?

VACCA. Perestroika is having a very beneficial effect on the ICP. Its ideas have much in common with our concepts of the relationship between socialism and democracy. Though the Stalinists still in our ranks are aghast at the denunciation of their idol, they are generally friendly towards the CPSU and the Soviet Union and do not deny the importance of perestroika. Basically, the stand formulated by Togliatti at the 10th ICP Congress

that there is a close relationship between socialism and democracy has remained unchanged. We continue to be committed to the concept of a stage-by-stage advance towards socialism under conditions of democracy and peace. In the longer term, we are going to work out a new approach to problems in socialist society by imparting a democratic content to every phase of its development and preserving political pluralism throughout. We also believe that, given the growing interdependence of countries, other left and democratic parties and movements, primarily in Europe, will find such a model acceptable.

CANO. (Guatemalan Party of Labour). What about the significance of Togliatti's Memorandum with regard to subsequent ICP activity? Can that document be considered the forerunner of Eurocommunism?

VACCA. The resolutions of the ICP's 10th Congress and Togliatti's Memorandum ushered in our party's modern history. Those documents were a reflection of our new thinking, including our interpretation of peaceful coexistence and other historic phenomena and processes which continue to determine world development. The platform outlined in the Memorandum, I think, anticipated Eurocommunism and sketched out its principal ideas.

SAMHOUN. (Lebanese Communist Party). You have laid strong emphasis on interdependence, and I think this is the right attitude. But isn't it too one-sided? Doesn't it ignore the developing countries' dependence on the leading capitalist powers? What do you think?

VACCA. By peaceful coexistence, I mean an international policy based on the principle of interdependence. You have rightly noted that, at present, interdependence manifests itself in various forms of dependence. Most countries depend on the superpowers or industrialised states, and also on political alliances. This is a consequence of the strategy of peaceful coexistence that was based on the logic of alliances. Gorbachov suggests that the concept of interdependence be revised and linked to universal human interests. This innovative approach, the core of new thinking, is directed against the division of the world into alliances.

As for alternatives to monopolistic internationalisation, I absolutely support the strategy for restructuring international relations that has been formulated in the frame of new thinking. The relationship between militarism as a world model and the debt burden of the Third World should always be kept in mind. But the key problem is to isolate the world economic and political forces behind militarism and to unite their antagonists on a worldwide scale.

"CONTINUITY" AND "BREAK"

SASSOON. Any analysis of Togliatti's Yalta Memorandum

dum brings into sharp focus the "continuity-break" relationship in the evolution of communist ideas. I will touch on this problem only insofar as Enrico Berlinguer is concerned.

From Togliatti's death up to the election of Berlinguer as General Secretary, the party in the main followed the policy line plotted by the author of the Yalta Memorandum. Even in Berlinguer's early policy, one of the two key ideas usually associated with his name, that of a historical compromise, is distinctly Togliattian in origin. The other one, the "break", belongs to the completion of the early stage of Eurocommunism. It was at that strategic juncture that Berlinguer's and Togliatti's policy lines diverged.

I think it worth analysing the "break" category on the basis of Berlinguer's ideas. Unlike Togliatti, he thought that a communist party's agreement or disagreement with the CPSU was no longer relevant to any judgement of its policy. In his view, an attitude to the USSR was no longer the "touchstone": firstly, every communist party is autonomous and independent in principle and, secondly, some parties, such as the Yugoslav and the Chinese ones, were actually pursuing independent policies and no one, not even the CPSU, questioned their allegiance to socialism.

I don't think that the "break" can be reduced to polemics and differences. Renewal was not a purely tactical phenomenon, even though tactical considerations were behind many stages of its development. It was a strategic move, which involved a drastic reassessment of the previous positions, and that process was launched by Berlinguer's "break". Its major result was the renunciation of the "chief antagonist" doctrine in international relations. Berlinguer took issue with the view of world politics which drew a divide between the imperialist and the socialist states. The analysis underlying his approach differed in principle from that of the Third International or from Togliatti's view that it was necessary "to choose between the two camps". Berlinguer shared Togliatti's idea that the relationship between the struggle for peace and the class struggle was changing in the nuclear age, but went farther than the author of the Memorandum and stated at the 16th ICP Congress that the struggle for peace was broader than the class struggle, and could not be reduced to struggle against imperialism. Two major goals—guaranteed security for the USSR and the US—should be pursued in international relations, which would make the problem of choice between the two camps irrelevant.

The development lines for Eurocommunism, the concept of the Third World and the idea of a "new internationalism" were sketched out within the context of the "break". Eurocommunism was conceived in order to help the ICP build bridges with West European socialist and social democratic parties. At first Berlinguer must have thought that the larger communist parties should coordinate their actions closely at the initial stage of the unification of the European Left. But such coordination was never achieved, both because the French and Spanish Com-

munists proved unable to advance such policies and because nowhere but in Italy did Eurocommunism gain strength and influence. As a result, Berlinguer began to press even harder for Euroleft unity. He argued that the fate of world socialism depended primarily on West European socialism because the development of the socialist movement prior to 1917, the emergence of communist parties and the rise of the liberation movements after the October 1917 revolution were bound to lead to a third, West European phase since East European societies were in the grip of a crisis and social democracy, though having gained a great deal, had failed to achieve socialism.

Another important factor was that, being the most likely battleground of a nuclear conflict, Europe had a special interest in international detente. But what really made it the "centrepiece" of Berlinguer's concept, I think, was that European capitalism, unlike Japanese or American, had been "worked over" from within by the struggles and victories of the working-class movement.

A union of the European Left was thus defined by Berlinguer as the central task, and its accomplishment was no longer considered dependent on the principles of an erstwhile internationalism which reduced the problem of alliances between national parties to relations of solidarity based on a recognition of the leading social and political role of the USSR as a nation state. The concept of new internationalism shifted the emphasis away from the role of the nation state to the process of social renewal itself.

Finally, the "break" with Togliatti was largely a result of Berlinguer's pessimistic outlook on the possibility for change in the USSR and the evolution of Soviet foreign policy; the author of the Memorandum was more optimistic in this respect. We now see that his hopes were not groundless, he was merely ahead of his time.

SAMHOUN. In the 1960s and 1970s, as has been mentioned here, peaceful coexistence was considered a specific form of the class struggle. The definition has now been revised, and correctly so, I think: it is a form of social relations in the nuclear age that puts them above the priorities of the class struggle. All this applies to interstate relations, but what about the situation inside each country? Should our commitment to the principle of peaceful coexistence also extend to relations between classes within a country? If so, how can we counter the aggressive attacks from imperialism and the onslaught of colonialism?

SASSOON. I don't think that the relationship between the class struggle and peaceful coexistence is an "either-or" issue, or that national independence should be counterposed to international security for fear of damaging relations between the superpowers. Of course, the international implications of the class struggle within a country or a region should be taken into account. The Arab-Israeli confrontation and other international conflicts

amply illustrate the danger of such clashes being internationalised. But compromises are unacceptable if the interests of national liberation struggles are sacrificed.

BERGSTEIN. Our discussion has so far been confined to the situation in the communist movement. As a Labourite, what can you say about the situation in the socialist movement?

SASSOON. It, too, is crisis-stricken and we Socialists should practise some self-criticism as well. In the last few years social democracy has lost much ground in Western Europe. The Labour Party in Britain has been out of government for ten years now, and there is little chance of our success in the foreseeable future. The picture is much the same in West Germany. The Italian Left has hardly ever been in office. And where Socialists are the governing parties, in Spain and Greece for example, they are unable to modernise their economies through alternative socialist programmes. Our movement needs restructuring and a new thinking.

OGANISYAN. In many Western countries, including Britain, not only Communists but also Socialists and Labour are failing to keep up with reform-minded Conservatives in formulating social and political initiatives. What do you think is the reason for this?

SASSOON. Briefly, Labour did not evolve a new thinking in time and the Conservatives did. They understood the changes in the economy and in society at the time. And I have to admit that they were able to use them with vision and daring to neutralise the working-class movement. For our part, we have tried to mount a counter-offensive against the Conservative Party. But we continue to be plagued by differences, the most serious of which concern our views on the performance of the Thatcher government.

Labour is a very specific West European Socialist party. It has never embraced Marxism, but has always had a Marxist current cooperating with other progressive forces, including British clerical circles. It is for this reason that Labour has made a contribution to the West European working-class movement and, to some extent, to the liberation struggle of the Third World peoples.

BERGSTEIN. I suggest that we turn to the very concept of the "international communist movement" in the context of the issues we have raised.

SASSOON. Perhaps this is tactless, but I see no grounds today for qualifying the communist movement as international. The movement has neither a centre nor an organisational structure. The circumstances of communist parties vary considerably and they often have serious differences of opinion. On a whole range of issues some of them stand closer to Western socialist parties than to other communist parties. Today, as I see it, the sooner the illusion of monolithic unity is done away with, the faster the Left as a whole will strengthen its posi-

tions. The concept of a monolithic communist unity versus the Socialists, and vice versa, is a stereotype of old thinking.

OGANISYAN. You say that there is no international communist movement as such because there is no organisational structure. The socialist movement has such a structure, the Socialist International. So it can be called international, though you do not consider it such, if I understand you correctly.

SASSOON. I don't think that any socialist party in Western Europe or elsewhere pays much attention to the Socialist International or feels bound by its decisions. It is headquartered in small premises with just a Secretary General and a couple of typists. It is a far cry from the old Communist International, for example.

OGANISYAN. But it is the international coordinating centre for congresses and other major actions and maintains bureaus for Africa, Latin America and other regions. Aren't these international activities?

SAMHOUN. I cannot agree that the communist movement is not international simply because it does not have a centre. This argument seems to me irrelevant. A movement means interaction, cooperation and coordination of various actions, not necessarily within formal organisational structures.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

OGANISYAN. I would like to draw the participants' attention to the fact that some of the conclusions of the Memorandum were not developed further precisely because they failed to win understanding and support from the international communist movement as an *international body*, or to find reflection in the policies of the ruling parties of the socialist countries. Togliatti himself noted in his Memorandum that an understanding of the changed world situation and the appropriate renewal of the Communists' strategy was possible only on the scale of our whole movement. Yet only some parties, such as the ICP, made attempts at renewal. Did the communist movement fail to embrace ideas like those put forward by Togliatti because it had ceased to be international at some point, or did it cease to become international because it had failed to absorb those ideas? I will try to answer this question.

But first, a few words about the specifics of Togliatti's political thinking, the continuity of its evolution and its relationship with international Marxist thinking. In my view, these matters are relevant to some objective processes in the communist movement.

One factor was a certain duality in Togliatti's political consciousness. Like his other writings, his Memorandum is the work of an innovative thinker, a keen analyst and a realist with a sober view of life who always tried to identify new phenomena and trends and to formulate communist

policies on their basis. At the same time his works, including the Memorandum, bear traces of ideological mythology, so to speak, in his attitude to political realities. As some students of Togliatti's legacy have noted,¹ such an attitude could be traced back to the late 1920s, when Stalinism had prevailed in the international communist movement. And it was in relation to Stalinism that it was especially obvious.

As early as the late 1920s, Togliatti was admitting, in connection with the struggle against what was referred to as social fascism, that occasionally he had to back ideas which conflicted with his own convictions. Later, he spoke out more than once in that vein against Stalin's precepts that were imposed on Communists. At the 10th ICP Congress he called Stalinism a straightjacket on the movement. But at the same time he argued that the exposure and criticism of Stalin at the 20th CPSU Congress had not detracted from his stature and importance and called him "a genius of the unity of theory and practice".²

I don't think this duality in Togliatti's political thinking was a personal trait but a characteristic of the political mentality of all the Comintern leaders; it was a reflection of those contradictions which the communist movement has still not resolved. Togliatti's Memorandum was an attempt to overcome these contradictions: between theory-turned-mythology and the practice which was moving farther and farther away from it; between words and deeds; between the real needs of the movement that arose from the changed conditions and dogmatic prescriptions; and between Marxism and Stalin's distortions of it. Togliatti was one of the first Marxists to try to comprehend the crisis in the communist movement. His Memorandum marked the moment of truth, but few parties, or groups within parties, recognised it as such. The "moment" stretched out into decades, and even today remains in large measure just an encouragement to tell the truth, a potential for soul-searching and self-renewal still stifled by the undefined legacy of Stalinism.

In October 1964, a few weeks after the release of the Yalta Memorandum, a Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee ousted Nikita Khrushchev and set the stage for the period which we now call a period of stagnation. It was not a palace revolution but the restoration of Stalinist tradition, which was continued, though in milder forms, and which left an imprint on the entire development of socialism over the last quarter century and on the situation in the communist movement. Dogmatism prevailed in the CPSU's official ideology and affected, in one way or another, most of the communist parties, which continued to check their step against that of the Soviet Communists. True, there was a substantial evolution from Stalin's diktat to what I'd call paternalism. It was both asserted by the CPSU and imposed on the CPSU by other parties, which had for decades operated in the shadow of its "leading" or "vanguard" role. Although the 27th CPSU Congress resolutely renounced the old approach, the effects of that

paternalism are still felt in the international communist movement.

The example of socialism, a factor in the progress of the communist movement in the 1920s-1930s and during the war, became a factor of stagnation, and even the most realistic and correct ideas, like those proposed by Togliatti, could not effectively influence its development at a time when the movement as a *whole* perceived "developed socialism" as a model and shaped its own activities after it.

That was why the innovative ideas of the Yalta Memorandum were not broadly reflected in the international communist movement. Was Eurocommunism their extension? I don't think there is a straightforward answer. Eurocommunism was fostered by the ICP, which followed Togliatti's ideas. I disagree with much of what Comrade Sassoon said about Berlinguer's "break". What he did, I think, was to debunk the ideological myths of Stalinism and forge some of Togliatti's ideas into a concept of the Italian way to socialism. Eurocommunism, strictly speaking, is "communism Italian-style". But while it brought the ICP some success at home, when extended into Western Europe as a regional, if not international concept, it proved a blind alley. Why so?

Togliatti stressed that Communists and the working-class movement had to counter "capitalist programming" on an *international scale* with their own *internationally meaningful* democratic alternative. But Communists failed to produce such an alternative and recapture the initiative. In the capitalist world they are always trailing behind social reformism, and even bourgeois reformism, which cleverly uses the potential of the technological revolution to shore up the positions of state-monopoly capitalism.

Togliatti realised that the communist movement was heading for a crisis, or had already landed in one, and sensed the need for a decisive breakthrough in the very development of the movement. But has such a breakthrough already occurred? I don't think so. What we see everywhere, in socialist, industrialised capitalist and developing countries alike, is the *developmental crisis* of the communist movement, which in various countries and regions has different specifics and manifests itself in different forms, from sluggish stagnation to disintegration. Only recently have some signs of renewal, resurgence and an adaptation to new realities emerged. Significantly, they are generated by the restructuring of socialism, which shows, among other things, that the communist movement is objectively *international*. That quality is now manifest, in particular, in the fact that the principle of unity in diversity, formulated by Togliatti, is being asserted to an ever greater extent in communist ideology and politics.

But Stalinism is far from extinct. It is constantly reproducing itself, sometimes in unexpected forms, and blocking the introduction of what we call new thinking, which appeared forcefully for the first time in Togliatti's Memorandum and in his earlier statements. The ideological mechanism surviving from the time of dogmatism and

sectarianism in the communist movement continues in some mysterious ways to suppress that new thinking. The very concept of "new thinking" has already begun to be used as a new dogma, a must for the communist parties and other left forces, although its real influence on their practical activities is occasional and tenuous.

When will the breakthrough come? Not, I think, before irreversible and drastic changes, initiated by perestroika in the socialist world, have occurred. Perestroika is the decisive factor in the realisation of those innovative ideas and approaches, of that vision and understanding of the world which pervade Togliatti's Memorandum and which alone can lead the communist movement to new frontiers.

BERGSTEIN. Togliatti also discussed in his Memorandum the prospect of the working people taking power in a bourgeois state and of its being transformed peaceably into a socialist state. What do you think of such a possibility?

OGANISYAN. First, Togliatti discussed such a prospect for developed capitalist countries, specifically, for Western Europe, and for that region the possibilities outlined by him seem realistic. The Third World countries are a different matter. That region is very motley, and conditions both favouring a peaceable transition and precluding it can arise there. It is hardly possible to predict developments in the Third World.

Generally speaking, any forecast should take account of the element of chance, but we tend to consider premises once formulated to be absolute truths. For example, the idea of a peaceable transformation of capitalism quite agrees with new thinking. But we seem to want to assert it as an absolute truth and link it to the concept of universal interdependence without any regard for possible unexpected developments. This is a textbook example of what I would call incipient dogmatism within new thinking. Meanwhile, the dialectics of the new world view reflects not only the interdependence but also the controversial character of today's world. Potentially unimaginable and unpredictable catastrophes may occur. It cannot be ruled out that in such situations a communist party or some other left party, even small and with little influence, may take power because other forces will be unable to retain or lay claim to it.

VACCA. What were the specific manifestations of the relapse into Stalinism under the Brezhnev leadership in the USSR? And another question: are there any grounds for the parallels, often drawn by the Left in the West, between Stalin's foreign policy strategy on the eve of World War II and Soviet foreign policy in the 1970s?

OGANISYAN. It should be remembered that during the stagnation period Stalinism was reproducing itself in not too favourable an environment. It assumed milder form, lost some of its "demonic" aspects, and was restricted by the new forms of social life which took shape after the 20th CPSU Congress. But, importantly, its off-

spring, and its political and physical embodiment, the administrative-command system, shaken under Khrushchev, regained its dominance, no longer restricted even by personal dictatorship, and became a virtually uncontrollable and, in a sense, independent force above the party and the state. Decaying under a dull and immoral leadership, it was corrupting society, ultimately plunging it into the crisis from which we are trying hard to pull out today.

As for the other question, Stalinism had an impact on Soviet foreign policy as well. In the 1970s, the same old concept which identified the state interests of the USSR with the interests of the international communist movement was being forced upon communist parties, though not so harshly as in the past and in different forms. Just as before the war communist parties were ordered by Stalin to approve his accords with Hitler, so during the stagnation period they were expected to endorse any military and political action taken by Soviet leadership, although, not all of them met the aspirations of the peace forces.

CANO. I agree that historically, the CPSU's relations with other communist parties were somewhat paternalistic, but there is hardly any point in harping on about that today. To my mind, joint efforts to assert the common principles of the communist movement now merit priority. This problem is indeed relevant: we ought to respect the internationalist norms of relations between parties rather than argue which party follows another party's course. A number of parties are now drifting away from the common stand determined by the strategy and tactics of the struggle for socialism, and the parties which consistently and staunchly defend our common principles remain beacons for others. Do you agree?

OGANISYAN. I think that the communist movement, like any other movement concerned with its present and its future, should always be aware of the effect of its past at any given moment. We cannot shake off traditions, good or bad, extinct or extant. They are with us, shaping our mentality and lifestyle. Paternalism is a tradition which should have died away, but remains. Its practical manifestations include, firstly, a claim to a monopoly of truth, even absolute truth, something that was asserted not only in Stalin's time but also later, though in milder form. Secondly, there exists a mandatory model of the party and of the social structure which should be the aim of social transformations. Paternalism does not necessarily have a definite place of origin—Moscow, Peking or Rome, for instance. Having emerged, the ideology of paternalism becomes a sort of independent agency and often works not only against the intentions of parties and their leaders, but even regardless of the needs and interests of the movement. As for more effective cooperation among parties, it is an urgent task.

BERGSTEIN. Summing up the discussion, I would say that the first experience of free exchanges of opinion

between scholars at our Journal has been a success, although not all the points raised by Togliatti in his testament have been dealt with, nor have all the questions raised been analysed in depth. It was nevertheless a fruitful discussion which highlighted the more urgent problems before the communist movement, identified different approaches to them and probed some of the more sensitive issues. The participation of Professor Sassoon, a member of the Labour Party, was an important element

because contacts between Communists, Socialists and other left forces are immensely important to peace and progress today. Our journal will do its best to promote them.

¹ See, for example, E. Ragionieri, *Palmiro Togliatti*, Rome, 1976.

² *Momenti della storia d'Italia*, Rome, 1963, p. 225.



REFORM AND REVOLUTION IN THE THIRD WORLD

Professor Christian MÄHRDEL
(GDR)

*WMR has published a series of contributions on the newly-free countries' choice of development, including problems of socialist orientation.*¹ This year's issue No. 5 carried an article by Samir AMIN, Director of the Dakar-based UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, entitled "Socialism and the Demands for Development". The article provoked a lively interest among our readers, and we publish below a response from Professor Dr Christian MÄHRDEL of the Karl Marx University (Leipzig). *WMR intends to continue the discussion on this subject.*

A heightened interest in the destinies of the peoples and countries of Asia and Africa as an original and distinctive part of our interdependent and integral world is well justified. The need to guarantee peace and progress, to ensure the survival of human civilisation and to renew its forms, and the tasks stemming from that need, are global and indivisible, and a joint search for ways and means of resolving the vital problems confronting the Afro-Asian peoples brooks no delay.

Samir Amin's article has given me food for thought in this respect, but before entering into discussion with him I would like to share my view of the problem in hand.

Representatives of the most diverse forces have now recognised that the immense and increasingly complex task of saving humanity from a devastating catastrophe, be it nuclear, ecological or socioeconomic, is the priority, and that there is a clear need to set aside all contradictions and differences in order jointly to shape a world com-

munity capable of consistently reanimating the interaction of its component parts through a balance of interests. In so doing, they are revising some of their theoretical postulates and political values.

An analysis of the content and forms of sociopolitical development, the favourable and adverse factors involved in world historical processes, and national historical circumstances will give us a real picture of changing society in the countries of Asia and Africa.

The present epoch is characterised by extremely diverse social forms. Developments are determined in large measure by the impact of the scientific and technological revolution, with its qualitatively new productive forces which can be used either for progressive and productive or for reactionary and destructive purposes. But in terms simply of the principal thrust and duration of the present period, its main social content is the *transition of humanity from capitalism to communism*. That is why it is important to take account of the subjective and objective factors of societal development and consider that process in a more realistic context. Simplistic perceptions of the rates and patterns of worldwide formative changes need to be abandoned. The countries of Asia and Africa are generally in the process of transition from basically precapitalist society to another type of social system. This prevalent trend takes on different specific features from country to country depending on the starting point, domestic and external factors, and the goals and forms of societal development.

Historically, such transitions from one social system to another, i.e., inter-formative processes, have always been characterised by a great diversity of social structures. Mixed economic systems emerge, and new and old features often coexist, working either with or against each other in quite ingenious ways. As a result, former colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies in Asia and Africa are confronted with *what is almost a new historical situation, expressed best as a concept of socioeconomic underdevelopment*. This has assumed global dimensions, and its gruesome consequences are forcing countries of Asia and Africa to fight for their very survival.

The main conclusion is that the colonial-nationalities

question as Marxist-Leninists understand it has not yet been resolved. The winning of political sovereignty has made it possible to reach the objective of seceding from an alien state entity, which Lenin characterised in his day as central to the peoples' right to national self-determination.² But that act only corresponded to the content of national revolution, i.e., the change of the class character of power through transition from the dictatorship of foreign capital to the rule of domestic non-monopolistic class forces of varying social characteristics.

A revolution of national liberation is sometimes trumpeted as social, ascribed a broader context, called "permanent" and identified with the continuation of social processes in a different form. In reality, such a revolution has its own limited historical goals, the accomplishment of which in itself cannot do away entirely with economic and social underdevelopment or (with very rare exceptions) drastically alter the direction of social development towards capitalism once it has been adopted (under colonial rule). In such cases a revolution does little more than *accelerate* the rate of change of the given formation (often powerfully influencing others). As Engels put it, this contributes "towards the ripening of the contradictions of that development".³ Objectively, it was impossible to bring the process to the point of economic liberation, which, as Lenin noted, "is the chief thing" in the national liberation of a country.⁴

Any social movement in Asia and Africa becomes purposeful and acquires a transforming force not only and not so much by virtue of its social content (even if anti-capitalist), as through a mass drive for national liberation, i.e., the solution of the (neo-) colonial and nationalities question.

Neither capitalist development nor socialist orientation have so far been able to do away with underdevelopment as the principal historical situation of those countries. The examples cited by Amin—"newly-industrialised countries", "threshold countries" (though the efficiency of their economic growth is still an open question), changing social structures and other signs of capitalist development—have so far been of little help in overcoming underdevelopment as a global phenomenon. In any case, they are not the decisive factor today nor a "model" for the future. It is equally obvious that socialist-oriented countries have not yet made any substantial progress. Practice has proved the truth of Fidel Castro's 1985 statement that "at present there are more important things than social changes, namely, the independence of our countries", for which reason "development is a command of the times, a vital and fundamental priority".⁵

The diversity of social goals set by nation states results in the dialectical interaction of new national and social factors. They are continuously penetrating each other, and contradictions at various levels are in play, demanding adequate solutions. Various social and political forces take account of all that in their struggles.

It would be wrong to reduce the content and criteria of

social progress for Asia and Africa exclusively to the overcoming of underdevelopment.⁶ That would be tantamount to denying the easily identifiable economic and sociopolitical factors that are typical of different Afro-Asian countries. A national and social potential contributing to progress can also be created through capitalist orientation.

In terms of "domestic" aspects, both the democratic (reformist) development of capitalism and the anti-capitalist alternative (a revolution) can contribute to the progressive potential of a society and thus help overcome underdevelopment. But it is hardly possible to predict in the longer term how far either can advance. "External" factors, the system of which is now changing substantially, will not play the least role here.

The unresolved colonial and nationalities question and the new alternatives for social progress in Asia and Africa are ultimately predicated on the course of global changes. *The world social anti-imperialist revolution, predicted by Marx and Engels, has not broken out. It has taken on the form of a protracted revolutionary process which is extremely diversified in form and content.* For this reason socialism has in a sense never experienced the "dual revolution" of sociopolitical and technological-economic transformations. But it was the interaction of such transformations that made capitalism as a social system historically superior to feudalism.

The emergence and development of a real alternative to capitalism following the 1917 October Revolution, and the formation and growth of the world socialist system after World War II, made politically decisive contributions to national liberation in Asia and Africa. But the world socialist system is not sufficiently developed yet to ensure the social realisation of the progressive anticapitalist potential of the social structures which have risen from predominantly precapitalist forms. Socialism as a new sociopolitical system has so far failed to make a proper economic impact and thus overtake capitalism historically. As a result, world capitalism has been able not just to "survive" and meet new challenges "in the centre", but also effectively to look after its global strategic interests in the former colonial "periphery".

In the absence of social revolutions in the more developed capitalist countries of Europe and North America, the less developed capitalist countries, and those with almost no capitalist development, have taken specific approaches to building socialism. For example, it was necessary to tackle the objective tasks of *democratic transformations and socialist revolution* at one and the same time.

Perhaps this was what caused Amin to talk in his article about "a difficult anticapitalist (but not proletarian—*Ch. M.*) revolution". The danger here seems to be an insufficiently differentiated interpretation of past historical experience. The unevenness of economic and political development gave Lenin grounds to conclude that "socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries",⁷ and then clarify this by adding that the old social system would first

be removed at its weakest link.⁸ This conclusion lays emphasis on the specific role of peripheral regions, by which Lenin meant not only the then colonies, but also the East European countries.⁹ Moreover, he criticised more than once the misleading idea of a "pure" social revolution and pointed to the diversity of class interests and the social and political forces involved.¹⁰

The revolutions cited by Amin as examples (those in Russia, China, Vietnam, Cuba, Yugoslavia and other countries) cannot, I think, be grouped as being of the same type. In spite of the *coincident strategic objectives of these revolutions* (opening the road to socialism), they cannot be equated because *practical objectives, motive forces, correlations, forms and methods of action of individual classes, and other features, not to mention international circumstances, were different.*

That is why Marxist-Leninist typology distinguishes between the 1917 proletarian socialist revolution in Russia and popular democratic revolutions in Eastern, South-Eastern and Central Europe and East and South-East Asia (Asia and Africa have their own kinds of noncapitalist changes of system and national-democratic revolution). "Anticapitalist" revolutions are even more differentiated in the Marxist-Leninist interpretation. Certain revolutionary processes in some Afro-Asian countries since the 1960s (which Amin does not mention) are referred to as national-democratic revolutions so as to distinguish them from earlier ones. But it is impossible to disagree with Amin when he says that the form of proletarian revolution as it is known in history will not be repeated in the future. In the changed historical circumstances social transformations will be achieved through a revolutionary breakthrough (or through reforms). The history of development towards socialism, especially in Asia and Africa, has not been a mere repetition of the any one "model" but proceeded in diverse forms.

In terms of *anticolonial* revolution (which is synonymous with national-liberation revolution), the emergence of socialism snapped the hitherto unbreakable link between national liberation and bourgeois development. But the failure of a world revolution to arrive prevented the replacement of the latter with its opposite, anticapitalist development. *In the postcolonial period the noncapitalist road has not become the general rule.* This is contrary to what Engels predicted when he spoke of "an abbreviated process of development" because he based his arguments on the inevitable success of proletarian revolutions in the more developed capitalist countries.¹¹

The following points need clarification: in these circumstances what is the relationship between transformations of a democratic and a socialist nature and what individual phases in the overall revolutionary process would this (or should this) lead to? How fast is the maturing of a socialist revolution or the transition to building socialism and what specific features appear here? Amin touched upon some of these issues in a constructive way.

He noted the contradictory combination of "etatist, socialist and national-capitalist tendencies" in "national people's revolutions" and shed more light on the role of the social forces, the character of the state and the problem of democracy. There is another important point here: when discussing development strategies for countries in Asia and Africa, we should not just look for revolutions, but pay more attention to other types of social movement like evolution or reform.

The omissions start with the obvious underestimation of reform as an inalienable part of the revolutionary process. This often leads to "running ahead" and to attempts to leap over intermediate, predominantly democratic steps of societal development. The practice of some countries and the various "corrections" in the strategy of building socialism, in China and Vietnam for example, are graphic proof of this.

Revolution and reform are two specific historical paths of progress. Reforms can also reduce and eventually eliminate the enormous threat to the survival of millions of people; they can help combat poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy and meet the basic needs of the mass of people. A real possibility of securing fundamental political, economic and social rights and participating in the historical processes gives them an *historical chance within capitalist development* provided it is a democratic, national-progressive option, and not a neocolonialist-reactionary one. Initially at least, the element of reform will operate on the international scene in parallel with many diverse transforming and revolutionising domestic factors. This means that alternatives for change will remain open for a long time to come.

¹ See Amath Dansokho, "The Destiny of Capitalism and the Prospect Before the Developing World", *WMR*, No. 1, 1987; "Africa: the Socialist Alternative". Vital Balla, "Life Versus Dogma", Benecio Costa, "How We View Liberalisation of the Economy", *WMR*, No. 8, 1987; Georgi Kim, "The Socialist Orientation: Theory and Practice", *WMR*, No. 11, 1987; "Lessons of Socialist Orientation", *WMR*, No. 6, 1988.—Ed.

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 73.

³ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 35, Lp. 269.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 398.

⁵ Fidel Castro, *Interview Excelsior*, March 21, 1985, Berlin, 1985, pp. 37 and 40.

⁶ See Dieter Klein, "The Chances of a Capitalism Without Guns", *WMR*, No. 12, 1988.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 79.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 290.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 59.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 356.

¹¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 404.



AMERICAN FAMILY FARMERS: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

Lem HARRIS
US Economist

Nearly 75 years ago, when he was in Switzerland, Lenin used the Censuses of U.S. Agriculture for 1900 and 1910 to write "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture. Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States of America". Many of the conclusions he drew at the time are consistent with the developing course of American agriculture to the present day. He noted the "ruin of the small farmers and a worsening of conditions on their farms, a process that may go on for years and decades".¹

This process of elimination of small U.S. farms has continued to be a consistent trend. The 1910 Census shows the average farm size was 138 acres and puts the total number of the farms at about 6 million. By 1987, these figures changed to 461 acres and 2,173,000 farms.² Accompanying this rapid and continuing disappearance of farms has been the sky-rocketing of farm debt, especially since 1970. At that time the farm debt stood at \$20 billion; by 1985 it had passed the \$225-billion mark, a crushing load for the remaining farms.³ Since then, the debt has lessened somewhat due to mass farm bankruptcies and some write-offs.

The evolution of American agriculture is a prime example of the contradictions inherent in the capitalist process. On the one hand, the United States possesses the most extensive area of contiguous prime farm land that exists anywhere in the temperate zone. Rich soils, including an extensive black-earth region, plus normally reliable rainfall (the acute drought of 1988 was a notable exception), plus the world's largest park of every type of power farm implement, plus the agronomic scientific assistance of government farm experimental stations located in every state—all this ordinarily results in bumper crops.

But, on the other hand, in spite of all the above advantages, up to one-third of all farms are today technically bankrupt, and a large proportion of the rest show miniscule net income return. The main reason for this anomaly

is that the prices received for farm commodities have for several decades declined more and more below average farm costs of production.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is required by law to publish the correlation between farm commodity prices and the estimated cost of necessary inputs for producing the crop. This correlation is called "parity". In December 1987 it was 51%, meaning farmers were receiving a trifle more than half of their real costs!⁴ This unfavorable parity ratio has been obtaining for a long time. Thus in 1970 the wheat parity was 72%, in 1975 76%, in 1980 65% and in 1985 52%.⁵ Clearly this pricing structure spells bankruptcy and ruin for great numbers of American farmers.

How can one explain this contradiction of high production and widespread bankruptcy? What about the vaunted "self-regulating" system of "free enterprise"? Of course the obvious answer is that the American farm market is neither free nor fair. A recently formed coalition of farmers, industrial workers and consumers in Iowa put the matter succinctly: "The true goal of the current initiative is not a free market, but a market unregulated by a democratic government, open to the domination of large, multinational conglomerates."⁶

In the case of wheat, the other small grains, also soybeans and corn, the restrictions on anything like a free market become painfully evident. Just four grain storage and shipping companies—Cargill, Continental, Dreyfus and Bunge—control the bulk of all the grain marketed. It is in their interest to buy their raw materials (grain, etc.) as cheaply as possible in order to generate maximum profits. To this end these grain corporations have made sure that one compliant national administration after another supports their policy. To absolutely insure that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is supportive of the interests of the grain trade, for many years there has been a "revolving door" policy under which grain corporation officials take turns in occupying such sensitive posts as USDA Director of Marketing and sometimes the Secretary himself.

A glaring example of such favoritism occurred in 1973 when the Soviet Union began buying grain on the world market in a big way. The USDA kept silent about the immense orders being received from the Soviet Union but the information was passed on to the grain merchants by their representatives in place in the USDA. This enabled them to buy enormous tonnages of grain at the lowest prices. Then, when the scale of the Soviet orders became known, they cashed in on rising prices.

The other side of the coin was revealed in 1979. In that year President Carter declared an embargo on all grain shipments to the Soviet Union. At that moment 17 million tons of wheat were under contract for shipment to the Soviet Union. The administration agreed to purchase the

entire tonnage that the grain merchants were preparing to ship. They lost nothing, but grain prices to farmers plummeted.

The grain merchants claim that their cheap grain policy means cheap food, but this is a misnomer. For example, a loaf of whole wheat bread costs the consumer one dollar or more, but the wheat grower receives just \$0.04 when wheat is 50% of parity. Should the farmer get the full 100% of parity, his share of the one-dollar loaf would be \$0.08—scarcely a crushing burden for the consumer.

This cheap grain, not cheap food policy has many devastating results affecting everyone with the exception of the grain corporations. Thus Cargill has become the largest privately held company in the United States, with 1986 sales of \$32 billion and 46,000 employees. Continental Grain is the third largest with 1986 sales of \$14 billion and 12,000 employees.⁷

For farmers, cheap farm commodities held at levels far below their production costs can only result in bankruptcy. Here are the prices received versus the costs of production for five major commodities average for the year 1987.⁸

	Prices Received	Cost of Production
Wheat bu.	\$2.71	\$4.82
Corn bu.	1.72	3.50
Rice cwt.	6.49	13.58
Cotton lb.	.64	.91
Soybeans bu.	5.57	8.54

No wonder the number of farms which have failed and gone out of business has reached 235,408 in two years.⁹

Inevitably, industries supplying farm equipment are suffering.

Also suffering are the rural communities which depend to a large degree on the buying power of farmers. It is estimated that each farm failure wipes out three to five town or city jobs, and for every six farms that fail, one rural business shuts down.¹⁰

While promoting low price commodities, the Government attempts to mollify farm resentment by offering totally inadequate subsidies. The 1985 Farm Act provides crop loans equal to the current market price. At best this slows down farm bankruptcies, but the costs to the government are enormous—in 1985 \$17.7 billion, in 1987 \$22.4 billion. As a result, agribusiness gets its cheap farm commodities but farmers continue to disappear.

Foreign producers of these same commodities view the U.S. Government subsidies to our producers while maintaining low export prices as plain dumping on the world market. The absurdity of this policy is revealed when it is realized that the Government spends \$12 billion to subsidize corn exports which earn less than \$4 billion. In the case of wheat we spend \$4 billion for \$3 billion ex-

ports.¹¹ This policy has tended to increase the volume of exports, but the U.S. is ending up with less money in revenues.

Many Third World countries also suffer from the U.S. policy of dumping cheap grain on the world markets. Commercial food imports to these countries undercut the prices that Third World farmers receive, and this aggravates the grinding poverty to be found there. The bottom line turns out to be that the price set in the United States for export farm commodities is the world price. In a 1985 interview, President Alfonsín of Argentina flatly stated that his country will meet and exceed any U.S. price decreases in order to maintain Argentina's world market share. Since 1980 Argentina has expanded its export volume by 60%, yet its export earnings have dropped by 42%.¹²

The usual rationale is that cheap exports are necessary to offset to some degree the present unfavorable American balance of trade. But this argument has little merit. The Department of Agricultural Economics of the University of Missouri has conducted a study of the effect of different price levels on the volume of American exports of farm commodities. This study found that there would only be a slight drop in American exports if prices were raised to the farmers' break even level, but because of the increased prices, actual export earnings would be much greater. For example, \$2.00 corn would give the U.S. an export volume of 2.2 billion bushels with earnings of \$4.4 billion. However, \$3.60 corn (roughly the cost of production level), would generate total sales of 1.6 billion bushels, but the new value of those bushels would be \$5.76 billion.¹³

Is this process of elimination of working farmers inevitable in a capitalist society? Can the complete ruin of America's family farmers be averted? It can, and in fact it was stopped during a previous period lasting over a decade.

The stock market crash of 1929 and the consequent depression affecting labor and farmers alike opened the door for emergency legislation sponsored by President Franklin Roosevelt. Originally intended as temporary legislation, the emergency farm measures evolved into what was thought to be a permanent federal program which guaranteed cooperating farmers 90% of parity prices for their commodities. These arrangements were in effect from 1942 to 1952. The law provided that farmers who joined the program would accept controls over their production. Locally elected committees of farmers would make the production assignments. These farmer producers could apply and receive a loan on their expected crop amounting to 90% of parity.

Multiple benefits resulted from this legislation. Farmers knew when they planted the minimum price they could expect from their crop, a price which meant a profit for efficient operation. The moguls of the grain trade could not purchase grain for less than 90% of parity since no farmer would sell it for less than his guarantee. The government was not involved in expensive subsidies since the loans

were repaid, the size of the crop controlled, and in fact in some years the government even made a profit based on the interest charges. Finally, consumers were not hurt because the fact that farmers were receiving parity was but a small factor in the pricing of food.

Starting with the administration of President Truman and continuing to the present day, all administrations have been hostile to this parity legislation. Bit by bit its guts were eaten away. The grain trade attacked the price controls as "socialistic" and, in 1988, general parity levels dropped from 90% to 51%. Falling prices were forcing farmers to step up their production to the fullest. This meant heavy borrowing for additional big-scale equipment. Banks loaned on the basis of land values which, in prime land in Iowa, reached a peak of about \$3000 an acre. Now the bubble has burst, and they have dropped to about \$1200. Many banks, themselves facing collapse, are calling their loans and authorizing distress sales in which farmers see everything they ever owned sold off.

But the active membership farm organizations—the National Farmers Union, the National Farm Organization, and the American Agricultural Movement—convinced that the present economic hardships are not due to any fault of their own, have united into a coalition demanding the replacement of the present farm subsidies by legislated parity price guarantees with supply controls, which worked so well in the past.

Outstanding in its efforts to press Congress to pass the parity price bill now known as the Family Farm Act, has been the American Agricultural Movement (AAM). During the winter for three years running, the AAM organized what they called "tractorcades" or "paritycades".

When President Reagan was first elected but had not yet taken office, the president of the AAM, a Texas farmer, interviewed him and told him that he, Mr Reagan "is our last hope". Reagan replied: "I won't let you down." But farmers know they have indeed been let down.

The severe drought of 1988 which affected major agricultural regions of the United States has intensified the already existing problems. The Department of Agriculture announced an expected shortfall. The food industries were quick to announce increases in retail food prices.

Here are some typical examples of how consumers are charged more while farmers receive less. From January 1981 to June 1988, the price paid by consumers for a pound of white bread increased from \$0.99 to \$1.16, while the amount received by farmers for the grain that went into its production fell from \$0.05 to \$0.03.

This dreary story is that corporate prices rise as farm prices plummet. In fact, between 1981 and 1988, corporate profits of food manufacturers rose 14.4% and those of food retailers, 16.6%. Meanwhile, crop prices to farmers have fallen 7.5%.

The government's response to the drought crisis was the furnishing of emergency loans to farmers with substantial crop losses at reduced interest rates. The loans were

helpful, but they extended the already crushing burden of debt.

The process of bankruptcy of American farms has gone too far. One must anticipate the continuing process of family farmers losing their homes and their land being absorbed by ever larger production units. But many thousands of farmers are determined to protect their homes and livelihood. They demand fair price and debt relief legislation. A great deal must be done to make their protests felt because they are scattered across the country. Only by waging their struggle jointly with industrial workers can farmers get a sense of their power. The day must come when a coalition of all who are oppressed can successfully challenge finance capital.

The 24th convention of the CPUSA, held in 1987, adopted a special farm program. Specifically, the Communists call for the passage of legislation to provide for 70% parity. This is still below the 100% parity farmers need, but well above the present level.

The CPUSA advocates a federally guaranteed price for farm products up to the amount needed to maintain small and medium farms, as well as farm land prices to be maintained, by law if necessary, at a level reflecting the value of the crops produced. This is to prevent the best farm lands from being taken over for resorts, condominiums or other non-farm uses. The Communists demand a moratorium on farm foreclosures and evictions, and low-interest loans for farm housing and development. It is important to provide extra assistance in whatever forms for young people entering farming. Similar assistance should be given to national minorities.

The CPUSA proposals also envisage other steps, such as social security for working farm women, federal reforestation programs to prevent erosion of farm topsoil, a ban on all chemicals and herbicides unless they have been thoroughly tested and proven safe to use, federal funding for research, etc.

Protection of farmers' interests and unity with farmers are an important task of the U.S. working-class movement, the CPUSA convention stressed.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 70.

² 1987 U.S. Govt. *Agricultural Statistics*, p. 608, Table 1056.

³ *Disappearance of the Family Farm in the U.S.*, Mark Ritchie, World Food Assembly, Rome, Italy, Nov. 12, 1984, issued by Dept. of Agriculture, State of Minnesota.

⁴ *Farm Facts*, Jan. 1988, Office of Farm Assistance Programs, Texas Dept. of Agriculture, Austin, TX.

⁵ U.S. Statistical Abstract 1987, p. 619, Table 1060.

⁶ Iowa Farm Unity Coalition, *Statement on the Importance of Farm Programs*, Summer 1987.

⁷ Labor Research Ass., NY.

⁸ *Farm Facts*, 1/88, Office of Farm Assistance Program, Texas Dept. of Agriculture, Austin, TX.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Crisis by Design, A Brief Review of U.S. Farm Policy*, Mark Ritchie & Kevin Ristau, League of Rural Voters Education Project, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1987, p. 8.

¹¹ *Value vs Volume, The U.S. Farm Export Debate*. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, MN.

¹² Interview with President Alfonsin, Jack Anderson and Dale van Atta. "Argentine Tightrope", *Washington Post*, April 7, 1985, p. F7.

¹³ Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI), *Agricultural Policy Alternatives, Modified Current Policy or Mandatory Supply Reductions: Expected Economic Consequences* (Columbia, Missouri, Center for National Food and Agricultural Policy, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Univ. of Missouri, 1985).



OLD ROLES IN A NEW SCENARIO

Mike MORRISSEY

member, National Executive, Communist Party of Ireland

In 1992 the Single European Act¹ will come into force within the EC. In the Irish Republic, the government was forced to hold a referendum before ratification. However, there the essential terms of the referendum debate focused on the question of neutrality rather than its economic dimensions. While the former was certainly important, its dominance in the debate nevertheless tended to under-represent the equally serious and potentially *negative economic effects* on the Republic. Since it is embedded in the UK, Northern Ireland can have no pretensions to neutrality, but its economic future remains an issue of intense debate.

The SEA has been the subject of an intensive advertising campaign designed to promote the idea that the nation's industry has only to enter Europe to overcome all economic problems.

THE CENTRE AND THE PERIPHERY

The SEA has its origins in a concern of the European Parliament to investigate the slowdown in the European economies in the 1970s and their decline relative to the United States and Japan. The main indicators of economic performance clearly pointed to that trend. In 1973, standardised unemployment rates in the EEC, USA and Japan were 3%, 4.8% and 1.3%, respectively. In 1981, the rates were 8%, 7.5% and 2.2%. The EEC had then a higher rate than the USA and over three times the rate in Japan. In the same period the numbers employed in industry increased by 2 million in the USA and 100,000 in

Japan, but declined by 4.1 million in Europe. By 1981 the manufacturing net profit rate in Europe was 5.2% compared to 10.3% in the USA and 13.3% in Japan.

Since the EEC had been primarily created to establish an economic conglomerate capable of rivalling the economic power of the USA and more latterly Japan, these were worrying trends. Despite the relative success of the West German economy, the EEC was in danger of being squeezed between the high technology products of its big competitors and the low cost products of the Newly Industrialising Countries. Moreover, the figures for investment rates in the EEC during the 1970s suggested that growth and productivity might be even lower in the 1980s.

The economists commissioned by the European Parliament concluded that the principal cause of the slowdown was the failure to develop and complete the economic integration of Europe. Divergent responses to the economic crises of the 1970s and early 1980s had reduced the level of economic cooperation and weakened common policies. They further argued that the failure to significantly reduce wage levels and social welfare provision in response to the oil increases in 1973² had been a contributory factor. Also, the lack of cooperation in the development of new technologies at the European level had possibly given the Japanese a decisive lead.

At the EEC level, the proposed solution lay in the further development of both "negative" and "positive" integration. The former consists of removing obstacles to the free movement of capital, labour and trade, not only in terms of tariffs but also in the case of different technical specifications, etc., while the latter is about the growth of common policies on currency, taxation and technological investment.

In essence, the call was for the completion of an internal market in Europe with common standards, currency and taxation and complete mobility of capital and labour—in fact a single European economy with the member states comprising no more than economic regions. In theory, this situation would ensure that the production of particular commodities would take place where comparative advantage was greatest, while the gains, in economies of scale, of producing for a market with over 250 million consumers would induce rapid technological and technical improvements. The whole EC population would benefit

We continue the exchange of views on the single West European market. See contributions by Bernard Marx (France) in *WMR* No. 1, 1989 and by Gerry Pocock (Great Britain), Jan Debrouwere (Belgium) and Serji Mari (Spain) in *WMR*, No. 3, 1989.

from improvements in design and reductions in price. Europe would have the same advantages as the huge internal US market.

At the same time, such forms of economic integration do create *their own problems*. Recent evidence indicates that very large internal markets are still characterised by certain regions with persistently low rates of economic activity and high rates of poverty. This has been theorised in terms of the relationship between the centre and the periphery, where the rapid development of the former exacerbates the decline of the latter. The problem with such theories is the assumption that geography determines the rate and level of capital accumulation—the centre and the periphery are defined in terms of space. The reality of capital movements is more complex. For example, in the USA industrialisation was once dominated by the North Eastern states while the South and West were regarded as the periphery. Today capital is accumulating fastest in the South and West while the North East has declined. Similarly, urban/rural differences used to be understood in terms of the industrialisation of the cities. Yet, more recently the trends in manufacturing capital investment have been distinctly anti-urban.

The term "uneven development" is a better description of inter- and intra-regional differences. However, whatever the debate about terminology, the fact remains that in large internal markets the rapid development of some areas contributes to the underdevelopment of others. Since Northern Ireland is a key example of an underdeveloped region within the EC, the Community's further integration could reinforce the trends associated with the region's decline.

WILL THE "STRUCTURAL" FUNDS HELP?

Although such possibilities for the disadvantaged regions of the EC were well-known, the member states nevertheless proceeded to negotiate the Single European Act. This contains a commitment to the *unification of the internal market* by 1992. It also changes the EC constitution to the degree that certain decisions can be taken by a qualified majority of the Council of Ministers (thus removing the right of veto of individual member states) and increases the powers of the European Parliament. Other provisions relate to cooperation in the development of technology and environmental protection. Finally, it contains a specific commitment to reduce regional disparities. The most discussed means of doing so is to double the "structural" funds—the regional and social funds from which the poorer regions disproportionately benefit. However, it is doubtful whether such provisions will compensate Northern Ireland for other probable economic costs.

There are really two peripheries within the EC. The first is the Northern Periphery comprising regions in the already industrialised countries which have suffered massive decline—Northern Germany, France, Belgium, and

the deindustrialising regions of the UK. Northern Ireland is considered the most extreme of these with massive rates of unemployment and poverty. The Irish Republic is also usually included in the set, though, as a "late developing country" with a large proportion of the workforce still in agriculture, it has many features in common with the Southern Periphery. This is made up of regions in Greece, Spain and Portugal and southern Italy. The significance of the Southern Periphery is that its inclusion in the EC dramatically affected the overall distribution of poverty and disadvantage.

Until 1981 the Irish Republic was undoubtedly the poorest country in the Community, while Northern Ireland and Calabria were widely regarded as its most disadvantaged regions. Today that picture has changed. If the Irish Republic were treated as a region, given its small population size, it would be the 22nd poorest with a Gross Domestic Product per head of about 70% of the Community average. Northern Ireland is now the 49th poorest region having a GDP of about 90% of the average. Nevertheless, there are still 21 poorer regions, most of them in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

The Irish Republic and Northern Ireland come out as the 11th and 12th worst for unemployment, being respectively 72.7% and 72.4% above the EEC average. Other regions show a more disadvantaged profile.³

Redistribution of resources within the EC will be based on some measure of relative needs. The Irish Republic will have a certain priority as one of the ten most deprived regions and Northern Ireland will be considered because of the political/military crisis, but neither will have a superordinate case: other regions are much worse off. In turn, this will affect how the structural funds will be distributed. The process is already happening. In 1978-1980 the Republic received 6.46% of the total funds allocated for regional development, the UK received 27%. By 1986 this had changed to between 3.82% to 4.61% and 14.5% to 19.3%, respectively. The arrival of Greece, Portugal and Spain has already changed the balance. Imagine the effect of Turkish membership, which is currently being discussed.

Those proposing the advantages of the SEA suggest that a significant redistribution of Community resources will take place. However, given the greater poverty in the Southern Periphery, even in the best possible scenario Northern Ireland might not gain much from the new arrangements. Moreover, some commentators are sceptical about the possibilities for any real redistribution.

Endless squabbles over the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) do not augur well for the *redirection of resources to the regional development and social funds*. In this case the politics are complicated. Margaret Thatcher, one of the strongest proponents of CAP reform, is also opposed to the doubling of the structural funds. The approach of the British Government is crucial, not just in summits and meetings of the Council of Ministers, but also in terms of the allocation policies for the aid it does

receive. Its concept of "additionality" has meant that Northern Ireland fails to receive EC aid on top of existing public expenditure. The claim is that such aid is already allowed for in the public expenditure proposals and so should be recouped by the government. Some estimates suggest that Northern Ireland has lost over 100 million pounds as a result. So, even if the funds are increased and specifically targeted at Northern Ireland, the benefits might well be marginal.

AN ALTERNATIVE POLITICS

It is far too late to prevent the ratification of the Single European Act and it will certainly come into force in 1992, most likely with the effects described here. Business is already gearing up for Europe, and it is imperative that working — class organisations give serious thought to the implications for them.

Attention should perhaps be focussed on a number of areas:

* *First*, it will be important to monitor the SEA's effects so that additional social costs can be calculated. This would form the basis of arguments for specific policies to counter the negative effects.

* *Second*, demands should be made for the development of regional policies associated with economic reconstruction so that future dependence on EC subsidy

will not be necessary. In that respect Alternative Economic Strategies like "INTO THE 1990s" produced by the ICFTU should be firmly placed on the agenda and ways sought to implement as many of the proposals as possible.

* *Third*, an international perspective is required and some effort must be made to develop cooperation with organisations in the Irish Republic and other countries that will suffer because of the SEA. The idea should be to develop common programmes of opposition and common demands. This is particularly pertinent for other peripheral areas which will undoubtedly suffer systematic underdevelopment. The politics of the periphery must be forced on the attention of Brussels.

Only an alternative politics can avert a bleak economic future.

¹ Adopted by the European Communities Council in Luxembourg in February 1986.

² Since the end of the 1970s many of the EEC's national governments took unilateral action to restrain wages and reduce social welfare provisions.

³ To obtain some aggregate measure of poverty the EC calculates what is called the Synthetic Index, amalgamating a number of features including GDP, unemployment and labour force change. On this Index, the Irish Republic emerged as the 6th worst region and Northern Ireland as the 33rd. — *M.M.*

* * *

THE POWER OF SOLIDARITY

The Afro-Asian peoples' solidarity movement has a great potential in the struggle against imperialism and for peace, democracy and social progress. *WMR* has already addressed this theme.¹ Issa MAIDANAT, Secretary of Jordan's Committee of Information and Solidarity and Political Bureau member of the CC of the Jordanian Communist Party, and Fuad MURSI, member of the Egyptian Solidarity Committee, discuss it further. Mahmoud SHOUKEIR, the Palestinian CP's Central Committee member and representative on *WMR*, who attended the 7th AAPSO Congress (Delhi, 1988), comments.

DEVELOPING COOPERATION

Issa Maidanat. National liberation forces have

scored important victories in the 30 years since the birth of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). After the disintegration of the colonial system most of the formerly oppressed peoples gained political independence. Yet in Namibia, Southern Africa, Palestine, and the Western Sahara the fight still goes on for national liberation and the right to self-determination. These fighting peoples need solidarity and support from the world public and from such representative organisations as AAPSO.

Political freedom did not automatically lead to economic independence. As a rule, the African and Asian countries remain in world capitalism's orbit, suffering all the negative consequences of neocolonial exploitation by monopoly capital and the multinationals. Crippling demands from Western financial centres, IMF and IBRD, inhibit their growth.

Third World export earnings have diminished and foreign indebtedness has skyrocketed as prices of raw materials have sharply declined. At the end of 1987 the external debt amounted to over \$1.2 trillion. The gap between developed capitalist and developing states is widening, the 2 billion population of the latter now suffering hunger, poverty and disease.

All this makes economic independence the premier task for the newly-free Afro-Asian countries. And the

solidarity movement can play an important role in mobilising world opinion for vigorous actions in this direction.

Fuad Mursi. I think AAPSO's contribution to solving humankind's problems would be weightier if its participants had more actively demonstrated the new thinking in raising international and Third World issues at the 7th Congress. We are dealing here with two key aspects of present-day reality—interdependence and dependence. In our opinion, they should be considered together, without exaggerating one over the other. It is very important for the developing countries to look for *new forms of anti-imperialist and anti-neocolonialist struggle that are based on the primacy of the issues of human survival*. At present this is obviously lacking. I believe that a special symposium or conference with a clearly defined agenda should be devoted to this theme.

I.M. We ought to remember that international imperialism has been using every means possible to prevent the development process. Having grudgingly accepted political independence for the former colonies and semi-colonies, it certainly does not intend to give up its reserve markets as an instrument of control over the vast, now-collapsed colonial empire. To maintain this control, it is resorting to the most unseemly methods, such as blackmail, threats, terror, open or veiled interference in domestic affairs and even outright acts of aggression.

Under these conditions, AAPSO could, in our view, mobilise public forces and *take effective steps to defeat the imperialist strategy of neocolonialism and accelerate growth*.

An important and unprecedented shift is now occurring in the world. We are witnessing an intense search for ways to international cooperation; talks are being held between conflicting sides, and possible interim solutions groped for to reduce confrontation and localise seats of tension. The Soviet-American INF Treaty is a first serious breakthrough towards nuclear disarmament, signalling a new quality in relations between the two world systems and auguring well for this effort and world peace.

Obviously this process will influence world development and affect the solidarity movement too. New disarmament steps are in order, and we shall have to help to make this tendency irreversible. AAPSO must explain to the Afro-Asian public that this directly benefits growth.

F.M. Soviet foreign policy is making a tremendous impact on the situation in the Arab region, especially on peace prospects there. Only recently certain quarters, including some progressive regimes, tried to make it look as if responsibility for defusing the Middle East situation rested solely with the USSR. But one people or one nation cannot solve another's problems. International solidarity is a major source of strength for the Arabs' struggle against Imperialism and Zionism. Here, of course, Soviet support is very important.

I.M. I agree that the present International climate favours Middle East peace prospects. Racist actions by rightwing extremists, during the election campaign in Israel for instance, cannot reverse the dominant trend towards a political settlement. Against the Zionists' sallies is the heroic determination of the risen Palestinian masses in the occupied territories, with whom the Arab peoples and the world community are solidary.

The results of the 19th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) were a turning-point for the region. They have gained the support of most states and the international public. As to the feverish efforts by the rulers of Israel and their imperialist backers aimed at continuing the policy of aggression, expansionism, hegemonism and violations of the legitimate national rights of peoples, these attempts will inevitably fail.

F.M. Yes, that PNC session's resolutions are helpful in winning international support for the Palestinians and in depriving the aggressive forces of a psychological weapon. AAPSO recognises that the Palestinian issue has now moved to the top of the Arab and world liberation agenda. Nor can one overlook other positive developments: for example, the shoots of realistic thinking that have begun to appear among the Arab ruling circles, the termination of the Iran-Iraq war, and the tendency towards a mutually acceptable settlement of disputes.

I.M. I shall add to this list the specific moves being made to defuse other regional conflicts, both via UN-mediated talks and efforts on the part of the sides concerned. We expect a more active role for AAPSO in these efforts. The emergent policy of national reconciliation deserves support and assistance from all democratic and peace-loving forces.

Taking the present-day realities into account, it appears that AAPSO's activity in the next stage will concentrate on the following:

- * an end to neocolonialism; economic and social advance for the young states; economic security, restructuring the world economy on a fair and democratic basis, and establishing a new international economic order;
- * affirming the "disarmament for growth" principle; stopping the arms race, and using the financial, human and scientific resources thus released to end backwardness and poverty and to ensure progress for the newly-independent countries;
- * affirming democracy and human rights in the Afro-Asian region and throughout the world;
- * completely eliminating all forms of racism and apartheid, and increasing militant solidarity with the victims of imperialist aggression (the peoples of Palestine, South Africa, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and other countries);
- * collaborating with all democratic and peace-loving for-

ces, not excluding those who, while holding special positions, show a willingness to cooperate with AAPSO.

I think it would be a good idea to ask researchers and experts in different countries to assist AAPSO in elaborating the fundamental problems of concern to the peoples of Africa and Asia. This would involve special seminars, symposiums and roundtable discussions (rather than large forums with an extensive agenda) and the convocation of regional meetings of national committees for exchanges of experience and views. The establishment of direct contacts between the AAPSO Permanent Secretariat and these committees would markedly strengthen the organic relationship between all contingents of the solidarity movement.

IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Mahmoud SHOUKEIR

member, CC, Palestinian Communist Party

In the new international situation, characterised by an intensified drive for peace and the political settlement of regional conflicts, mass organisations like AAPSO acquire a particular significance. The large-scale development of people's diplomacy attests not only to the importance of its practical role in the new conditions, but also to the need for a streamlining of the methods of political activity and the mobilisation of the masses.

An analysis of the general line of the solidarity movement clearly shows that world developments, such as the steps toward disarmament, the termination of the nuclear arms race and the settlement of regional conflicts, are clearly reflected in AAPSO's work. Thus, the 7th Congress reaffirmed its support for the national liberation movements in Palestine, South Africa, Namibia, for the struggle against racism and apartheid, and for solidarity with the victims of imperialist aggression. It reaffirmed AAPSO's stand on the issues of development and the foreign indebtedness of the Afro-Asian countries economically still dependent on imperialism.

Although the forum was addressed by such eminent politicians as Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and SWAPO President Sam Nujoma, the general slant of its work was nevertheless determined by speeches that had not been prepared in advance and often lacked any serious scientific analysis. The congress participants decided to tap the potential by recommending in their final

statement that expert help be sought in the elaboration of such vital questions as the financial crisis, world prices, debt servicing, the bank rate, protectionism, socioeconomic reforms, and the STR's effects.

Self-criticism is now a characteristic of AAPSO leaders; they are particularly dissatisfied with the inadequate liaison between the Permanent Secretariat and national committees. Although the solidarity committees in many West European and Latin American states are continuously being enlarged, some still represent only official government circles. This often prevents other detachments of the patriotic and progressive forces, as well as various population strata, from taking part in the work of such committees. Democratisation is the way to enhance the effectiveness of national solidarity committees.

The unsatisfactory handling of information in the AAPSO system has also come under fire. Changes to the Statute have been approved that ensure improvements in its work, including cooperation with the United Nations, and also with international, regional and national mass and non-governmental organisations.

The solidarity movement cannot stand aloof from the struggle for democracy and human rights while hundreds of millions of people in Asia and Africa still face repression and the usurpation of power by the ruling classes and reactionary forces. But this question was barely touched upon in the final statement of the 7th Congress, general wishes being expressed without regard for the hard facts about the positions in individual countries.

Understandably, the way the organisation works, its composition, and the correlation of forces in and around it may interfere somewhat with its approach to such a thorny issue. However, it is AAPSO's duty to search for ways and means that would help to bring a solution nearer, to alleviate people's suffering in Africa and Asia and to gain democratic freedoms. The movement should not ignore the real state of affairs, or avoid struggle, by resorting to general statements which do not refer specifically to any side or regime.

Nevertheless, Afro-Asian solidarity has entered a new period. A step has been taken in the right direction, and others will undoubtedly follow to encourage the whole international movement for peace, democracy and social progress.

¹ See Mourad Ghaleb, "Solidarity Movement: Growing Responsibility", *WMR*, No. 4, 1989. — Ed.

PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL POLICY

Seif Ali MUKBIL

Yemen Socialist Party, representative on WMR

The immense changes in the cultural life of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the past quarter century are not a godsend but a result of the social transformations carried out under the leadership of the Yemen Socialist Party.

The dominant ideology in the country before the revolution¹ was that of the colonialists, the Ottoman Empire and the British, who held sway at different times. The imamate was quite happy with this because it had made an exploitation-oriented class alliance with the conquerors. The founder of our party, Abdel Fattah Ismail, called the culture of the period a means of intellectual and psychological oppression and a brake on the development of the Yemenis' national awareness. Anything bright and vivid in the people's heritage was suppressed. Instead, the regime incited and exploited communal and religious strife. The imams isolated the country from the universal achievements of human civilisation and demanded blind obedience from the people in a bid to perpetuate the system of oppression. Whole generations were denied the right to education or access to art. But national culture was making its way even in that depressing social, economic and cultural atmosphere. It absorbed the people's bitter social experience and reflected the resolve of the masses to do away with indignity. The revolutions in the north and south of the country epitomised rejection of the hated past and a drive for a progressive culture inspired by the achievements of our ancient civilisation.

Two states were established on Yemen soil, and only the people themselves can do away with this anomaly. The YSP bases its policy on the *unity of national culture and on its class character at the stage of the national democratic revolution*, which is being led by the alliance of progressive patriotic forces. The party is making every effort to meet the people's material, cultural and intellectual needs. The task today is to free the people from economic and political dependence, to satisfy the pressing needs of the population and to guarantee every democratic freedom to the new social forces.

The party's cultural policy takes account of Yemen's complex and specific realities. Its *major goal* is to do away with ignorance and backwardness, starting with illiteracy. This, along with the apolitical attitudes of many Yemenis, has become the object of our resolute efforts.

More than 157,000 have learned to read and write in the course of a countrywide campaign for literacy. The number of schools has more than trebled, from 309 to 989.

Today there are almost 343,000 school students (20 years ago there were only 64,000), and tuition is free. The new structure of public education is eight-year schooling and secondary school. Teaching methods and textbooks have been fundamentally revised and attuned to the needs of the socioeconomic, scientific and cultural development of the country. *The principles of scientific socialism* have for the first time ever become the basis of curricula and textbooks in a backward Islamic state.

The development of national radio broadcasting, the expansion of TV broadcasting to cover most regions of the republic and the publication of various newspapers and magazines have contributed to the large-scale propagation of culture and accelerated the eradication of political ignorance. Patriotic and revolutionary-minded intellectuals are playing a progressive role in this process.

Another aspect of our cultural policy consists in encouraging art as it serves the interests of revolution. Writers and artists have an important political and educational function: they encourage love of country in people and help them better to understand the essence of the revolution as it leads the country to new frontiers.

Conditions are being created for strengthening the *alliance of creative intellectuals and the people*. The intellectuals' task is both to educate the people and to learn from them. Poetry, theatre, film-making and singing are developing, and modern technology, such as video, is being introduced. There are shortcomings, however: the fine arts are virtually non-existent and literary criticism is lagging behind. New forms and methods of work amongst creative intellectuals should be introduced to encourage them to operate more productively and on a larger scale.

The party believes that science is the foundation stone of progress and thus attaches much importance to raising educational standards and training specialists. The university of Aden was established in 1975 and dozens of colleges and specialised schools have been opened. These prepare the many personnel who work on the republic's development programmes. In addition, many Yemenis have received their education in friendly countries, mostly in socialist ones. In the early years of independence we suffered from a shortage of trained specialists, but now we have them in all spheres. Workers trained after the revolution are the backbone of government and public organisations.

New forms of education and training have been evolved, such as short-term political courses, an advanced training system, lecture courses and so on. Once a month a "political day" is held in all work collectives to discuss current problems and to explore domestic and international events.

As the "Critical Analysis of the Experience of the Revolution in Democratic Yemen (1978-1986)" notes, the party is vigorously seeking to effectively democratise cultural life by creating a broad system of libraries, cultural centres, theatres and cinemas and by raising their role in the education of the working people. The values of nation-

al, Arab and progressive world art are within the people's reach thanks to free theatre shows, festivals and exhibitions, subsidies to book publishing,² weeks of literature, cinema, theatre and folk dancing, visits of performing companies from Arab and other countries, and extensive activities at cultural centres and sports clubs.

A new generation of revolutionary intellectuals has risen since independence. They continue to translate into practice the moral ideals of the September 26 and October 14 revolutions in order to advance the interests of the working people. The YSP wants ordinary Yemenis to study and absorb the rich and progressive national cultural heritage and to become knowledgeable fighters and real patriots and internationalists. This is the only way of accomplishing the tasks set by the party.

The Yemeni intelligentsia is heterogeneous. The philosophy of the revolutionary trend, which is growing numerically, is a blend of the ideas from our national cultural heritage and those of scientific socialism. But the socialist doctrine is new to our society. Until recently, nationalist-minded intellectuals played the leading role in the country. Most of those people grew up under feudalism.

Many workers in literature and art are particularly interested in common Arab and world culture. As a result, they risk losing touch with national realities, with their roots, as it were. But can artistic creativity thrive in isolation from the home country and the national base?

That is why a great deal is being done to promote and popularise the people's cultural legacy. Everything of lasting value is being encouraged, while outdated or alien elements are cut off. This helps to enrich cultural life and promote an interest in national art. We are trying to build the foundations of a culture, YSP General Secretary Ali Salim al-Bayd said, which would be linked dialectically with the progressive Arab and socialist traditions. The national cultural heritage, Abdel Fattah Ismail, the founder of our party, observed, has not only ideological and class but also general human content; it cannot "soar", as it were, above classes. Every social group has its own system of values which represents its interests. The YSP is fostering the culture of the progressive patriotic forces which cherishes the spirit of the Yemeni people's heritage and struggle, constitutes a blend of the national and the international, and is open to every achievement of human thinking.

At first the ideas of scientific socialism seemed novel and unorthodox, and therefore alien to the realities and traditions of a Yemeni society dominated over the ages by Muslim culture. Small wonder that some works of literature are ideologically aberrant and hostile to Marxism-Leninism, serving only to confuse the public.

The Abdalla Baadib Institute of Scientific Socialism, established at the YSP CC in 1971, plays an important part in propagating Marxist-Leninist ideas, organising ideological work and training party cadres. Many of the more than 15,000 graduates from the Institute are working in the party

and government, in the economy and the armed forces. Equipped with the theory of scientific socialism, they and the graduates from Aden University, and from universities and colleges in socialist countries, bear the brunt of the struggle against reaction and backwardness and for social transformations.

A number of harmful old traditions and customs, tenacious separatism, parochialism and tribalism stand in the way of party policies in this field. Underdeveloped mass consciousness, especially at a time of prevalent right-wing opportunism, was one of the reasons behind an erroneous political course. It also deformed and held back the development of progressive national culture. The fallacious idea of a "cultural split" among the Yemeni people gained currency at one time, but it was effectively rebuffed both in the North and in the South. *Our national heritage cannot be divided, just as the struggle between the reactionary and the progressive trend in its development cannot be stopped.* "Northern" authors and thinkers, such as Abdel Aziz al-Mahalih and Abdalla al-Baraduni, who address problems of interest to all Yemenis, enjoy great respect in South Yemen, and writers and artists from the PDRY who embody the unity of national culture are appreciated in the North.

The YSP is working hard amongst the people to mobilise them for the achievement of the revolutionary objectives and educate them in scientific socialism and the system of its moral ideals. Emphasis is laid here on fostering patriotism and respect for labour, creativity and initiative. September 10 is annual Science Day, when all those engaged in creative effort for the good of the people are honoured. Working people are being educated in the spirit of collectivism. They are taught to reject self-praise and the excessive glorification or cult-worship of individuals which can grow so easily in a backward society with a young and inexperienced party.

In its cultural policy the YSP follows several basic principles.

Party spirit is a major postulate of the ideological work carried out by the political vanguard. In cultural matters it means a contest between the feudal and bourgeois heritage on the one hand, and the culture of the working class and its allies on the other. This is what the YSP means when it speaks of a progressive class-based Yemeni national culture which relies on Marxism-Leninism and serves the people's interests.

Scientific methods. Anarchy, mindless imitation and eclecticism are inadmissible in the cultural sphere. Considered practice is a source of inspiration for theory.

Creative approach. The opposite of dogmatism and stagnation. Our party advocates public criticism of shortcomings in the press and at worker meetings on "political days". People are thus involved in discussions on many important issues.

In works of literature and art we value clarity, simplicity and truthfulness, which are not the same as deliberate

simplification of the language, lowered artistic standards, or the vulgarisation of art. The task is to try to transform reality instead of bowing to it.

Democratism is the cornerstone of the YSP's cultural policy and a guarantee of the effective influence of the mass of people on the cultural sphere. We are in dire need of constructive literary and art criticism, however unpleasant, that would counter anything reactionary and counter-revolutionary. At the same time the party warns intellectuals against going to extremes either in praise or in denunciation. There must be no areas immune to criticism, which should be constructive and balanced, and to which all spheres of creative activity should be open.

The party is far from having accomplished all its objectives. But we have made substantial progress for such an impoverished country with a complex social structure. Progressive culture has struck deep roots, and it has thrived over the short period since independence.

¹ The revolution against autocracy in North Yemen on September 26, 1962, and the armed uprising against British colonial rule in South Yemen on October 14, 1963.—*Ed.*

² The state subsidises all books published in the country, including research papers, at 50% of retail price.





“THE FIRST PRECONDITION FOR ANY EMANCIPATION”

(Marking the 100th Anniversary of the Second International)

Roland BAUER
Doctor of Philosophy;
member, CC, Socialist Unity Party of Germany

“When freedom is in danger of being strangled and war unleashed, we must stress the need for international peace and our will to preserve it...”. “Peace ... is the first and absolutely essential precondition for any emancipation of labour.”¹ These words, still relevant, were written 100 years ago and are taken from the minutes of the International Labour Congress (Paris, July 14-21, 1889).

The French Socialist Paul Lafargue, opening what was then the largest forum of representatives from socialist and other labour organisations, called its participants the “apostles of new thought”.² The German Social Democrat Wilhelm Liebknecht noted that the congress was an “epoch-making step forward for human culture”, and spoke of the delegates’ “identical aspirations” notwithstanding the difference in countries and languages.³

Although the sessions took place mainly in Salle des fantasies parisiennes (Hall of Fantasies), most of the 407 delegates to the congress, with their Marxist persuasions, anarchist delusions, even their common illusions, were not fantasists or abstract theoreticians, but represented a cross section of the real movement of the proletariat in more than 20 countries. They had not intended to create a new international organisation and did not formally even take such a decision. But imbued with the spirit of

internationalism, they found a form of interaction for national workers’ parties and associations and made world history, starting something that still has a marked influence on the democratic movement.

The *Paris Congress’s* work consisted mainly of reports from individual delegations on the state and problems of the labour movement in their countries. It reached agreement on the ways and means for effective safety at work, and adopted the historic decision to celebrate the First of May as an international day of proletarian solidarity. It also defined attitudes to the winning of suffrage and its use by workers in the struggle for political power.

Yet in 1914 most of the Second International parties’ leaders failed to stand the test, betrayed their ideals and principles and threw the right conclusions and decisions of its congresses overboard. This aroused justified criticism, especially on the part of the revolutionary wing of the labour movement. Nevertheless, I don’t think what happened changes in any way the correctness of many of the International’s decisions or affects their timeless relevance.

Lenin, who after 1914 was one of the most consistent critics of the Second International, at the same time emphasised its historical contribution, which class-conscious workers will never disavow. Now, as in the past, the Communists

acknowledge both the weak and strong points of the Second International. Anyone who takes part in Mayday demonstrations, who abhors militarism and war, celebrates the 8th of March, sings the *Internationale* and believes that the conquest of political power and the socialisation of the means of production are the prerequisites of socialism acts in the spirit of its decisions.

The political stands and theoretical conclusions on war and peace fixed in resolutions of the Second International’s congresses were another indisputable achievement. They were published at the time but are almost inaccessible now. We shall try to fill this gap by publishing a small selection of excerpts.

For objectivity’s sake it has to be said that along with conclusions adopted by the majority of the delegates, particular opinions were also expressed and discussed at all the congresses. A characteristic feature of the Second International was that it did not have as rigid an organisational structure as the First or the Third. Its member parties were separate organisations not bound by any common code of discipline. The congresses were seen as no more than discussion forums, certainly not “courts” or “councils for excommunication”.⁴ Their decisions, according to Lenin, were “formally ... not binding on the individual nations, but their moral significance is such that the non-observance of decisions is, in fact, an exception...”.⁵

Developing the theses adopted in 1868 by the First International, the *Paris Congress* approved a resolution on “The Liquidation of Regular Armies and the Total Armament of the People”. Regular armed forces, it said, are the weapon of reaction and aggression, they are incapable of defending the country from a strong enemy, and in times of peace disrupt civilian life and divert resources from production. The people’s

total armament and the organisation of a militia at the place of residence would not have the negative features intrinsic to regular armies. A people bearing arms could itself keep the peace, ensure democracy and repel any aggressor. This would put an end to aggressive policies and secure peace.

The congress noted that war, as the dismal product of modern economic relations, would disappear only when the capitalist mode of production gave way to the emancipation of labour and the international triumph of socialism.

At the *Brussels Congress* (1891) an attempt was made for the first time to analyse *militarism as the product of the capitalist system*: "A heavy burden on Europe, militarism is an inevitable outgrowth of the open or covert war imposed on society by the regime of man's exploitation by man, with the class struggle as its consequence... The efforts to wipe out militarism and establish peace among nations, however noble their aim, are utopian and impotent unless they affect the economic causes of evil... Considering that the situation in Europe is daily becoming increasingly menacing, and that the ruling circles have initiated chauvinistic campaigns in various countries, this congress calls upon every worker to protest by constant agitation against all the incipient military tendencies or alliances that are conducive to war, and thus to accelerate the triumph of socialism through the growing might of the international working-class organisation.

"The congress declares that it regards this as the sole adequate means for counteracting a catastrophic world war, all the hardships of which the workers alone would have to bear, and considers it necessary to place the responsibility to history and mankind for all that may happen on the governing classes."⁶

The *Zurich Congress* (1893), the only one in which Engels took part, put forward a *demand for disarmament* for the first time: "The representatives of a working-class party are obliged to vote against the war credits, protest against expenditure on the maintenance of regular armies and demand disarmament. Socialist parties must lend support

to all the associations trying to establish universal peace."⁷

Much of the credit for the theoretical elaboration of these questions goes to Engels, who in his last years repeatedly warned of the dangers of wars, uprisings and armed conflicts.⁸ Thus, in 1891 he wrote to Friedrich Adolf Sorge that he regarded war as a "great misfortune", even "if it led us to power ahead of time".⁹ In a series of articles published by the newspaper *Vorwärts* in March 1893 under the title "Can Europe Disarm?," Engels argued that in the political and social conditions of the time European governments were quite able to reach such a solution if they were to display a little bit more benevolence and a greater sense of realism in politics.¹⁰

These pieces by Engels, which have not lost their pertinency, describe the basic elements of an international treaty to safeguard peace, as well as his thoughts on creating a coalition of forces of reason and realism.

The *London Congress* (1896) introduced the ideas of *international arbitration and the abolition of secret diplomacy* into the Socialists' theoretical arsenal. "Contemporary militarism, exhausting the peoples even in conditions of peace, the expenditures of which are mostly shifted on to the shoulders of the proletariat, not only increases the danger of military conflicts between nations, but also by the will of the ruling classes simultaneously becomes an instrument of ever more brutal repression of the working class... Only the working class, by conquering power, can display enough purpose to establish peace throughout the world. Therefore it demands:

"1. A simultaneous disbandment of the regular armies in all states and the armament of the people.

"2. The creation of international courts of arbitration, the rulings of which must have the force of law.

"3. The adoption of a final decision on war or peace by the people themselves in cases when governments disobey the rulings of the courts of arbitration.

"The working class protests against the conclusion of secret state treaties.

"These demands ... can only be carried through when the working class ac-

quires a decisive influence on legislation and, by adopting international socialism, achieves a genuine fraternity of peoples."¹¹

The *Paris Congress* (1900), held amidst the first imperialist conflicts (the Spanish-American war, the English-Boer war, the Boxer Uprising in China), pointed out for the first time the connection between militarism and colonialism. In practical terms it called above all for *anti-militarist work among the youth* and sought, as Rosa Luxemburg stressed, to take "the new phenomena in world politics" into account. The congress resolution stated:

"1. The socialist parties must everywhere take it upon themselves to zealously engage in educating and organising the youth with the object of fighting against militarism.

"2. The socialist deputies in all Parliaments must infallibly vote against all military expenditure, including monies for the navy and for colonial expeditions.

"3. The permanent international socialist commission is thereby instructed in cases when the threat of war arises to organise simultaneously in all countries and in identical fashion an international movement of protest against this threat and against militarism."¹²

The *Stuttgart Congress* (1907) took place after the first Moroccan crisis and the defeat of the 1905 revolution in Russia. Thanks to the initiative of Lenin, Luxemburg and Martov, who introduced substantial additions into the original draft of a final document (proposed by August Bebel), an antiwar resolution which met the demands of the time was adopted by an overwhelming majority of votes. It explained for the first time *what was to be done when the proletariat failed to avert war*.

"...The workers ... and their representatives in Parliament must ... do everything they can to prevent an outbreak of war, using methods which can of course be adapted or reinforced to take account of intensified class struggle and the overall political situation. If war, nevertheless, does break out, they must demand an early end to it and try with all their strength to use the social and economic crisis brought about by it to

awaken the people and accelerate the liquidation of capitalist rule."¹³

Unlike its predecessor in Stuttgart, the *Copenhagen Congress* (1910), meeting at a time of increasing German and British naval activity, discussed the issue of "safeguarding peace throughout the world". Its final document contains more specific proposals, with the issues of courts of arbitration and universal disarmament moving to the fore. In view of aggravated national conflicts, for the first time a case was made for the *recognition and defence of the right to "free self-government of all the peoples* not only in Europe, but *also in Africa and Asia*".¹⁴

"Based on the reiterated duty of the socialist deputies in parliaments unremittingly to fight against armaments, and to refuse to permit their funding, the congress expects that the parliamentarians will:

a) invariably repeat the demand that all the conflicts between states should compulsorily be settled by international courts of arbitration;

b) continue to make new proposals aimed at total disarmament, first and foremost the conclusion of an agreement limiting naval armaments and abolishing the rights of a victor at sea to the spoils;

c) demand an end to secret diplomacy and the publication of all existing and future treaties and deals between governments;

d) act for the right of all peoples to self-determination and their defence from military attack and forcible suppression."¹⁵

The *Extraordinary International Socialist Congress in Basel* (1912) was the last and culminating stage of the Second International's theoretical and practical work on questions of war and peace. Convened during the Balkan war, it was the biggest and most impressive demonstration in defence of peace. This was the first congress to adopt not a short resolution on principles, but a comprehensive Manifesto which contained a whole programme of action.

"Overcoming the conflict between Germany on the one hand and France and Britain on the other," said the document, "would eliminate the gravest threat to peace in the world, shake the might of czarism, which is exploiting this conflict, rule out a possible Austro-Hungarian attack on Serbia and ensure world peace. Therefore all the International's efforts should be directed at achieving this aim.

"The congress notes the identity of views of the entire socialist International with respect to these principles of foreign policy... It is insistently demanding peace... The proletarians consider it a crime to shoot each other for the sake of capitalist profits, dynastic vanity or the high honour of secret diplomatic treaties.

"...The proletariat is aware that at this moment it is the bearer of the future of mankind. The proletariat will make every effort to prevent the destruction of the flower of nations, which is threatened with a terrible death from arms, hunger or infectious disease."¹⁶

The Basel Congress took place in that city's famous cathedral. The fathers of the church had not only provided the premises for the forum, but even devoted a special sermon to it. This attested both to the Socialists' desire to forge broad alliances and to the church's intention to act in defence of peace.

"When attempts are being made to explain to us that war is a blessing or a sad necessity," Father Täschler of the Basel Cathedral said in his sermon, "we answer that war is an evil which can and must be eliminated. We worship a God of justice, brotherly love and peace. The meeting that will take place here this afternoon is imbued with the Christian spirit, even if the speakers use phrases that seem strange to us. Since Christian principles and ideas are to be proclaimed at this congress, we extend a warm and sympathetic welcome to these people, some of whom have come from far away.

"...We mentally shake hands with

you; for what you want is also our sincere desire... 'War against war in the name of the unfortunate' is our message to the world."¹⁷

¹ *Protokoll des Internationalen Arbeiter-Congresses zu Paris, abgehalten vom 14. bis 20. Juli 1889*, Nuremberg 1890, pp. 2, 120.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Paris 1900*, Berlin, 1900, p. 18.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 82.

⁶ "Kongreß in Brüssel 1891", *Außerordentlicher Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Basel am 24. und 25. November 1912*, Berlin 1912, p. 46.

⁷ *Protokoll des Internationalen Sozialistischen Arbeiterkongresses in der Tonhalle Zürich vom 6. bis 12. August 1893*, Zurich 1894, pp. 28, 30.

⁸ Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 37, S. 234; Bd. 38, S. 78, 158, 163, 431; Bd. 39, S. 9.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Bd. 38, S. 158.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Bd. 22, S. 383-415.

¹¹ *Verhandlungen und Beschlüsse des Internationalen Sozialistischen Arbeiter- und Gewerkschaftskongresses zu London vom 27. Juli bis 1. August 1896*, Berlin 1896, p. 24.

¹² *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Paris 1900*, Berlin, 1900, pp. 27, 28.

¹³ *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Stuttgart vom 18. bis 24. August 1907*, Berlin, 1907, pp. 65-66.

¹⁴ *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Kopenhagen, 28. August bis 3. September 1910*, Berlin, 1910, p. 31.

¹⁵ "Kopenhagener Kongreß 1910", *Außerordentlicher Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Basel, am 24. und 25. November 1912*, Berlin, 1912, p. 50.

¹⁶ *Außerordentlicher Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongreß zu Basel am 24. und 25. November 1912*, Berlin, 1912, pp. 26-27.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-54.

DEFENDING THE INNOCENT

Documents from the Comintern archives reveal efforts to shield communist internationalists from Stalin's repression

In the 1930s, hundreds of communist and other political emigres from many countries who had been granted asylum in the USSR fell victim to Stalin's repression and thus shared the bitter lot of many Soviet people. The staff of the Executive Committee of the Communist International were not immune either.

Documents from the recently opened archives testify to the selfless and heroic efforts of many Comintern leaders and rank-and-file staff members of the Comintern's Executive Committee as they tried to stem the repression. Stalin's policy did not break the courage and willpower of Communists, who would not bow to lawlessness and arbitrariness.

Georgy Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Comintern's Executive Committee, presented countless submissions in defence of political emigres and, as a deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet, tried to save wrongfully arrested Soviet people. He petitioned the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) and the chief executives of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) and the Procurator's Office more than 130 times in 1939 alone.

Usually these efforts encountered a wall of silence, or were answered with curt official statements as to the correctness of the verdicts, which were passed on the basis of fake evidence. Dimitrov often followed up a case with letters to various bodies, trying to prove the person's innocence, but reviews and releases were very rare. Yet his efforts should not be underestimated: one innocent person saved from ignominy and death is an achievement.

Dimitrov took up the cases of many communist leaders, rank-and-file Communists and unaffiliated political emigres, among them the Bulgarians Ferdinand Kozovsky, Anton Volodin, Radoslav Janchev, Boris Valev, Jordan Terziev and Stoimen Spasov, the Germans and Austrians Franz Falk (alias Geza Reitmann, Franz Kunert), Paul Scherber (Paul Schwenk), Anna Etterer, Walter Ditbender and Franz Quittner, and the Hungarians Stefan Vagi, Bela Szanto and Friedrich Karikasch.

Many Comintern staff members also tried to rescue the victims of repression: the submissions and petitions which appear in this article were drawn up by the respective communist parties' missions on the Comintern's Executive Committee. All those involved realised, of course, that intervention on behalf of an arrested person could be construed as an "enemy ploy" and trigger off fresh arrests. We should remember this when

coming across ritualistic protestations of "loyalty" worded in the language of the period.

On March 21, 1938, the NKVD arrested Khristo Kabakchiev, a veteran of the Bulgarian working-class and communist movement and a BCP CC member of long standing, who had been living in the USSR since his release from jail in czarist Bulgaria in 1926. Georgy Dimitrov and Vasil Kolarov, the BCP's representative on the Comintern's Executive Committee, immediately addressed Mikhail Frinovsky, Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs. Dimitrov wrote:

"I hereby pass on to you Cde Kolarov's letter concerning the veteran Bulgarian Communist Khristo Kabakchiev (arrested today) and for my part confirm that I personally know Kh. Kabakchiev as a most honest Communist.

"I ask you to look into this case personally and to speed up the investigation because the detainee is very ill.

"With comradely greetings,

G. Dimitrov
21.03.1938"

Kolarov said in his letter that Kabakchiev "has always served the proletariat and the party loyally and honestly" and "cannot be a double-dealer and an enemy".

Kabakchiev was released after a few days of investigation.

The archives contain a letter to Stalin from Yevgeny Varga, a leader of the Hungarian communist movement, a people's commissar of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, a candidate member of the Comintern's Executive Committee and a world-famous economist. It deserves being reprinted in full because, to a far greater degree than other similar documents, it reflects the agony of those who dared to question the actions of the repressive organs. Varga is required to make a few political "curtseys" to the "leader" and the NKVD—"to avoid any misunderstanding", as he himself put it—before getting to the heart of the matter. He foresaw the consequences of the extermination of the tested communist cadres, as sanctioned by Stalin, and he understood the risks involved in his daring. Varga's letter is a valuable historical document and at the same time an example of dedication and courage.

Strictly Confidential

To: Comrade Stalin

Copies to: Cdes Dimitrov, Yezhov

THE CADRES PROBLEM IN UNDERGROUND PARTIES
AND MASS ARRESTS

Dear Comrade,

Regrettably, the effect of your remarkable letter to Cde Ivanov¹ has not been lasting. No one talks or writes about it any longer. One-sided, narrow nationalism is increasingly gaining ground at the expense of the correct combination of Soviet patriotism and

Documents for this publication were prepared by Valentina Yendakova, Ralsa Paradzova and Yelena Tsapova, research associates of the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CPSU Central Committee. Comments by the Institute's sector head Fridrikh Firsov, D. Sc. (Hist.).

internationalism. Hatred for foreigners is rampant. Foreigners are indiscriminately considered spies; foreign children are called fascists at school, etc. (a small symptom: this year, for the first time, our press has failed to mention the anniversary of the Hungarian Soviet Republic).

This growing xenophobia has been triggered off by the mass arrests of foreigners (the reasons behind it, clearly, are not the arrests, but rather the capitalist environment, the threat of war and the vestiges of Great Russian nationalism from the czarist period).

To avoid any misunderstanding, I will stress that in the present situation I think it absolutely correct to arrest two innocents rather than to let one spy get away! The Soviet Union must use every means to defend herself from her enemies even if innocent people sometimes suffer. But I am concerned primarily about one political issue: the process of the rapid depletion and demoralisation of those cadres of the communist parties in fascist countries, who would have a very important role to play in the forthcoming war!

This process is moving along the following lines:

a) many cadres are sacrificing themselves heroically at the fronts in Spain;

b) an increasing number of former cadres are being arrested in the Soviet Union;

c) the cadres living freely in the Soviet Union are profoundly demoralised and confused by the mass arrests. This demoralisation has gripped most of the Comintern workers and spread even to some members of the Secretariat of the Comintern's Executive Committee.

The main cause of this demoralisation is a sense of utter helplessness with regard to arrests of political emigres. In some cases scoundrels are exploiting the general mistrust of foreigners and the ignorance of the history of fraternal communist parties on the part of many new NKVD officers and making false denunciations in order to have honest revolutionaries from underground parties arrested. At the same time an honest Communist, convinced of the innocence of an arrested person, can do very little, however hard he or she tries: there is no way of learning about the crimes imputed to the arrested person, no access to the investigating officers, etc. Since people do not know what evidence is used to arrest and sentence their countrymen, a dangerous atmosphere of panic is growing among foreigners in the Soviet Union. Many people explain the arrests by the fact that the Soviet government is consistently interning all foreigners in the face of the impending war. "Anything we do is useless, we're all going to be interned anyway. It would be more honest if the government were to imprison us openly instead of branding us as enemies of the people." Others whisper that the NKVD apparatus has not been fully purged,² and that the saboteurs who previously covered up for traitors now continue their sabotage by arresting honest revolutionaries. "Even the most honest foreign revolutionaries cannot be certain of their freedom." Many foreigners pack their belongings every evening in anticipation of arrest. Many have gone half mad because of the gnawing fear, and are unable to work. These sentiments show that arrest is viewed as a misfortune, not as ignominy, as was the case just a year ago. Those who are arrested are pitied, not despised!

Clearly, people in such a mood cannot be cadres in the grim trials of the forthcoming war.

d) The last and most important part are the underground cadres in the fascist countries. They must be very confused. They learn about the mass arrests of their countrymen in the Soviet Union from relatives' letters or from the fact that they no longer receive such letters; from bourgeois newspapers; from the exaggerated stories of people exiled from the USSR; and also through Trotskyites. They are not given any explanations, nor can they find any on their own.

I will use Hungary as an example because I know it better than other countries.

Comrades in Hungary hear from the Soviet Union that only four of the people's commissars of the Hungarian Soviet Republic who fled from there (Hungary—Ed.) are free, while ten have been arrested; that only two of the founders of the Hungarian Communist Party (if I am not mistaken) are free; and that several hundred Hungarian factory workers—political emigres—have been arrested. How are they to understand this?

Are they to assume that the proletarian revolution in Hungary was launched by enemies of the working class? Or that those people have become scoundrels after having lived in the Soviet Union for some time? Or are they to believe the Trotskyites' insidious allegations that those people have been arrested in the Soviet Union by 'reactionaries' because they are revolutionaries? None of these false explanations will satisfy the comrades in Hungary. The confusion is worsened by the fact that everyone of those arrested has personal acquaintances and friends amongst workers in Hungary, who, in the absence of any information, are not convinced of the guilt of their countrymen. Confused as they are, such workers will naturally turn away from the party. In this way the work of the Communist Party of Hungary, like that, perhaps, of every other underground party, is becoming even more complicated.

What can be done to stop the depletion and demoralisation of the underground party cadres?

Of course, sparing deliberate enemies is out of question! But the following steps could be taken:

1) A thorough and unhurried examination of all the cases involving the arrests of foreigners who could be useful cadres for underground parties. The Comintern and those few foreign comrades who are absolutely above suspicion ought to be given an opportunity to help the NKVD in this work by providing explanations.

2) Somehow informing foreign comrades in the Soviet Union and in fascist countries about this examination in order to counter pessimism and panic.

3) Informing comrades in this country and abroad about any compromising evidence against the better known sentenced figures by means of booklets or confidential reports (insofar as this does not interfere with investigations).

4) Drawing attention anew to your letter to Cde Ivanov in order to block this wave of hatred for foreigners in the Soviet Union itself.

Yevgeny Varga
Moscow, March 28, 1938³

The letter did not seem to have any effect on Stalin: there were further arrests of political emigres and foreign Communists and the vilification campaign against foreigners continued unabated. The press even claimed that any Japanese living outside

his country was a spy, and every German a Gestapo agent. On April 26, 1938, Dimitrov wrote a letter to Andrei Zhdanov, Secretary of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) Central Committee, drawing his attention to these absurd and politically harmful allegations about people who had been forced into exile, including political emigres living in the USSR.

On April 23 Dimitrov passed on to Frinovsky a letter he had received three days before from Wilhelm Pieck, a member of the Presidium and Secretariat of the Comintern's Executive Committee.

Confidential

To: Comrade Dimitrov

Dear Comrade Dimitrov,

Please find enclosed a list (supplied by the personnel department) of the names of people arrested by the NKVD, but the personnel department does not have any incriminating evidence against them. As regards the persons listed from No. 1 to No. 8, the Secretariat of the CC of the Communist Party of Germany is absolutely confident that they could not have perpetrated any criminal actions against the Soviet state, nor have had any ties with hostile anti-Soviet elements. We do not know the others so well, but think that they are also innocent. We ask you to take the appropriate steps to expedite the investigation of these people so as to speed up their release.

Regards,

Pieck⁴

Appended to the list were the detailed biographies of 15 persons together with character references. No. 1 in the list was Paul Scherber (Paul Schwenk), a CPG member since 1920, who for many years had been a deputy to the Prussian Parliament, a fellow of the Institute of Marx-Engels-Lenin from 1934 to 1937, and prior to his arrest a deputy chief of the Redizdat, the publishing branch of the Comintern.

The list also included the names of Willy Kerff and Walter Ditbender, both of whom had been thrown into a concentration camp in 1933 by the Nazis. Speaking as witnesses at the Leipzig Trial, they repudiated allegations that the CPG was plotting a "conspiracy" and planning an uprising. Their courageous stand helped Dimitrov to expose the Nazis' provocative arson attack on the Reichstag. Freed by the Nazis, they went to the USSR. There is documentary evidence that Pieck continued to press for their release.⁵

Of the 15 persons listed in the letter, only three were released: Kerff in 1939, Schmidt in 1940, and Schwenk in 1941.

On December 3, 1938, the mission of the Bulgarian Communist Party on the Comintern's Executive Committee and the BCP Foreign Bureau sent a letter signed by Kolarov, Belov (Georgy Damianov) and Marek (Stefan Dimitrov) to the Comintern leader, reminding him of the lists of arrested political emigres passed on to him in March.

The letter said, *inter alia*: "We consider them to be honest Communists and workers dedicated to Soviet power, incapable of becoming enemies of the people. They are from among those who formed the backbone of the Bulgarian political emigre community, and who fought vigorously against hostile elements and corrupt influences. We vouch for their political loyalty".⁶

Only 20 of them had been released, the letter went on, and nothing was known about the fate of the others. Appended was also a petition to the NKVD, asking for the release of 131 persons.

When, on December 7, Lavrenty Beria replaced Yezhov as the NKVD chief, Dimitrov immediately addressed the new People's Commissar:

"I am passing on to you a letter and a list of names from Cde Kolarov and the Foreign Bureau of the CC of the BCP, and for my part ask you very much to expedite the investigation of these cases and inquire about the lists submitted earlier. I am convinced that a proper examination of a number of cases will reveal that honest Bulgarian Communists have fallen victim to intrigues by enemies of the people".⁷

On the list of names were BCP veterans and young Communists, members of the Bulgarian People's Agrarian Union and non-affiliated researchers, office and factory workers, students, invalids and pensioners. Many of them had participated in the September 1923 anti-fascist uprising and been sentenced to long prison terms (32 of them to death) by the Bulgarian czarist regime.

Dimitrov's new petition was of no avail, and most of those names were included in new lists submitted to the CPSU Central Committee, the NKVD and the Procurator's Office. Many of the arrested Bulgarians had already been shot or died in detention, but the Comintern's General Secretary had not been informed and continued to demand their release.

Dimitrov was becoming more and more insistent because many cases where, according to information he had received, there was no evidence were not being re-examined.

In a letter to CPSU CC Secretary Andrei Andreyev⁸ on February 7, 1941, Dimitrov wrote: "It is also beyond doubt that among the arrested political emigres of other nationalities (Germans, Austrians, those from Balkan countries and others) are quite a few honest and dedicated Communists whose cases should be reviewed in order to rectify any mistakes".⁹

Dimitrov suggested that Andreyev speak to Yakunin, Gitman and Kurov, from the Procurator's Office of the Moscow Military District, "who maintain that their investigations into the cases of political emigres have made no headway because even when the charges against them are proved to be groundless, they are usually not dropped and the innocent people remain in custody".¹⁰

Among the political emigres who arrived in the USSR in the 1920s and 1930s were people from different backgrounds, including musicians and artists, physicians and scientists. The archive documents reveal the tragic fate of one of them, the well-known physicist Franz Quittner, an Austrian Communist, as belated and futile attempts were made to secure his release.

On April 19, 1940, on behalf of the mission of the Austrian Communist Party on the Comintern's Executive Committee, Johann Kopenig, Friedl Furnberg and Fritz Schilling asked Dimitrov to help secure the release of Franz Quittner, a party member since 1918 who had been arrested by the NKVD in March 1938.

"From the very start he has been an active and reliable party member, working over the years in the Austrian Young Communist League, and for a long time as a member of the League's Central Committee. He has never deviated from the party policy line, and at times of factional strife within the party he always upheld the Comintern's line against all factionists. There was never even a hint of suspicion against him throughout the period of his work for the party, and all the comrades considered him to be an honest and upright Communist. Apart from working for the party, he made his name as a research physicist in Austria and was invited to work in the USSR. He had no hesitation in leaving his position as an assistant at Vienna University and coming to the USSR".¹¹

With the letter was a note from Professor Alexander Valter, a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, who spoke highly of Quittner's studies in electrical engineering.

On April 22, 1940, Dimitrov wrote to Mikhail Pankratiev, Procurator of the USSR:

"I am sending you a petition signed by senior members of the Communist Party of Austria regarding the case of Franz Quittner and ask you to look into it and, if possible, to have it reviewed. Please advise me of the results".¹²

The reply was a brief and toughly worded note dated May 11, 1940 which said that under interrogation the person for whom the Comintern was petitioning "admitted his guilt and confessed that he had been spying against the USSR". The Austrian scientist was "shot as a spy" on May 31, 1938.¹³

Quittner was rehabilitated posthumously in August 1956.

The archives also contain Dimitrov's letters concerning the Italian Communist Manuel Antonio Fuentes, a leader of the sailors' trade union, who in the late 1920s fled Italy to avoid arrest. In 1931 he settled in the USSR. Following Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, Fuentes applied to the Comintern's Executive Committee for an opportunity to participate in the armed struggle against fascism. In July, however, he was detained by the NKVD directorate of Novorossiysk, where he worked in the port, and sent to a prison camp. On February 12, 1943, following requests from the Comintern's Executive Committee Secretary Ercoli (Palmiro Togliatti), the representative of the Communist Party of Italy at the Comintern Vincenzo Bianco, Paulo Robotti, Negri Gino, Antonio Conestri, Giovanni Germanetto and other Italian comrades, Dimitrov asked the Procurator's Office of the USSR "to revise the case and release Italian CP member Manuel Fuentes".¹⁴

On May 28 Dimitrov again asked about the fate of this Italian

Communist, who, according to Dimitrov's information, "was interned in Novorossiysk as a national of a country which was at war with the USSR".¹⁵

Manuel Fuentes was released from the camp in 1944, but died shortly after.

This was one of Dimitrov's last letters as General Secretary of the Comintern's Executive Committee: in a few days the Comintern ceased to exist. But archive documents surviving from that period reveal the historical truth and illustrate the heroic efforts that were made in trying to save innocent people from arbitrary repression.

¹ Reference to Stalin's article "Reply to Cde Ivan Filippovich Ivanov", published on February 12, 1938, on the need to strengthen the international proletarian ties between the Soviet working class and the working class of other countries. See *Pravda*, February 14, 1938.—Ed.

² Reference to the elimination by Nikolai Yezhov of many senior NKVD officers who had worked under the former People's Commissar Genrikh Yagoda.—Ed.

³ Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, stock 495, list 73, file 48, pp. 96-99.

⁴ Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, stock 495, list 73, file 60, p. 28.

⁵ *Neues Deutschland*, January 12, 1989.

⁶ Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, stock 495, list 74, file 73, p. 42.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁸ According to Academician Boris Ponomarev, then a political aide to the Comintern's General Secretary, staff members of the Moscow Military Procurator's Office asked for a meeting with Dimitrov and told him that the files against political emigres seemed very dubious, in other words, they were trumped-up. After that meeting, Ponomarev recalls, Dimitrov called Stalin to complain about the arbitrary repression of Comintern staff and political emigres, and the latter suggested that relevant documents be sent to Andreyev who would look into the matter.—F.F.

⁹ Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, stock 495, list 74, file 81, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, stock 495, list 73, file 88, p. 66.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, stock 495, list 74, file 255, p. 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

WMR TIES

* General Secretary Rigoberto Padilla Rush of the Communist Party of Honduras visited the *WMR* offices and told the editor-in-chief about the situation in Honduras and the activities of the Honduran Communists. Future cooperation between the PCH and *WMR* was also among the subjects covered.

* During his visit to Czechoslovakia, Kaare Andre Nilsen, Chairman of the Communist Party of Norway, called at the *WMR* offices

and discussed ways of ensuring the Norwegian Communists' closer collaboration with *WMR*.

* A meeting with Salah Khalaf (Abu Ayad), Central Committee member of the Palestine National Liberation Movement (Al-Fatah), took place at the *WMR* offices. The guest speaker analysed the historical aspects of the Palestinian problem and dealt with the course of the popular uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories.

THE SANDINIST VICTORY: THE WAY IT HAPPENED

Dr Sergio RAMIREZ
Vice-President, Republic of Nicaragua

On July 19, 1979 the Sandinist Revolution triumphed, opening the way to freedom, progress, peace and prosperity for the Nicaraguan people. To mark the 10th anniversary of this date, we present an account of those (by now historic) events by one of the principal participants—Sergio RAMIREZ, a prominent public figure and writer, and Vice-President of Nicaragua. The interview was arranged by the Czechoslovak journalist Jan MACH who, together with Zdenek DLESK, Czechoslovak Ambassador to Nicaragua, is writing a book on the Sandinist Revolution tentatively entitled "The Long, Long Day".

■ *We are aware of the vigorous role you played in the events that culminated in the overthrow of the Somoza regime. Could you share with us your personal impressions of those ten decisive days in 1979?*

The days that preceded the triumph of the revolution no doubt allowed us to consolidate the political and military victory in Nicaragua itself and helped to raise our prestige on the international scene, particularly in terms of our relations with the United States.

While discussing this second aspect, with which I am more familiar, let me note that, having realised the futility of its attempts to save Somoza, Washington continued to do all it could to preserve his system until the last moment, leaving intact the National Guard as a tool of oppression. At the same time, the United States sought to reserve a decisive role in the new government for the country's traditional political forces. US diplomacy was working for a non-violent transfer of power under an arrangement which suited Washington's political and military plans. In particular, the US insisted that one of the officers who would survive the collapse of the Somoza regime be placed on the General Staff and command the remaining National Guard units. Washington also demanded an enlarge-

ment of the five-member Governing Junta which, in line with a decision of the FSLN National Leadership, included representatives of the traditional political forces.¹ Aware that the balance of interests favoured the Sandinists, the United States did its utmost to upset it. It also sought to preserve the existing government institutions. This is why an attempt was made to have Somoza officially hand over his office to a new President (elected, under the Somozist Constitution, by the Congress) who, in turn, would transfer power to the Governing Junta. Those were the central elements of the US position at the time.

■ *Did the Carter Administration plan to send troops from the Organisation of American States to Nicaragua?*

At a session of the OAS the United States did submit this proposal, but it was rejected. But let us return to the problems discussed with White House representatives during the last ten days before the Sandinists took power.

We viewed the situation integrally, not only from a strictly political and diplomatic standpoint. The fact that the war, waged under FSLN leadership, was about to end in our victory was of crucial importance. The Sandinists were at the head of the popular uprising in which

thousands of armed people, mostly young, took part. We secured control of the principal lines of communication between communities and major cities, and in fact encircled Managua. We also played the role of leaders in the mass movement and in the drive to establish alliances and win the support of other political organisations—something to which the Group of Twelve contributed tangibly.² The unity we achieved as a result was so broad that the traditional political forces were almost completely isolated. At the talks, we had sufficient room to manoeuvre for reaching agreements with Washington to allow us, in our view, to prevent US armed intervention and remove all obstacles to the transfer of power.

Under these circumstances it was important for the United States to settle all issues with us before the fall of Managua because the international support enjoyed by the FSLN ruled out all options except negotiations. In our efforts to secure the desired objectives we also took care to allay all possible fears on the part of the leaders of other Latin American countries. The Governing Junta sent a message to the OAS Secretary General outlining the obligations we accepted with regard to the character of the new administration and its policy of *non-alignment, political pluralism and a mixed economy*—the three principles that were the motive force of the Sandinist Revolution.

The situation was such that, for tactical reasons, the FSLN had to agree to the formation of a General Staff comprising representatives of the National Guard command. We realised that we were dealing with defeated and demoralised troops and that the remaining officers would be mostly young people untainted by Somoza's corruption since most of the corrupt officers would have left the country. It was clear that the General Staff, whose demise was a foregone conclusion, would exert no influence on the course of events.

■ *So time was on the side of the FSLN?*

Of course. I remember that William Bowdler, the US negotiator, had Somoza's letter of abdication literally in

his pocket. Shortly before, Somoza had given it to the US ambassador in Managua. The letter bore no date, and Bowdler kept telling us, "Let's hurry up and fix the date. It all depends on you. As soon as we agree on the date, everything will be resolved." My position was quite the reverse: the later we affixed a date to the letter, the more strength the revolutionaries would gain and the more successful our offensive on all fronts would be.

That was the position of the FSLN. But since we would benefit from Somoza's departure, we settled for July 17, when we agreed on a number of points. Specifically, we were to create a new General Staff under two chiefs. One would be Colonel Mejia, the National Guard officer recently appointed commander of the army by Somoza, and the other, a representative of the FSLN. Furthermore, given the insistence of our partners at the talks, we also accepted the proposal on an orderly transfer of power. The Governing Junta then prepared to fly from San Jose (Costa Rica) to Managua where Cardinal Obando³ (who was to go down in history for this) was to accept the resignation of Urcuyo⁴ and then meet the new leadership of the country at the airport.

We drew up a precise schedule: Somoza was to submit his letter of resignation to the Congress; then the Congress would convene to appoint Urcuyo President; at 11 a.m. on July 18 (exactly 12 hours later) the plane with the Governing Junta would land in Managua following the departure of the dictator's successor. The Junta would thus be definitively installed in Managua. Simultaneously, Colonel Mejia was to meet in Costa Rica with a military representative of the Sandinist Front to work out the forms of joint command. Earlier in the talks, we had succeeded in rejecting the proposal on enlarging the Governing Junta membership.

■ *Is it true that Violeta Chamorro⁵ was one of the more resolute opponents of such an enlargement? How do you explain her stance?*

Yes, that's the way it was. At first the US wanted the Junta to consist of 12, not 5 members, each of them filling a cabinet

post. Of course, we rejected that proposal categorically. Then strong pressure was brought to bear on us: our friends in Panama, Costa Rica and Venezuela who supported the FSLN insisted that we accept the enlargement of the Junta for tactical reasons, so that the US would no longer obstruct the plan. Indeed, there were times when we did not rule out an acceptable enlargement because, naturally, we regarded the talks in both their tactical and strategic aspects. During one of the sessions—a meeting of the FSLN Leadership at which, as I recall, Tomas Borge, Daniel Ortega and myself were present—doña Violeta exclaimed angrily that she did not agree to an enlargement of the Junta, that it was "US interference", that this was "none of their business", etc. Frankly, her stand was crucial to the decision that was taken. The North Americans gave up because what they heard came not from the Sandinists, but from this señora.

■ *What gave rise to the idea of sending a message to the OAS and how did this move influence developments on the eve of the transfer of power?*

The idea of sending such a message was born at one of the conferences at Punto Arenas, attended by the then President of Costa Rica Rodrigo Carazo, Jose Figueres,⁶ Carlos Andres Perez,⁷ a personal representative of General Torrijos and Tomas Borge, Daniel Ortega, Humberto Ortega and myself of the Sandinist Front. There, we agreed on the contents of the letter which I subsequently drafted. I still have my notes with President Carazo's words: he said that with a letter like that, he could pressure the North Americans. Carlos Andres Perez, Torrijos' envoy, and all the rest agreed that the demand for an enlarged Junta and any other claims could now be safely shelved.

On the night of July 17, when we were preparing to leave for Managua the following day, I got word that Somoza had left Nicaragua. I must make an important digression here. At that time Monsignor Obando was in Venezuela, where the US government, in a last-ditch effort, scheduled some kind of meeting (acting either directly or through intermediaries)

for July 15. Besides Obando, it was to be attended by the leaders of several Nicaraguan parties and by major private entrepreneurs—people who, by then, had settled firmly in Miami. This desperate attempt to create an alternative to the Sandinist Front was a failure because the delegates from Miami never arrived and, most importantly, there was no viable alternative to our proposal.

Late on July 17 Obando arrived in San Jose from Caracas on a commercial flight and went to the Irazu Hotel. I was waiting for him at the Venezuelan Embassy, where he was to mediate our talks with representatives of the Andean Group⁸ about the details of our flight to Managua. Obando sent a message saying he was very tired, could not come to the meeting and doubted he could fly to Managua early the next morning.

This was a dangerous stand because the news about Somoza's departure from Nicaragua was already spreading through San Jose. Immediately, I contacted President Carazo who assured me that everything was ready at the airport for our departure at 10 a.m. on June 18, with honors reserved for foreign heads of state.

■ *But Urcuyo decided to act counter to the agreed plan.*

Exactly. As the media reported early the next day, when he donned the presidential sash at the Intercontinental Hotel, Urcuyo announced he was not going to resign, arguing that he was a constitutionally elected head of state. It was a completely new situation. The Congress that endorsed Urcuyo's appointment had been convened thanks to US efforts. On instructions from the United States, Nicaraguans who had settled in Miami arrived to attend the session. The members of Somoza's parliament still in Nicaragua were ferried to Managua by helicopter. The United States needed this show to ensure a formal transfer of power. When Urcuyo refused to resign, Humberto Ortega and myself, still in San Jose, concluded that this was the time to change gear and ignore any and all accords. At that time Bowdler was in Panama. I contacted him and communicated our decision while Humberto or-

dered all operational groups to launch their troops on a march on Managua.

Here I would like to remark on an interesting fact quoted in a book by the Costa Rican journalist Julio Sifol. In an interview, the President told him that he had insisted on the Junta's departure for Managua because he thought the first to arrive there would take power. The Costa Rican leader believed that the Governing Junta still had a chance of emerging on top—although this was in fact impossible since it was merely a representative political body in no position to control what was happening in the nation. Therefore, I told Carazo we were ready to leave for Nicaragua immediately—but for the interior, not Managua.

That was when the North Americans began to worry so much that they even phoned Somoza in Miami and threatened to deport him from the States if Urcuyo did not leave Nicaragua. The ex-dictator himself recalled this incident in his book *The Time*. He apparently said: "That's not my fault. I can't control the man." To which the reply was, "No way. Either you order him to leave the country, or you'll be expelled from the United States."

President Carazo failed to persuade us to fly to Managua. We told him there were objective considerations. Managua's airport was still in the hands of the National Guard, and we argued that members of the Junta would simply be shot on arrival: no one could guarantee our safety. Confronted with our refusal, Carazo helped us fly to Leon⁹ in two small planes chartered by the government of Costa Rica. On board were three members of the Governing Junta, Father Ernesto Cardenal, Violeta Chamorro's daughter Claudia, our doctor Juan Ignacio Gutierrez and other people whose names I cannot recall at the moment. Carazo himself came to the airport, although the red carpet prepared for the departure ceremony remained rolled up, awaiting some future occasion. It was a very risky flight, but there was no other way. It was imperative to establish a government within Nicaragua.

■ Who met you there?

Comandante Daniel Ortega, Tomas Borge, Jaime Wheelock, Dora Maria Tel-

lez, Leticia Herrera, Omar Cabezas, Mauricio Valenzuela and others. On July 18 the government was officially installed in office in the hall of the National University of Leon, and the city was proclaimed the provisional capital of the republic. Hundreds of journalists covered this great and decisively important event: the United States was confronted with the fact that our administration was now on Nicaraguan soil. Panama and Costa Rica immediately recognised the new government. Urcuyo's absurd escapade was frustrated, and all he could do was flee to Guatemala.

Early on July 19 the Sandinist Front announced on radio and television that Managua was under its control and that the Governing Junta was about to move in. We discussed the question of whether we should leave for Managua immediately or on the following day. Finally we decided to take the latter option so that a mass rally could be staged on Republic Square. But towards evening Henry Ruiz¹⁰ radioed Daniel Ortega from Managua airport to say that he was with Bowdler, who had just arrived in Managua and insisted on an official transfer of power with Obando's participation. Daniel replied that he was fed up with Yankee tricks. "No, this is very important," Henry said. Then I told Daniel, "Come on, the tables have been turned. It is not the terceristas¹¹ any more who are advocating compromise, flexibility and alliances." Eventually Daniel decided to end the discussion and said to me, "You'd better go to Managua yourself and sort everything out." We asked for a small plane, which took doña Violeta and me to the capital. Henry Ruiz and Bayardo Arce met us there at 6.30. The airport looked like an army camp.

I talked to Bowdler at the Camino Real Hotel. We agreed that the transfer of power ceremony would be held the next day. There was no more argument on this point.

At 4 a.m. on July 20 Violeta, Moises Hassan and I took the same plane back to Leon in order to return to Managua with the rest of the Junta. I remember that we found about 200 new cars stored at Puerto Somoza. I don't know who they belonged to, but we took them, and our

motorcade left for Managua. As we neared the city, a fire engine picked us up and took us to the heart of the capital.

The nation was entering a new stage in its history.

¹ The Governing Junta of the Provisional Democratic Government of National Revival was formed in Costa Rica on June 17, 1979 and consisted of Daniel Ortega, Sergio Ramirez and Moises Hassan (FSLN), Violeta Chamorro (independent) and Alfonso Robelo (Broad Opposition Front). —Ed.

² A group of prominent Nicaraguan intellectuals, businessmen and religious activists who supported FSLN policy and sought to rally all anti-Somoza forces together. —Ed.

³ The head of the Catholic Church in Nicaragua who played a prominent role in the struggle against Somoza's tyranny, but later assumed a pro-US stand, charging the Sandinists with violations of democracy. —Ed.

⁴ Francisco Urcuyo Maleano was Somoza's successor as president. —Ed.

⁵ The widow of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, manager of the newspaper *La Prensa* and chairman of the Democratic Union of Liberation (affiliating seven parties and two trade unions opposed to the Somoza regime), who was assassinated by the dictator's henchmen in January 1978. Later Violeta Chamorro joined the anti-revolutionary opposition and began to pursue a pro-US policy. —Ed.

⁶ President of Costa Rica from 1970 to 1974. —Ed.

⁷ President of Venezuela from 1974 to 1979 and since 1989. —Ed.

⁸ A subregional economic group comprising Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. —Ed.

⁹ Nicaragua's second biggest and most important city, some 130 kilometres northwest of Managua. —Ed.

¹⁰ Comandante of the Revolution Henry Ruiz was in charge of the FSLN units which occupied Managua's Mercedes Airport in the early hours of July 19, 1979. —Ed.

¹¹ In 1974-1978 there were three currents within the FSLN. Aside from a "proletarian trend", Henry Ruiz was a prominent advocate of continuing the people's war, while the Ortega brothers were in charge of the tercerista ("third force") wing which called for a broad alliance of the anti-Somoza opposition and for insurrection based on the urban masses. —Ed.

FROM OUR MAILBAG * * * * *

READERS' RESPONSES, PROPOSALS, CRITICISMS

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Political scientists—from Communists to avowed right-wingers—now all agree that Soviet perestroika (economic and political reforms) will considerably influence the power struggle in the capitalist West, shifting it "to the left". Spain's Communists link the prospects for the European communist movement with "their ability to exploit the possibilities created by radical reform in the socialist countries".¹

So far this relationship has been little studied by either Marxist or any other theoreticians. Yet even without a deeper theoretical analysis, but simply proceeding from one's awareness, it is possible to draw important practical and political conclusions. Do we accept that the conditions in which the Western communist parties have to work are largely shaped by the domestic and foreign policy of the socialist states? If we don't, then the Spanish Communists' reasonings are hardly sound. If we do, then their approach should be deemed insufficient.

The world (not just the European) communist movement and its unity will develop only when Western communist parties manage to move away from simply using the results of socialist states' policy of reforms towards their own direct participation in its formulation, thus benefitting the movement as a whole. It may even be desirable to have a political and

organisational mechanism by which the Western CPs could help to frame the policy of the ruling communist parties. Like it or not, the Western CPs have to pay for any negative results of this policy with their own prestige among the masses.

This, then, calls for the non-ruling communist parties, in theoretical and propaganda work, to critically assess the experience of their ruling counterparts concerning its impact on the sociopolitical situation in the capitalist states.

That impact will clearly help one to judge if the socialist states are on the right path.

Recent history has shown the total futility of attempts to restore the movement's unity outside the political logic of peaceful co-existence between states. At the 3rd Congress of the Comintern Lenin noted that "taken as a whole, the class instinct and class-consciousness of the ruling classes are still superior to those of the oppressed classes".² Soviet perestroika now gives us an opportunity at least to reduce, if not to eliminate, this decades-long gap. Don't miss it!

Oleg VITE
Leningrad, USSR

¹ Salvador Jove, Santiago Alvares, "The View from Spain", *WMR*, No. 12, 1988.

² V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 483.



THE BOOK SCENE

THE PARTY AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY

Dimitr Ananiev, **THE POLITICAL PARTY: THEORY AND HISTORY**, Partizdat, Sofia, 1988, 272 pp. (in Bulgarian)

Although there are many works on political parties in bourgeois and Marxist literature, there has as yet been no comprehensive study of this question. The more interesting then is Bulgarian scholar Dimitr Ananiev's book, *The Political Party: Theory and History*.

The increasing politicisation of modern society means that an extremely broad circle of people is now involved in the work of various associations. According to Ananiev, there are over 800 parties in the world today with hundreds of millions of members and even greater numbers of supporters. These figures alone reveal how important the subject is.

This study, based on an in-depth Marxist-Leninist analysis, upholds the new political thinking, exploding the myths with which bourgeois scholarship is still invested.

Ananiev sets out to explore the reasons behind the appearance of political organisations, the ways in which they are formed, and the methods by which they operate in the face of rapid advances in science and technology. He views a party as being a body in society that establishes ties and mutual relations with its other structures. His meticulous research is conducted on two levels: he examines the political party as a general concept; and he looks at certain types of organisation. The two approaches are brought together to form an indissoluble whole.

Ananiev believes the party to be both a sociopolitical and a human phenomenon, opening up new dimensions for the col-

lective while at the same time endowing the individual with a political personality.

The emergence of parties is the result of concrete, objective historical circumstances. Having taken shape and gained relative independence, these organisations then begin to influence the social processes.

The author criticises the view that political parties date back to antiquity, arguing that the past use of the concept of a party proves nothing. Social relations took entirely different forms then. Political associations in slave-owning and feudal societies fell far below the level of a party (see p. 60) since the appropriate superstructure needs a certain economic base. "A political party," he notes, "is required wherever and whenever there are free commodity producers but relations between them are covert. These ties reflect the overturned relations between labour objects and products in a society where the rule over people is exclusively the rule of force and is achieved by means of the rule over things" (pp. 60-61).

In other words, the prerequisites appear only at the stage of capitalism where the bourgeoisie begins to seek political power. It is precisely in this period that the principles of bourgeois democracy are established. In turn, the formation of parties serves as an important element in remaking the superstructure of the economic basis of society.

There is still no commonly accepted periodisation of the history of political parties. The author describes five periods, the first being the rise of the capitalist mode of production, when bourgeois parties appear; the second, when workers' and social democratic parties emerge; the third, when monopoly capitalism gives rise to the formation of communist parties; the fourth coincides with the start of capitalism's general crisis; and the fifth, the modern phase after World War II.

A special place in the book is given over to a study of the types of political party, their attributes and essential features.

The creation of a party is seen as involving certain characteristics: class affiliation and purposefulness; ideological certainty; organisational and structural shape; a definite attitude to power. From this certain types of party are discerned: bourgeois, workers', and Marxist-Leninist. The specific features of Third World political organisations are also analysed in this section.

On the basis of this analysis, the book provides what the author terms a "working" definition of a political party: a "firm organisation, a union which brings together the most active part of a given class or social group with the aim of expressing and defending their basic material and spiritual interests guided by a more or less developed ideology; the party seeks, independently or in coalition, to win and use state power in order to make these interests and ideology dominant" (p. 139).

Ananiev treats his object of study as a system which functions on the basis of inner regularities. Its unity and coherence are ensured by the institution of membership. He highlights the organisational links in a party structure, its hierarchic floors, and the relations between them. In so doing he relies on the experience of the Bulgarian Communist Party and that of political parties in other countries, showing how governing bodies are formed, how they function, the role of the leadership, the problems of democratic centralism, and the reasons and remedies for internal conflicts.

Parties are born and function in a certain social environment. Examining the relations between them and society, Ananiev points out their interaction, noting that the functions of a political party are conditioned by its social and class essence (see p. 200).

The concluding part of the book contains reflections on the party's role in the system of socialist democracy and self-government.

Ananiev sums up the rich empirical material and compares the views of political scientists of various schools. His wide-ranging opinions and assessments are appealing in that he never resorts to absolute judgements. He makes no claims to ultimate truth, seeking instead to penetrate the complex dialectics within political parties.

Certain questions thrown up by such an all-embracing subject are not covered. I would like, for instance, to have read more on issues like pluralism, new political thinking, the restructuring in socialist countries and the general worldwide renewal as applied to the teaching on parties.

However, this does not detract from the scientific value and topicality of a book that bravely tackles an important and complex subject.

Georgi ILIEV
Bulgarian Journalist

* * *

ANOTHER FAILURE FOR BRZEZINSKI

Zbigniew Brzezinski, *THE GRAND FAILURE. The Birth And Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1989, 278 pp.

For over 30 years, this scion of Polish landed gentry has been so single-minded in his obsession that the name Zbigniew Brzezinski is practically synonymous with anti-Sovietism. Beginning with his initial volume, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict* (1960), he has staked his career on the idea that the forces of conflict would prevail over the elements of unity within the Soviet Union and in the socialist community of nations. Besides having served as President Carter's national security assistant and written many books and articles, he has also been directly involved in various schemes and projects intended to "hasten" the fulfillment of his oft-repeated predictions that the USSR will break up and the East European socialist countries will break away from socialism and from their alliance with the Soviet Union.

Brzezinski's latest volume—*The Grand Failure*—reads like self-exultation over the supposed triumph of his prophecies. He literally hugs himself for joy over what he considers to be the insoluble problems of socialism.

With only a passing nod to the accomplishments of the Soviet Union, he associates *all* models of socialism with the mistakes and departures from scientific socialism principles and

with the crimes committed during the Stalin years. But he goes further, much further. According to him, the source of this failure is Leninism and the vanguard concept of the communist party. Venom, distortions and false characterizations abound in the pages of his book: Lenin is an "obscure Russian political pamphleteer" and Marx, an "émigré German-Jewish librarian" (p. 3); Leninism is defined as a "combination of dogma with organizational regimentation" (p. 126); communism is "fermenting in the Soviet Union, repudiated in Eastern Europe and more and more commercialized in China ... a globally discredited ideology" (p. 189); etc.

To Brzezinski, Leninism is the ultimate evil, and he maintains that perestroika and glasnost are bound to fail so long as the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union does not abandon Leninism. "The fatal dilemma of the communist system in the Soviet Union," he claims, "is that its economic success can only be purchased at the cost of political stability, while its political stability can only be sustained at the cost of economic failure" (p. 102). Brzezinski is ready to give the benefit of his advice to the Soviet Union: the USSR can restore its global prestige and the "global prestige of communism" by redefining the "meaning of Leninism so that it begins to resemble social democracy more than bolshevism" (pp. 50, 49).

Note that, having fought against socialism for decades, he suddenly concedes that the USSR had global prestige which is now allegedly lost.

He spells out how capitalism can help "restore" the Soviet Union and other socialist countries by using a "Western strategy deliberately designed to enhance the prospects of a post-Communist transition to democracy"—initially, "various degrees of

mixed state and private economic sectors, legitimated by increasingly social democratic phraseology, which would thereby create ... the eventual point of departure for a popularly determined turn toward a predominantly free enterprise system" (p. 253).

This process, Brzezinski argues, would not be the same, or relatively as easy, as the transition of Spain and Portugal from fascism to democracy. Without saying so explicitly, he acknowledges that fascism and bourgeois democracy, as forms of capitalist rule, can be interchanged without disrupting the economic foundation; whereas to switch from socialism to capitalism requires a counter-revolution directed against socialism's basic economic principles. He knows how difficult that would be and complains that "even in relatively non-totalitarian Yugoslavia, the monopolistic Communist tradition—rooted specifically in Leninism—has ... so far stymied the progressive transformation of the country into something approximating a social democracy" (p. 253).

Fully one-third of the book under review is devoted to Poland, regarded as the weak link in the chain, and to China, looked at through the prism of anti-Scvietism. According to Brzezinski, the chief obstacle to restoring capitalism in these and other countries is Leninism which, he asserts, is inimical to democracy. The author completely ignores Lenin's consistent championing of democratic methods as absolutely essential for the development of socialism.

These falsifications evoke memories of the U.S. prosecutors in the infamous trials of communist leaders during the years of McCarthyite repression. By citing carefully selected quotations entirely out of context and in total disregard of the overall meaning of Lenin's work, the prosecutors presented Communists as violent, antidemocratic and terrorist. Brzezinski is following the same line.

Only someone who is completely ignorant or bent on deliberately distorting history can postulate that bureaucracy is integral to Leninism or that leadership "in the Leninist manner" is "from above" only (p. 45). A single example will suffice. The Decree on Land was one of the first decrees of the young Soviet republic. The decree did not so much give the land to the peasants as authorized them to take it from the rich land-owning oppressors. In other words, the authorization from above, from the government, required massive self-activity below, among the peasants, to bring the decree to life. Such was and is the Leninist style, always aimed at involving, and relying on, the masses in the solution of social problems.

At the heart of Leninism is the struggle for socialism and democracy: "...There is no other road to socialism save the road through democracy, through political liberty."¹ Today, at the heart of perestroika and glasnost is, as Mikhail Gorbachev expressed it, "more democracy, more socialism". This represents the restoration and further development of Leninism after a prolonged hiatus.

The book is replete with misrepresentations, distortions and lies. For example, in order to sustain his contention that the world communist movement is facing impending demise, he claims that for the first time the 1988 periodic world conference on the work of *World Marxist Review* did not command "major attention from the world's mass media" (p. 190). I attended three conferences on the work of *WMR*, including the 1988 conference, as a representative of the Communist Party, USA. To my recollection, none of the bourgeois mass media gave any of

these conferences "major attention", certainly not in the U.S.A. Meanwhile, Brzezinski covers up the real news of the 1988 conference: it was the largest and best attended in the history of *WMR*, with 93 communist, workers' and revolutionary democratic parties present. When one makes a habit of deviating from rectitude, it is not hard to see failure in success.

Brzezinski's abysmal ignorance of scientific socialism is surpassed only by his pretensions at being an expert. For example, he interprets Mikhail Gorbachev's attack on wage-levelling as follows: "In effect, Gorbachev was saying that henceforth wage differentials based on productivity were to be the true expression of genuine equality, a principle which many American industrialists of pre-trade union days would have heartily endorsed" (p. 63). Putting aside the odious comparison with the heyday of merciless anti-union employers in the U.S., Brzezinski cannot, or refuses to see that Gorbachev is restoring the fundamental tenet of socialism: from each according to his ability, to each according to his work. Brzezinski confuses socialism with communism. It is under communism that the true expression of genuine equality finally comes to life because the basic tenet will be: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.

Brzezinski would not be Brzezinski without persistent attention to efforts at breaking up the "Soviet empire". He identifies with attempts to undermine socialism in Eastern Europe. He boasts of information supplied by underground sources in Poland about the publication of clandestine newspapers, periodicals and books. He writes with relish about the existence there of large numbers of conspiratorial political groups, including ultra-nationalist right-wing ones "based on the outlook of the prewar Polish leader, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, with their central emphasis on national independence and on collaboration against Moscow with such suppressed non-Russian nations as the Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Byelorussians" (p. 121). He even lets you in on the secret that in Polish Silesia, a "tightly disciplined, deeply conspiratorial organization appropriately called Fighting Solidarity" is working to "topple the regime" (p. 122).

As though giving leadership from afar, Brzezinski offers a blueprint for breaking East European countries away from alliance with the Soviet Union: "...A strategy of historical stealth would have to be persistently pursued. To be successful, it would have to involve the co-optation of at least a portion of the ruling class and entail some informal coordination with proponents of change in adjoining East European countries. It would also have to take advantage of propitious splits within the Soviet leadership" (p. 113).

It is not without good reason that Brzezinski sees the communist party as the chief obstacle to the realization of his cherished dreams. It is interesting that he can see an essential difference between Dubcek and Gorbachev. Dubcek's program, he says, was aimed at breaking up the leading role of the Communist Party, whereas Gorbachev calls for a party more responsive to the wishes of the people (p. 62).

Brzezinski has spent years fine-tuning his efforts to mastermind the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. He places Poland and Hungary in the lead in the dismantling process and most likely to reach the "dividing line" (capitalism) before the others (pp. 248, 249).

Characterizing China as "building commercial communism", he anticipates that by surpassing the USSR within the

next 20 years in economic terms, China will confirm the demise of Marxism-Leninism, because by then, he believes, the capitalist element in the Chinese economy will have become dominant.

It is understandable that Brzezinski is ready to pronounce the funeral oration over the grave of socialism. One cannot envy him his great disappointment in his declining days. Socialism is awakening to a new dawn. Perestroika and glasnost in the Soviet Union, reforms and expanding democracy in the socialist community of nations, rejuvenation and revitalization of Leninism are harbingers that the best is yet to come. Indeed, it is more democracy, more socialism.

Of course, anyone can make mistakes. Brzezinski has made more than his share. His latest book, *The Grand Failure*, is still another mistake. He should have saved the title for his autobiography.

Jim West
member, CPUSA National Board;
Chairman, CPUSA National Review Commission

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 442.

* * *

ARDUOUS REVIVAL

Hun Sen, *TEN YEARS OF KAMPUCHEAN DEVELOPMENT. 1979-1989*, Kampuchea 2, Phnom-Penh, 1989, 500 pp. (in Khmer)

The complex processes that have occurred in and around Kampuchea over the past decade are still a focus of attention for the international public, scholars and politicians, and continue to provoke contradictory assessments. But now a book has appeared in which the revolutionary movement in that country, its socioeconomic development and the confrontation of political forces are examined by a man who stands at the centre of events, having risen from a private of the Liberation Army to the head of government. He is Hun Sen, a Political Bureau member of the Central Committee of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP) and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The book opens with an account of the troubled days of 1970 when, 16 years after the restoration of peace in Indochina, war came again to the Kampuchean land. By the author's assessment, "CIA agents in Phnom-Penh pushed Lon Nol towards a coup d'état against Prince Sihanouk", thus ending the "stage of peaceful and neutral development" (p. 4). He shows convincingly that the coup and US aggression led to the nation's spiritual breakdown, a demarcation of political forces and an armed confrontation.

National suffering did not end with the national liberation movement's victory over the pro-American regime in April 1975. Power was captured by Pol Pot's clique. Its ultra leftist actions in the name of a "radical and definitive revolution" grew into mass terror when, along with political opponents, "ordinary people, skilled personnel, members of the armed forces and highly placed officials were exterminated or subjected to torture" (pp. 8, 9). In the three years of Pol Pot rule, more than 3,000,000 citizens were killed or disappeared. All social structures were essentially destroyed, and the economy's foundations badly shaken. The clique abolished the money system and internal trade, and resettled vast masses of the population. Pol Pot's "democratic Kampuchea" fenced itself off from the outside world, organised armed provocations against neighbouring countries and unleashed a border war against Vietnam.

The book describes how, in 1978, patriotic forces worked out a strategy for struggle against the Pol Pot regime. The most commonly-held view among them was that they should first liberate the eastern and northeastern parts of Kampuchea, turn them into a "bastion of revolution" and only then advance on Phnom-Penh and other areas. However, writes Hun Sen, "if one compares the plight of our people under Pol Pot's regime to a disease, then it was a disease which had to be cured at once, allowing for no delays or procrastination" (p. 13). Those in favour of immediately liberating the whole country won out in the end. But complex external and internal political conditions made this task infeasible. The Kampuchean patriots had only one option—to turn for help to Vietnam, with whose people they had jointly fought against colonialism.

The downfall of Pol Pot's regime was not the result of Vietnamese intervention, but a consequence of the regime's own crimes and adventurist policies: the people rose in revolt and were backed by Vietnam. Hun Sen emphasises: "The motive force of the 1979 revolution was the alliance of the democratic part of society and Vietnamese volunteers, with the Kampuchean patriots playing the decisive role in overthrowing the clique" (p. 21). The victory of January 7, 1979, marked a turning point in Kampuchean history. It opened the way to revival, to the construction of a new life.

Faced with a Western diplomatic and economic blockade, the new government not only had to liquidate the famine and restore a destroyed economy, it also had to organise armed resistance to Pol Pot detachments operating from the border with Thailand and backed by certain states. As its own resources were obviously inadequate against all these problems, the country's leadership asked for Vietnamese forces to be stationed temporarily in Kampuchea.

While acknowledging the importance of fraternal Vietnamese aid, Hun Sen dismisses as preposterous allegations of SRV influence on the processes occurring in Kampuchean society. He writes: "...Leadership of the state, the solution of all the problems connected with the fate and development of our country are a matter for the Kampuchean people themselves and neither Vietnam, nor any other country, can do it for them" (p. 410). The author stresses the absurdity of the view that the Kampuchean problem was caused by the Vietnamese intervention. "Internal difficulties, especially the Pol Pot regime's policy, were the real root cause" (p. 20).

The book traces the direct link between the positive international changes since 1985 and the negotiations for a settlement to the Kampuchean problem. Hun Sen explains the essence of his government's course for national reconciliation and shows how contacts with the opposition and talks with Sihanouk developed. These eventually led to an informal meeting between the Kampuchean sides and the representatives of Vietnam, Laos and the ASEAN nations in 1988.

A situation has developed in Southeast Asia where an increasing role belongs to the pro-dialogue forces, says the book. The main problem is that of preventing a restoration to power of the Pol Pot regime, whose policies have not changed. They continue to terrorise the population of Kampuchea, the refugees and even their own coalition allies. The Kampuchean leadership invited its opponents to participate in a settlement of the bloody conflict, essentially with but one proviso—the disbandment of the Khmer Rouge units.

The leadership of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea has agreed to accept a multiparty system in the country. Hun Sen puts forward a concrete plan to resolve internal problems: "...It is necessary to leave all political and military forces where they are presently stationed; to set up a committee or council for the holding of elections; to hold elections to a National Assembly under the supervision of an international commission. The National Assembly will then adopt a new constitution and form a new government which will create the armed forces of a future Kampuchea. The elections should be held after a complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and the cessation of assistance to the opposing Khmer forces" (p. 462).

A section of the book is devoted to the history, current practice and further tasks of party and state building. The PRPK turned from a group of like-minded people (200 members in 1979) into a cadre (7,500 in 1985) and then into a mass party (22,000 at the end of 1988). The author does not avoid sharp issues and he refutes the distorted perceptions of the Kampuchean revolutionaries. Thus, returning to 1978-1979, he writes: "...Among the fighters for national liberation were true, honest party members who spearheaded the movement. Having left the ranks of a party bled white by Pol Pot, they did not abandon its Marxist-Leninist ideals" (p. 408).

Regarding Kampuchean economic development, the book

puts a strong case for a shift to self-support, financial independence and self-management for state enterprises. Hun Sen advocates the development of all economic structures, and argues for the transfer of land to and state credit for the peasants, a land tax and other measures. With self-financing at enterprises, brigade and lease contracts would be expedient, helping to link the growth of profits and wages directly to output. While underscoring the market character of Kampuchea's economy, he believes that planning should be the foundation of economic strategy.

Hun Sen pays much attention to the prospects for using private capital in industry, civil engineering, and transport. For example, the leasing or selling of unprofitable plants and the creation of mixed state-private companies have been proposed. For brisker foreign trade large-scale private initiative under state control, and the granting to provinces and cities of the right to conduct export-import transactions, are envisaged. Will this entail a return to capitalism. Hun Sen replies: "Kampuchea is in a particular position which precludes copying the experience of any other state. We proceed from general regularities but must apply them in conformity with our own special features. It will take a long journey to end poverty.... But this has to be done in the name of building socialism" (pp. 484-485).

Important changes have occurred since the publication of Hun Sen's book. In April the governments of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea issued a joint statement on the withdrawal of all Vietnamese volunteer forces by the end of September 1989, which accords with the cessation of military aid to the four Kampuchean groupings. An extraordinary session of the National Assembly adopted a new edition of the Constitution. The republic's previous name has been changed to the State of Kampuchea, representing an integral, independent, democratic, sovereign, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned country. In the economy, the country is looking to the creation of state, state-private, cooperative, family and private sectors.

Hun Sen has written a book of reflections and reminiscences, filled with the pain of endurance, the joy of success and hopes of a better future for his people.

Chin SATHI

* * *

A STRATEGY OF INTER-CLASS ALLIANCES

Joe Slovo, **THE SOUTH AFRICAN WORKING CLASS AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION**, An Umsebenzi Discussion Pamphlet Published by the South African Communist Party, 1989, 36 pp.

In South Africa, where the revolutionary process embraces both class battles and the national liberation struggle against the racist regime, the question of their interconnection and correlation is exceptionally important. This problem is analysed from

the Marxist-Leninist standpoint in a pamphlet by Joe Slovo, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP), entitled *The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution*. The aim of this study is to stimulate an active debate on the theoretical principles of revolutionary practice in the current struggle against the racist system of exploitation. The scientific thoroughness, political relevance, polemical character, and convincing arguments displayed in this small, highly informative study are sure to arouse considerable public interest internationally.

The supporters of workerism—a political current which denies the need for a national democratic phase of the revolution in South Africa—insist on an immediate struggle for socialism with trade unions in the vanguard role and reproach

the Communists for abandoning socialist perspectives. This study opposes such leftist views, arguing that workers' involvement in inter-class alliances does not mean a disavowal by the proletariat or its party of their leading role in the revolutionary process. Self-isolation would do considerable harm to the cause of national and social liberation.

"It is," the author writes, "a basic maxim of working-class revolutionary strategy that, at every stage, it is necessary to maximise the forces which can be mobilised against the ruling class around a principled common immediate programme."

The national democratic revolution reflects the objective aspirations of the overwhelming majority of South Africans, and serves the interests not only of the workers and small entrepreneurs from among the blacks, but also of the emergent black bourgeoisie. This explains the need to combine in a liberation alliance all classes and strata suffering at the hands of the apartheid regime. The Communist Party considers as its crucial task the mobilisation of mass support for the African National Congress (ANC). This organisation heads a movement of which the working class is both an integral part and a major contingent.

The pamphlet draws an important conclusion about the fact that the conditions of the revolutionary process in South Africa demand that equal consideration be given to the *class content* of the national struggle and to the *national content* of the class struggle. These aspects cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. The author refutes allegations that such categories as the "white working class" and the "black working class" are "unscientific". These categories reflect social reality. The actions by the black population against national oppression help to shape the political consciousness of the proletariat as a whole and deepen its understanding of its own class interests. Using the struggle in South Africa as an example, the pamphlet clearly reveals the interconnection between capitalism and racial oppression. The doubly exploited black working class "stands to gain more from the ending of national domination than any other class among the oppressed".

It also raises the question of the black middle and upper strata. Do they have a stake in a successful national democratic revolution? We believe that the answer is clearly yes, the author replies. However, their obvious preference for capitalism means that they will want to preserve it even after the liquidation of apartheid. That is why attempts to substitute reformism for revolutionary tasks will meet with the least resistance on their part. Here, though, the author continues, national oppression induces these strata to enter into an alliance directed against the apartheid system. The practice of institutionalised racism severely disadvantages the incipient black bourgeoisie when it comes to credit and loan facilities, possible sites for business schemes, etc. The apartheid regime forces it into ghettos and deprives it of the right to participate in the drafting of legislation. Thus, in the national democratic revolution the interests of the proletariat and this part of the bourgeois strata coincide to a certain extent. The *inter-class alliance of the oppressed black population* is conceived on this basis.

The situation is different with the black bureaucratic bourgeoisie in bantustans. This sector serves apartheid and enriches itself through collaboration with the racist regime. The author

stresses that it depends for its capital accumulation more or less entirely on its position within the collaborative structures of apartheid—bantustan "governments", community councils, management committees, etc.—where fraud and corruption are rife, and where opportunities exist for it to allocate to itself land, trading premises and other resources. The origin and fate of this stratum "depend solely on the survival of race domination and (individual defections aside) it will share a trench with the enemy".

The South African Communists believe that the national democratic revolution is closest to the realities of their country in present-day conditions. Its aim is to end apartheid and national oppression, and to create a democratic, non-racial, unitary state in the country. This stage could become a prelude to a socialist revolution by preparing for it. To call it a "bourgeois democratic revolution" is, in the author's opinion, a misleading description of the present stage of struggle. For "wherever democracy threatens the basis of capitalist economic exploitation the bourgeoisie are the first to abandon it" (p. 15). In South Africa it is this class that wields economic and political power. It has achieved and maintained its hegemony by denying bourgeois-democratic rights to the majority of the population; capitalist exploitation is inseparably linked with race domination.

"The shortest route to socialism in our country," the pamphlet concludes, "is via a democratic state. But it will be a democratic state which will at once be required to implement economic measures which go far beyond bourgeois-democracy" (p. 18).

It also notes that the working class as the leading social force in the inter-class liberation alliance must emerge as the politically dominant social class in the post-apartheid state. By contributing significantly to the struggle for the democratic aspirations of all the racially-oppressed groupings, it has already won popular acceptance from the peasants, intellectuals, women, youth, small traders, and even the racially-dominated black bourgeoisie.

In the South African case, the author says, the national question is particularly important. The SACP and the ANC consistently adhere to a course aimed at moulding a specifically national rather than an ethnic or tribal consciousness. Despite its cultural and racial diversity, South Africa is not a multinational country. "It is a nation in the making; a process which is increasingly being advanced in struggle and one which can only be finally completed after the racist tyranny is defeated. The concept of one united nation, embracing all our ethnic communities, remains the virtually undisputed liberation objective" (p. 30).

In analysing the conditions and prospects for the liberation struggle in South Africa, this new study by Joe Slovo has considerably enriched the theoretical and political arsenal of the revolutionary and progressive forces in the country.

Sam MOETI
representative of the Communist Party
of Lesotho on WMR







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Chicago, Illinois 60610.

World Marxist Review is published by **Progress Books**,
71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 2P6.

Second class mail registration number 2352.

Printed in Canada.

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