AKP(m-l) developed into a mature party

AKP(m-l) sees women’s struggle for liberation over the whole world as an important revolutionary potential. Marxist-leninists must lead this struggle and fight for directing it against the bourgeoisie and imperialism and in this way create a united front among the world’s supressed peoples and nations. At the same time it is necessary to look critically at «the woman question’s» place in the tradition of marxism-leninism. We in AKP(m-l) believe we have taken important steps in this direction.
How has the AKP(m-l) of Norway developed into a mature party?

Many people from different countries ask me why it is so that the Workers' Communist Party (m-l) of Norway has not only survived the general crisis of the western communist movement, but has also succeeded in doing a lot of good work. I use to answer that it is due to a happy mixture of objective conditions, skill and luck, says Pål Steigan, the former leader of WCP(m-l), in this article. That is of course not very scientific summing-up, so my point has to be explained a little further.

In a way the revolutionary movement in Norway is a sort of anachronism. It is one of the stronger of the new parties in the most tranquil and reformist country in Europe. With the general split of the socialist left, a lot of left-wing newspapers, a lot of trade-union militants and lots of new parties and movements. But still there is it. All other political parties are in any case
democrats acheived a position that it is so that the Workers' Communist Party (m-l) of Norway has not only survived the general crisis of the western communist movement, but has also succeeded in doing a lot of good work. I use to answer that it is due to a happy mixture of objective conditions, skill and luck, says Pål Steigan, the former leader of WCP(m-l), in this article. That is of course not very scientific summing-up, so my point has to be explained a little further.

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How has the party worked its way to this position? As I said, partly because of objective factors. Here some words of early Norwegian communists:

"The party's daily from being a revolutionary party with a cadre, in its early phases, to be of interest to comrades in Norway if there hadn't also been some skilful work. I believe that our party has gained some experiences during our development, that may be of interest to comrades in other countries as well. But I stress that these are our own experiences and I would not insist that they are compatible to conditions elsewhere. Most probably they are not.

1. Theory and practice

From the very outset the ml-movement has been a revolutionary party with a cadre, in its early phases, to be of interest to comrades in other countries as well. But I stress that these are our own experiences and I would not insist that they are compatible to conditions elsewhere. Most probably they are not.

2. Composition

There has been a fairly good quality of the party membership and cadre. From the start there was a strong link between the formation of radical workers' movement and the national resistance during the second World War. Though most of the membership were young people, high school and college students, they were mostly from working class or radical intellectual background. The party managed early to secure some of the most active and radical young workers to the party. Together with the students, young workers and a few veteran socialists, they were most alive in promoting these movements. This has been the case with the strike movement, the leftwing of the anti-common market movement, the movement against Soviet expansionism in the northern areas. The party has been concerned with classanalysis and its presentation from a communist analysis of Norway. The same with its military policy and its work with the womanquestion.

4. Importance of anti-ECC struggle

In the early seventies the ruling class and most political parties in Norway wanted the country to join the Common Market. But there developed a massmovement against membership for the workers, peasants and fishermen. This movement had a considerable impact on all political activity in the country for more than two years. Massdemonstrations, rallies, provocations and pro- testcampaigns and so forth.

The ml-movement has tried to promote these movements. This has been the case with the strike movement, the leftwing of the anti-common market movement, the movement against Soviet expansionism in the northern areas. The party has been concerned with classanalysis and its presentation from a communist analysis of Norway. The same with its military policy and its work with the womanquestion.

5. Daily newspaper

A mainstay in the partybuilding of the norwegian m-l movement has all the way been our newspaper. Founded in 1969 as a monthly "Klassekampen" (The Class Struggle) has been an important lever for organizing the party and creating revolutionary and progressive popular awareness. "Klassekampen" was formed in 1973 the newspaper already had developed into a weekly and 2 years later it finally became a daily.

The newspaper has always been focused on the interests of the working class and the working people and on solidarity with oppressed people as well. It has demasked a lot of under-cover activity committed by the ruling circles of Norway, it has become a loyal organ of all people fighting for justice. At any time workers on strike or women activists or foreign workers have found their interests best represented by "Klassekampen".

I am totally convinced that if it hadn't been for the daily our party would have been a lot more seriously harmed by the irrational class-struggle in the ml-movement by the turn of the seventies. It has also been an important lever for turning the party into the day-to-day problems of the norwegian society. You simply cannot develop a communist daily on abstract issues.

6. "Proletarization"

Having gained the hegemony on the universities in the early seventies the ml-movement decided to encourage a vast university and highschool students to quit their studies and become workers. Hound drewids, in two waves, and added to a rather small number of members in the parties. In spite of some shortcomings, some anti-intelectualism and some prlism in the beginning this was a strategic conlusion of the ml-movement in the working class. Most of

The picture shows AKP(m-l)’s 3rd anniversary in 1976.
Adoption of the new General Program was preceded by almost two years of party discussions. Two topics were particularly focused in these discussions: the experience and liberation of women. Sum up experiences To this day, socialist revolutions have been successfully carried through only in countries very unlike Norway in structure and political tradition. It is necessary to sum up both positive and negative experiences in the history of socialism. Further, it is necessary to decide which principles and experiences are generally applicable to all socialist revolutions and socialist societies, and which have to be modified and tailored to the specific conditions in different countries.

Armed revolution The chapter on socialism in the new General Program states that historical experience teaches the necessity of armed revolution against the bourgeoisie. Regardless of will of the people, the bourgeoisie will not resign power and privileges they are forced to do so.

The program also states that the state form of socialism has to be the dictatorship of the proletariat, based on the class alliance between the leading working class and the rest of the working people. One main point in the party discussions has been the importance of democracy for the people in socialist society.

Democracy Democracy is necessary to mobilize the working class and resist the workers as the rulers of the state, and to pave the way for the abolition of division of labour. Democracy is the working class and the people's own administrative measures from the state, also to be the main basis in the suppression of the bourgeoisie.

The role of the communist party in socialist society is another important point. The role of the party must be against Soviet social-democracy and to guard the working class in the struggle to develop socialism into communism. The prestige and rallies must remain a critical element in society, with strong roots among the working class and the working people. The party must fight against social-democracy and the formation of a new privileged class in socialist society.

Women The new General Program closely links the liberation of women with the development of socialist society. The struggle of women for liberation is one of the main forces in the struggle for communism. Socialism will not automatically solve the women's question and do away with all kinds of discrimination and oppression of women. But socialism will create a new foundation for the struggle, making it possible to build the economic and political conditions for the full liberation of women.

To carry this through, a strong, independent, organized Women's movement will be necessary. 50% of the membership of the newly elected Central Committee of the party are women, and 50% belongs to the working class. Pål Steigård who has been leading the party for 9 of the twelve years of its existence, resigned his leadership, but remains a member of the central committee. Steinig was warmly thanked by congress for his hard and inspiring work during these 9 years. The new leader of the party is Kjersti Ericsson. Political secretary is Arne Lauritzen,run Gulbrandsen, and organizational deputy leader is Arne Lauritzen.

the people who followed the call to become workers have managed to take roots and become accepted leaders among their fellow trade-union members. Without this move, the party would have been unable to profit lasting from the youth-movement. There are also reasons to believe that the party was more resistant to the ideological change when that became the vogue.

7. Trade union work At the end of WW2 the social-democrats launched a ‘joint programs’ in which the trade-unions gave up their independence and pledged to enhance profits in exchange for welfare and job security. During the fifties all revolutions and communists were excluded from the trade-union posts and the unions became tools of classcollaboration. This situation prevailed until the end of the sixties. Then some trade-union leaders broke these fetters and waged strikemovements in spite of top-level veto. The young

found much to be useful in building up the party. There was a general consensus that some of their work has been among the most important ones on a national scale in a whole decade.

In general, the revolutionary work has been successful in creating a base for those who have not been taken care of before, but they have done so in many different ways and through different techniques and approaches. Our cultural workers have had an important role for the indoctrination and have performed an important role for the self-orientation of the working people.

13. International work Our party has carried out a lot of international work and solidarity work. Party members have been as medical workers for liberation movement, the party has carried out innumerable campaigns in solidarity with the peoples of the third world and with the working people in other countries in general. This work has played a great role for the orientation of the party and the radical section of the working class move- ment. And it has also had measurable impact on the society as a whole. It has been and is our primary objective that we always will carry out solidar- ity work. As a party we have also gained a lot from this work. We have had the undivided pleasure of taking part in the valuable experiences of other parties and revolutionary organizations. I believe that this experience has been an important reason for our ability to take counter-measures against the liquidationist trend that hit the ml-movement a couple of years back.

Although we support com- rades in other countries as far as our small means allow, we will never be subject to the de- cisions of any other party.

14. Unified leadership and democratic centralism The leadership of the party has never been split. The leading comrades have always been united in a central lead- ership and there are only ra- ces of fractionalism. Though the leadership has de- veloped all the time, there has never been any major deser- tion from the leading bodies of the party.

The WCP(m-l) practices democratic centralism and our experience is that this org- anizational principle is indispens- able in a revolutionary party. One major cause of the party's relative success is that we managed from the very outset to unite all significant marxist-leninist forces in one organization. This has added to the gravitational field of the party, that is made it more attractive to more people.

Perhaps the brief summary of some of the most important experiences of our party. There is of course a lack of significant "think" in the brief account. Please blam- e them on me, not on the party.

Pål Steigård
The Social-Democrats are Pursuing Non-Socialist Policies

Arne Lauritzen, the former head of the Workers' Communist Party (marxist-leninist) policy advisory committee, now deputy head, writes here about the tactical situation prior to the autumn elections in Norway. He maintains that the Norwegian social democratic party is the main tactical enemy of the Workers' Communist Party (AKP m-l) in the election and that the non-socialist policies it pursues are identical to the policies of the Norwegian Conservative Party (Høyre). The Conservative party holds office in Norway today.

— The main question in the coming period will be our relationship to the Norwegian Labour Party, the Norwegian social democrats. Up until 1 May we will be pressured to participate in the broad front (from the Left) against the conservative forces and the Willoch government (the conservative government in power at present). May Day will be celebrated by the parliamen
tary (Storting) election campaign, and the decision made of us will be to join with us against the blues, vote La
bour.

— Our point of view is summarized in the concept: A = B (social democrat equals non-socialist) but if this is to be more than pure rhetoric, we must be capable both of showing that A really is the same as B in addition to being aware that means are to be found. We are faced therefore by a tactically difficult situation, both as far as 1 May is concerned but also in relation to the entire period up to the Storting elections.

It looks as though the entire political scene will be coloured by a choice between the two largest parties, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, and that many people will be taken in by Labour and that many members and new recruits are to be found.

The prerequisite for the Labour Party

There are one important tactical point which must be fulfilled if the Labour Party is to succeed with these tactics: They have to have gathered around them so many activists that they can carry out an effective election campaign; in other words the party structure has to be strengthened to such an extent that enthusiasm spreads both within and outside the rank and file of the party. The struggle over 1 May and between the Labour procession or the class-struggle procession will be an important indication of how to be able to prevent policies which can be recognised as a real alternative to those of the Willoch govern
ment.

Let us look more closely at this prerequisite:

First, the question of whether the Labour Party currently has enough momentum to give the party increased support amongst the voters. My assertion is that Labour has more problems than it can deal with. Had I been asked nine months ago I would have answered that Labour were sure to win the election. Today I am not so sure. The six points which follow serve to reinforce my position.

Six points

1. The Gallup poll. If the Labour Party are to bring about a political situation in the election campaign from which they will fully benefit, there is no doubt about the moral advantage of being well placed in the opinion polls. Everyone is talking about the effect of wear and tear on the Willoch government and its similar effect on the Labour opposition. But Labour cannot boast an inc

crease in support in the opinion polls. They are making little headway and have not done so for a long time.

2. The activity of members: Spot checks around the country in the last few months both of those give in the main the same result. The Labour Party has problems mobilising its own members. Sure enough quite an effort is being made to activate the iron and metal trade union movement into campaigning for the party. The Labour house went ahead last autumn when a number of courses were held; a sort of ideological rearmament of which we were the specific target.

3. The real pay-off is yet to come and it is reported that the Labour Party lacks cadre members and new recruits.

4. The old faithfuls are making all the effort. In a num
ber of places it is reported that AUF, the social democrats' youth organization, is growing, but that the situation seen as a whole leaves something to be desired.

5. The Labour Party is plai
ning by discussion in important concrete issues. The leaders of the iron and metal workers have for nearly two years desperately tried to mobilize the union, and especially the shipyard industry, against the election campaign. The seven members of the Stoltenberg days were a fa
sho. In Stavanger the iron and Metal Workers' Union has 4,000 members. Of these, only four members are able to attend the Stoltenberg days of Action. In 1984 the picture was even more clear-cut. Skyten's (the chairman of the important Iron and Metal Workers' Union) and his associates arranged action-days against the fiscal budget and linked this with election campaigning for Labour. A number of clubs and unions in the shipyard industry protested and the effect was negligible. Shipyard workers do not have much confidence in the Labour Party being able to straighten out the situation and very many disagree with Skyten's attack on the 'Yes, we'll work' action when his response to the struggle to save shipyard jobs is election campaigning for Labour.

Another open split can be seen in the budget difficulties in Oslo. Deep contradictions have been revealed within the DNA, from the time when the struggle against the budget began with the compromise agreement proposed by the Labour members of the Municipal Employee's Union, via "Let Oslo Live" (a grass-root demonstration against the decimation of manufacturing industry in the capital), and the demonstration on 10 December by 10,000 trade union members — to Stolten
berg's (the leader of the Labour party in the city council in Oslo) boundaries lo
yalty to the Conservative Par
ty over the treatment of the budget in the city council.

4. The political and organisational changes which the Labour Party has attempted to initiate have proved of little worth. I have mentioned the Days of Action which were organised by the Iron and Metal Workers' Union. The attempts at mobilising the trade unions haven't been painless either. Gro Harlem Brundtland can still manage to rouse standing applause at federation meetings, for example of the Commercial and Office Employees' Uni
on, and the national con
ference is used solely for the Labour's election campaign. But I think that Labour itself
is counting its chickens before they’re hatched. One thing is to enjoy oneself in an assembly of largely faithful; quite another to win support at grassroots level in the trade unions. Referring once again to the Commercial and Clerical Employees’ Union, Labour received NOK 750,000 not their national union, but the delegates at the conference who aggressively defended the union against the challenge of the employer organisations will not be so cocksure when they return to their local environments. A concrete example will be the threat of withdrawal from the Commercial and Clerical Employees’ Union and the Union of Civil Aviation Employees (1200 members).

5. The fiscal budget. For reasons which I will explain later, the DNA cannot present an alternative budget which clearly shows the difference between the Labour Party and the Willoch government, and with that the mobilisation effect it would have. On the contrary, in the past four months Labour has actively said that the pressure on expectations must be dampened down. This happened most recently at the important annual meeting of the Troms County Labour Party in January where Einar Ferde pointedly warned against such expectations. The Labour Party is on the verge of being caught in its own net, and the consequence is that people have trouble in distinguishing between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party.

b. Membership trend. The Labour Party set itself an ambitious target in 1982. They have been cheated twice. DNA states in its draft budget for 1985 that «The Labour Party believes that restructuring is necessary in industry. The Labour Party states that the main pattern of population settlement and safeguard stable of the iron and steel workers, Gro Harlem Brundtland and the rest of the membership of the social democratic party became more and more similar to the policy of the bourgeois party of Norway. Here symbolised by the leader of the bourgeois party of Norway, the leader of the social democrats, Gro Harlem Brundtland.»

The two faces of the Norwegian Labour Party
One face is turned toward the bourgeoisie and is actively engaged in developing capitalist strategies in order to get capitalisation through its crisis and make necessary adjustments while keeping profits intact. The other of its two faces is turned toward the working class and promises «defence of the welfare state» and «full employment.» At the same time as the Labour Party had 59% of the votes of the working class in 1981, an increasing part of the same 59% were hit by policies inimical to the working classes, formulated by the selfsame Labour Party. This situation is the Labour Party’s Achilles heel; it pervades the Party. If we make proper use of this class antagonism it will give us great chance to manoeuvre. A striking example of this is the exposure, by the Oslo division of the Red Electoral Alliance, of Stoltenberg and the Labour Party in connection with the increase of the housing rent in the working class.

We maintain that A = B. Let us look at one or two important issues and see how things really are.

The struggle for jobs
What is the Labour Party doing to protect jobs in, for example, the shipyard industry? Let us return to the national conference of the Iron and Metal Workers’ Union in 1982. Gro Harlem Brundtland (leader of the social democratic party) promised full support to the iron workers and was given resounding applause. One of the demands was, and is, that permanent installations should be built at Norwegian yards. The day after these promises were made at the national conference of the Iron and Metal Workers, Gro Harlem Brundtland and the rest of the membership of the social democratic party became more and more similar to the policy of the bourgeois party of Norway. Here symbolised by the leader of the bourgeois party of Norway, the leader of the social democrats, Gro Harlem Brundtland.

Another example is the interest on loans in the State Housing Bank. The Building Workers’ Union and the Federation of Trade Unions demand that interest be reduced to 8%. In their alternative budget for 1985 the Labour Party demand an interest rate of 10,5 per cent. A half percent increase (or reduction) of the interest on State Housing Bank loans would mean increased/decreased living expenses of NOK 200 per month.

We maintain that the Labour Party has paved the way for the policies which the Willoch government have pursued in the past few years. The trend in interest rates on loans from the State Housing Bank is a good example. Labour policies being inimical to the working classes. In 1980/81 the DNA raised the interest on loans from 7% to 10%. In other words, several thousand kroner in increased living expenses for most people. The Conservative Party and the Willoch government have followed this up by raising the interest level first from 10% to 11% and then from 11% to 12%.

A = B
We are entering a period in which the large numbers of students who left school in the 60s are now joining the housing queue. Willoch’s policies in recent years have made it almost impossible for many to buy a house. But it was the Labour Party who started the decimation of the State Housing Bank — and the price of restoring the Housing Bank to its pre-1980 level is estimated at NOK 5—7 billions. This sum is the reason why Labour’s housing policy is almost identical to that of the Conservatives. In sphere after sphere we see the same pattern. The now so infamous ‘socializing Term Programmes’ of 1981 drew up the Labour Party’s main policies. And in budget after budget these policies are consecrated.

Bernt Eide
Photo: Arbeiderpartiet

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The Women’s Question — a Key Question for the Working Class

In this article, Siri Jensen — leader of AKP(m-1)’s Women’s Committee — takes up the party’s policy concerning «the women question». It is the communist party’s duty, she says, to place itself in the vanguard of the struggle for women’s liberation, and to avoid division of class according to sex. It is also important to fight repression of women within the communist party itself, she says, and points out the importance of criticizing the marxist-leninist tradition on this point.

In Norway today, women constitute a half of all employees and approximately half of the employed working class. Large groups of the working class’s closest allies in the petit-bourgeoisie are women; nurses, teachers, social workers. Employment among women has increased notably in the last 10 years. At the same time, this has meant that women have been drawn to a larger extent into class struggle, and the women question has forced itself upon the political order of the day.

Women, however, are concentrated in relatively few professions. A third of all working women are to be found in education, health and the social sector, a fourth within trade, hotel and restaurant, an eighth in industry. 20% have office work, 13% nursing, 11% work in shops and 9% are cleaners.

Lower wages

Women earn less than men. Wages are lower and the fact that half of the employed women work part time, makes the difference greater.

More than two thirds of women are employed — the remaining third stay at home.

These figures show that women have a special position within the working class. We believe that it is important to understand women’s dual position in our society. Women are in working life, constitute half of the employed working class, and are to be found in most professions.

At the same time, women have a special position which basically rises from the tasks society imposes upon women within the family, and the division of labour between sexes — which society decides. This duality is expressed in many forms. On the one hand, women are less economically dependent on men — marriage is not the only possibility. Women, with or without children, can manage, more or less, on their own income or with the help of social security. Women can divorce.

On the other hand, single women and single providers are the poorest members of society, with many economic problems. Economies is still an important factor in limiting the right to divorce. Women’s low wages and working hours make many women dependent on their husbands.

In one way it is accepted that women have jobs, including traditionally male jobs, and women look upon themselves increasingly as employees with the right to work alongside men.

Private work

At the same time, women are dependent upon adapting their jobs to the needs of their families — husband’s working hours, possibilities of child care etc. Society does not increase kindergarten facilities or care for old people according to necessity — for example, 90-95% of care for the elderly is private, that is to say the women’s responsibility.

It is, furthermore, still a fact that women are squeezed out of jobs to the advantage of men, when it comes to cuts down and reductions. Real unemployment is highest amongst women.

Women take an active, though much smaller, part in political life and mass organizations: Women organize themselves and demand greater influence. Women have fought to gain the right to self-determined abortion.

At the same time women’s freedom is limited by the demands of the family and because they are still to a great extent regarded as men’s property. Malreatment of women within the family, rape, pornography and prostitution contribute to holding women down. Increased employment and increased consciousness as to one’s own rights lead to a stronger will to struggle and demand that working class organizations take to a greater extent, their situation and demands.

AKP(m-1) considers this to be a key question for the working class as a whole.

Today the trade unions do not give priority to cases of importance to working class women — wages for those who earn the least, shorter normal working day, possibilities to combine full job with family, rights for part-time workers etc.

At the same time employers know exactly how to make use of women’s situation to press wages down, increase wage differences and undermine the normal working day.

This is possible, not because women show less solidarity, but because they are crushed between the demands of work and family. The eight hour day is too long, in as much as women have a second job at home. Many women must ask for special contracts for shorter working hours, usually on the employer’s terms with lower wages and fewer rights.

The only possible answer to this is a joint struggle for a 6 hour day with full wage compensation.

As long as the unions couldn’t care less, employers can offer women lower wages because they are «provided for». In todays situation, women can become a lever to press down wages. Therefore, we believe that the struggle for women’s rights is today necessary to strengthen working class unity and to meet the bourgeois offensive. It is of course, a condition for mobilising the female half of the working class, which has the worst circumstances and most to win through fighting.

This struggle must be a central task for a revolutionary marxist-leninist party.

Grounds for repression of women under capitalism

The grounds for repression of women under capitalism are women’s position in the family and a society based on division of labour according to sex.

In addition to class repression, which affects women in the oppressed classes, women are repressed as a sex in two ways:

— the bourgeois represses women
— men represses women

The bourgeois repression of women

The family is a part of socety’s basic organization and of capitalistic relations of production. It carries forth bourgeois property through inheritance. The family and not society has the main responsibility for providing for those without income. In this way the bourgeoisie is spared enormous expenses. Historically speaking, men have been the family providers. Women stand in a stronger economic position today, because they represent half of all employees. Yet women are still economically dependent on men. Many hundreds of thousands of women do not have income giving jobs. The labour market is divided according to sex and women are concentrated in routine type jobs with low status and low pay. Half the number of working women have part time jobs. These conditions arise again because the family will always choose the «easiest» way to secure a necessary income. This means that the man has full time work and is the main provider, because his work has a higher value than the woman’s. Capitalism will never give everyone full time work.

Capitalism secures women as a huge reserve army of labour power. The consequences of this family system affect all women, whether or not they live within a family, whether they are heterosexual or homosexual. All women lose the market divided according to sex and low wages.

Throughout the entire history of class society, the ruling class has oppressed women particularly, and given men privileges. This colours all institutions and relatiionships, careers, politics, school, the media, church, the unions etc.

The ruling ideology elevates men and represses women

Pornography and prostitution present women as objects
The struggle for women's liberation has long traditions in Norway. The sign to the left says "We want the night back", and the one to the right: "Fight against all oppression of women.

PHOTO: KIRSTEN KARLSEN AND SAMFOTO

The women's movement

The increase in women's paid work activity is an important reason for the broad women's movement which takes up their struggle in all areas. Women have strengthened their political power. Because repression of women touches all women no matter class, there is the basis for a broad struggle.

Women in the working class have a special historic role in this movement. Together with the other women of the working people (small farmers, workers, intellectuals etc.), they are all repressed as both class and sex. As well as this they must fight the repression of men from their own class. They must lead the women's struggle and be at the same time an especially important leading force of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie. They must do away with capitalism both to free themselves as workers, and as women.

A women's organization is therefore also a necessary ground for women's liberation and thereby for revolution and socialism. Also here, it is the case that the working class must play an active role.

The women's movement cannot win if it is limited and steered by illusions that women can liberate themselves without changing the whole of society. More and more women understand this, through struggle.

In the same way, women in Norway cannot gain liberation isolated from the women of the rest of the world. Today imperialism is the most important hindrance to the bettering of women's situation. Women and women's movements must see their part in the fight to crush imperialism on a world scale. The women's movement must tie close bonds with the working class and to develop a common struggle.

Kvinnefronten

(\textit{women's front})

\textbf{In Norway}

AKP(m-1) looks upon the building of a nation wide women's organisation as a strategic task. An organization for women in all types of jobs and life situations, of all ages, who can stand on the front line for the different areas of women's struggle, lead mass struggle and fight for women's premises in class struggle.

Kvinnefronten has existed in Norway today for 13 years. It has an anti-capitalist platform, and has always fought for ordinary women's interests, for work, kindergartens, self-determined abortion, against pornography and for international solidarity. Kvinnefronten has carried on the fight against all attempts to isolate women's struggles from the struggle against imperialism and the struggle against the bourgeois state and the Soviet Union. Today Kvinnefronten is fighting especially for the six hour working day with full wage compensation, against women losing their jobs, against pornography and violence to women, and for active international solidarity work - including support of the freedom fighters of the civil and working class.

The front has groups in many places in Norway and shows influence outside of its own ranks. Kvinnefronten has led the 8th of March Marches in Norway in recent years the 8th of March has been celebrated with demonstrations and meetings in 30-80 different places.

AKP(m-1) has many active members of Kvinnefronten.

The struggle for socialism and communism

In the debate on AKP(m-1)'s newly adopted program, the women question was a central factor. The struggle to make an end to the repression of women has for the first time been discussed as an absolutely necessary part of the struggle for socialism and communism.

The debate has also pointed out that a central task for the socialist economy must be to create the possibilities for full women's liberation.

This means a stop to division according to sex in all areas of society. Today's institutions of the family, which suppresses women, must be abolished. The family must be replaced by new basic groups which the people choose for themselves. These have the following strategic tasks:

- Equal relationship between men and women
- Education for all people of all sex (in each separate little group of people) must have the responsibility to provide for and take care of its members.
- All members (also children) must be able to work and earn their living. The struggle against unemployment and underemployment. The right to work for all.
- Women's freedom in all sexual matters.
- Women's freedom to choose for themselves.
- Women's freedom in all political and social fields.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of culture, art, science, sports.
- The freedom to participate in any form of politics.
- The freedom to participate in all parts of the economy.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of leisure and recreation.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of education.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of communication.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of health care.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of recreation.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of entertainment.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of exercise.
- The freedom to participate in all forms of exercise.
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In September-October 1984 a delegation from the central committee of the Workers’ Communist Party (marxist-leninist) headed by Pal Steigan, was in China. Six comrades spent three weeks visiting Beijing, Shanghai, Shandong province and the economic zone in Shenzhen. This was Pal Steigan’s fifth visit to China. On previous occasions he has met Mao Zedong, Chou Enlai and Hua Guofeng. This time he, and the entire delegation, met Hu Yaobang. The delegation also participated in the celebration in Beijing of 1. Oktober - the 35th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic.

Greater prosperity
Class Struggle has asked Pal Steigan what he found most conspicuous in today’s China.
— The greater prosperity, without a doubt. The shops carry more merchandise, people are better dressed and there is a lot of new housing. Many of the political slogans have been replaced by advertisements for Sony and International. A question which remained unanswered was whether China would develop in a commercial direction in the time ahead, with political issues taking second place to purely economic factors.

A question we consider important is the role played by the working class in Chinese society, given the new economic reforms. What of trade union rights? What power does the working class have? On the question of how the delegation approached the tour, Pal Steigan said that very critical questions were put to the Chinese comrades throughout.

Open hosts
— Compared with previous visits our hosts were relatively open. They gave close attention to our questions and provided us with a wealth of material to take home.

The Workers’ Communist Party (marxist-leninist) has not adopted a viewpoint on the economic reforms in China. We believe unreservedly that major changes in the economy were necessary in order to modernize China. But we will not take a stand on the concrete measures now being carried through. We see clear dangers associated with the economic reforms which we discussed openly with our Chinese hosts. Will the gap between poor and rich in China become so wide as to amount to a cleavage between the classes? Does the manufacturing industry being developed through joint ventures with overseas companies contain the beginnings of an urban bourgeoisie? Is there a risk that a new landowner class will emerge in the rural areas — as witnessed in many other Third World countries. Pal Steigan cites issues which the delegation worked on.

Gains undermined?
— There is a danger here that the gains won through socialism will be undermined, he emphasizes. And the dangers are quite obvious, in my view. It remains to be seen how the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people will meet this situation. Our sincere wish is that China will succeed in building up a modern socialist country with an advanced technology and culture. But we realize there are many obstacles to be overcome. For the time being we consider it too early to draw any preliminary conclusions.

At international level we noted China’s support to liberation movements, e.g. in Kampuchea, and its general support to the Third World. China gives large and valuable support to those struggling against imperialism and hegemonic desires. There can be no doubt about that. But at the same time there appears to be doubt regarding China’s views on the situation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It is no secret
that there are differences of opinion between our two parties in this respect, differences which we discussed frankly with our hosts.

Develop relations

Pål Steigån relates that the visit was concluded with a mutual desire to develop relations between the Chinese Communist Party and the WCP(m-l) of Norway in a number of fields, for example through further tours by special delegations.

— I should stress that the visit was carried through based on the principle of parity between the WCP and the CCP, he says.

— What was the greatest surprise of the visit to China?

— We chose the same route as in 1981. The biggest surprise was probably the marked economic progress made in the most backward rural areas. We feared that progress had only been made in the advanced rural areas. Otherwise, the capital Beijing had changed a great deal, with large new housing projects in evidence. Obviously there are immense ecological problems. Waste gas from industry is a major problem. At the same time, energy utilization is low. The Chinese face great challenges here.

The visit to one of the economic zones was a novel experience for this delegation. And I must admit that the strategy presented to us for the next 70 years, with the aim of creating a developed modern China, was more comprehensive and ambitious than I realized. It was slightly surprising to discover how well informed they were of the new technological revolution. I would assert that in material terms China is undergoing a very sound development. What worries China’s friends is whether socialism and the leading role of the working class will survive this process. China has always occupied a central role in the young revolutionary movement, and many are the parties — including the WCP(m-l) — which have sworn by «Chinese solutions» to political problems they have faced.

Independent

— The most important lesson to be learned is that the Chinese always did what they themselves considered right. Ignoring the Komintern’s directives, Mao applied Marxism’s general principles to the actual conditions in China. That is why there was a revolution in China. And that is why we cannot emulate China today. Mao once said to some foreign guests who praised China uninhibitedly: «Go home and forget everything you’ve seen!»

Pål Steigån emphasizes how important it is to cool one’s ardour once in a while.

— A significant weakness of the young revolutionary movement in the Western world was that we too failed to listen to what Mao said, he says in conclusion.

Right: What will the future bring him?

PHOTO: LEIF GABRIELSEN

Beneath: China is prospering. New houses are built and the shops can offer a great variety of commodities.

PHOTO: PETER M. JOHANSEN
The Soviet Union: Advanced Capitalism

On 8 February 1948 the Yugoslav party leader, Djилас, returned from a meeting with Stalin in Moscow and reported to the Yugoslav party leadership: «We must expect to have to manage on our own and not count on any assistance. The Soviet government will subordinate us to their own policies and force us down to the same level as the occupied countries of Eastern Europe». This was the first time a Communist leader questioned the nature of the Soviet state. The Soviet Union's international prestige was at its peak at this time. Djилас' statements would never have been believed by communists around the world if they had been made known outside the borders of Yugoslavia.

Soviet Union and China. It relates to the critique of the Soviet Union's best «friends». While the capitalist countries in the West were undergoing a world crisis in the thirties, the Soviet community was being methodically developed. Although some Western economists doubt Stalin's growth figures, nonetheless, it is at all events clear that economic growth in the first two five-year periods stood at 5 to 12 per cent. Labour productivity was on the increase and the country was in the process of turning into an industrial great power. Despite (the large-scale devastation of wars) and the economic policy. But, at the same time the Soviet Union has acquired new friends. As a superpower with large economic, political and military resources the Soviet Union has played the part of «progres- sive» vis-à-vis liberation movements which have struggled against U.S. imperialism. Moreover, the large Soviet market acts as a magnet for capitalist groups and opportunities the world over. For them it is therefore important to tone down the criticism of the Soviet Union. These factors, and the fact that Soviet society is as closed as it is, have meant that there is still much confusion as to the nature of the socialist system in the Soviet Union. The fine phrases about socialism, the leading role of the party, the planned economy etc., blur the picture and serve to disguise the true facts - capitalism in an advanced form: Social Imperialism. In this article I will present some of the material which shows the Soviet Union to be capitalist. In the first instance I will examine the economic system.

Planned economic growth or crisis?
It may be useful to take a look at what the system has achieved, before going on to criticism of a more theoretical nature. Practical experience is, as we know, the most important source of knowledge. As a matter of state policy for socialists are no help when statistics show steadily decreasing growth and crises in the economy! Historically it is precisely statistics which have been the Soviet Union's best «friends». While the capitalist countries in the West were undergoing a world crisis in the thirties, the Soviet community was being methodically developed. Although some Western economists doubt Stalin's growth figures, nonetheless, it is at all events clear that economic growth in the first two five-year periods stood at 5 to 12 per cent. Labour productivity was on the increase and the country was in the process of turning into an industrial great power. Despite (the large-scale devastation of wars) and the economic policy. But, at the same time the Soviet Union has acquired new friends. As a superpower with large economic, political and military resources the Soviet Union has played the part of «progressive» vis-à-vis liberation movements which have struggled against U.S. imperialism. Moreover, the large Soviet market acts as a magnet for capitalist groups and opportunities the world over. For them it is therefore important to tone down the criticism of the Soviet Union. These factors, and the fact that Soviet society is as closed as it is, have meant that there is still much confusion as to the nature of the socialist system in the Soviet Union. The fine phrases about socialism, the leading role of the party, the planned economy etc., blur the picture and serve to disguise the true facts - capitalism in an advanced form: Social Imperialism. In this article I will present some of the material which shows the Soviet Union to be capitalist. In the first instance I will examine the economic system.

Imports and exports. During the 1980s, when the economy had been «in preparation» for the 1975-80 period, the Soviet policy. But, at the same time the Soviet Union has acquired new friends. As a superpower with large economic, political and military resources the Soviet Union has played the part of «progressive» vis-à-vis liberation movements which have struggled against U.S. imperialism. Moreover, the large Soviet market acts as a magnet for capitalist groups and opportunities the world over. For them it is therefore important to tone down the criticism of the Soviet Union. These factors, and the fact that Soviet society is as closed as it is, have meant that there is still much confusion as to the nature of the socialist system in the Soviet Union. The fine phrases about socialism, the leading role of the party, the planned economy etc., blur the picture and serve to disguise the true facts - capitalism in an advanced form: Social Imperialism. In this article I will present some of the material which shows the Soviet Union to be capitalist. In the first instance I will examine the economic system.

Productivity falling
Economic growth in capitalist Norway stood 50 per cent over the growth in the socialist USSR. Statistics were no longer on the Soviet Union's side. Not only was GNP expanding by 5.5 to 6 per cent annually, (in the period 1946-62 growth in Norway was 4.7 per cent). The very high growth for the Soviet Union's «brilliant» results. However, the growth figures soon became less impressive, and for the period 1976-80 economic growth was down to 2.8 per cent annually. (By way of comparison, annual GNP growth for Norway was 4.2 per cent in the same period.)

Can the USSR be said to be capitalist?
In my view the declining growth figures do not show that capitalism is superior to socialism. However, they are a warning because drastic changes have taken place in the Soviet system. More to the point: can it be asserted that a country with a tightly and extensively controlled economy is capitalist? In the main the idea that capitalism characterizes countries with a highly developed manufacturing sector, private monopolies and extensive merchandise trade is most probably correct. But, at the same time, there are clearly wide differences between the social systems of the capitalist countries. They differ in regard to historical background, level of development, and also class...
The collective sector is maintained to be found in agriculture. The collective farms control the means of production. They are state properties without the doubt the most important means of production. It is state property which provides the basis for the power of the ruling class in the country. However, there is little doubt that major contradictions also exist within this system. After the reforms of 1965 the individual trades and enterprises have acquired greater independence. The struggle for credits, projects and prices lays the basis for numerous contradictions within the state economy. Given favourable conditions the individual state enterprises can raise profits and thereby the standard of living of the employees, in the first instance those at director level.

The Nomenclature

The Nomenclature — representatives of the people or a ruling class? Does the dominant state sector not guarantee that the socialist sector of the economy wins over the private sector, and that all means of production come under the control of the working class and the working people? A prerequisite for this is of course that the state property is controlled by the working class. This was at one time the case in the Soviet Union. Today the facts show that the Nomenclature itself takes an active part in the illegal market. Trips to the West provide them with both access to foreign currency and to goods which can be sold on the private market or Russian market at a huge profit.

Privileges

Another factor which shows how the leaders of party and state have distanced themselves from the people is the extensive system of privileges enjoyed by Stalin and Lenin.

Who controls the means of production?

Today one type of Soviet criticism asserts that the USSR is a super-centralized social system controlled by the Nomenclature. They say that the country has one set of capital resources. This bears little relation to reality. The Soviet Union is the world's largest state in extent. There are so many nationalities, over 100 languages and wide variation in economic development. In this system contradictions between the nationalities and the Russians, the Ukrainians, the nationalities numbers approximately 50 million and accounts for about 20 per cent of the population. The Uzbek number about 10 million, and a number of other nationalities are over 5 million strong. There are contradictions between the state and the collective sector and between the state and the private sector. All these contradictions are between groups which control the means of production. Thus, there is clearly no question of a single centre of power.

I will come back later to the Nomenclature, the most powerful of the power groups in the country. I shall include some data in order to show about just as much land as the state farms. Collective property is a form of group property which, through trade with the state and trade on the market, has its own economic interests. About 20–25 per cent of the Soviet population today live on collective farms.

In the Soviet Union there is both a legal and an illegal private sector. The legal sector is to be found in agriculture. It is well known that the USSR today is dependent on the private producers for meeting the country's needs for important food products. Some 4 per cent of the Soviet Union's land area is in private hands. Yet this area accounts for 60 per cent the country's potato production, 40 per cent of fruit and eggs and 25 per cent of meat, milk and vegetables (M. Goldman: USSR in Crisis, 1981, pages 83). Through private trade much capital is accumulated which goes to consumption of luxuries by the rich. However, it is also used for expansion within the large illegal sector. All who have travelled in the USSR have encountered the black market. According to estimates by Western economists, this market accounts for 20–25 per cent of GNP, i.e. a market larger than the entire national product of Norway! All kinds of article are sold — from machinery and equipment which are stolen from state enterprises to imported luxury cars or foreign currency. There is no reason to doubt that the Nomenclature itself takes an active part in the illegal market. Trips to the West provide them with both access to foreign currency and to goods which can be sold on the private market or Russian market at a huge profit.

Evidence for this: The economy of the Soviet Union has developed more and more into a war economy. The military-industrial complex and the consumer goods sector and service sectors are underdeveloped. The people's basic needs are not being met. People still have to queue for basic necessities. The quality of consumer goods is very poor. Today the USSR has more large quantities of consumer goods from Eastern Europe.

Hungarian and Yugoslav economists I have spoken to say that the Soviet Union takes everything we can deliver. They don't ask about quality. The following explanation for this was given by a Hungarian economist at the Ministry of Finance in Budapest: «The Soviet Union compels us to deliver space merchandise so that they themselves can invest in the war industry.» In recent years the Soviet defence appropriations have stood at 12–15 per cent of GNP, a figure that is particularly high given the economic problems facing the country.

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Is labour a commodity? This is a question that has been debated throughout history. The concept of labour as a commodity is central to the understanding of capitalism. In a capitalist system, the worker sells their labour power to an employer in exchange for a wage. This wage is determined by the supply and demand for labour, and it is not necessarily tied to the value of the goods or services produced.

The idea that labour is a commodity is a fundamental aspect of the theory of political economy developed by Adam Smith. Smith argued that the division of labour and specialization of tasks are essential to the efficient production of goods and services. However, the concept of labour as a commodity has been criticized by Marxists, who argue that it is a form of exploitation where the worker is robbed of their full potential.

In conclusion, the concept of labour as a commodity is a complex and multifaceted one. It is a key element in the operation of capitalist economies, but it also raises important questions about the nature of work and the rights of workers. The debate continues to this day, as new economic and social conditions emerge.