

FORUM

INTERNATIONAL

FOR THE UNITY OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT



No. 4

August, 1981
Vol. 2, No. 2

Feature:
**The Soviet
Union
Today**

plus...

Armed Struggle
in Ireland

Debates on
communist unity

News from the
revolutionary
struggle

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International Forum needs correspondents of all kinds in order to get different views circulated, to inform people of what debates are going on and to describe the life and work of the various revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist organizations in the world. There are all sorts of ways to help improve the quality of the magazine and its distribution.

Send us your assessment of the texts we reproduce. Tell us what you think of the journal generally and suggest how it could be improved. Give us suggestions for the best texts or articles by different Marxist-Leninist forces that we can print on specific topics. Send them to us — preferably in English, French or Spanish. If the piece in question is in another language, it would really help us in the search for relevant documents and in subsequent translation if you could do a brief résumé of it. Let us know how you react to the positions put forward by parties and organizations in other countries than your own. Send us documents from the past or present of the international communist movement that are hard to find. Alternatively, tell us how we can procure them so that we will be able to make them accessible to a wider audience.

Send us information about the most important items being published concerning the revolutionary struggle in your country and around the world. Tell us what Marxist-Leninists are doing in your country. Send us your position on the major events in your country and on a world scale.

Order a number of copies of **International Forum** to distribute within your organization, among the democratic and the revolutionary forces that you have contact with. Take the initiative of sending some copies to comrades that you know in other countries. Ask them what they think of it and send that opinion on to us.

Suggest to local bookstores in your area that they carry **International Forum**. Do the same in the outlets on university campuses, in the committees of solidarity with overseas struggles, in unions and mass organizations, in the armed people's organizations etc.

Every little bit counts. Each thing you do, slight as it may seem, can help build the ties between the Marxist-Leninist forces in the world. It can aid in intensifying the co-operation — and the ideological struggle — between the forces that are working to make the path of proletarian revolution and building socialism prevail around the world.

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Introduction

Letters and announcements

This section of *International Forum* is based on the correspondence from our readers around the world. It is open to any kinds of news or announcements our readers wish to send concerning their theoretical or practical work, as well as to letters which comment on *Forum* itself and on the texts we have published.

From Ireland

We were very pleased to see our position on the Broad Front published in your journal, *International Forum* (ed. note: in issue no. 3), and hope that it will encourage debate among anti-imperialists.

We believe that Broad Anti-imperialist unity is essential for the successful outcome to the present struggle for liberation in Ireland and indeed in all countries where a revolutionary situation exists.

One point of clarification: demand no. 8 is no longer accepted by the IRSP. It was felt at our last Ard Fheis (annual Congress, 1980) that such a demand excluded many elements from working for anti-imperialist unity, as it could be construed in such a way as to appear that only those who support the Armed Struggle could be involved in the proposed Broad Front. The IRSP will work with all progressive elements on a principled basis to achieve these demands.

We wish *International Forum* every success.

Is Mise, Naomi Brennan,
General Secretary
Irish Republican Socialist Party

Cypriot comrades support *International Forum*

Dear comrades:

We have received the third issue of *International Forum* and your letter in which you expressed your financial difficulties in publishing *International Forum*. We understand very well your financial difficulties in publishing matters. In one of the meetings of the International Relations section of the Organizing Committee of the Communist Party of Cyprus (Marxist-Leninist) we decided to contribute some money. We are ready to help you as much as we can. We find it necessary because *International Forum* and your other publications, i.e. *Proletarian Unity* and your newspaper "IN STRUGGLE!" are helping a lot in giving information about the International Communist Movement and the revolutionary struggles going on all over the world. It is necessary to help your M-L organization because we see that your organization stands opposed to revisionism, modern revisionism, and all kinds of anti-ML positions of counter-revolution.

Taking into consideration your financial need we would like to send you a sum of 50 pounds sterling right now, and we will try to arrange regular subscriptions to *International Forum* and other publications of your organization IN STRUGGLE!

Also, we would like to see more comments on democratic revolutions and socialist revolution (i.e., the differences between the two stages).

Communist greetings,
International Relations section
of the Organizing Committee
of the Communist Party of Cyprus (M-L)

Declaration by revolutionary forces in Senegal

Editor's note: *International Forum* has received a programmatic declaration from the organization AND-JEF Revolutionary Movement for a New Democracy in Senegal. This declaration has been published at an important time in the political life of this country, a West African country whose economy is largely dominated by French imperialism. Leopold Senghor, the president of Senegal since it achieved formal independence from France in 1960, has resigned to hand power over to Prime Minister Abdou Diouf. The government is talking of giving more democratic rights to political parties, while also stepping up its repression of revolutionary forces. The economy is in a state of serious crisis, and the mass movement of struggle and resistance is growing.

We are printing here the part of the declaration which deals with the political programme of this organization. The complete declaration can be obtained in French and Arabic from the newspaper *Le Prolétaire* of Senegal, and in English in the May 1, 1981 edition of the *Revolutionary Worker* from RCP Publications in the USA (addresses at back of *Forum*).

* * *

AND-JEF RMND (Revolutionary Movement for a New Democracy) is a political organization which bases its action above all on the working class and is open to the laboring peasantry, to revolutionary intellectuals, to thoroughgoing democrats and patriots. It aims to break the Democratic National Movement away from reformist and revisionist influences, to make the workers movement — which is the vanguard of the struggle for new democracy — the leading force of a true democratic national movement.

AND-JEF RMND intends to organize the masses, not around saviours, but around a political programme for the road of Popular and Democratic National Revolution.

AND-JEF RMND, through the process of carrying out its political objectives, supports every revolutionary movement directed against the neo-colonial and semi-feudal system but fights resolutely against any programme or action which attempts to mislead the struggle of the Senegalese people.

AND-JEF RMND will develop militant solidarity with the international proletariat, national liberation movements, and progressive and democratic forces in the world.

AND-JEF RMND is advancing the following political programme which is based above all on the full and active mobilization of the working people under the leadership of the proletariat:

- Establish a State of New Democracy;
- Build an independent national economy in the service of the people;
- Ensure the social well-being of the popular masses;
- Develop a scientific, popular, and national culture;
- Carry out a policy of independence and real sovereignty.

Around this fighting platform, the PROVISIONAL INITIATING COMMITTEE calls on all proletarian revolutionaries, workers, peasants and thoroughgoing patriots and democrats determined to fight for the national and social liberation of the Senegalese people to join in its efforts to establish a legal political pole.

The signers urge all militants and supporters to set up ways to plan and get the initiative going everywhere in the factories, businesses, workshops, neighborhoods, schools, universities, villages, and emigration areas, with a view to the recognition of AND-JEF RMND.

Forward to the open activity of AND-JEF Revolutionary Movement for National Democracy.

Long live AND-JEF Revolutionary Movement for National Democracy!

Long live the struggle of the Senegalese people!

For the Provisional Initiating Committee

Studying revisionism

We have subscribed to the journal you publish, *International Forum*. We have just received the first three issues, as we requested. Overall they provide a welcome wealth of information about the many groups that exist. On these grounds the magazine is performing a vital function.

One of the vital topics addressed in *Forum* and by many of the contributors is the subject of the depth and extent of revisionism over the past 3, 4, 5 decades. We too have a keen interest in this subject. In fact, several members of our groups worked on and published a book (title: *On the Roots of Revisionism*) in co-operation with other individuals who are not in our groups. The book examines the history of the Comintern and the CPUSA, with the main emphasis on the period 1928-1940. It criticizes the Seventh Congress of the Comintern for right opportunism on the question of popular front governments, not only as this concept was "applied" but also its theoretical foundations. At the same time the book defends the adoption of united and popular front tactics for the conditions of the time. The criticisms of the CPUSA are broader, sharper, and more extensive.

We expect readers of *International Forum* will want to be aware of this book. It has been advertised in several publications in the USA, but has had very limited distribution overseas. It is available from: Road Publications, P.O. Box 24589, San Francisco, California 94124, USA. The cost is \$6.90 American plus postage. It is 445 pages long.

Comradely regards,
Some American militants

Publications received

News from the revolutionary movement in Azania (South Africa) is now available in *Solidarity*, the official organ of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania. *Solidarity* is published quarterly, in English. The issue of October, 1980 deals with the following themes:

- the urgent tasks defined by the recent conference of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCM(A));
- analysis of the student struggle and school boycott in Azania;
- recent news of the mass struggles of the students, teachers, and workers;
- comments on Zimbabwe and the struggles in the Caribbean.

The address for this journal is at the back of *Forum*. *Solidarity* needs international subscriptions and donations, and publicity, as a concrete form of support to the Azanian revolution.

* * *

We have received the recent issue (no. 9) of the Liaison Bulletin of the CEDETIM, a center of the anti-imperialist studies in France. This issue of the bulletin is the first introducing a new format for this publication. Many of the texts in this issue were presented originally at a CEDETIM-organized conference on the theme of "Anti-imperialism and Non-alignment". Other texts deal with racism and immigration, with French imperialism, and with South Korea and Zimbabwe.

What is interesting about this collection of texts is the emphasis given to concrete analysis and recent developments in relation to such questions as anti-imperialist struggles, French imperialism, war preparations, and the imperialist role of the Soviet Union. The Liaison Bulletin can be ordered (in French) at: CEDETIM, 14 rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris, France.

* * *

The Communist Workers Party of the USA writes to inform our readers about a new book and a film dealing with the murder of five of their party members by the Ku Klux Klan (American fascists and racists) two years ago in Greensboro, North Carolina. The book is entitled *The Greensboro Massacre* and the film is called *Red November, Black November*.

The murder of these five communists has become a national political issue in the USA, because of the direct involvement of both the Klan and the American State, and because the fascist murderers were declared innocent in a trial in spite of video films showing them firing on the communist demonstrators. This book and film are of interest to those who want to know more about how one American communist group analyzes the rise of political repression and fascism in the USA. For more information, contact the CWP, USA (address at the back of *Forum*).

Editorial by International Forum

The Soviet Union and the world communist movement

For the last twenty years, one of the most basic points of unity among communist forces around the world has been their criticism of the phoney "socialism" of the Soviet Union and their opposition to the revisionist line of the Soviet leaders and their international supporters. Today, this unity is increasingly put into question. Most communist organizations and parties still criticize Soviet-type "socialism" and still denounce the Soviet line as revisionist. But although the same words are used, the real meaning that is given to them is becoming very different...

In fact, there are two distinct trends that are developing concerning the role of the U.S.S.R. in world affairs and the kind of socialism that the Soviet Union stands for. Many communist forces see in contemporary world events a confirmation of the need to militantly oppose the policies and actions of the Soviet leaders. They see the U.S.S.R. arming itself for inter-imperialist war — and using these arms for its imperialist interests in Afghanistan. They see in the Polish struggle the starting point for a revolutionary struggle against the state-capitalist regimes in the U.S.S.R. and the Eastern European countries. They react to the set-backs in the struggle for socialism — especially the triumph of the capitalist road in China — by working harder to understand the roots of revisionism in the formerly socialist countries, including in the U.S.S.R.

But many other communists are taking the road of increasing conciliation with the Soviet Union, with what it does, and with the kind of society it represents. They secondarize or ignore the imperialist actions of the U.S.S.R. and they concentrate on giving their support to the liberation movements fighting U.S. imperialism — movements that are often being courted by the Soviet Union and its allies. What they find in the Polish workers' struggle is a chance for "socialism" to be democratized and reformed. Faced with the theoretical problems posed by the difficulties and defeats for the proletarian revolution in a number of countries where the working class took power, they simply capitulate. They want us to return to the romantic myth of one big happy socialist camp, a strange sort of socialist paradise where revisionist leaders run free to carry out their plots against proletarian revolution while the "socialist" economic base remains untouched.

Communists have to firmly oppose this growing trend to conciliation with Soviet imperialism and Soviet-type state capitalism. Those who ignore or deny the reality of Soviet

imperialism cannot build a real internationalism, even on the level of world-wide anti-imperialist solidarity. Those who pretend that socialism still exists in the U.S.S.R. and its Eastern European neighbours are not only spreading confusion on the nature of these societies. They are also deforming the very meaning of genuine socialism as a period of working-class rule and transition to communism.

But fighting this opportunist trend is not simple or easy. This battle presents some very real challenges for communists around the world.

It is within the struggles and movements that face American (and Western) imperialism as their main enemy that we find the most sympathy for the Soviet Union and its allies (like Cuba). So communists who are serious about exposing the real nature and role of the U.S.S.R. are going to have to learn how to do real education within the revolutionary and anti-imperialist movement fighting U.S. imperialism. And a pre-condition to doing such education is that the communists give honest and effective support to these struggles. Too many communist forces still want to take the easy way out on this question. Some reduce their education on the role of the Soviet Union to support for those movements — in Afghanistan, in Eritrea, etc. — that are already engaged in militant struggle against the U.S.S.R. and its allies. Others adopt a completely leftist and sectarian posture towards the revolutionary forces that do not recognize the U.S.S.R. as an immediate enemy, insuring in advance that their "pure" positions will never be listened to or discussed.

If communists are going to expose the role and nature of the U.S.S.R. they will have to raise the theoretical level of their analysis and debates on these questions. There is nothing in the current debates to seriously challenge the basic understanding that the Soviet Union acts as an imperialist power, or that Soviet-type socialism is in fact a society based on exploitation and repression of the working class. But there is much which puts into question some of the superficial and dogmatic ways that Marxist-Leninists have developed this analysis. What is needed today is to develop our understanding of the societies like the Soviet Union to the point where it represents a comprehensive understanding of the basic laws of motion that are particular to these social formations. The best way to make progress towards this kind of understanding is through a serious exchange and debate among the Marxist forces who share this basic goal.

Editor's note

Other than those written by IN STRUGGLE!, the articles and documents reproduced in this publication do not necessarily reflect IN STRUGGLE!'s positions. We have taken the initiative of reproducing these texts because we consider that they are of interest in the ideological and political struggle being waged among the forces who are struggling to demarcate from revisionism in their country and in the world.

As well, the articles reproduced have been chosen by IN STRUGGLE!, in certain cases at the suggestion of those who wrote them. We intend to develop this type of collaboration as much as possible so that the content of International Forum will not depend solely on the knowledge and capacities of our organization.

The Soviet Union today

Comments on the debate on the nature and role of the Soviet Union... Presentation by International Forum

For over twenty years now the question of the nature and role of the Soviet Union has been one of major importance for the communist and revolutionary forces around the world. But recent developments both in the world situation and in the world communist movement have also given a particularly sharp and lively character to the debates on this question today. That is why we have chosen this question as our main theme for this issue of **International Forum**.

When we began to prepare this issue we knew that it would be impossible to deal with all the important questions and debates concerning the nature and role of the U.S.S.R., especially in a situation where we are making an overall assessment of problem for the first time. What we have tried to do instead is to provide a selection of texts that give an overview of the most important debates going on **right now** within the world revolutionary movement, concerning both the role of the Soviet Union in world affairs and the different theories and criticisms of Soviet-style "socialism".

The first text, from the MAPU-Workers Party of Chile, provides an analysis of a very important recent event in world affairs: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The next two texts deal with the nature and role of Cuba, a country that plays a key role as an ally of the Soviet Union, especially in Latin America and Africa. The article from the American anti-imperialist newspaper, the **Guardian**, takes up the defence of Cuba against the aggression of U.S. imperialism, based on the view-point that Cuba is a revolutionary socialist state practicing militant internationalism. The analysis of Cuba by **IN STRUGGLE!** of Canada is quite different. Their article examines the recent decisions of the 2nd Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in order to contest the idea that Cuba is still on the revolutionary path. It focuses on the capitalist nature of economic management in Cuba, and on the ways in which the Cuban party's international policies are based on collaboration with those capitalist and imperialist forces who have contradictions with U.S. imperialism.

The next three articles provide different view-points on the Polish workers' struggle — a subject that has been very widely discussed in the revolutionary and communist press around the world. The first two articles show the depth of the disagreements that exist among communist forces concerning their attitude towards this struggle. The newspaper **Que Hacer** from Venezuela analyzes the demands of the Polish workers as legitimate, but says that the Solidarity unions and their leaders are reactionary forces allied with American imperialism. This position represents a partial demarcation from the views of the Party of Labour of Albania (and its followers), who condemn the basic demands of the Polish workers as well as their leaders and independent unions. The document from Proletarian Democracy in Italy represents a view-point which is completely different from these analyses and which has had wide-spread support among different kinds of communist and revolutionary organizations. They give their militant and enthusiastic support to the Polish workers' movement in its present form, and see in the move-

ments' recent victories a real step forward towards a genuinely socialist and revolutionary movement in the Eastern European countries. The next article on Poland is taken from the newspaper of En Avant Prolétaires in France, and deals with the question of the nature of Polish society. The French comrades take on the opportunism of the revisionists in the French trade unions who pretend that the struggles and victories of the Polish workers prove... the socialist nature of the Polish regime! Their polemic is important, because this kind of argument is widespread in the trade-union movement in the West, where the Polish workers' struggle has won important sympathy and solidarity. But it is also quite relevant to a number of communist forces internationally who are also pretending that Polish "socialism" is being reformed through the pressure of mass struggle.

The last two articles are of a somewhat different character, being devoted to an overview of the current debates among Marxist and communist forces concerning the nature of the Soviet Union and Soviet-type "socialism". The first, prepared by **Forum**, looks at the debates in the American communist movement on the nature of the U.S.S.R. The second, taken from **Ethiopian Marxist Review**, takes an analytical and critical look at the theories of Marxist dissidents in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. These two texts together provide some idea of the theoretical debates that are taking place concerning a Marxist understanding of these societies.

Here are what seem to us to be the most important questions and conclusions that we can draw out from studying these texts...

The Soviet Union as an imperialist power

There are still a great many anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces that refuse to speak out on the imperialist nature of the U.S.S.R. It is not at all uncommon to find revolutionary organizations who will struggle against the class collaborationist and reactionary policies of their "own" revisionist party, but who are very tentative or even completely silent, when it comes to the reactionary role of the Soviet Union in world affairs.

The analysis of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan by the Chilean comrades provides a good example of how this kind of thinking must be challenged. Their article shows clearly both the imperialist nature of this invasion, and as well the opportunist nature of the arguments used to justify it. When this article criticizes those sectors of the Chilean left that refused to condemn this Soviet aggression, it is in fact criticizing a whole trend within the world revolutionary movement.

There is another kind of thinking that obscures the imperialist role of the Soviet Union and the reactionary role of its allies, like Cuba. The **Guardian** article represents this view-point quite clearly. The **Guardian** will admit that the Soviet leaders are "revisionist" and their foreign policy sometimes reactionary — as in Afghanistan. But they insist on **mainly** judging the international role of Cuba, and the Soviet Union, by one criteria: their opposition to U.S.

imperialism and their support to the forces fighting American domination. This way of looking at the alignment of world forces is quite wide-spread, and particularly strong among the revolutionary movements that confront U.S. imperialism as their main enemy.

The basic problem in the *Guardian* line lies in the **method** by which they analyze the world situation. Their position reduces the struggle against imperialism to the struggle against the most powerful imperialist country — for the *Guardian*, that country is the USA. With this method, the *Guardian* simply ignores the **class nature** of other states and forces in conflict with U.S. imperialism.

Of course the Soviet Union and Cuba give a certain kind of aid to different liberation movements that fight against American imperialism. So do the West German imperialists. The question is why do they do this? Is it really a form of internationalist aid that will strengthen the proletarian revolutionary forces? Or is it not, in fact, one tactic that is used to weaken their American imperialist rival and to gain influence over the future revolutionary governments that may be created?

It is also true that the prestige of the Cuban State throughout Latin America is based on some real economic and social gains of the Cuban revolution. But this kind of revolution cannot be understood without examining its bourgeois democratic (capitalist) nature. This is true for Cuba in the past, or for governments like Nicaragua today. The fact that the Cuban economy is in increasing crisis, or that the Cuban State is allied with the reactionary policies of the U.S.S.R. around the world, cannot be detached from the fact that the Cuban revolution did not continue forward on the socialist road. And even if the revolutionary government in a country like Nicaragua is today a progressive force, the fact remains that the battle over the future consolidation of genuine socialism remains to be fought out in this country as well. To simply accept the "socialist" label that these governments give themselves only creates confusion about the problems that revolutionaries must clarify.

All of this leads us to the general question of the Soviet Union as an **imperialist** power. For the last twenty years Marxist-Leninists have maintained that capitalism has been restored in the U.S.S.R. and that this process was accompanied by the transformation of the Soviet Union into an imperialist power. Today this theory is increasingly under attack. It has been discredited among many revolutionary forces because of its association with the reactionary Chinese "three worlds theory", a theory that called for collaboration with Western imperialism and reactionary third world regimes in the name of fighting the Soviet menace. It is also a theory that has been weakened by dogmatic interpretations, such as the idea that the Soviet Union represents "fascism of the Hitler type", or that the Eastern European countries are simple colonies of the U.S.S.R.

But the fact remains that the theory of the Soviet Union as an imperialist power remains the only revolutionary theory which attempts to explain the reactionary role of the U.S.S.R. in world affairs in a **materialist** way. How else do we explain the Soviet Union's building up of a massive military force designed for **offensive** purposes, and its use of this force in countries like Afghanistan? How else can we understand the use of Cuban troops to battle the Eritrean liberation forces who threaten the (pro-Soviet) Ethiopian State? How else can we explain the friendship between the U.S.S.R. and fascist dictatorships like those of Turkey and Argentina? How else can we understand why the Soviet

Union not only supports state-capitalist regimes in Eastern Europe, but is prepared to use its tanks to crush the workers' revolt against these regimes? What is most striking about **all** those forces that contest the theory of Soviet social-imperialism, is that they have no theory at all to explain these things.

The Polish struggle and Soviet-style socialism

The Polish struggle has provoked massive sympathy and support from progressive and revolutionary forces around the world. It has also revealed the total disunity that exists among communist forces when it comes to analyzing the class struggle and revolutionary perspectives in this kind of society.

Some communists oppose the struggle as reactionary, at least in its present form. The only proof they offer for their position is the fact that there are reactionary ideologies and leaders which have influence in the struggle, and that the Western imperialists are trying to profit from the struggle. This happens to be true... not only for Poland, but for most mass and working class struggles around the world. But what is more important is that these arguments are used to oppose the Polish workers' basic demands, particularly their demands for independent trade unions and for political liberty. These demands would be supported by these same communist forces if they were put forward in any Western or third-world capitalist country. So why are they reactionary in Poland?

Other communist and revolutionary forces give their militant support to the Polish workers' struggle, but see it leading to an improved and reformed "socialism. We are led back to the same fundamental question. What do communists really mean when they call Polish society "revisionist"? Do they mean that it is a capitalist society that must be changed through working-class struggle and proletarian revolution? Or do they mean that it is a kind of deformed socialism, a society with a socialist structure and opportunist leadership, a society whose socialist remnants must be defended... or reformed?

We think that any analysis of the Polish struggle must start from the understanding that Polish "socialism" really is a form of **capitalism**. The workers' struggles and demands are legitimate and progressive. They are rooted in the class exploitation of the Polish workers. The victories won will improve the conditions of struggle. But the partial victories won will not resolve the situation of grave economic, social, and political crisis in Poland, a crisis rooted in its exploitative social system. The debate on the workers' immediate struggles and demands must be pursued. But this disagreement should not blind us to the importance of another fundamental question, the question of the path to proletarian revolution in a country like Poland.

Some theoretical questions

Historically, two main theories have been put forward within the world revolutionary movement to criticize the Soviet Union and Soviet-style socialism. The Trotskyists have analyzed these societies as degenerated workers' states, countries which maintain a socialist economic base but whose corrupt leadership must be overthrown in a "political" revolution. Marxist-Leninists have analyzed that a capitalist system has been fully restored in the formerly socialist Soviet Union.

Today, there is a wide range of Marxist thought which analyzes the U.S.S.R. and the Eastern European countries as

exploitative and class-divided societies, but which challenges these two theories in their interpretation of the nature and laws of these social formations. This debate poses some fundamental questions that must be confronted seriously by revolutionary forces who want to develop a coherent and convincing theory of these societies.

One of the challenges to both the theories of bureaucratic degeneration and capitalist restoration comes from those who emphasize the historical **continuity** of the problems of the Russian revolution. They bring up the question of political democracy and working-class power under socialism, questioning the basic role of the Bolshevik party as a ruling party. They also bring up the problem of the role of the development of the **productive forces** in limiting or encouraging the development of genuine socialism. Returning to the original Marxist proposition that socialism and the transition to communism would take place in those societies where capitalism had greatly developed the productive forces, they contest the possibility for real socialism to be built on the basis of backward societies, like Tsarist Russia at the time of the October Revolution.

Another element in the discussion comes from those who maintain that the classical economic laws of Marxism for capitalist society do not apply to the U.S.S.R. and the Eastern European countries. The implication of this position seems to be the need to develop a Marxist political economy for a type of social formation that presents certain new historical features, different from either traditional capitalism or genuine socialism.

Afghanistan

Why did the Soviet Union invade Afghanistan?

When the Soviet Union undertook its massive military intervention in Afghanistan in December, 1979, it encountered not only wide-spread armed resistance from the people of Afghanistan, but also strong condemnation from a broad range of anti-imperialist forces throughout the world.

One example of this condemnation is the following article, written by the MAPU — Workers' Party, a Chilean Marxist-Leninist organization active both within the resistance movement inside Chile and among the Chilean exiles abroad.

Written in May, 1980, a few months after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the article is a positive example of the kinds of polemics conducted by communist forces to expose the reactionary role of the U.S.S.R. in the international arena. It tries to situate the invasion in relation to the imperialist interests of the U.S.S.R., and it directly refutes the different arguments that are used by the Soviet Union and its supporters to try to justify this particular military aggression. As well, the article gives us a brief portrait of the resistance forces inside Afghanistan; and it also exposes the opportunist attitude of those forces in the Chilean left that refused to condemn the Soviet aggression.

The translation from the Spanish is by IN STRUGGLE! More information on the struggle in Afghanistan can be found in the last section of this current issue of *Forum*.

A debate to be pursued

All of the questions that we have brought out here are of the greatest theoretical and practical importance for the world revolutionary movement. We intend to continue this discussion in the near future in the pages of *International Forum*, possibly in another issue devoted completely to the discussion we have begun this time.

We hope that we will have contributions that will help us go further in the debate on the fundamental nature and laws of societies like the U.S.S.R. We also would like to have texts that deal with certain specific questions that require deeper analysis:

- the economic role of the U.S.S.R. in today's world and the material basis of its imperialist policies;
- the nature of the pro-Soviet communist parties and revolutionary movements; the ideology of these parties and the question of Euro-communism; the problem of tactical alliances with these forces in the anti-imperialist struggle and workers' movement;
- the path to revolution in countries like the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the nature and role of the workers' movement and the existing political opposition in these societies.

Our ability to develop this debate in a useful way depends on your contributions. We want texts for reference, to understand the most important debates taking place and the main theories and positions being discussed. We want texts for publication, whether from your organization or from others that you know of. And we want your comments on the texts and opinions that we have presented in this issue.

Against Soviet intervention in Afghanistan

In the face of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, MAPU Workers Party of Chile declares:

1. It absolutely opposes this intervention, which has nothing to do with a so-called defence of the Afgha people. Its fundamental and immediate goal was to prevent the defeat of the pro-Soviet regime installed in April of 1978, and to assure USSR control of the Afghan government and State. Both the coup against Amin and the massive USSR military intervention last December were thus a typically reactionary and imperialist response to an unstable internal situation caused by the bureaucratic and repressive character of the regime then headed by President Hafizullah Amin.

A regime also rejected by the people

2. The pro-Soviet regime led first by Taraki and later by Amin was extremely precarious and unstable. Without any doubt, its instability and weakness arose from its bourgeois class character and its revisionist and bureaucratic ideas and practice.

Its "democratic and national" programme was purely formal and demagogic. The agrarian reform promoted by the regime has been a manifest failure (as even the Soviet press admits). This is precisely because they tried to **impose** predetermined agricultural plans and measures on the mass of peasants from above — and this included the use of force — without any participation of the peasant masses in the discussion or elaboration of the policies. On the other hand, using the age-old argument that "the people are in power", they openly denied the workers (labourers, government employees, etc.) the right to strike. All attempts to mobilize to defend their most immediate economic and democratic interests were brutally repressed. This repression was also systematically used against progressive students and intellectuals each time they expressed their disagreement with this or that government measure. Consequently, the basic **democratic** tasks were quite far from being really taken up and accomplished by the regime.

The situation is no better with respect to **national** tasks. The struggle was exclusively directed against American and European imperialism. Not only did the Kabul regime seek the backing of Soviet social imperialism but it even **subordinated** itself to the latter in practice. Consequently, **instead of effectively defending the national interests of the country**, one form of imperialist domination was replaced by another.

Certain revisionist ideological and political positions can be found underlying this "democratic-national" program. The strategic perspective or objective of the regime was certainly not socialism, but rather **State capitalism**, subordinated to the Soviet regime. Similarly, the **State** established in Afghanistan after the April, 1978 coup was not a "people's State" or a "form of the dictatorship of the proletariat". It was a clearly **bourgeois State controlled by a State bourgeoisie in the process of constituting and developing itself**.

A regime with essential characteristics like those could not be democratic or national in practice. Its growing isolation from the **vast majority** of the people (in particular from peasants, urban workers and students) and its consequent instability and precariousness was therefore inevitable. Not only was this regime disclaimed by the former dominant classes, but it was also repudiated by the majority of the people. The regime was unmistakably bound for extinction.

The true character and objectives of the Soviet invasion

3. The Soviet intervention and invasion which overthrew and liquidated Amin's **government** to save the established pro-Soviet **regime** was a brutal attack against the independence and national sovereignty of Afghanistan and against the fundamental right to self-determination of the Afghan people. It was fundamentally an imperialist, colonialist and expansionist action, essentially similar to what the same Soviet social Imperialism is now perpetrating against the heroic people of Eritrea. It is comparable to Yankee imperialism's many acts of aggression and intervention in various parts of the world.

On the other hand, Soviet intervention tends to sharpen inter-imperialist rivalry — particularly between the USA and the USSR. It thus **considerably increases the danger of war on a world scale, giving U.S. imperialism new pretexts to further militarize its economy**, perfect its gigantic war machine and continue its attacks on the people. We are therefore dealing with an act that creates new obstacles to the development of the democratic and national liberation movement and the struggle for socialism on a world scale.

What is more, Soviet intervention further **proves the non-socialist, but rather capitalist and social imperialist nature** of the USSR. A genuinely socialist country does not crush the independence and national sovereignty of another country; it rigorously respects the right to self-determination of peoples and promotes the organization and mobilization of the popular masses in other countries against their fundamental enemies. In other words, a socialist country would do just the opposite of what the USSR is doing today in Afghanistan and to what it has done and continues to do for instance in Czechoslovakia and Eritrea.

By intervening in Afghanistan, the USSR is clearly trying to assure its control over Afghanistan and to convert it into a **tool** of its expansionist and hegemonist objectives in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. In other words, the Soviets want control over the principal sources of energy (particularly oil) in the West; of important maritime transportation and supply routes; of the gigantic natural resources on the African continent; and of the main access routes to the European continent.

The facts speak for themselves: the intervention in Afghanistan now; the interventions in Czechoslovakia and Eritrea; the USSR's hegemonistic and imperialist policies towards Somalia and South-Eastern Asia; its open economic and political support of dictatorships and fascist regimes like the one in Argentina. All these events have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate to the peoples and revolutionaries of the world that the basic strategic objective of the USSR on a world scale is to **conquer others and impose its political, ideological and military hegemony** even if it means a new world war. Its goal is not to promote or encourage the development of revolution and socialism.

The Kabul regime gets more isolated every day while the people's resistance builds up its strength

4. The situation inside Afghanistan has not stopped degenerating since the Soviet invasion. The Karmal regime has no support besides the almost 100,000 soldiers in the Soviet invasion force. **Despite** brutal and growing repression, popular demonstrations and uprisings — especially by Kabul students and workers — against Soviet occupation are daily stronger and more numerous. In fact, contrary to what is said by revisionist forces and certain opportunist or uninformed sectors of the international left, the **main force** in the anti-Soviet resistance is **the peasants** and other sectors of the people and not the old dominant classes. And in the **leadership** of the resistance, beside right wing Islamic and other reactionary organizations, several revolutionary and progressive organizations are participating more and more. Recent popular demonstrations were led by SAMA (Afghan People's Liberation Organization), a progressive people's organization with a clear, anti-imperialist anti-feudal orientation. SAMA, Djaba-é-Nuristan, the Molate organization, the Sorkh-ka, the Ojambez Guerrilla Organization, and other popular and democratic organizations represent the most active sectors of the anti-imperialist and anti-Soviet resistance right now.

Arguments to Justify Soviet Intervention

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has provoked reactions comparable to those aroused in 1968 by the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Just as on that occasion, today the Soviets as well as their most obsequious allies (among whom the CP of Chile as always holds a place of honor) and certain centrist groups try to justify the aggression and fool the people with arguments that don't stand up under any analysis. Let us look at the principal ones briefly: A) They say that "Without Soviet intervention, reactionary forces would have overthrown the (Amin) government" Brezhnev even said that the USSR prevented "another Chile debacle". First, if the danger of overthrow existed, it did so precisely because of the isolation and weakness of Amin's pro-Soviet government. Secondly if the reactionary forces succeeded in getting enough backing from the masses to threaten the government, it was precisely because of the government's incapacity to respond and satisfy the basic grievances and demands of the people. Thirdly, with respect to our country, the Soviet position is completely hypocritical. In effect, what did the USSR do, to prevent the "Chile debacle"? Did it not **deny** economic support to the Allende government (when the latter asked for a \$500 million loan, they barely received \$50 million, which is just about the same the USSR lent to Brazil and China)? Did it not guarantee the Yankees that it would "stand back" if there was an eventual coup d'état against the UP government?

B) They say that if the USSR had not intervened, the USA government would have promoted massive subversive activity from Pakistan against the Afghan government. This is as weak an argument as the previous one. First because neither the USSR nor the Agghans have shown any **conclusive proof** that an intervention was being prepared. Second, because if the Afghan government **really was defending the national interests of its country**, it would have been able to defeat any imperialist manoeuvre with its own means, that is to say, backed by its own forces and all this without the need of Soviet intervention.

C) They say that the Soviets were **invited** by the Afghan government to come to their aid. Very well, but everybody knows that the first thing the Soviets did upon entering massively into the country was to kill Amin, his family, the majority of his government, and most of his personal guard of 4,000 men they bombed the seat of government, disarmed, immobilized and purged the Afghan army, etc. Is it reasonable, therefore, to think that the victims "called in" those who proceeded to destroy them?

D) Finally, it was said that Amin was an "agent of the CIA". Can this be seriously said of the number two man in the Khalq party (which had always been pro-Soviet) of Taraki's Prime Minister, of the President of the Republic officially greeted by the USSR after the coup against Taraki? Besides, why wasn't the accusation made before, when Amin was Prime Minister or President? Needless to say this singular accusation has not been backed by any **concrete data**.

In fact, what we're dealing with are "arguments" whose prime objective is to make propaganda; to set up a smoke-screen to stop people from seeing and understanding the real character of the Soviet intervention. That is, to prevent people from seeing the hegemonic and imperialist character of the intervention.

The validity of essential revolutionary principles

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan gives new and greater support to the validity and truth of essential revolutionary principles such as the following:

— That in the present historical conditions a **consistent anti-imperialist** position implies and demands that one confront and fight not only U.S. imperialism (and eventually its European and Japanese allies) on a world scale **but also Soviet social Imperialism. Being anti-Yankee is in practice no longer synonymous with consistent anti-imperialism.** In Latin America, a truly anti-imperialist position means first to fight the principal enemy, U.S. imperialism. But it also means maintaining an intransigent independence with respect to the USSR, condemning and combatting its attempts to control and infiltrate revolutionary movements for national liberation and its hegemonistic plans on a world scale.

— That a party, a nation or a country can only guarantee its autonomy **by counting fundamentally on its own forces.** A country that claims to "count on one imperialism to fight another" is doomed in the short or long run to losing its autonomy and independence and to being defeated by its enemies.

— That an effective national and democratic struggle directed towards socialism can be victorious **only if it is taken up by the popular masses and led by the revolutionary proletariat.** A "national democratic" struggle that does not basically depend on the strength of the masses, on their organization and mobilization, that goes as far as to substitute itself for the masses and repress them is not only doomed to failure but is, in fact, reactionary and not genuinely democratic and national. The Afghan experience clearly demonstrates this.

The Soviet intervention has put the Chilean left's consistent anti-imperialism to the test

7. The fact that a significant part of the Chilean left and democratic movement has condemned the Soviet invasion is very positive. The Christian Left, MAPU-Garretton, PCR, PS-Altamirano, MAPU-Workers' Party and groups of Social Democrats have all expressed their opposition. On the other hand, the PC — in keeping with its traditional and unconditional pro-Soviet stance — has given its immediate and unstinting support to the Soviet aggression against the Afghan people. This again demonstrates the profoundly inconsistent character of the CP's anti-imperialist position. On the other hand, it is regrettable that the leadership of MIR and other parts of the left, through opportunism or lack of information, have also taken up the defence of the Soviet invasion. The SPC, for its part, has also come out against the intervention. However, this only expresses the pro-Yankee character of this party and is in no way an anti-imperialist position.

The Soviet invasion has given a significant boost to Pinochet's dictatorship. The latter has used it to wage a broad smear campaign against the left, against socialism and against revolutionary forces, which in reactionary propaganda are systematically confused or identified with the U.S.S.R. In the same way, on the continental level, the Soviet invasion serves the interests of U.S. imperialism both on the ideological and political levels. In Central America, particularly in El Salvador, the people's movement is waging

a fundamental war against the big bourgeoisie, the landlords and Yankee imperialism. An eventual American invasion is more likely there now than before the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Now, more than ever, U.S. imperialism has a solid pretext to step up its aggressive incursions against the people of the Latin American continent. If the U.S.S.R. can barefacedly intervene in its own "back yard", the why can't the United States do the same thing?

Support the resistance of the Afghan people against Soviet intervention

Finally, we call upon all democratic, popular and revolutionary groups in Chile, in Latin America and the whole world to continue expressing their categorical opposition to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan; to show the broadest and most active solidarity with popular resistance in Afghanistan to Soviet occupation and aggression; to condemn and combat the hegemonistic and war-mongering plans of the two superpowers; to promote revolutionary struggles in their own countries and to back the people who, like those of Eritrea, Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, Nicaragua, and El Salvador find themselves on the front lines of the struggle against the fundamental enemies of the people of the world.

Soviet troops, out of Afghanistan!

Long live the revolutionary struggle against the two superpowers!

Long live real proletarian internationalism!

External Leadership of
MAPU WORKERS PARTY

Cuba

Cuba and its role in world affairs

One important aspect of the contemporary role of the U.S.S.R. is its close alliance with a number of less developed countries that claim to be "socialist" at home and "anti-imperialist" in their international relations. Examples of these countries include Vietnam in the South-East Asia, Ethiopia and Angola in Africa, Syria in the Middle East, and Cuba in Latin America.

Revolutionary and communist forces around the world are very sharply divided in their assessments of these States and of their role in the world revolutionary struggle. The case of Cuba is particularly interesting in this regard, because the disagreements are very clear. The two articles that follow will give our readers an idea of the very different analyses that are made concerning Cuba and its role in the world.

The first article is taken from the March 4, 1981 issue of the *Guardian*, an independent American weekly newspaper of revolutionary and anti-imperialist news and analysis, with a large circulation in the American left. The *Guardian* article calls for the militant defense of Cuba in the context of the current U.S. offensive against the liberation forces in El Salvador and against other progressive governments and anti-imperialist struggles in Latin America. For the *Guardian*, Cuba is a socialist State and an important ally of the liberation struggles. As with many anti-imperialist forces around the world, the *Guardian* considers that U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of the world's people, and that the revolutionary forces must determine their alliances and tactics on this basis.

The second article is taken from the January 20-27, 1981 edition of the weekly newspaper of the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada IN STRUGGLE!. This organization considers that Cuba is neither a genuinely socialist country nor a real ally of the international revolutionary struggle. This article tries to demonstrate this viewpoint through a critical analysis of the recent Second Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba. The article concentrates on the capitalist nature of the management of the Cuban economy, and on the compromising and reformist nature of Cuba's support to the anti-imperialist struggles, while also drawing out the relation between these questions and Cuba's close links with the U.S.S.R.

'Hands off Cuba!'

The Reagan administration's bellicose policy in El Salvador is a means, not an end in itself.

Washington obviously intends to keep an unpopular, rightwing government in power in this tiny Central American country by any means necessary, quite possibly including direct U.S. intervention. Certain parallels to the early stages of the Vietnam war are already evident.

But the rightist Reagan regime has a considerably larger objective in its political, economic and military sights: strengthening U.S. domination throughout all Latin America within the context of sharpening its confrontation with the USSR.

To achieve this goal, President Reagan is concentrating on backing the fascists in El Salvador — but he is also directing the main blow at socialist Cuba, secondarily at revolutionary Nicaragua and at the Soviet Union.

In the process, the Reagan administration is speedily strengthening rightwing forces in Central and South America while attempting to frighten more liberal regimes into silence or at least neutrality, not only on the question of El Salvador but on the larger goal of expanding U.S. hegemony on the entire continent. In addition, Washington is twisting the arms of the Western allies to force them to support this policy after many have already gone on record as supporting the Salvadoran liberation movement.

Cuba has been singled out for particular U.S. hostility in this affair because it is a militantly revolutionary socialist state with close ties to the USSR and exercises deserved political and moral influence over the oppressed masses of Latin America. As such it is a natural rallying point of opposition for all the governments Washington seeks to bring under its anticommunist umbrella.

With this in mind, let's look at the U.S. propaganda campaign launched in recent weeks to generate support for the fascist junta and weaken the backing earned by El Salvador's national liberators from social-democratic and liberal bourgeois governments as well as from progressive and socialist countries.

In essence, the U.S. claims that the just struggle for freedom in El Salvador amounts to little more than a cynical drive for power by the USSR carried out by Cuba with support from Nicaragua.

"Secret documents" (a la Vietnam) have been circulated by Washington alleging that the liberation forces are being supplied with arms from the socialist countries via the good offices of Cuba and Nicaragua. In addition, Cuban President Fidel Castro has been "accused" of trying to foster unity

among the diverse progressive movements in El Salvador in 1979.

As Marxists, we think that such actions, if true, would be perfectly justified. The rightist junta is composed of blood-stained fascists responsible for murdering over 10,000 of their own people last year. It is not a "center" government striving to exist against extreme left and right opposition. It is a rightist regime beholden to U.S. imperialism which keeps the people of El Salvador in penury and national bondage. It deserves to be overthrown and would have been, had it not been for U.S. support.

The point is that the allegations regarding massive arms shipments, which the Salvadoran liberation forces say are untrue, are being used to justify dangerous U.S. threats against Cuba, curbs against Nicaragua, intensification of the cold war with the USSR and escalation of Washington's involvement in the fascist counterinsurgency war in El Salvador.

Several times during the 1980 election campaign, candidate Reagan noted his government would entertain the option of blockading Cuba and taking other action against this outpost of freedom and socialism in Latin America. Now he's found his rationale.

Blockade talk and worse is in the air. Chief White House policy adviser Edwin Meese said in reply to a direct question Feb. 22 that the administration would not "rule out anything," including a blockade. He also said other forms of U.S. action against Cuba are "entirely possible if the arms shipments do not cease."

A few days earlier, Secretary of State Alexander Haig told Western diplomats that "the left (in El Salvador) is increasingly under Marxist domination and Cuban influence" and that "what is happening is part of the global communist campaign coordinated by Havana and Moscow to support the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador."

The former general and NATO commander continued: "We have not yet decided on the precise steps we will take to deal with the situation. We will, however, in some way have to deal with the immediate source of the problem — and that is Cuba."

Replying to these threats Feb. 24, President Castro said the U.S. was searching for a pretext to "wipe Cuba off the Latin American map. We will fight for each piece of our territory to the death in case imperialism attacks us."

As Washington's propaganda offensive mounted, the Reagan administration announced it was considering sending \$30 million more in immediate military aid to the rightwing junta and some two dozen additional military "advisers" to train the fascist army. The U.S. claims only a handful of military personnel are in El Salvador at the moment, but a spokesperson for the Democratic Revolutionary Front told the *Guardian* the number was more like 230 and growing.

The U.S. role in El Salvador is reminiscent of the early 1960s in Vietnam — total military and political support for a rightist government fighting popular liberation forces; the gradual increase in Pentagon "advisers;" attempts to weld an alliance with other reactionary military forces (Guatemala, Honduras) in the region to oppose the revolutionary struggle; allegations of an international communist conspiracy based on "captured secret documents" which cannot be verified; measures taken against neighboring supporters of the popular struggle (such as the aid cutoff to Nicaragua).

The White House is going to some lengths to deny any parallel with Vietnam. Reagan said Feb. 24 "we have no intention of that (Vietnam) kind of involvement" but noted the same day that U.S. troops were forced to leave Vietnam "not

because they'd been defeated, but because they'd been denied permission to win" — the first time in several years that a President felt confident enough to justify the Vietnam war.

Haig in his comments said, "We do not intend to have another Vietnam and engage ourselves in another bloody conflict where the source rests outside the target area" — meaning Cuba directly and the USSR indirectly.

It is good to see an El Salvador support movement developing in this country. At the same time it is obvious Washington's designs go beyond El Salvador and are a harbinger of vastly increased U.S. penetration throughout all Latin America and quite possibly a serious move against socialist Cuba and revolutionary Nicaragua.

Thus, in addition to opposing U.S. adventures in El Salvador, the time has clearly come to oppose Reagan's moves on the continent in general, defend Nicaragua and increase solidarity with the heroic Cuban people, and once again demand "Hands off Cuba!"

Is Cuba still revolutionary?

On January 20, 1981, Fidel Castro gave the closing speech at the Communist Party of Cuba's second Congress, held from January 17-20. He addressed almost 150 foreign delegations representing pro-Soviet communist parties, liberation movements and even some social-democratic parties of the Socialist International (SI) (1), as well as more than a million Cubans. This fact alone is a measure of the prestige which the CPC has among many political trends and working people around the world.

But the economic situation in Cuba, brought to light during the congress, and the path which Castro is proposing to the peoples struggling against imperialism, give food for thought and should lead us to question the supposedly revolutionary path which Castro claims to be defending.

Certain economic difficulties

One of the main concerns of the congress was the economic situation in Cuba. Despite an overall situation envied by many of the peoples dominated by U.S. imperialism, the main report presented by Castro revealed that the objectives of the 5-year plan adopted at the First Congress in 1975 were not attained. Economic growth reached only 4%, despite an objective of 6% and the industrialization plan met with difficulties. These results are of some importance since the objectives set at the last congress were consciously modest.

Today, the Cuban leaders persist in explaining these difficulties by referring to the same difficult conditions which they have invoked for many years now to explain their policies. Reference is made to Cuba's ever-present situation of underdevelopment which dates back to the overthrow of the Batista dictatorship (complete dependence on the fluctuation of sugar prices manipulated by the monopolies, extreme poverty of the population, and so on), the economic blockade declared by the U.S., invasion attempts, etc.

Today, in addition to the historic conditions, there are the repercussions of the fluctuations in the prices of oil and sugar on the Cuban economy, with oil moving ever higher and sugar dropping, as well as the deep economic crisis in the Western imperialist countries. It is to be noted that the report is completely silent about the economic crisis in the U.S.S.R. and the so-called socialist camp. Cuba is certainly experienc-

ing the backlash from that, especially since between 1975-79, the U.S.S.R.'s share in Cuban commerce rose from 48% to 67%. It should also be pointed out that the key role played by the production of sugar in the Cuban economy is the result of Cuba's place in the international division of labour imposed by the U.S.S.R.

A new system to manage the economy

Given this situation, the Second Congress underlined the need for increased mobilization in production and stepped up plans to implement the new system to manage the economy which was first adopted at the First Congress.

At the time, this system was presented as an answer to the idealist errors of the 1965-70 period when it was claimed that all forms of market economy had abruptly been eliminated. The system clearly draws inspiration from the experience of the economic reforms introduced in the U.S.S.R. by Khrushchev in the early sixties, which are judged as positive. These reforms underlined the importance of "the law of value, the necessity that in all enterprises, including State enterprises, there are buy and sell relations, and that within these relations (the market categories) function as indispensable instruments for measuring the use we make of our productive resources... in order to decide which investments are the most advisable, and to know which enterprises... work the best..."

The result of these reforms is much autonomy for the enterprises, the right for the most profitable to keep part of their profits as a stimulus, to produce and sell marginal products on their own and to set up their own bonus systems for their workers. In practice, this leads to the creation of a privileged group within the working class formed of workers from the most productive, modern factories.

Implantation of a free market

Thus, at the 2nd Congress, Castro could state that "the plan now deals with categories such as investments, costs, and profits". For the mass organizations, he fixed the objective of promoting the application of another part of the reform, a generalized system of wages based on production bonuses. It was also decided to put an end to rationing of products which are considered non-essential. Although their prices will have to be raised, they will be put on the open market where independent peasants can get rid of part of their produce. The system will only be fully implemented in 1985.

A socialist policy?

A long debate could be held on the specific virtues or the inevitability of any one of these measures in a country which is just coming out of a period of under-development. But taken globally, the past experiences with this system in the U.S.S.R. and the other Eastern European countries have shown that they do not lead to socialism. On the contrary, they lead to the development of a new bourgeoisie and promote the appearance of a new form of exploitation of the working class.

We are not trying to deny the reality of the difficult concrete conditions which the Cuban leaders and people had to face. Our efforts to make an assessment of the struggle for socialism as a basis for a scientific criticism of modern revisionism, lead us to pay much attention to the inevitable burden carried by the different people's and anti-imperialist revolutions, like the one in Cuba, due to the backwardness of

these societies and their isolation in a world still dominated by imperialism.

However this does not lead us to accept the affirmations of the Cuban leaders which claim that the policies they have been applying over the past years have something to do with the building of socialism, nor that they should be presented as such to the many other peoples whose eyes are turned towards Cuba. The same difficulty arises on the subject of Cuba's foreign policy which it also claims was established in the name of socialism.

International co-operation and overtures to social democracy

Over the years, Cuban foreign policy has gained a reputation for its support to revolutionary struggles, such as its current support for the struggles in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. The support given these struggles is real and is underlined in the report. However, try as we might, we are unable to find a single line in the report where the revolutionary path taken up by these peoples is given as an example of the path to follow. Thus, while the struggle of the Salvadoran people is given but brief mention, the bourgeois movement of the non-aligned countries highlighted in the report as the strategy to rid these countries of imperialist domination. The report states "a period of wide-scale international co-operation must be ushered in the world" and "it is time... to co-ordinate the interests of the developing capitalist countries, the socialist countries and the developing countries so as to find constructive proposals".

Consequently, the report salutes the apostles of the North-South dialogue, such as the Socialist International leaders who act in the name of European imperialism, notably West-German imperialism. It especially considers the growing presence of social democracy in Latin America, as well as the "social-democratization" of the former bourgeois parties and oligarchies as important and positive.

So, at a time when the entire continent is in turmoil, the Cuban leaders are not putting forward the revolutionary path of armed struggle against imperialism and local reactionary forces as the solution. Pointing out the danger represented by Reagan's election, to the point of praising Carter, they suggest that the solution is the emergence "of a current which is independent of Washington" grouping together different countries dominated by their bourgeoisies, led by the richest nations such as Mexico, and even Brazil, a country which is still controlled by a clique of fascist military men.

These policies, which undoubtedly correspond to the specific interests of the Cuban leaders, are in complete conformity with the political objectives pursued by the U.S.S.R. in Latin America. Cuba's role is to link itself with and support the revolutionary movements so as to have them riding on the coattails of Russian imperialist interests. Every page of the report can be interpreted as unconditional support for what is referred to as "the U.S.S.R.'s peace policy". Thus, on the subject of Poland, for example, one can read that "it is absolutely beyond doubt that the socialist camp has the right to preserve integrity, to survive and to resist, at all costs, imperialist attacks", thus giving advance support to an invasion which the U.S.S.R. has been threatening since the fall.

In the current context of war preparations and the sharpening of contradictions between the imperialist blocs, this support for Soviet policy which the Cuban leaders are defending within a number of revolutionary movements where they have an audience is quite alarming. In the end, the danger is

they may mobilize these peoples to support the aims of Russian imperialism, and in the short run, to liquidate their own projects for social transformation in the name of conciliation with the pro-Soviet and other reformist trends. This should certainly be the subject of a deep and broad debate on a question which is of importance to many progressives, anti-imperialists and revolutionaries.

(1) Those present included the United Leadership of the Guatemalan Revolutionary Organizations, the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front of El Salvador, the Polisario Front, the South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO), the ZANU and several Chilean organizations.

Poland

Is the Polish workers' struggle being led on a reactionary path?

The recent struggles of the Polish workers have won broad international sympathy and support, not only from different communist and revolutionary organizations, but also from many trade unions and mass organizations. But the analysis of this struggle within the international communist movement has also been very contradictory. In fact, a certain number of Marxist-Leninist forces have concentrated on criticizing the movement as it presently exists, claiming that it is being led on a reactionary path by counter-revolutionary leaders in alliance with Western imperialism. This kind of analysis has come not only from apologists for the Moscow revisionists, but also from communist organizations and parties who consider that Poland is a revisionist country.

The following article is typical of this latter reaction, and explains this basic position in a condensed form. It is taken from the February 25, 1981 issue of *Que Hacer*, a Venezuelan revolutionary newspaper which is published by the Committees of Popular Struggle and which reflects the viewpoint of Venezuelan Marxist-Leninists.

We would like to point out to our readers that *Que Hacer* has been able to resume regular publication, under conditions of severe political repression and great financial difficulties. Contributions and subscriptions are greatly needed, at the address indicated in the back of this issue of *Forum*.

The English translation from Spanish is by IN STRUGGLE!.

The Polish workers revive their revolutionary past

Just as capitalist countries are going through an economic, political and social crisis as a result of U.S. imperialism's situation on a world scale, revisionist or pseudo-socialist countries are also experiencing similar problems due to the policies promoted by the hegemonic Soviet centre. In essence, revisionism is a way for the bourgeoisie to exercise power over a group of countries that form the periphery of

social imperialism.

Both U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperialism are developing a series of measures with the fundamental objective of insuring that the reactionary elements stay in power in the countries under their domination. Both are trying to obtain larger spheres of influence and to expand their territories by continuing to plunder and to oppress peoples. They hope that by doing this they will be able to counteract the crisis of capitalism which is affecting both imperialist powers in a similar way.

The crisis unleashed in Poland over the past few months is a new manifestation of the failure of the policies of the revisionist gang entrenched in power in Poland, which in the same way as any other country restricts the rights of the working class and other sections of the people.

The array of struggles that the Polish working class is waging to win better salaries, to reduce the working day, to obtain the right to strike and to free association are for justifiable demands. They are demands which the working class must try to win from any anti-worker and bureaucratic State, whether it is a declared capitalist one, or a revisionist one hiding behind a revolutionary or socialist mask. What is incorrect is to permit bourgeois forces to prosper within the working class movement of protest and struggle in any country; bourgeois forces which take advantage of the oppression suffered by the working class to take over the leadership of the whole protest movement as has happened in Poland. This is what has happened in the case of the "Solidarity" union, headed by Lech Walesa, thus ensuring that the Western bourgeoisie will revive its fortunes there and achieve greater penetration of the political and economic life of Poland. The religious outlook that Solidarity is promoting, together with other bourgeois ideological values, is an attempt to counteract the truly Marxist positions betrayed by the Polish United Workers Party, the revisionist renegades forming the clique in Warsaw who also in the final analysis represent the ideological views of the bourgeoisie albeit under social-imperialist control.

Both the unions promoted by the Western bourgeoisie, those united together within Solidarity, and the self-management unions promoted by the revisionists are vehicles operating contrary to the interests of the Polish working class. The latter are made to order to serve the economic plans being developed by the revisionist State to get themselves out of the present crisis. They will become more significant as the policy of self-management, which is based on class collaboration, develops. These unions, far from being organizations for the defence of the interests of the working class, far from promoting struggles that could lead to the fulfillment of the historical role of the working class, like taking power and leadership in dictatorship of the proletariat, are conceived and encouraged by the workers' enemies as organizations for compromise, to halt mobilization and to prevent all possibilities of political involvement and organization by workers. This policy leaves the door wide-open for bourgeois currents from one or the other cliques to gain strength among this important section of the people.

Crisis in Poland's economy

The political, economic and social crisis Poland is going through, with an external debt of \$24 billion to the West, is being coped with by the Polish State by the undertaking of negotiations which are further mortgaging the country to Western capitalism.

On the other hand, there is a debt to the Soviet Union

which maintains its relative hegemony in the Polish economy.

With the outburst of the current crisis, the Polish government intensified its relationships with Western capitalism, which, without cancelling old debts, offered to invest new capital to resolve the existing crisis. This new offer comes as much from the European Economic Community as from the United States, Canada, Japan, and other countries not belonging to the E.E.C. and from social-imperialist (Soviet) capital to the Polish regime. It is an investment by U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism aimed at ensuring their quota of political power in that country, and of course, to create a bridgehead from which they hope to penetrate nearby territories. This new situation brings with it a greater super-exploitation of the working class and other sectors of the Polish people.

We are sure that the Polish working class, and other working people will become much more conscious of this situation over time and will build class unity. They will promote and take the leadership of the struggles against both the State power held by the United Workers' Party clique and its allies; social-imperialist capitalism and Western capitalism, which today are working to create better opportunities for themselves to exploit and subjugate the Polish people.

The Polish workers challenge their revisionist rulers

The following text comes from Proletarian Democracy, an Italian organization which is among the most influential forces to the left of the revisionist Italian communist party. Proletarian Democracy is active in the mass struggles and also participates in electoral activities. They publish a newspaper called the *Quotidiano dei lavoratori* (the *Workers' Daily*).

Proletarian Democracy is part of a current which promotes the idea of the autonomous organization of the working class and the masses through the form of workers' and people's councils (soviets). This is based on the understanding that, under socialism, the masses must be able to take part in a very high degree of direct democracy. In relation to Poland, Proletarian Democracy is very active in building support for the workers of the Solidarity movement, while also pointing out the reformist nature of the leadership of Lech Walesa. According to Proletarian Democracy, the committee of workers' defense and social self-defence (KOR-KSS) has a more radical and more correct analysis and tactics in the present situation in Poland.

In reading this text you will notice that certain aspects are already outdated, because it was published in August, 1980, before the fall of Gierek in Poland and the presidential elections in the U.S.A.. However the basic analysis in this text remains very interesting. It situates the struggle of the Polish workers and people in relation to the over-all situation in Europe and internationally, and it also relates the current struggles in Poland to the re-establishment of socialism in that country.

The text is taken from the August 29, 1980 number of the weekly edition of the *Quotidiano dei lavoratori*. The english translation is by IN STRUGGLE!

Polish workers raise the question of power

The bureaucracy tries to co-opt workers demands The U.S.S.R. stands aside... for now

There are a number of reasons why Polish workers are today able to preserve their victories. In our opinion, the first is the nature of the movement that is still growing in Poland. In Poland, more than in any other Eastern European country, it is the working class that is leading the struggle against the bureaucratic capitalist system. There, much more than anywhere else, the programme of struggle is a working-class programme, a genuinely socialist programme. The movement is the outcome of a now lengthy history of bitter struggles waged by the Polish working class against exploitation: against a poor standard of living; housing shortages; the high cost of living; the bureaucracy's arrogant privileges (special stores for various parts of the apparatus, apartments in separate neighbourhoods, villas, cars, incomes 10 or 20 times greater than the average wage); the all-powerful police; the total absence of the most basic democratic rights; and the imperial pressure of the U.S.S.R.. This movement reflects the culmination of a social and economic crisis that has been dragging on in Poland for more than 25 years. It is also a clear indication that the prestige and credibility of the bureaucratic capitalist regime have never been lower. These are the main reasons why the ruling regimes in the U.S.S.R. and Poland have been loath to send in their tanks to crush the Polish workers. The situation was much more complex than some would have us believe.

The rulers in Warsaw and Moscow judged that the only predictable result of military repression would be to seriously aggravate the situation in Poland. They concluded that there would be resistance from the entire population. Only a vast military and economic effort, guaranteed support from the U.S.S.R., and a reform of prevailing economic and social policies in Poland, along with a gradual improvement in the standard of living, would allow them to keep this country in the Soviet empire. The alternative would be the beginning of the disintegration of the regime's consensus mechanisms within the U.S.S.R. itself.

So for the first time in the history of the U.S.S.R.'s relations with Eastern Europe, a policy of conceding and agreeing to negotiate was the lesser evil.

The current situation in European and international politics also played in favour of the struggle of the Polish workers. Military repression in Poland would have seriously endangered the Soviets' painful attempts to persuade the amin governments in Western Europe to discuss "détente" in Europe and to use the crisis affecting the United States to make a breach in NATO. It is perfectly obvious that military repression of the movement in Poland would have spelt the end of these efforts and forced the U.S.S.R. to increase its already huge military budget. Conditions inside the U.S.S.R. have to be kept in mind: the repression of Poland would create a precarious situation, because it would oblige the Soviet regime to act on several levels simultaneously.

In other words, the Soviet regime is worried about what is happening in Poland, but it is even more worried about the possibility of conditions developing in the U.S.S.R. that might produce a similar situation. Internationally, the U.S.S.R. is currently involved in a massive expansionist drive with the goal of getting its hands on Western Europe through a combination of diplomatic pressures, economic promises and military threats. At the same time, it is stepping up its military and political penetration of the third world. The U.S.S.R. is already bogged down in Afghanistan; it cannot afford to get bogged down even more hopelessly in Poland. To really grasp all the difference between the situation of U.S. imperialism, on the decline today, and that of expanding Soviet imperialism, you have to understand what the facts show: that the United States is in crisis while the U.S.S.R. is not.

It is also obvious that the U.S.S.R. has already pushed its expansionist policy to the limit of its available resources. Investing any more in expansion would have serious consequences on the domestic level. When the U.S.S.R. crushed the revolt in Hungary in 1956, and when it invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, it was not involved in Afghanistan, Cambodia or Eritrea, and Cuban soldiers were not patrolling Africa. Poland could be the last straw, either in terms of subsequent commitments of resources or else more generally in terms of the need for a very expensive military build-up along the borders with a Western Europe in the process of rearming.

In our opinion, therefore, the U.S.S.R.'s best bet was a policy of strategic retreat in Poland, especially since Gierek and Brezhnev got some very unexpected help.

The credits the Polish regime needs to meet its foreign debt to the West and try to revive the economy were offered first by Western Europe, and in particular West Germany. Such concern would have been unthinkable not so very long ago. It is explained today by the interest social democracy and part of West European big business have in developing political and economic relations with the U.S.S.R. and its sphere of influence in Europe, especially as the U.S. military "umbrella" gradually weakens as a result of the crisis in the United States and the growing strength of the U.S.S.R.

As for the United States, it seems to be willing to contribute to the West German financial aid for Poland.

It is very unlikely that the current U.S. government would run the risk of losing the upcoming election by adopting a less cautious approach. It also seems conscious of the fact that the United States is weak, politically and militarily, in Europe, at a time when the European arena is particularly decisive.

The Roman Catholic Church in Poland and internationally has probably also been concerned that military repression would mean the loss of the very sizable field of social and political action that it has conquered in Poland.

So the Polish working class seems to be sizing up both the possibilities offered and the outside limits by the national and international context. In the light of this assessment, it is seeking the maximum possible results. The class consciousness organization, political judgement and social influence that the Polish working class has demonstrated in this struggle is encouraging and stimulating.

The Polish working class has focused on improving living conditions — the deteriorating standard of living was without a doubt what sparked the struggle — making as many concrete gains as possible, with a view to eventually ensuring worker control of the economy and political and social af-

fairs. In other words, it wants to clear the way for class struggle to overthrow the ruling bureaucratic capitalist regime and guarantee working-class and socialist democracy.

To put it another way: the Polish working class has very realistically evaluated the national and international context and therefore decided to aim for partial results (free unions and worker control) rather than immediately tackling the presently unrealizable goal of winning working-class political power in Polish society. Winning these partial goals would create much more favourable conditions for the workers' struggle for political power.

It is very clear that the struggle now being waged by the Polish workers could lead to a struggle for political power if we see beyond the cautious positions appropriate in the context of the difficult task of getting negotiations going with a despotic government, more used to deploying open anti-worker violence. The Gdansk, Szczecin and Gdynia platforms address all aspects of political, economic and social life in Poland and propose profound democratic proletarian changes — changes that would push forward the social dialectic and stimulate mass action.

At a time when there is much uncertainty in the Italian left, especially in terms of the end of illusions about Eastern Europe and the possibilities of genuine socialism there, the struggle of the Polish working class has had a one great historic merit. It has confirmed that socialism means maximum direct democracy and freedom of mass action, in the perspective of finding positive solutions to the material and moral problems faced by the masses.

The struggle of the Polish working class has great historic merit because it confirms that the concrete political form of genuine socialist power is the organization of the working class and the masses in Soviets or workers' and people's councils.

Meanwhile, the bureaucratic capitalist Polish government is trying desperately to gradually co-opt the workers' struggle by making more generous material concessions and containing the political ones. It short, it is obvious that the ruling power is attempting to carry out a reform that would safeguard, for the essential, current relations of domination. The model for this is more or less the Yugoslavian model.

But it is not easy to fool or imprison a working class like the Polish working class. We and all Italian workers must resolutely support the struggle of the Polish workers, and building this support must be our immediate goal. This could be an important contribution to helping making sure that the struggle of the Polish workers is neither repressed nor sidetracked from the pursuit of its working-class and socialist goals.

Poland — for opportunists, proof that Polish “socialism really works”

The development of the Polish workers' struggle, and its growing international support, have given rise to a very peculiar kind of analysis by a number of forces linked to the Moscow revisionists. Afraid to isolate themselves by openly condemning the struggle, these opportunists have instead adopted another tactic — that of pretending that the Polish example shows us that this kind of “socialism” can really be made to work in the interests of the working class.

An example of this analysis is the position put forward by the leaders of the French *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT), one of the two main union federations in France, and a body dominated by the revisionists of the French communist party. Their opportunist acrobatics are refuted in the following article by the communist Marxist-Leninist organization EN AVANT PROLETARIAIRES in France. The article also points out the completely reformist conception of socialism that is part of this opportunist analysis.

EN AVANT PROLETARIAIRES is one of several French Marxist-Leninist organizations working for the construction of a genuine communist party. It has taken a general position of militant support for the Polish workers' struggle. The article here is taken from the January, 1981 edition of their monthly newspaper *Combattre*, which also contains other articles both on the Polish struggle and on the CGT as well.

The English translation from the French is by IN STRUGGLE!

The CGT and Poland: Everything is beautiful in its own way

At first, the CGT weekly, *Vie Ouvrière*, was better off on the question of Poland than the PCF daily, *Humanité*. In July, the latter had published news reports explaining that things were well in hand. Since *Vie Ouvrière*, however, did not publish anything on the subject before the last weeks of August, it had less chances of getting caught out. But don't worry, they managed to contradict themselves anyways. On August 27, they wrote that this was a classic social conflict and then, two weeks later declared: “the negotiators' decisions represent a real turning point in the development and establishment of a new economic policy as well as in union practice and the management of enterprises which will give workers a greater place and a more important role”. So as to fall back onto their feet after these acrobatics, they explained

in the October 15 issue, as if the readers were idiots, that the old unions were not all that bad, that they were aware of the workers' demands and that the only reason they had not implemented the reforms was that the leaders were incompetent. They went on to explain that this proves the superiority of the socialist system for the leaders had been re-educated within a few days and they are now working earnestly at doing what they should.

We will not go into the details of these verbal acrobatics. What interests us is what this says about the CGT leaders' conception of socialism.

That is the heart of the matter and they even admit it.

“The end-all of socialism is of course the life of men, their material, cultural and moral well-being” (*Vie Ouvrière*, September 3). There's motherhood and apple pie for you! But things are not that simple and the well-being of one class can stand in opposition to the well-being of another. So we must look at what means a socialist country needs to take to reach that goal.

All the CGT leadership means by socialism is negotiation, union participation in management, etc... that is all.

Negotiations

“At the last convention of the World Federation of Trade Unions (ed note: pro-U.S.S.R.), I said that the right to strike is a right which cannot be banned, that when workers can no longer make themselves heard, they go on strike, including in socialist countries, and that it is then necessary to negotiate with them. That is what is happening in Poland. The situation and the events offer truly intriguing perspectives for dialogue and negotiation between the discontented workers who make proposals and the official authorities of the country.” (Séguy, former secretary-general of the CGT, on a French television network, Antenne 2).

“Cool-headedness, lucidity, a sense of responsibility, dialogue and negotiation, prevailed in the quest for better solutions between the workers and the top men of the Party and the State.

What a contrast with the authoritarian methods and repression used here.” (Séguy on Antenne 2 again, August 25)

In this second public statement, Séguy clearly states that, from his point of view, this illustrates the superiority of socialism.

Vie Ouvrière adds that in Poland, at least, workers are taken seriously. At this point, it becomes downright disgusting. In 1970, when the workers were taken so seriously that tanks were sent in to shoot them, the CGT (and the PCF) approved of this in the name of socialism, for socialism was being threatened by anti-socialist hooligans. That is part of their socialism too. It is only the relative strength of the workers at present that is forcing the State to negotiate, negotiate.

Participation

The September 24 issue of *Vie Ouvrière* published a certain number of letters from readers, with priority given to critical ones, so they said, and answers to them.

“More socialism means increased workers' participation in management.” This statement by *Vie Ouvrière* is all the more significant since it is part of an answer to a reader's letter which raises a fundamental question: why have workers been forced to wage such a hard fought battle to force the “workers' government” and the “workers' party” to consider their demands?

Yet, such participation existed before the Gdansk agreements: “Workers' control bodies also have a role. The self-management conference is composed of the Party leadership, the union leadership, the leadership of the youth section and of fifty workers elected in the various shops. These fifty workers make up what is known here as a “workers' club”, and before each meeting of the conference they make proposals, even if they are on subjects not on the agenda. These workers are not staffers and have no advantages over other workers. The functioning of this structure (elections take place each year) makes possible constant cooperation between workers and the leadership.” (*L'Humanité*, July 14) The plant they are referring to in this quote, where everything is so fine and dandy, is the steelworks in Huta Warszawa — the one which was the hardest line and the most distrustful of the authorities during the conflict over the attorney general's leaflet. It took the victory of the Polish workers for us to find out that there was no more than a handful of workers in these elected self-management bodies, and that the vast majority are engineers, management and technicians. As for the sincerity of the opinions expressed in these meetings, here is an article of an agreement signed after Gdansk: It is forbidden to use apparently legal forms of harassment, including with strikers' families...”

So, that is their conception of socialism: the management of factories and the State remain estranged from workers, but the latter are consulted from time to time on questions of management. And, if they fight hard enough, then there will be negotiations. They are several passages which clearly indicate that that is how they see socialism for France too. Thanks a lot, Mr. Séguy, but we want to have nothing to do with that type of socialism. It is a carbon-copy of capitalism.

Analysis of the USSR

The American left analyzes the Soviet Union

Over the past decade the revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces inside the U.S.A. have remained very sharply divided in their assessment of the nature of Soviet society and of the role of the U.S.S.R. in today's world. Not only is the literature defending the different analyses quite extensive in the U.S.A., it is also on a quite high level of analysis and polemic.

The following article, prepared by *International Forum*, gives a brief portrait of some of the most important of these debates. To the best of our knowledge, these positions are quite representative of the different currents of thought concerning the U.S.S.R. that exist in the revolutionary movement internationally. So we hope that our readers will find this article useful in terms of a general outline of the various kinds of analyses of the Soviet Union that are currently being debated by the communist and anti-imperialist forces around the world.

Important debates on the nature of the U.S.S.R.

Throughout the decade of the 1970's, the general ideological and political leadership of the Chinese and Albanian communist parties was widely accepted among the anti-revisionist forces working to build a new communist party in the U.S.A. This was clear in relation to the question of the U.S.S.R. in particular; the most important Marxist-Leninist organizations put forward that capitalism had been fully restored in the once-socialist Soviet Union, and that the U.S.S.R. was now a social-imperialist and social-fascist State. In the period of 1974-1975 two important books were published that defended and elaborated on this position.

One of these was **The Restoration of Capitalism in the US-SR**, written by Martin Nicolaus, a Marxist academic active in different Marxist-Leninist organizations. The book begins with a brief history of the Soviet revolution up to the period of the Second World War, and analyzes that up to this point the revolution had produced a powerful socialist State with a healthy economy and with the proletariat in firm control. Nicolaus maintains, however, that the objective basis for capitalist restoration already existed at this point, with its social basis in opportunist and careerist party leaders and factory managers, and with the material basis for these pressures lying in the continuing existence of capitalist forms of economic management in both agriculture and industry. He also maintains that Stalin's denial of the continuing class struggle under socialism made the struggle against the danger of capitalist restoration more difficult.

It is in the latter part of his book, however, that Nicolaus' analysis becomes more developed and more original. Basing himself on Soviet as well as Chinese and American sources, Nicolaus paints an elaborate picture to explain exactly how capitalism was restored. The drama begins immediately after the death of Stalin in 1953, with a very bitter but very secret fight between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists that remains confined to the highest levels of the party leadership. The victory of the revisionists, led by Krushchev, leads to the public slander of Stalin and the repudiation of the most basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, as well as a massive purge over the next few years of the honest elements in both the higher levels and the rank-and-file of the party. With this accomplished, the capitalist-roaders proceeded over the next ten years to the systematic wrecking of all that was once socialist in the economy of the U.S.S.R.

According to Nicolaus, the role of central planning was abolished, with enterprises being given freedom to operate as competing units and with profit performance as decisive. This occurred not only in industry, but also in agriculture, where the State farms were given possession of the own means of production. The means of production were made into commodities that could be bought and sold between enterprises. Labour power also became a commodity again, with the fact that managers had increased rights to hire and fire workers, to tie wages to productivity, and to earn bonuses based on the enterprises' profit. Accompanying all of this was a

"trustification" of the economy into monopoly-like cartels, and a capitalist re-organization of the State-controlled banking system.

The results of all this, says Nicolaus, were the reintroduction into Soviet society of all the traditional evils of capitalist society — cyclical economic crisis, massive unemployment, growing inflation, and a continually growing gap between the wealth of the new rulers and the poverty of the working masses.

The second important book defending the capitalist restoration was published in the same period by the Revolutionary Union (forerunner to the RCP, USA). It is entitled **Red Papers 7: How capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union and what this means for the world struggle**. On the history of the Soviet revolution under Lenin and Stalin, and on the economic nature of the restoration of capitalism, the theses in this book are essentially the same as those of Nicolaus. But the book places a much greater stress on the role of politics and ideology than on the economic changes in the U.S.S.R. For example, Red Papers 7 is more elaborate on the role they give to errors by Stalin: along with the denial of the class struggle under socialism, it also stresses Stalin's responsibility for over-emphasizing the role of the productive forces and failing to develop the initiative of the human factor in socialist construction, and for further holding back the mass struggle against bureaucracy by sometimes dealing with contradictions among the people as antagonistic. The theory and practice of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China are put forward as the method to correct Stalin's errors and fight capitalist restoration.

Red Papers 7 also differs from Nicolaus' book in that it tries to put forward a comprehensive view of the role of the U.S.S.R. as an imperialist power in the world. It argues that the Soviet Union colonizes Eastern Europe and exploits the underdeveloped third world countries like India; with the only difference from Western imperialism being that it relies more on unequal exchange (terms of trade) than on direct capital investment. Red Papers 7 also argues that the inter-imperialist rivalry between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. is the main source of the danger of world war. The political conclusion of this analysis is the call for a world united front against the two superpowers.

* * *

The theory of capitalist restoration as represented in these two books was the dominant trend of thought concerning the Soviet Union among forces working toward an anti-revisionist communist party. But it was far from being uncontested. Many anti-imperialist and revolutionary activists remained unconvinced by the restoration thesis, while seeing themselves as united mainly in their opposition to U.S. imperialism. These kinds of forces have developed a kind of "general line" which puts forward that American imperialism is the main enemy of the world's peoples; that the main contradiction is between U.S. imperialism and the liberation struggles; that the Soviet leaders are revisionist in their general line and wrong in particular policies (Afghanistan, Poland); but that the U.S.S.R. remains both part of the socialist camp and an important ally of most liberation movements. The influential **Guardian** newspaper has generally defended this line over the last few years. As well, many local anti-imperialist organizations in the U.S.A. hold to this position, such as the **Resist the Draft** Committee.

A more theoretical opposition to the capitalist restoration thesis has come from some American Marxist intellectuals,

with the work of Paul Sweezy of **Monthly Review** providing the most developed alternative analysis of Soviet society. Sweezy's analysis of the U.S.S.R., and of other countries that took up the socialist road, has led him to some original conclusions concerning these "post-revolutionary" societies.

For Sweezy, a society like the Soviet Union is neither socialist nor capitalist in classical Marxist terms. Nor is it a transitional society where the forward progress to socialism is blocked by the bureaucratic rulers — as the Trotskyists maintain. Rather it represents a historically new type of social formation that must be analyzed in its own right.

If the U.S.S.R. is not socialist, for Sweezy, it is because of the position of the workers in this society. They have no political power. They remain propertyless wage-slaves that are exploited and controlled by a self-perpetuating ruling class; even if they have won important economic rights through the revolutionary process. Sweezy agrees with his French colleague Charles Bettelheim that this new ruling class was consolidated in the 1920's and 1930's, after the proletariat was decimated in the civil war, and as the interests of the new managerial elite began to predominate in the party.

But Sweezy's argument also lays great stress on the differences between Soviet society and traditional capitalism. He maintains that two main ingredients of capitalism are missing in the U.S.S.R.: the ownership of the main means of production by private capitalists, and the division of the units of production into independent and competing entities. He also maintains that the role of planning remains determinant for the greater part of the (state-owned) economy; and that the laws of capitalism (law of value, of capital accumulation) are only decisive in the sectors of privately-owned agriculture and in the (growing) black market. So, for Sweezy, both planning and profit co-exist in the U.S.S.R., with the role of planning still dominant in the over-all functioning of the economy.

For Sweezy, the societies like the U.S.S.R. play a historically progressive role for the less developed countries, in so far as they resolve certain basic economic problems: land reform, development of industry, improvement of the economic conditions of the working masses. But they do not solve the basic problem of a proletarian socialist revolution — that of the establishment of the political power of the working class and the development of social production controlled by the producers. And these societies face serious problems of economic stagnation as they develop; because they have neither the political methods of genuine socialism nor the economic methods of traditional capitalism to develop greater productivity.

* * *

More recently in the U.S.A., the theory of capitalist restoration in the U.S.S.R. has come under very heavy attack from different Marxist-Leninist forces and organizations that had previously supported it. This is clearly related to the fact that this theory was directly identified with the Chinese "theory of the three worlds", which made the Soviet Union the main enemy of the world's peoples. The opposition to the three worlds theory was naturally particularly strong from the revolutionary left within the U.S.A.. And the repudiation of China's leadership has produced great ideological confusion for many American communists; as well as creating an opening for pro-Soviet forces to attack the very idea that the U.S.S.R. is either capitalist or imperialist. An idea of the depth of the crisis in the American communist movement can

be seen from the fact that the Communist Party M-L, the party officially recognized by China, is in the process of completely falling apart, and has been debating in its own newspaper such questions as whether the U.S.S.R. is really socialist, and whether Mao Tsetung Thought was ever really relevant to the imperialist countries....

One of the books produced in this recent offensive against the capitalist restoration thesis is entitled **The Myth of Capitalism Reborn: A Marxist Critique of Theories of Capitalist Restoration in the USSR**. The book was written by two communist militants who set out to prove with more facts the restoration thesis, but who became convinced through their research that the theory didn't hold water. The book is interesting in that it tries to directly refute the most developed theories for capitalism restoration (Nicolaus, Red Papers 7, Bettelheim); and in that the author's arguments are accompanied by a wealth of factual information on Soviet society, drawn mainly from U.S. and Soviet government sources.

The authors of this book develop two separate lines of argument: the first against the mainly "economic" restoration thesis (Nicolaus); the second against the mainly "political" thesis (Red Papers 7, Bettelheim).

In combatting the "economic" theory of restoration, the authors develop an analysis similar to Sweezy's. They amass different statistics to try to show that the economic laws of capitalism do not really apply in the U.S.S.R.: for example, that the economy is run on planning and not mainly on profit, that there is no "boom-and-bust" cycle to the economy, that there is no industrial reserve army of labour, etc..

The authors also combat the "economic" theory of restoration on one of its most basic theses: that the social system in the U.S.S.R. changed in a **qualitative** way between the period of Stalin's leadership and the period of Khrushchev's power. They maintain that most of the economic problems that exist in Soviet industry and agriculture can be shown to have existed **continually** since the October revolution, and, if anything, to have been partially resolved in the 1950's and 1960's — so that the mere existence of these problems under Khrushchev's rule doesn't prove anything about how the economy has fundamentally **changed**. They also try to repudiate the idea of a massive purge of the party leaders and members under Khrushchev, with statistics that show that such changes were relatively minimal compared to the resignations, expulsions, and executions among the Bolshevik party members and leaders during the 1930's.

The second line of argument of this book is against the theory that capitalist restoration is demonstrated by the dominance of a revisionist line in the party (and the State run by the party). The authors criticize this trend of thought as an idealist departure from Marxism, a deviation that makes the line and action of political parties and leaders determinant in relation to the material foundations of a society. They also claim that the proponents of this thesis have implicitly created a non-Marxist definition of capitalism, a definition that makes capitalist any hierarchical society in which workers sell their labour power.

These kinds of arguments in this book are both provocative, and useful in stimulating study and reflection, in so far as they are accompanied by factual research that can be critically analyzed. But the over-all political orientation of the authors remains confused and confusing, and this has

quite negative effects on both the analysis they make and the conclusions they draw. The authors essentially ignore the exploitation of the Soviet workers, reducing their socialist rights to those of economic planning and job and material security. They admit that there is an "elite" in the U.S.S.R., but dismiss without serious arguments the idea that it is a ruling class. They minimize the degree of capitalist forces that do exist in the economy and the pressures to develop them more, and even dismiss the possibility of a capitalist-style economy being introduced with the feeble argument that it would "go against the logic of the system". They admit that the Soviet party leaders are revisionist in their domestic and international line; but nowhere can they explain the material basis for this.... instead, they maintain that the logic of the collectivized economy will assert itself against the revisionist leaders. And since the factual portrait that they draw of Soviet society is in complete contradiction with the definition that the authors themselves give to genuine socialism (at the beginning of the book), the authors are left with the conclusion that the U.S.S.R. is still in transition.... to socialism.

It is undoubtedly these political confusions that mean that this book can be so noisily promoted by the Line of March organization, a militantly pro-Soviet "party-building" organization that is currently doing propaganda for support to the struggles of the Afghan people and the Polish workers — in the form of more Russian tanks.

But the kind of arguments put forward in this book are clearly having a real impact among American communist forces. For example, the Communist Workers Party has just announced the publication of a new book, entitled **The Socialist Road**, which will basically revise this party's positions on the question of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and China. According to this party's newspaper, the book argues for a break with "idealist" conceptions of socialism and the transition to socialism, an idealism that was typified by the left of the Chinese communist party during the Cultural Revolution. The book will try to show that the Soviet Union (and China) continue to be socialist and to form part of a socialist camp; and that their revisionist leaders operate relatively independently of the material basis of these societies.

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Marxism inside the revisionist countries

The following article appeared as a commentary in the first issue of *Ethiopian Marxist Review*, dated August 1980. It focuses on a question that is often neglected or ignored in the analysis of the Soviet and Eastern European societies — that of the theories of the Marxist and socialist opposition within these countries. The article tries to give us a general portrait of these theories, while also pointing out the important differences that exist among the different Marxist dissidents, and the current weaknesses of certain aspects of their theories. As such, the article is a useful contribution towards developing a more coherent theory of the nature of these revisionist countries.

The *Ethiopian Marxist Review* is published quarterly in English by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party. This Marxist-Leninist party has been active in the revolutionary struggle in Ethiopia over the last decade, and has suffered brutal repression at the hands of a so-called socialist regime which pretends to be based on Marxism-Leninism, and which is heavily supported by the U.S.S.R. and its Eastern European allies. We hope our readers will take notice of this important new publication, which is intended to be not only a theoretical journal for Ethiopian Marxists, but also a platform for communists from throughout Africa and around the world. Subscriptions and sales can be arranged through the addresses found at the back of *International Forum*.

Socialist political opposition in the East

B. Zelalem

**The truth and honesty you sought.
Let them slander let them curse
Remember, as you face the worst,
There is no jail for thought.**

by Lev Kopelev
(USSR dissident)

The phenomenon of dissent in the USSR and East European countries presents various features and even if the western mass media focusses on the conservative or bourgeois liberal variety (Solzhenitsyn/Sakharov, etc.), the current of socialist opposition in these countries is not negligible. In other words, the opposition in the USSR and its satellites is not merely local nationalist, anti-socialist or pro-West — there is a developing trend of socialist opposition which strives to base itself on Marxism and to chart a socialist alternative.

Not that dissent of a nationalist colour or the movements for human rights are unimportant. These type of oppositions,

aside from manifesting the malaise and antidemocratic rule existing in these societies are also important, as the dissident Weil stated, in so far as they raise the fundamental question of liberty which is encompassed by socialism itself. They also give the opportunity for the socialist opposition to break its isolation by championing the general democratic demands and linking these to an overall socialist alternative to transform the society. "Political democracy", as the dissident Egorov stated "is not a superstructure of socialism but its *sine qua non* condition".

The current of political opposition in the East which claims adherence to Marxism is not homogeneous. The differences lie in the characterization of the existing societies themselves and in the strategy foreworded to realize a revolutionary change. Rakovski put it succinctly as follows:

"(in E. Europe) ... there are marxists who state that capitalist exploitation has been abolished in the Soviet-type societies; other marxists assume, on the contrary, that this type of society is based on the same mechanisms exploitation as capitalism. There are others who accept the theses that the East European working class has been expropriated by an all-powerful bureaucracy. Some marxists expect that the rapid development of the productive forces will create the economic basis of what they call "socialist democracy"; others believe that the Soviet type of development is a mere imitation of the economic and technological structure of capitalist accumulation, and consequently it cannot sustain any social relations other than those of capitalism..." (in *Towards an E. European Marxism*)

and so on, and so on. The variation is wide. If Weil considers these societies to be state capitalist characterised by the state property, the sale of labour force as a commodity, etc.... there are others who consider that these societies can still be called socialist despite their "deformations". However, a relatively prevailing characterization is one that defines these societies as ones which are neither socialist nor capitalist but which are exploitative, class societies *sui generis*. That the Soviet-type societies manifest different features from that of capitalist ones in the west is indisputable and the mode of ownership of the means of production is one feature of this difference. The question is not one of deformation — this view which is dear to trotskyites is more than outdated. Rudolf Bahro, who along with Rakovsky represents lucidly the marxist current in the dissident movement, described the problem in the following manner:

"... it is high time for revolutionary Marxists to abandon all theories of "deformation" and put a halt to the old anger about the distortion and "betrayal" of socialism, understandable as this at one time was. If the historical drama is reduced to a problem of poor realization, then one is proceeding from unreal assumptions and theory is led astray. Certainly, we can confront the practice of actually existing socialism with the classical theory, and must do so, in order to preserve in the face of this practice the substance of the socialist idea. But this practice must be explained on the basis of its own laws. For it is very far from arbitrarily produced, or "permitted" by some weakness. It has completely different foundations to those originally conceived. And so it does not require justification, apology or embellishment, but rather truthful description and analysis". (in *"The Alternative for Eastern Europe"*)

The starting point for this analysis, for both Bahro and

Rakovski, is the fact that the existing societies (which Bahro calls "actually existing socialism") are not socialist and they contradict the basic Marxist conception of such societies, i.e. socialist societies. The axis is put on the pyramidal division of labour and the centralized and strengthened power of the State. The old division of labour has neither been surpassed nor suppressed and the state, in contradiction to the Marxist view on the question (the Commune, etc), is taken as an indispensable element which is progressively strengthened and centralised instead of being progressively weakened. Hence, Bahro and the others go back to Marx of Capital, the Grundrisse, the German Ideology, etc... in their critical examination of the actually existing societies.

The analysis inevitably focusses on the experience of the Russian Revolution. For Leonid Plyusch, there was no class in Russia which could support socialism and the Bolsheviks are "guilty" of trying to jump a historical stage on the basis of voluntarism and the consciousness of militants — "Leninism is (thus) a combination of experiences of German social democracy and that of the asiatic Russian one". For Bahro, who starts from Marx's premise that communism must proceed from the abolition of capitalist private property in its most developed form, Russia of 1917 did not present such a picture. Defining Russia as one in which the semi-asiatic mode dominated, he states that in 1917 Russia there was little capitalist private property and its abolition thus could have no big significance. The situation led, in his view, to the tragedy in which the Russian Socialist vanguard found a different task to fulfill in practice from that which the influence of their West European models had suggested to them. Hence, Bahro argues, the October Revolution introduced a completely different process from the socialist revolution anticipated in Western Europe. If the new organization of society does bypass capitalism, it is not, according to Bahro, a transition period between capitalism and socialism. Once again the reference is to a class society *sui generis* which is neither capitalist nor socialist but existing alongside capitalism. This again calls for a reevaluation of the tenets of traditional historical materialism as in this, to quote Rakovski,

"there is no place for a modern social system which has a evolutionary trajectory other than capitalism and which is not simply an earlier or later stage along the same route".

Bahro, Rakovski and the Marxist opposition in general put the necessary emphasis on the fact that socialism and communism are incompatible with the maintenance of the old division of labour and the perpetuation of the State. Mere change in the forms of property ownership are not sufficient for the transition to socialism unless this is accompanied by concrete steps to abolish the old division of labour and the state. Hence, Bahro and the others correctly discard the official position which defines the Soviet-type societies as "relatively autonomous socialist societies". If this definition is different from that of the early period which asserted socialism not as a transitory period, anti-chamber of communism, but as an autonomous socio-economic formation in its own right, it still does not escape Marx's scathing criticism (*Critique of the Gotha Programme*) against considering the socialist stage as an autonomous or stable one. Thus, whether the existing societies are defined relatively autonomous or provisional, so long as they maintain the old division of labour and the State in its form cannot be called socialist and are in fact an obstacle on the path of socialism and communism. Egorov, on his part, takes the whole issue further by

asserting that transition from private property directly to socialism is utopist since the dictatorship of the proletariat accelerates the economic power of the state. According to Egorov, neither Marx nor Lenin saw this development.

If Roy Medvedev and others focus on showing that Stalin and the Stalin period are not logical continuations of Lenin and Leninism, Bahro and Rakovski point out that Leninism or the Bolshevik experience cannot be equated with Marxism. In other words, the analysis of the Soviet experience must take these experiences as they are and seek out their own particular laws rather than counterposing this to the Marxist conception from which it differs fundamentally. To Bahro, the new social order created by the Bolsheviks could in no way have been a system of real freedom and equality —

"at the head of the apparatus state it created, Lenin's Bolshevik Party in Russia was to a large extent the extraordinary representative of the expelled capitalist exploiting class (without, however, taking the place of the class), which had not been deeply rooted enough in the economic life of a gigantic peasant country that was still primarily semi-asiatic..."

The new order itself is a barrier that has to be dissolved if socialist transition is envisaged. Thus, in the analysis of the dissidents claiming adherence to Marxism there is a recurrent theme — socialism is possible only with a high development of the productive forces. To Bahro, therefore, a new organization of society in countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa can at best be 'a non-capitalist development towards industrial society', towards the development of the productive forces 'to the threshold of socialist restructuring' and cannot at all be a transition period between capitalism and communism.

In the theoretical formulations of the Left dissidents there is also an examination of the role of the party, its relations with the mass organizations, its role in the proletarian dictatorship, etc... all with reference to the experience of the Soviet-type societies. It is not my intention here to deal in detail with the analysis presented in this respect, especially by Bahro and rakovski. Suffice it to state that they present arguments which call for serious reflections so as to use the past in the service of the future if only by learning to avoid past mistakes. The different interpretations and emphasis that one finds in this particular current leads its exponents to various positions vis a vis the question of "what is to be done?" to transform the existing societies.

The gradualist position is best reflected by Medvedev who entertains the view that there are still healthy elements within the ruling parties who can act as forces of renovation. He sees the radicalization of the intelligentsia as the motive force for change and supports detente and inter-governmental relations as it will create a favourable atmosphere for reform demands. The position of Medvedev is not shared by others (especially his yearning for an able reformer — in an interview to the *Observer*, 15 June, 1975) but it highlights the dilemma of a significant portion of the dissident intellectuals — their isolation from the working masses and their fear of violence from below. Hence, it is not surprising that Medvedev calls Grigorenko (who called for the abolition of existing bureaucratic institutions and the instiautions of workers' control and management of industries) "anarcho communist" and labels Alexei Kosterin (who condemned the CPSU, in toto, in 1968) as "too emotional". For Bahro, on the other hand, the existing structures in the Soviet-type societies have to be dissolved and not reformed. For him and Rakovski, liberalization under the existing situation can only

be relative. Rakovski believes that with the rise in the standard of living there is the possibility of an increase in the non-conformist attitudes of the new generation of workers. These, with others, could constitute an autonomous social base for Marxism standing opposed to official Marxism and exhibiting non-reformism, i.e. a rejection of the notion that the dominant class and the system can be reformed. Bahro also inclines towards the need for a new party to carry out "the cultural revolution", a party of a new type which has no intention of remaining a party alongside the old one. Such a party must be formed 'outside of the existing state apparatus' and must be ultra-democratic both in its functions and relations with society. The task of the party will be

"to shape the forces of society", (the new consciousness stored up in the society serving as a base), "in such a way that they massively confront the apparatus as autonomous powers and are able to force it towards progressive compromises. This requires the organization of communism as a mass movement. In principle, this signifies a division of social power; the establishment of a progressive dialectic between the state and the forces of society. The communists must themselves bring the contradiction into the government apparatus. The result will be a situation of regulated dual power, in which the statist side of the equation gradually loses its predominance. Stick fast with étatism or go forward to the cultural revolution—those are the two alternatives."

Quite a number of interrogations can be made in respect to Bahro's position. The reality we observe makes us dubious about the possibility of forcing the apparatus into progressive or increased compromise. The fate of Bahro, of Vladimir Borisov (who had formed an unofficial trade union in the US-SR) and of all the others expelled to the West or sent to the labour camps indicates that there are more than a few obstacles in maintaining the intellectual opposition nucleus let alone forming a communist mass movement. The problem raised by Egorov/Kopelev/Elaguine and others about the difficulty of defending an ideology that quite a few may consider "oppressive" is not one to be brushed aside. The dominant classes have also a system of propaganda which, as Kopelev stated, has created a situation in which we can replace and interchange diverse ideas and ideals, slogans and political notions without much effort and without changing the essence. The problems are real even if one discards Plyusch's statement that "the masses have no political consciousness whatsoever and since their living condition is improving there is no revolutionary situation which is said to take place from the masses 'no longer being able to live as before'." The debate is open... but one of the primary questions remains to be the link between the Marxist intellectuals

(up to now the marxist opposition is composed by them) and the working class. Is this unity to be realized via a common program based on a struggle for sovereignty and national independence, as the Czechk Jiri Pelikan suggests...? The general points which unite dissidents of all colours (an end to political repression, respect of human rights, etc.) are not enough. Charter 77, for all its positive aspects, cannot be the communist mass movement or a programmatic basis for one. The question that faces the marxist opposition in the East is not merely what kind of party but is also the path of change. Is there a possibility of constructing an organizational instrument, whatever its name, that can exist as a reflection of the autonomous power of the masses so long as an answer is not given to the question of how it is possible to envisage a revolutionary confrontation with a violent dominant class without countering it with the **violence** of the masses?

The Marxist opposition is struggling to emerge out of its isolation and assert its existence. To this, the analysis presented by Bahro, Rakovski and others is very important. In fact, the importance of the Marxist opposition in the East is not limited geographically. To all the forces everywhere struggling for socialism the reflections and debates, as well as the struggle and the fate, of the marxists in the East is of paramount importance. The opposition is trying to clarify itself on the past and the present so as to understand what should be done to realize socialist changes. At the same time, steps towards one or other forms of organizations are being taken. The USSR itself and Poland are good examples. Also Cuba, where according to Carlos Franqui (in an interview to the Italian **Il Manifesto**, May 11/1980) the people, especially outside the urban areas, organize themselves to occupy houses and take other measures in opposition to the Castrist apparatus. Out of these tentative organizational steps, weak at the moment, and from the theoretical clarifications that are being sought, the revolutionaries in the Soviet-type societies will surely find the political-organizational means to overthrow the oppressors and destroy the repressive apparatuses.

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Current Debates

Presentation by International Forum

In this section of *Forum*, we are printing articles that deal with two different themes. The first two articles have been chosen because they reflect some of the important debates which continue among communist forces internationally concerning the road to rebuilding a principled international unity. We think that these two texts provide some useful material for reflection on this essential question, a question that we will certainly return to in other ways in future issues of *Forum*.

The third article deals with the armed struggle in Ireland. It has been chosen not only because of the current importance of the Irish liberation struggle, but also because of the necessity for communists to discuss and debate on their strategic and tactical conceptions of the military struggle. With the continuing development of the international economic crisis and with the rise of organized reaction and fascism in the world, the question of armed struggle is becoming more and more impor-

tant, not only for the victory of the different national liberation struggles, but also as an increasingly practical problem for the future of the revolution in the more advanced capitalist countries. There is an urgent need for serious and collective discussion among revolutionary forces concerning such questions as the political leadership and mass character of the armed struggle in the dependent and colonial countries, the lessons of the armed liberation movement of the Basque or Irish people, the problem of armed self-defence and the form of armed insurrection in the imperialist countries. The editors of *Forum* do not consider that we are capable right now of dealing with all of these questions as a main theme in a single issue; so we have decided instead to start the discussion with this article and to pursue it in future issues. We are counting on the contributions and comments of our readers to pursue this important discussion.

Debates on the unification of the world communist movement

During the last few years, the anti-revisionist Marxist-Leninist forces around the world have been in a state of general ideological and political crisis, a crisis provoked in part by the triumph of an openly revisionist line in the Communist Party of China. Faced with this situation, different Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations have tried to put forward a principled basis on which the world communist movement could unite and fight revisionism. One of these attempts has come from the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA), and has involved the repudiation of Mao tse Tung as the cause of Chinese revisionism, and a call for the return to the Bolshevik principles of Stalin. Another attempt has come from those forces that see any repudiation of Mao as a dangerous form of revisionism, be it from the current Chinese leaders, or from the PLA and its supporters, or from "centrists" who refuse to make the defence of Mao the key line of demarcation in the world movement. The RCP, USA and the RCP of Chile have been active in giving leadership to this latter trend, and in trying to concretize the defense of Mao tse Tung Thought in the form of a general ideological and political line for the world movement. Recently their efforts have been concretized in the form of a common declaration by 13 communist organizations, and in the publication by these same 13 organizations of a new international journal, *A World to Win*.

The following two texts are written by two different Marxist-Leninist organizations that were involved in discussion of this unity project as it developed, but which — for different reasons — did not unite with the final results of these initiatives as represented by the common declaration. The first text is by the Communist Marxist-Leninist Organization Voie Prolétarienne of France, and explains why, after participating in the discussions, they refused to sign the common declara-

tion. The second text has been written for this issue of *Forum* by the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada IN STRUGGLE!, an organization which discussed this unity project in its initial stages with the American and Chilean parties, but which was denied any further involvement by these parties because of its refusal to accept the integral defense of Mao tse Tung thought as a starting point for unity. The text is written as a commentary on the article by Voie Prolétarienne, but its content provides a more general view of IN STRUGGLE!'s disagreements with all those forces that make the defence of Mao the key question in fighting opportunism and building unity.

The English translation from French is by IN STRUGGLE!

Note to our readers:

The common declaration by 13 organizations, and their new international journal, can be ordered in several different languages from RCP Publications in the USA. The complete text of the article by Voie Prolétarienne can be ordered as a separate pamphlet (in French only) directly from them. Voie Prolétarienne also publishes a monthly newspaper, *Pour le Parti*, which deals with current events in France and internationally, and a theoretical review, *La Cause du Communisme*, which deals with major theoretical questions such as the labour aristocracy and the peasantry in France, or the problems of the transition to communism in socialist society. For a better understanding of IN STRUGGLE!'s positions on the unity of the world communist movement, the reader can refer to the *Appeal for the Political and Organizational Unity of the International Communist Movement from the 3rd Congress of IN STRUGGLE!*, and to a series of articles analyzing the results of IN STRUGGLE!'s international work

in issues nos. 245, 247, and 250 of their newspaper. The addresses for all these publications are found at the back of *Forum*.

On the Joint communiqué by 13 Marxist-Leninist organizations

Editor's note:

Because of space limitations, we are only able to produce the last and concluding section of this text by *Voie Prolétarienne*. However, we feel that this extract sums up their basic argument clearly and simply. In the preceding parts of the text which are not produced here, *Voie Prolétarienne* argues against a dogmatic conception of communist unity that ignores the necessity to take position on new developments in the world proletarian struggle, in particular on the concrete lessons to be drawn from the negative experience of the restoration of capitalism in a number of formerly socialist countries. They also draw out numerous examples to prove that the common declaration by 12 organizations refuses to take positions on many burning political questions that divide communists — including those who signed the declaration. They make reference to the many questions that divide communists today in relation to the fight against imperialist war, the basic tasks of communists, the situation in the dependent and colonial countries, the tasks in imperialist countries, and the problem of communist unity — questions that are essentially ignored or glossed over in the general line formulated in the common declaration.

Two Lines on Communist Unity

What communists, workers and the peoples of the world need today is a line of **struggle** to defeat imperialism. Communists will build unity in the heat of the theoretical and practical struggle to develop this line and make it a vital reality in the masses. It is in the course of the struggle against imperialism that communists are forced to struggle against opportunism. But communists do not mistake their target and the shadow it casts. They will therefore never be fooled into thinking that dealing with the past is enough to settle the questions of the present or that the struggle against opportunism is sufficient to crush imperialism. Nor can communists continue the "traditional" practice of subordinating political questions to organizational ones, on the pretext that there is a genuine desire around the world for unity and that there are urgent tasks to be carried out. We believe that the call to struggle must not just remain a struggle over the call. Concern with the urgency of tasks does take the place of actually dealing with urgent tasks.

Today, it is undeniable that the recognition or non-recognition of the contributions of the Great Cultural

Proletarian Revolution and of Mao Zedong to the development of the revolutionary science of the proletariat is a key element for struggle and for unity. But it is also undeniable that there are differences and questions which arise from the living and creative application of these contributions. These vital and practical differences **prevent communists today from waging a UNITED STRUGGLE**. But instead of posing these differences openly in order to mobilize communists around the world to resolve the differences, and thereby prepare the grounds for a revolutionary Appeal to struggle **followed by a practical leadership over the struggle**, this Appeal covers up differences in order to attain superficial unity. For decades now, the ideological and political struggle within the International Communist Movement (ICM) has been stifled so as to maintain a façade of superficial unity and wildly over-optimistic talk which had little to do with reality. Experience has shown that this attitude is harmful to the interests of the revolutionary proletariat. Today, communists cannot avoid criticizing the "always unanimous" **form** and the opportunist **content** of this past unity. If communists do not want to repeat the same basic errors, they must not repeat the same erroneous methods. This is why, in spite of the fact that we feel a great need to debate, to subject our practice and ideas to scrutiny and to achieve militant unity with other communists of the world, we cannot sign this Appeal. We do not believe that the minimal political bases have been clarified to the point that THIS step forward of appealing to the workers and peoples of the world to fight under the **united leadership** of communists can be made.

On the contrary, to embark on this path **today**, on **this basis**, is to spread or perpetuate illusions about the true capacity of communists to LEAD a UNITED revolutionary struggle. It also shuts down the dynamic struggle to resolve differences. It therefore also serves to encourage those forces which look for answers to their questions on an international level or in the purity of doctrine rather than in the concrete application of Marxism-Leninism to national and international reality. And finally, it encourages the apparently neutral position in the international ideological and political struggle of those who completely deny the ideological and political importance of the differences on the pretext of not remaining at the level of the superficial divisions introduced by Enver Hoxha's revisionist attack on Mao's work. In the final analysis it provides ammunition to the "center" and encourages it to lean to its favorite side: the right.

In closing, are we against unity?

We are not breaking from or opposing the movement towards unity that is apparent among world communist forces today. We are opposing THIS Appeal. Nevertheless, we hope to contribute and to be open to all positive contributions from others which help advance the struggle for revolutionary unity.

Finally, we are not hostile "in principle" to signing a document and to participating in a process of unity with which we do not agree on all points. We are not upholders of the "all or nothing" point of view. We have learned through our struggle to build the unity of communists in France that while you do not build unity without demarcating, you cannot demarcate on everything all at once and forget that unity is also a way of developing demarcation. But there is one precondition to tactical flexibility: maintaining what is essential. And **this Appeal**, which hushes up differences and pretends to be the basis for a united struggle, does not respect this one condition. At best, it's a snare at worst, it's a hoax.

Finally, we believe that to achieve the militant unity of

communists, we must pursue the path on which we had begun, that is:

— that each party and organization continue the theoretical and practical work called for by the concrete situation in their country;

— that parties and organizations deepen their understanding of one another's political lines and practices and develop the struggle for ideological, political and practical unity;

— that parties and organizations translate and pass around documents and wage polemics among themselves and to publish texts in whatever organs are willing to print them;

— that parties and organizations hold bilateral and multilateral meetings to raise the level of struggle and unity to the highest possible level.

We should do this so that we may, in the shortest possible period of time, develop a minimal political basis of agreement on revolutionary strategy and tactics which will enable us to organize common activities to build the true unity of militant communists.

We have already taken up this work and we intend to pursue it.

"Without defending Mao Zedong's contributions and without building on the basis of these contributions, it is impossible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and the reactionary forces in general." (Appeal, page 9).

**The leading body of
the MARXIST-LENINIST COMMUNIST
ORGANIZATION VOIE PROLÉTARIENNE**

Some comments on the analysis by *Voie Prolétarienne*

The organization *Voie Prolétarienne* of France says it refused to endorse the Joint Public Statement of the 13 organizations for basically one reason: the statement liquidates the real differences between communist forces on what the revolutionary line in various situations is today and simply reiterates abstract principles. Can we conclude that the movement initiated by the RCP-USA and the RCP of Chile has already shown, by virtue of its practice, that its superficial effort to promote the unity of Marxist-Leninists is a dead-end? Unfortunately, not yet.

Dogmatism has never solved anything

Voie Prolétarienne is correct to criticize the Joint Statement as abstract. For the most part, this statement skirts on the fringes of the true problems posed by the present revolutionary struggle.

Indeed, this statement which claims to put forward "important elements" for the "development of a correct ideological and political line for the international communist movement" (Joint statement, page 2) in practice only reiterates principles which are already known: the need to continue class struggle under socialism, the need for armed struggle, the need for a communist party, etc. And *Voie Prolétarienne* is correct in stating that Marxist-Leninists have been repeating the same principles for 20 years now, persuading themselves that by doing so they were demarcating from revisionism.

But, is it in any way surprising that the Joint Statement turned out to be what it is? Could it have been different? We

believe it could not. And that is what *Voie Prolétarienne* does not understand or refuses to admit. For, instead of concluding that it is impossible to sort out the confusion and differences within the International Communist Movement by starting from statements of principle, *Voie Prolétarienne* explains the superficial nature of the statement by the fact that there exists "two conceptions of how to interpret the contributions of the Great Cultural Proletarian Revolution and of Mao's work" (*Voie Prolétarienne*, pg. 10). So, *Voie Prolétarienne* concludes that the problem lies with **this** particular statement and not the basic assumption underlying it, that is, that the solution of the crisis of the International Communist Movement lies in the defense of Mao Zedong Thought.

Yet, that is precisely the reason why the Joint Statement is incapable of providing convincing answers today and why it is incapable of taking a stand on the differences which exist in the International Communist Movement and which require a concrete analysis of concrete situations.

Is it surprising that those who signed the statement have nothing new to say on revolutionary strategy and tactics in imperialist countries since, in their view, the absence of successful revolutions in these countries can be explained by just one thing: the abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principles?

Voie Prolétarienne must certainly not be unaware of the practice of the RCP-USA in its own country: a practice which is located on the fringes of the mass movements in the U.S. and which replaces education around the concrete contradictions of American society (those within the bourgeoisie, in the union movement, and those which appear in the struggles of oppressed nations and national minorities) by sloganeering and long revolutionary-style speeches. This is quite in keeping with the dogmatism of the Joint Statement. It is not surprising that a group that does not see the coming to power of Reagan as an important change in the policy of the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie should feel that it is contributing to the development of revolutionary strategy in imperialist countries by stating: "The October Revolution remains the fundamental reference point for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics."

The October (Russian) revolution took place in a country where the proletariat represented less than 10% of the population, in a country which was hardly out of feudalism, at a time when the bourgeois democratic revolution had just been victorious politically and in a world situation where imperialists were at war for the first time. That situation is quite evidently, strategically and tactically, **different** in many respects to the situation in a country where the proletariat represents the vast majority of the population, where the peasantry is almost non-existent, where the bourgeois revolution was carried out more than 200 years ago, where the labour movement has been dominated for a very long time by the labour aristocracy, etc., etc. The greatest harm we can do to Lenin's "thought" is to distort in this way its concrete revolutionary content, to mechanically apply things he has stated, or what Soviet workers accomplished in a fundamentally different situation.

The same goes for Mao Zedong Thought. No matter how great the Cultural Revolution was, it did not, and perhaps it could not, resolve all the problems about the building of socialism. Is China not clearly today on the path to capitalism? We are left with the task of finding a scientific explanation for historical events. The way to do this is not to look for scapegoats, a series of traitors and liquidators, as has been current practice for too long within the Inter-

national Communist Movement. Nor is it to look for saviours who have already solved problems in our stead.

From words to action

Voie Prolétarienne criticizes the Joint Statement for having eliminated the debate on the true differences which exist and for having emptied Mao's contributions of their concrete revolutionary content? This gives the impression that their approach might be a more materialist one, one which breaks with dogmatism. What in reality is the situation?

One of the criticisms made by Voie Prolétarienne is that the Joint Statement grouping doesn't go any further than to take a negative attitude to the national question. Voie Prolétarienne is in favour of the equality of nations, but then they add that that is still within the framework of bourgeois democracy and "the proletariat struggles for a much more grandiose objective... the freely agreed to merger of nations and their disappearance under communism" (Voie Prolétarienne text, pg. 9). The question is a very pertinent one, not only in relationship to national liberation struggles but also in imperialist countries themselves.

But what does Voie Prolétarienne mean in practice? We know that in France there are large numbers of immigrant workers, many of which come from countries which are under the neo-colonial domination of France. Several organizations have sprung up or have developed in the immigrant communities to work at destroying the neo-colonial power in their homeland. Yet, Voie Prolétarienne refuses to recognize these organizations as foreign revolutionary organizations, such is notably the case with the organization ECH-CHOOLA of Tunisia) on the basis that all immigrant worker must work for revolution in France and join the French Marxist-Leninist organizations. Is that a practical application of what Voie Prolétarienne calls the "freely agreed to merger of nations under communism"? If so, Voie Prolétarienne's grand appeals to oppose dogmatism don't mean much.

Here is another example. In spite of the superficial nature of the public statement, Voie Prolétarienne states that it is "not breaking from or opposing the movement towards unity that is apparent among world communist forces today" (pg. 12). But what do they mean by "world communist forces"? Once again, they refer only to those forces which recognize the contributions of the Great Proletarian Revolution and Mao Zedong. And what about other forces which do not believe that the struggle for unity should start from the recognition of one principle or another, whether Mao's or anyone else's, but rather that it should proceed from the concrete analysis of concrete situations utilizing Marxism-Leninism as a science and debates between organizations on their differences in views?

The fact is that Voie Prolétarienne is not taking these forces into consideration any more now than it was before.

Dogmatism is often the twin brother of sectarianism. The Joint Public Statement of 13 organizations which believe they can resolve the crisis in the International Communist Movement by upholding the principle of Mao Zedong Thought illustrates, if such a demonstration is indeed necessary, that this initiative leads nowhere. Voie Prolétarienne and the other organizations which have upheld this approach have yet to break with the erroneous underlying assumption upon which that initiative is founded.

Armed struggle in Ireland today

The Irish liberation struggle has recently captured the attention of revolutionary forces around the world, with the struggle of the Republican prisoners for political status winning important mass support not only throughout Ireland but also internationally. But the Irish liberation struggle also has a specific characteristic that should not be ignored: that of being one of the most important military struggles within the advanced capitalist countries. This characteristic is recognized by the forces of Western imperialism united in the NATO alliance, who see in the Irish struggle an important testing ground for their techniques of counter-insurgency against a mass-based armed revolutionary movement. This characteristic should also draw the attention of revolutionary forces internationally, because the advanced nature of the military struggle in Ireland can be an important reference point in drawing more general lessons on the development of the armed struggle.

The text we are producing here gives a summary of the main aspects of the armed struggle in Ireland from the point of view of the Provisional wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). It was printed in the May 17, 1980 edition of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, the newspaper of the Sinn Féin, which is the political wing of the IRA (Provisional). Although the article concentrates on the question of military tactics, its publication reflects a general process of clarification of both the political and military aspects of the liberation struggle going on within the Provisional IRA. The April 19, 1980 edition of *An Phoblacht*, for example, carried an article entitled "Scenario for establishing a Socialist Republic", which stressed that the goal of socialism in Ireland could not be guaranteed by simple military victory, but was more and more dependent on the development of a mass political movement.

We think this article is useful to our readers in two ways. First, because it provides an explanation of the particular military tactics used by the Provisional IRA — tactics that are often questioned or criticized, including within the international left. Secondly, because it gives a general view of the role and nature of the military struggle in Ireland today. We hope that both of these aspects of the article will draw comments from our readers.

Revolutionary guerilla warfare in Ireland

IN CONVENTIONAL WARFARE success for an army is measured in terms of its military victories and its task is the military defeat of the opposing army. But, in revolutionary guerilla warfare, success is measured in terms of the political defeats inflicted on the ruling regime by — through force of circumstances — limited military actions. And, because of the relationship between guerilla activity and overall political developments, military action broadens outside of the framework of gun and land-mine attacks against enemy military personnel to include attacks on property (the commercial bombing campaign), on communications (telephone

installations and transport services such as the cross-border rail link), on the judiciary and prison officials, on enemy propagandists (Ross McWhirter and Sir Richard Sykes), and on the enemy's most prestigious figures (Lord Mountbatten, the Queen, and politicians).

In the North all attacks are aimed at weakening the confidence of the British government. Through relentless struggle the IRA aims to break the will of the British to remain. So the IRA, with popular bases and material support secured, are organised and trained for a long, revolutionary war. Their strongest weapon, however, apart from popular support, is not the M60 or RPG7 but is a simple condition of mind — the will to win and the determination to continue despite all set-backs. With such a mentality, lack of weaponry and explosives, loss of comrades to jail or death can be overcome.

The British government and its people, on the other hand, because of their indefensible moral position, undoubtedly have the will to lose.

After its mode of operation, the next most distinguishing feature between a revolutionary soldier and a conventional soldier is in motivation and in political awareness.

A republican soldier, having experienced repression and witnessed deprivation, is motivated by the patriotic desire for freedom and is out to help construct society along socialist principles. A soldier of a People's Army is expected to understand and appreciate his actions and their political nature. Every IRA Volunteer is expected to be a political cadre, and thus make the IRA an armed political organisation.

A Brit, however, has no arguments for killing people other than he was ordered to do so, and has little or no political consciousness bar a professional ruthlessness to toe the dictated political attitudes of his government.

IRA Volunteers, because they live with the people and among the people, are directly responsible to the people for their actions. Their level of support and shelter is dependent upon public approval for their actions.

However — and this is a major problem in creating a troops out movement in England — because the Brits are an imperialist army and not a People's Army, there is little effective link between their demoralisation and the British public's attitude to the war. This dictates the necessity to bring the war in Ireland home to the British people and thus there has been a bombing campaign in England off and on for the last seven years.

Cost

Since August 1969 the six-county state has been so unstable that, without the British government and military propping it up, it would have collapsed. However, the British government has long ceased to economically profit from its Irish colony — its presence in the North can be defined as political imperialism designed to ensure that the whole of Ireland remains politically stable and sympathetic to British interests.

The six-county state, which the Brits are propping up through the injection of £1,000 million annually, is economically dying. Its industries are old and ailing ones, and despite all the publicity about foreign investment, very few companies have been lured or lulled into the North.

Though the British government would have to pay for the upkeep of its soldiers, wherever they were based, there is an extra operational cost of around £100 million annually. The RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary), UDR (Ulster Defence Regiment), courts and prisons, cost them another £200

million annually. The bombing campaign has cost the British state one billion pounds in compensation, so far, and claims for the last three years have yet to be processed.

Bombing

Bombing commercial targets is a means of struggle adopted by the IRA to successfully demonstrate the instability of the state. The British administration's credibility suffers, and its will to rule is undermined, by every bomb that breaches the 'security zones' and the 'security' that Britain supposedly guarantees.

As the current Northern Commander of Land Forces, James Glover, admitted in captured Document 37, "bombings expose the inadequacy of the Security Forces", and as Ian Paisley admitted last year, "every bomb weakens the union".

Unfortunately, in war it is necessary to destroy parts of the state structures which affect civilians and not just the military, in order to topple the state, and this destruction can lead to much inconvenience for the people. For example, through the disruption of the civilian transport system.

(In Zimbabwe, more than nine out of ten of the cattle-dips were destroyed — all the people suffered to some degree because of this — but the subsequent crisis in agriculture was a significant blow to the Salisbury administration.)

The IRA's bombing campaign brought down Stormont and ushered in the clearly visible imperialist direct-rule. And, on the day last month, that direct-ruler Atkins met with the Free State collaborator Haughey, the IRA stole the headlines and got across its attitude by bombing three hotels and causing over one million pounds worth of damage.

Commercial bombing well suits the IRA's adopted strategy of a long war of attrition. It is currently impossible for the IRA to solely direct all its resources against the British military. Personnel losses under such restrictive operations would risk the necessary delicate re-planning, re-grouping and re-organising and would thus possibly jeopardise the whole liberation struggle. Maximum preservation of the revolutionary guerrilla army is essential.

Furthermore, there is no guarantee that such a singular strategy (of a purely anti-military campaign) would mean the realisation of any of the factors instrumental in creating withdrawal.

Propaganda

All IRA actions create propaganda and good propaganda raises the nationalist people's morale, puts Ireland on the world stage and demoralises the British government and its forces.

Internationally the IRA is respected as a daring guerrilla organisation which has taken on, and is giving a thrashing to, one of the most modern sophisticated armies in the world. The remote-control land-mine (the product of long experimentation), the close-up gun attacks in city and countryside, and the ability to rejuvenate after rounds of repression, has placed the IRA in an enviable position from the point of view of other national liberation armies.

In this political war the IRA often does not even have to fire a shot to create insecurity and demoralisation within enemy forces! Just the appearance of armed IRA Volunteers at Casement Park in Belfast, last August, had loyalists publicly squabbling with the colonial Northern Ireland Office. For not taking action the British administration was accused of 'ceding West Belfast to the Provisionals', and of dealing 'a blow to morale in Northern Ireland'.

And the filming of the IRA in Carrickmore in Tyrone was

raised in Westminster, with massive consequent exposure of the inadequacy of the occupation forces.

Overseas

By taking the war even beyond England, and into British army bases in West Germany, the IRA has demonstrated its operational capacity and has kept international attention focussed on Britain's dirty war in Ireland. As an IRA spokesman stated, following the latest attacks in February: **"Overseas attacks have a prestige value and internationalise the war in Ireland"**.

Propaganda is an extremely important theatre of war. Through a widespread and expensive advertising campaign the British government has attempted, and failed, to project the Republican Movement as a 'criminal conspiracy'. Through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, who have promotional campaigns going in North America and Western Europe, the Brits have been projecting the North as a tranquil and normal place.

The IRA by attacking hotels and hitting the tourist trade have been spreading the opposite message.

Political

While the IRA carries out revolutionary armed struggle, solidarity and agitational work and open political resistance is carried out by Sinn Fein. Working away in spite of bannings, and with its members the subject of constant harassment, raids and arrest, and even assassination, it is Sinn Fein's task to capitalise on and consolidate the gains made by itself and the IRA.

In any revolutionary struggle the political organisation is always propagandising against the enemy; articulating the need for, and justification of, resistance; building itself up into a strong and sophisticated machine which can challenge collaborationist parties; and giving leadership to the people whether it be through itself, or in conjunction with a broad front.

Ulsterisation

Militarily the Brits have at their disposal: 14,000 British soldiers stationed mostly in and around nationalist areas; 7,000 RUC men and women; 4,500 RUC Reservists; and 8,000 UDR soldiers, 2,500 of whom are full-time. As they have not managed to defeat the IRA then why does the British government not pour in extra soldiers?

News from the revolutionary struggle

The goal of this section of *International Forum* is to provide our readers with essential information on the recent developments and actions of the communist and revolutionary movement around the world, in a form that is both condensed and useful.

Our capacity to develop this section is very much dependent on the correspondence we receive from our foreign comrades, as well as being subject to limitations of space.

March 8, 1981: Unity and militancy

International Women's Day was celebrated in many

One reason is that they are still trying to 'Ulsterise' their forces (that is, have RUC and UDR men in the front line) and this would go against that trend.

So effective have IRA attacks been on the RUC and UDR that the British government has a continual problem (demonstrated by the massive recruitment campaign) maintaining these forces at strength, never mind increasing their numbers. (There are so many resignations within the UDR that almost every third or fourth 'UDR man' shot now turns out to have resigned within the previous six months.)

Nevertheless, the British government would not let 'Ulsterisation' prevent them from bringing in more soldiers. But this in itself would present a problem.

As the Brits have found to their cost, more troops often mean more targets for the IRA to shoot at, mean more Brits suffering demoralisation, mean more blatant repression than is politically 'acceptable'. Brit generals seem agreed that the 14,000 troops presently engaged in the war is the best number for optimum results.

Control

Clearly the British government do not yet want to rid themselves of the North, contrary to what Fine Gael leader Garret FitzGerald asserted recently. The British know that the North is the key to political control of Ireland.

They are aware of, and they fear, the socialist direction Ireland could take if it were free from imperialist bondage. They also fear the political repercussions in Britain which a defeat in Ireland could bring.

Leading Tory spokesman John Biggs-Davidson said a few years ago:

"What happens in Londonderry is very relevant to what can happen in London, and if we lose in Belfast we may have to fight in Brixton or Birmingham. Just as Spain in the thirties was a rehearsal for a wider European conflict so perhaps what is happening in Northern Ireland is a rehearsal for urban guerilla war more widely in Europe, particularly in Britain".

All present indications are that the Brits have resigned, rather than committed, themselves to battle it out — to foot the bill, while the thickies in the army foot their lives. But they have no idea where the next blow is going to fall or what it is going to cost them. The Republican in jail haunts them and outwits them, the Volunteer on the street just awaits the next opportunity to press the trigger or detonate the bomb!

countries with massive and united mobilizations.

In Europe and Japan, more than 100,000 women demonstrated against the Right's attacks on abortion and women's social rights. There as well as in North America, March 8 helped prepare and mobilize for May 16, the International Day for Free Abortion on Demand. Besides putting forward their specific demands, women demonstrated against preparations for war and the rise of fascism. Thousands and thousands of women also demonstrated in the United States and Canada in response to calls issued by politically very broad-based coalitions.

One of the main questions raised in various conferences held at this time was the problem of the correct relationship to be established between the struggle for women's im-

mediate demands and the struggle for their liberation, on the one hand, and the revolutionary political struggle of the working class and labouring masses, on the other hand. It seems that in countries where there is a more imminent revolutionary situation, women's organizations give priority to calling on women to join the general revolutionary struggle. In countries where the situation is not so critical, and notably in the imperialist countries, much greater importance is given to women's specific demands.

In **Nicaragua**, Angela Rosa Acevedo, leader of the Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMN), said: "The struggle for justice for women is the struggle against the dominant repressive system that perpetuates imperialism around the world." The union of domestic workers, which belongs to the AMN, took part in the March 8 celebrations to press the demands of its members: a 10-hour work day and a 6-day work week: overtime and vacation pay; a minimum wage of \$72.50 a month. Domestic workers currently earn about \$60 a month, without any fringe benefits. These women were unable to participate in the recent literacy campaign because their employers refused to give them time off. Yet most of these women have not finished their third year of elementary school. (Information from the *Guardian*, April 1, 1981)

In **Ireland**, more than 1,000 people demonstrated in support of the women imprisoned at Armagh (near Belfast). One of the banners read, "It is false and dishonest to say that all women are sisters — look at Margaret Thatcher!" (**The Starry Plough**, organ of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, March 1981). At conferences held the previous day in Dublin and Belfast on the topic of "The national question in Ireland: how does it affect Irish women?", some 300 women debated the relationship between the struggle for reforms and the struggle for the social and political liberation of the Irish people. One of the speakers was Naomi Brennan, secretary-general of the IRSP, who said that reforms like day care, the right to divorce and equal pay were unlikely in Ireland, both in the North and in the South, because of the domination of British imperialism, which has prevented the Irish economy from developing fully. Although the struggle for these reforms must be waged, "it would be wrong for the Irish women's movements to set too much store by the successes of women's movements in Europe for example. These movements have grown out of a specific set of conditions — basically Social Democracy. These are not the conditions of Ireland... Our struggle will have more in common with the women in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Palestine than with our closest neighbour, Britain."

She went on to discuss the real needs of Irish women: "In the North, for example, the most crushing oppression that women suffer is the presence of the British Army. Harassment, intimidation, sexual insults and abuse, strip-searches and dawn raids are an everyday occurrence for the nationalist women." According to Naomi Brennan, the women's movement in Northern Ireland stems primarily from the women's involvement in the anti-imperialist struggle, and not the influence of growing feminism in southern Ireland: "... there is no real women's movement in Ireland at the moment. Women Against Imperialism (WAI) has proved to be the most successful in the six counties and the single issue of Contraception Action Programme in the south. It is my strong belief that an anti-imperialist current inside of the remnants of the women's movement in Ireland is not sufficient and that it is precisely because of the lack of an anti-imperialist perspective that the women's movement in the south has failed, and conversely that WAI has succeeded.

Until such questions are tackled, until we try to unite feminists with an anti-imperialist and socialist perspective, feminism in Ireland will remain what it has been: an elite phenomenon, incapable of successfully challenging our oppressors and winning our liberation."

In **Brazil**, 6,000 took part in the debates leading up to the Third Congress of Sao Paulo Women, despite the fact that a parallel "congress", organized by bourgeois groups, was held. Since 1975, there has been a reorganization in the women's movement in Brazil. Given the situation in this country, the movement finds itself facing a number of political problems. Thus the congress passed a resolution aimed at promoting "women's participation in workers', people's and political struggles and in their organizations (parties, unions, etc.), and the putting forward of women's specific issues". (**Movimento**, March 16, 1981). Other resolutions formulated the topics to be dealt with in the coming year: 1) for women's right to jobs; 2) for day care in the workplace; and 3) against government — control of pregnancies and for the right to have only children that are wanted.

In **Canada**, March 8 was an opportunity for the MLOC IN STRUGGLE! to make a critical reassessment of its line and previous work on the question of women. Josée Lamoureux, a representative of IN STRUGGLE!, gave a speech called "The women's struggle and socialism — a battle that's hard, that we can win, that must be fought now!" Starting with the correct over-all analysis that the total emancipation of women is incompatible with capitalism, IN STRUGGLE! has made some important errors, she said. As a result, IN STRUGGLE!'s relations with the women's movement were characterized principally by its denunciation of feminism; in practice, the struggle against chauvinism was downplayed.

While acknowledging that not all women necessarily achieve political awareness through the experience of their own oppression, Josée Lamoureux nonetheless emphasized that the women's struggle was a vital part of the class struggle in Canada. Women's specific oppression and the demands that grow out of this oppression justify women organizing among themselves on this basis.

Turning to the question of the necessary unity between women and men, IN STRUGGLE!'s spokesperson stressed the importance of seeing what divides men and women, including working-class men and women: "We have to understand that this division is in actual fact grounded in the **material benefits**, the **privileges** that men gain from the oppression of women — at work and within the patriarchal family." It is clear that there is chauvinism and a sexual division of work within IN STRUGGLE! as well. At its April 1981 meeting, the Central Committee of the Organization endorsed this analysis and adopted a resolution aimed at developing the struggle against chauvinism, notably with respect to family responsibilities and the division of work within the organization. (For the full text of this resolution, see IN STRUGGLE!, no. 251, May 19, 1981.)

El Salvador: the support movement grows

There has been a considerable worldwide development of solidarity with the people of El Salvador since the beginning of their offensive last January and the subsequent counter-offensive by the Salvadoran junta and the United States. Revolutionary and progressive forces have shown their solidarity with massive mobilizations. In Caracas,

Venezuela, more than 20,000 people demonstrated. In West Germany, 300 local solidarity committees have been set up. In Mexico, there was an international conference in late June involving 150 international organizations. One of the most impressive demonstrations took place right in the United States — in Washington, D.C., where between 75,000 and 100,000 people marched in protest on May 3, 1981. They were responding to the call launched by the People's Anti-War Mobilization, a broad coalition of worker, student and community groups aimed at developing the struggle against Reagan's policies, and in particular war preparations and U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

A second concern for revolutionary and progressive forces is the Socialist International's growing involvement with the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) in El Salvador since Guillermo Ungo became the leader of the Front. Ungo is the leader of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), affiliated with the SI. In an editorial in its May 12, 1981 issue (no. 250), the Canadian newspaper IN STRUGGLE! emphasized that "in October 1979, after the military coup d'Etat fomented by the United States, the MNR agreed to participate in the junta. Meanwhile, in London, the Socialist International issued a press release welcoming the new government in El Salvador, 'dedicated to achieving real and effective democracy.'" Realizing how big the mass movement was, the MNR left the government and joined the FDR in April 1980. The Socialist International, representing mainly West European imperialist interests (West Germany provides 60% of the SI's funds), is trying to impose its own political solution. It recently sent Ed Broadbent, leader of the Canadian New Democratic Party, to Latin America for an "exploratory mission".

So revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist forces are confronted with social democracy in their practical work of solidarity. Should the West German and other imperialists be denounced? How should independent points of view be put forward, while at the same time preserving the "united front"? In Canada, for example, the social democrats together with the revisionists insist that the goal of support work should be to convince the Canadian government, which supports the junta and U.S. intervention, to adopt a "correct" attitude and right its "occasional mistakes". They see the work mostly in terms of lobbying members of parliament, and communists must not be too much in evidence! In contrast, the communists insist on the need to build active mass support and at the same time to struggle against their own imperialist bourgeoisie.

However, the MLOC IN STRUGGLE! recognizes that a number of Marxist-Leninist forces have given very mitigated support to the struggle of the Salvadoran people — precisely because of the influence of social democracy. It has therefore issued an appeal for international political and material support for this struggle. The goals are to: counter imperialism's dishonest media campaign against this struggle; demand that the various countries break off diplomatic relations with the junta; donate an hour of pay to support the armed struggle. Contributions can be sent to: IN STRUGGLE!, c/o Support El Salvador, P.O. Box 340, Station M, Montreal, Canada H1V 3M5. They will be forwarded to the FDR/FMLN.

Afghanistan: mass struggle and international support

All sectors of Afghan society are involved in the struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan — workers, peasants, women, students, feudal lords and the Islamic clergy. Soviet control is considerably hampered by the many workers' strikes, demonstrations and other examples of active or passive resistance. To give an idea of the scope of the mass movement: in the spring of 1980 there was a shopkeepers' strike in Kandahar; a general strike in Herat; and strikes and demonstrations in the major cities. In April 1980, students at the University of Kabul launched a general strike that was soon taken up by other student bodies. In a number of cases, demonstrations and confrontations with the occupying troops were led by high school students only 13 or 14 years old. The armed clashes left several hundred dead or wounded and were followed by thousands of arrests.

Many guerrilla forces are fiercely opposing the Karmal regime in various parts of the country. Although the majority of these forces are Islamic, there are important differences between them. Five hardline parties, combined in the Islamic Alliance for the Freedom of Afghanistan, together with Golbodine Hekmatyar's Islamic Party, are led by feudal landlords and serve their interests above all. They claim to be waging a religious war. These organizations are also supported by the Arab monarchs, the Pakistani Conservative Party and other forces on the side of U.S. imperialism. The hardliners are opposed to any land reform, including the version promoted by the pro-Soviet regime.

It would seem from various sources that the most active organizations inside Afghanistan are the progressive ones. The **National United Front** was the result of work done by the SAMA (Organization for the liberation of the peoples of Afghanistan) and includes a number of political and guerrilla organizations. One of these is the Nouristan Front, in the eastern part of the country. The National United Front's platform of unity calls for an anti-imperialist struggle and an independent Afghanistan free of any imperialist bloc, be it Eastern or Western. These forces hope to improve the living conditions of the people living in the liberated zones in the course of the struggle.

There are also many local or tribal forces that remain isolated, being jealous of their independence or suspicious of the other ethnic groups and nationalities.

Afghan Marxist-Leninists are in reorganization and relatively absent from the picture. (In the 1960s, the Shola Jaweed (Eternal Flame) movement developed substantially. After suffering savage repression it split. Some of its members, including the leader Abdul Madjid Kalakani, formed the SAMA, which its opponents accuse of being opportunist and economist). The organization AKHGAR (see **Internation Forum**, no. 2) was created in West Germany in 1976. It has gone through internal splits, in particular over the issue of Mao. Both Akhgar tendencies made their points of view known recently. (See **Revolutionary Worker**, organ of the RCP-USA, July 11, 1980.)

Build support

Although a number of left-wing political organizations voiced their opposition to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan,

it must be admitted that there has been little concrete support for the struggle of this people. One of the reasons for this is undoubtedly the "Islamic" nature of the resistance, as reported in the Western bourgeois and imperialist press. Of course, it is in the interest of these media to present struggles against Soviet imperialism as if they were led by confirmed and utter reactionaries or, better yet, anti-communists.

There have, however, been efforts to build a movement of solidarity with the Afghan resistance. June 6, 1980, there was a day of debates in Paris called "6 hours for Afghanistan". This event gave rise to the Movement of Solidarity with the Afghan Resistance (MSRA). The MSRA is already active in a dozen cities in France. Its aims are to circulate information about the struggle and develop material support in close cooperation with Afghan organizations. The MSRA publishes a newsletter, **Afghanistan en lutte** (published in French).

In September 1980 there was a solidarity conference in Rome organized by **Mondoperaio**, the journal of the Italian Socialist Party. Participants included representatives of the Socialist and "Eurocommunist" parties, organizations defining themselves as Marxist-Leninist and a representative of the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) in Poland. One of the conference goals was to create a pan-European solidarity committee. This was not done, as the various groups present disagreed on issues that were often related to their domestic politics. But some initiatives were endorsed, such as the idea of a kind of "Russel Tribunal" to judge the war crimes committed by Soviet Troops, and the idea of a fund-raising campaign for the Afghan resistance.

Groups of Afghan students abroad are active in West Germany and France. They can be contacted at these addresses: Union générale des étudiants afghans à l'étranger, c/o ESG, Postfach 25 02 29 — 4630 BOCHUM, Fed. Rep. of Germany; or 20 rue d'Assas — 21 000 DIJON, France. The Federation of Afghan Students Abroad can be contacted by writing to: F.A.S.A., P.O. Box 21 09 20 — Karlsruhe 21, Red. Rep. of Germany. **Afghanistan en lutte**, newsletter of the MSRA, can be obtained at the following address: MSRA, c/o Jean Freyss, 20 Rue Pierre Brossette, 93130 Noisy-le-Sec, Paris, France.

Unity initiatives in the left

CHILE: debates within the resistance movement

On the occasion of the congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, leaders of eight Chilean resistance parties met in Havana to sum up the development of unitary organizations in exile. They indicated that this work should be strengthened in the future. Participants in the meeting represented the Communist Party (CP), the Socialist Party (PS), the MIR, the Christian Left, MAPU, MAPU-Worker-Peasant (MAPU-OC) and the Radical Party. (**Granma**, Jan. 4, 1981)

In October and November 1980, a series of conferences and debates were held in Paris at the initiative of the Committee of Solidarity with the Chilean People. Representatives of the MIR, the Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR), the PS (Altamirano section), the PS-CNR (National regional co-ordinating body) the PS-CNR (COPOL), the Christian Left, MAPU, and MAPU Workers' Party (MAPU-PT).

The conferences were an opportunity to evaluate and debate points of agreement and disagreement between the various political resistance organizations.

Although all these groups agree about the need to develop the broadest possible unity among the working class and peo-

ple, they propose different ways of achieving that unity. The MAPU-OC, MAPU, the Christian Left and the PS (Altamirano) propose to establish a **Socialist Convergence**. However, these groups have different assessments of the CP of Chile and a number of other matters, including the issues of the relationship between democracy and socialism, and international policy.

The MAPU Workers' Party emphasized "the necessity of building unity from the bottom up and developing the revolutionary organizations that the masses themselves establish instead of creating umbrella structures 'from the top down'. Unity will be achieved in the heat of the struggle, not through organizational mergers that will not stand up to the first hard blows arising from changing conditions."

The Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR) highlighted the urgent need to establish a revolutionary pole, recognizing that the PCR had failed to do so. It added that what was most important in the process of building unity was "the basis for the unity, not the quantity of forces united".

All the organizations except the MIR indicated that they were going through a period of crisis, caused notably by the distance "between the 'political class' and the real social movement".

The MAPU Workers' Party, however, thinks that this situation must be seen in the light of the crisis in the international working-class movement as a whole. The main aspects of this crisis involve how we see such things as the transition to socialism; the dictatorship of the proletariat; the party and its relations with the masses; socialism (the difference between genuine socialism and State capitalism).

Concerning the international situation, differences were crystallized over the attitude to adopt towards the U.S.S.R. The MIR considers the U.S.S.R. a strategic ally of the Chilean revolution and sees the invasion of Afghanistan as "internationalist help for an endangered revolutionary process". In contrast, the Christian Left sees the U.S.S.R. as a bureaucratic socialist country and wants nothing to do with this kind of "socialism". The PS and the two sections of the PS (CNR) condemn the invasion of Afghanistan and support the struggle of the Polish workers. The PCR and the MAPU Workers' Party hold that the U.S.S.R. is an imperialist power (see the article in this issue of **Forum** on the invasion of Afghanistan).

(Information taken from ANCHA, no. 59 and 60, January 1981)

GUATEMALA: Unification of revolutionary mass organizations

Various mass organizations working with peasants, workers and in education have united to form the January 31 People's Front (FP-31). The name commemorates the day in 1980 when 27 revolutionaries occupying the Spanish Embassy were murdered by Lucas Garcia's army.

The FP-31 has set itself the task of working with the masses to develop the actions necessary in the current situation of ripening revolutionary conditions in Guatemala. Such actions can range from limited or general strikes to weaken the regime through to para-military forms of struggle. The FP-31 recognizes the guerrilla organizations EGP (Guerrilla Army of the Poor), FAR (Armed Rebel Forces), ORPA (Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms) and PGT (Guatemalan Party of Labour) as the vanguard of the struggle. These organizations are themselves in the process of uniting.

PERU: Left makes progress in municipal elections

Izquierda Unida, the alliance of the united left, emerged as the main opposition to the regime in the municipal elections held in November 1980. Izquierda Unida won close to 30% of the vote in the area of Lima, coming ahead of the Peruvian Aprista Party, which traditionally forms the opposition. The candidate for the Popular Action Party won election in Lima, with 37% of the vote. (About 35% to 40% of the electorate generally abstains.)

Izquierda Unida is composed of the parties and organizations that describe themselves as Marxist-Leninist, including the Communist Party of Peru-Patria Roja (which defends the three worlds theory). The majority of Trotskyist groups refused to work with the coalition. The January 1981 issue of the Venezuelan publication KO-EYU reported the Trotskyist leader Jugo Blanco as saying that the alliance was an "attempt at class collaboration with the bourgeoisie".

WESTERN EUROPE: European organizations work together to fight the rise of the right

A dozen organizations identifying themselves as "independent" Marxist-Leninists and all belonging to the European Co-ordinating Committee of Revolutionary Organizations (ECRO) recently met in Paris to discuss the struggle against rising fascism and racism. There has been a definite upsurge of expressions of racism in Great Britain, France (where the CP of France has been involved) and West Germany. Fascist tendencies are becoming more and more notable in all European countries.

Some of the groups participating in ECRO include Sinn Fein (the political wing of the Irish Republican Army), the Movimiento Comunista of Spain and Democrazia Proletaria of Italy, (Information from the *Guardian*, March 11, 1981 and the *Bulletin* of the CEDETIM, November 1980).

SPAIN: The struggle against NATO

The February 6, 1981 issue of the newspaper *Vanguardia Obrera* contains a communiqué signed by a number of organizations in Euskadi (Basque country), calling for the renunciation of the 1976 treaty between the United States and Spain and the dismantling of U.S. bases on Spanish soil; it also opposes Spain joining NATO. The organizations that signed the communiqué, (including the CP of Spain (M-L) Communist Movement (Euskadi), the PCEU and the PTE), agree that the struggle against NATO has to be linked to "the general context of people's struggles (against nuclear power, unemployment, the monarchy; for the right to self-determination; etc.) and given an anti-imperialist orientation."

ETHIOPIA: Call for a united front

The People's Liberation Front of Tigre (a province in northeastern Ethiopia) has called for a united front of all revolutionary organizations and opposition movements from the main national movements in this country with the purpose of stepping up the struggle against the ruling regime, backed militarily and politically by the U.S.S.R. and economically by the Western imperialist powers. According to a report in the February 18 issue of the *Guardian*, the FPLT's military strength is growing; it estimates that 3,900

Ethiopian soldiers were killed or wounded in 1980 in combats initiated mostly by guerrilla forces. Founded six years ago, the FPLT aims to put an end to "feudal exploitation, national oppression and foreign control". The Front claims to control 80% of the province. It says it combines guerrilla tactics with a political strategy of "improving the living conditions of the population, most of whom are peasants, while at the same time providing it with the means to defend its victories". The FPLT has also called for an international boycott of the Ethiopian regime.

Divisions and splits within the left

SPAIN: crisis in the CP of Spain (M-L)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain (M-L) (PCE(M-L)) held a plenum in the end of January. A notable feature of this meeting was the denunciation of a minority group with "rightist, adventurist and liquidationist" positions and activities. *Vanguardia Obrera*, the organ of the PCE(M-L), published a communiqué from the Executive Committee in its February 6 issue saying that the work of the "factionalists", who are present at various levels of the party and notably in the CC, was aimed at "1) denying, obstructing and opposing in practice the party's tactic of republican people's unity; and 2) in the same vein, opposing the party's tactic of class unity in union work".

According to the *Letter* to all party militants from the Executive Committee of the PCE(M-L), "It is not just a matter of ordinary differences of opinion on this or that aspect of our political line or work, differences that can and must be expressed in the committee or cell where each member works. This would be perfectly normal. Instead, we are faced with activities that tend to undermine the party, its organizational structures and leadership bodies..."

The *Letter* adds: "The basic goal behind the factionalists' positions is to change the republican tactic, to dilute it until it blends with all opportunist groups and organizations that talk about the republic but do nothing to win over the masses, a necessary step in order to fight the monarchy.... They also tried to liquidate the AOA (Workers' Association for the Assembly) so as to restrict union work to the collaborationist labour federations.... They tried to liquidate the Republican Convention and draw up an abstract, ambiguous policy of alliances with pro-Soviet fringe groups like Communist Movement, the Trotskyists and so on."

The Central Committee set up an investigation and control committee to examine the activities of the "factionalists" and establish their scope and internal and external links and ramifications. All the members accused of factionalism, including the members of the CC, were dismissed from their positions.

SPAIN: Eurocommunism in crisis

At its recent congress, the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC), a section of the Communist Party of Spain, challenged the "Eurocommunist" line of Santiago Carrillo (leader of the CP of Spain). According to issue no. 152 of *Servir Al Pueblo*, the organ of Communist Movement, this indicates that an important part of the PSUC rejects Carrillo's "fundamental reformism". It seems, however, that some of the main opposition figures want the CP of Spain to revert to positions similar to those of the CP of Portugal,

which has never wavered in its unflagging support for the U.S.S.R. The PSUC would also like to be more militant: it would like to avoid making deals with the Spanish government as Carrillo has done, for example, to tolerate the adoption and application of repressive laws.

THREE-WORDISTS: the crisis continues

Although some of the groups that defend the three worlds theory have been somewhat successful in the working-class and mass movements — for instance in Norway, the Dominican Republic and Peru (see the previous item on electoral successes) — they are still experiencing an on-going crisis (see *International Forum*, no. 2). The three worlds theory is interpreted in various ways: as a call for a united front of all the peoples and countries of the second and third worlds against the two superpowers; or as a call for a united front of all forces, including the United States, against Soviet social imperialism.

The activity of the CP of China is undoubtedly one of the contributing factors in the confusion of the three worldists. Besides establishing fraternal ties with the revisionist Italian party, China has suspended its aid to revolutionary movements in Asia. After the CP of Thailand refused to support China in an anti-Vietnam front, it was prevented from using radio transmitters located on Chinese territory. The CP of Thailand has also rejected Vietnamese pressures to join the latter's anti-Chinese front.

There are important debates going on within the CP(M-L) in the United States, if an article in the February issue of its newspaper, *The Call*, is to be believed. The article is not an official statement by the party. Nonetheless, it calls for a thorough reassessment of the party's past line and work. Observing that results are meagre after ten years of work, that the party has lost several hundred members over the last two years and that most of the organizations belonging to this political tendency in advanced capitalist countries are disintegrating, the author indicates that the cause should probably be sought in the fundamental conceptions of the "Maoist" or pro-China parties. The author says, "Perhaps... Mao Zedong Thought was, after all, primarily an application of Marxism to China's third world conditions."

The author considers that the main causes of CP(ML)'s failures were its sectarianism towards mass movements, its ultra-leftism towards reforms and its ideological dogmatism. Noting that the party has done very little original theoretical work, he adds: "We have no specific program for revolutionary work either in the short term or the long term, and we can offer the people no concrete vision of what a socialist USA would look like even in a general way."

GREAT BRITAIN: shake-up in the Labour Party

Last March, 21 leaders generally identified with the right wing of the Labour Party (a member of the Socialist International) resigned from the party to create the "Social Democratic Party". This new party will try to form an electoral and parliamentary alliance with the Liberal Party. Observers consider that such an alliance would stand a good chance of winning the next election and becoming the government.

The resignations came in reaction to the growing influence of the left wing, and notably the Trotskyists, in the Labour Party. The first disagreement was over the method of electing

the party leader. Previously, the leader was chosen by the Parliamentary caucus (the MPs). The left wanted the system changed so that the leader would be elected by the union leaders parliamentary caucus (30%) and local sections (30%). In terms of its political platform, the left wing had gotten the party to commit itself to unilateral nuclear disarmament, the withdrawal of Britain from the Common Market and the nationalization of banks and main industries. The right wing was opposed to all these positions.

Struggles against political repression

TURKEY: a people imprisoned

The military coup d'état on September 12, 1981, was very well received in imperialist circles, including in the U.S.S.R. With inflation running at a rate of 100% since the coup, Turkey has had to reassure its imperialist masters. The country's foreign debt totals more than \$16 billion, of which \$3.7 billion is owed to the U.S.S.R. Wages have been frozen indefinitely and martial law imposed, banning all trade-union or political activity, even by the liberal opposition. But it was soon obvious that the revolutionary forces in general were the main target of the military. According to the American newspaper *Guardian* for February 11, 1981, there were 29,995 activists arrested between September 10 and December 10, 1980. The vast majority of them belonged to far left organizations or the Kurdish national movement. In a May Day declaration, the Union of Turkish workers in France stated that there were now more than 100,000 political prisoners in Turkey. Some of the universities in Ankara have been converted into prisons.

The most barbaric kinds of torture and summary executions are everyday occurrences. Erdal Eren, 18 years old, a supporter of the Democratic Communist Party of Turkey (M-L), was executed last December, despite the fact that his death sentence had been commuted by the previous government following international protests. The Communist Party of Turkey (M-L) and its Liberation Army of Workers and Peasants of Turkey (TIKKO), The Voice of the People, the People's Liberation Party, and others, report that many of their members and supporters are being imprisoned and tortured. They are calling for international solidarity to break the wall of silence maintained by the imperialist press on the situation in Turkey. The Federation of Turkish Students in Great Britain calls on people to denounce the regime of terror, saying: "One of the most striking aspects is torturing of political prisoners. It has reached such dimensions that it is impossible to ignore it, yet the progressive public opinion of the world is not fully aware of the situation. We take it as our duty to inform the public abroad so that they can rise and say no to torture."

"... The champions of 'Human rights' and 'democratic' governments of the U.S.A., West Germany, England and the so-called 'socialist' U.S.S.R. have turned a blind eye to all this. This is understandable since the junta is trying to keep Turkey as an integral part of the capitalist-imperialist world order."

The Turkish comrades ask all progressives and democratic people to move motions of support in their unions; to pressure their governments to suspend military and economic aid

and to break off diplomatic relations; and to pressure the media to break the wall of silence surrounding the prisoners.

Turkish Students in Britain publishes a newsletter in English called UNITY. (Write to BTOF, 1/a Hollybush Place, Office No. 3, Bethnal Green, London E2.)

News

Brazil: A military court sentenced 11 union leaders to up to 3½ years in jail for "inciting civil disobedience". The labour leaders had headed up a strike by 300,000 workers in the Sao Paulo industrial belt in March 1980. They are also leaders of the Workers' Party, a new broadly-based, social-democratic workers' group.

China: The convictions of Jiang Qing and Chang Chunchiao set off vigorous reactions in a number of circles. Close to 2,000 people signed an appeal issued by the Mouvement de libération des femmes in defence of Jiang. The appeal was published in the French daily, *Le Monde*, on

January 15, 1981. Three French groups — Union des communistes de France/m-l, the OCML Voie prolétarienne and the OC Combat révolutionnaire — published a joint statement stressing the legacy of the Cultural Revolution defended by the Chinese accused. The American newspaper *Revolutionary Worker* reported on January 30 that militant demonstrations had been held in a number of U.S. cities. Elsewhere, the Communist Workers' Organization (CWO) in France, the Communist League (KB) in West Germany, the group for Socialism in Belgium and Communist Movement in Spain all condemned the Beijing (Peking) trials and demanded the immediate release of those charged. (taken from *Servir Al Pueblo*, no. 153).

United States: Bob Avakian, chairman of the RCP of the United States, has requested political refugee status in France. He is presently facing politically motivated "criminal" charges in the United States and is liable to a cumulative total of 241 years in jail if convicted. (see *Revolutionary Worker?* March 20, 1981).

Addresses for foreign publications

We are providing our readers with the following list of addresses taken from the publications of parties and organizations which have been mentioned in *International Forum*.

Warning: These addresses are only to be used for public correspondence (for example, to ask for or to send public documents). Readers who intend to use these addresses must scrupulously follow the instructions, and must address their envelopes and letters in exactly the same way they are written in the list — with nothing added to what is indicated for the address.

AUSTRIA
For the publications of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Austria, write to:

Rote Fahne,
c/o Franz Strobl,
Goldschlagstrasse 64,
1150 Wien, Austria

AZANIA

Solidarity, the official organ of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, can be obtained at the two following addresses:
410 Central Park West, no. 3c,
New York, N.Y. 10025, USA.

Oppelner Strasse 41,
6990 Heidelberg, West Germany.

The documents of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania can be obtained from:
PAC Observer Mission to the United Nations,

B.P. 198, Paris 75864
Cedex 18, France

The documents of the MAPU — Workers Party of Chile can be obtained from:
REVISTA UNIDAD PROLETARIA,
Box 26016 — 7526,
Uppsala, Sweden.

ENGLAND

The literature of the CP of Britain M-L is available at:
Bellman Bookshop
150 Fortress Road
London, NW5, England

ERITREA

News and analysis from the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) is found in:
Eritrea Information,
via Della Dogana Vecchia, 5,
00186 Rome, Italy.

CEYLON

The texts of the CP of Ceylon are available from:
Ceylon Communist Party, 9, De Mel Street,
Colombo -2, Ceylon.

CHILE

To obtain the publications of the RCP of Chile, write without mentioning the name of the party to the following address:
Silvia Chateau

ETHIOPIA

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) now publishes a review entitled *Ethiopian Marxist Review*. It is available at the following addresses:
SPIC, box 12545,
Amsterdam, Holland.
SPIC, c/o Allison and Busby, 6a Noel Street,
London W IV 3RB,
Great Britain.
SPIC, c/o 46 rue de

Vaugirard, 75006
Paris, France.

FRANCE

The publications of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Organization "En Avant Proletaires" can be obtained by writing, without mentioning the name of the organization, to:
T. Hédox,
B.P. 330, 75 025
Paris Cedex 01, France.

The publications of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Organization "Voie Proletarienne" are available at the following address — do not mention the name of the organization:
P.L.P., B.P.#5
93401, Saint-Ouen
Cedex, France

The publications of the Workers CP of France can be obtained at:
Alfred Zimmer,
B.P. 35,
67036 Strasbourg
France

WEST GERMANY AND WESTBERLIN

The documents of the Communist Workers' League of Germany (KABD) are available at:
Redaktion Rote Fahne,
Postfach 103112,
43 Essen 1,
Federal Republic of Germany

The address for the texts of the CP of Ger-

many is:
Roter Morgen
4600 Dortmund 30
Postfach 30 05 26
Federal Republic of Germany

To obtain the newspaper "Gegen die Strömung" write to:
Walter Hofman,
Homburger Landstrasse 52, 6 Frankfurt
Main,
Federal Republic of Germany

To obtain the newspaper "Westberliner Kommunist" write to:
E. H. Karge,
Monumenten Str. 37
1000 Westberlin 62
Federal Republic of Germany

GREECE

For the texts of the CP of Greece, M-L, write
Proletariaki Simea
Themistokleous 54
T T 145, Athens,
Greece

INDIA

The newspaper "Mass Line" can be obtained at this address:
Mass Line
Kottayam 686001,
Kerala, India

IRAN

English translations of the texts of the organization "Peykar" can be obtained from this address in the USA:
U.I.S.U.S.,
P.O. Box 744,
Berkeley,
California 94701,
U.S.A.

Documents and information from the Union of Communists of Iran can be ordered from:
ISAUS,
P.O. Box A3575,
Chicago, Illinois 60690,
USA.

IRELAND

The publications of the Irish Republican Socialist Party can be obtained at the following address:
Irish Republican Socialist Party,
34 Upper Gardiner Street,
Dublin 1, Ireland
The newspaper of the Sinn Fein can be obtained at:
AN PHOLBACHT/REPUBLICAN NEWS,
44 Parnell Square,
Dublin 1, Ireland

ITALY

The newspaper and journal of DEMOCRAZIA PROLETARIA can be gotten from:
Quotidiano dei Lavoratori,
Via Cavour 185,
Roma, Italia.

JAPAN

For the texts of the CP of Japan (Left), which are available in Japanese and English:
Jinmin No Hoshi
3-28 Kamitanaka 3
Shimonoseki — Shi
Yamaguchi — Ken
751, Japan

NEW ZEALAND

The press of the CP of New Zealand can be obtained at:

People's Voice
P.O. Box 1785
Auckland 1, New Zealand

PORTUGAL

The documents of the CP of Portugal (Reconstructed) are available at:
Bandeira Vermelha
R. da Alegria
76,2 — DT
Lisbon, Portugal

The publications of Unidade Comunista can be obtained from:
Rui Gomes,
Apartado 96,
2676 Odivelas Codex
Portugal

SENEGAL

The communist newspaper *Jaay doole bi* — *Le Proletaire* can be ordered from:
LE PROLETAIRE,
B.P. 12025,
Dakar, Senegal.

SPAIN

For the publications of the CP of Spain M-L in Spanish and French write to:
Vanguardia Obrera
Sede Central
C/Libertad, 7
Tercero, derecha
Madrid 4, Spain

The documents of the

Communist Movement of Spain can be ordered from:
Servir Al Pueblo,
Montalban, 7 — 4º,
Madrid 14, Spain.

SWITZERLAND

The organ of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Movement "Roter Prolet" are available at:
Verlag Roter Prolet
C.P. 3349, CH — 8031
Zurich, Switzerland

TUNISIA

Texts of the Marxist-

Leninist group "ECH-CHOOLA" are available in Arabic and in French from:
Editor "Ech-Choola",
B.P. 1, Paris 75660,
Cedex 14, France

TURKEY

For the publications of the CP of Turkey M-L, write without mentioning the name of the party to:
T. Buchladen Georgi
Dimitrov,
4 Koblen Str.,
Frankfurt Main,

Federal Republic of Germany

For documents of the RCP of Turkey in English, write to the following address:
Verlag Roter Morgen(TDKP),
Postfach 30 05 26,
4600 Dortmund 30,
Federal Republic of Germany

UNITED STATES

For the texts of the RCP-USA, in English and Spanish, write to:
RCP of USA

P.O. Box 3486
Merchandise Mart
Chicago,
Illinois 60654, U.S.A.

The documents of the Communist Workers Party are available from:
C.W.P.,
P.O. Box 2256
New York, N.Y. 10116
U.S.A.

The texts of the CP USA M-L can be obtained from:
CPUSA (M-L)
P.O. Box 6205
Chicago,

Illinois 60680, U.S.A.

Documents are also available from the Committee for a Proletarian Party at:
Box holder
P.O. Box 8147
San Diego,
California 92102,
U.S.A.

The weekly newspaper the Guardian can be ordered from:
Guardian, 33 West 17th
Street,

New York, N.Y. 10011,
USA.

VENEZUELA

For documents of the Venezuelan communist movement, write to:
Libreria Julio Gonzales,
Zamuro A. Dr. Diaz,
Pasaje Zamuro no. 4,
Centro Simon Bolivar,
Apartado 16201,
Caracas, Venezuela.

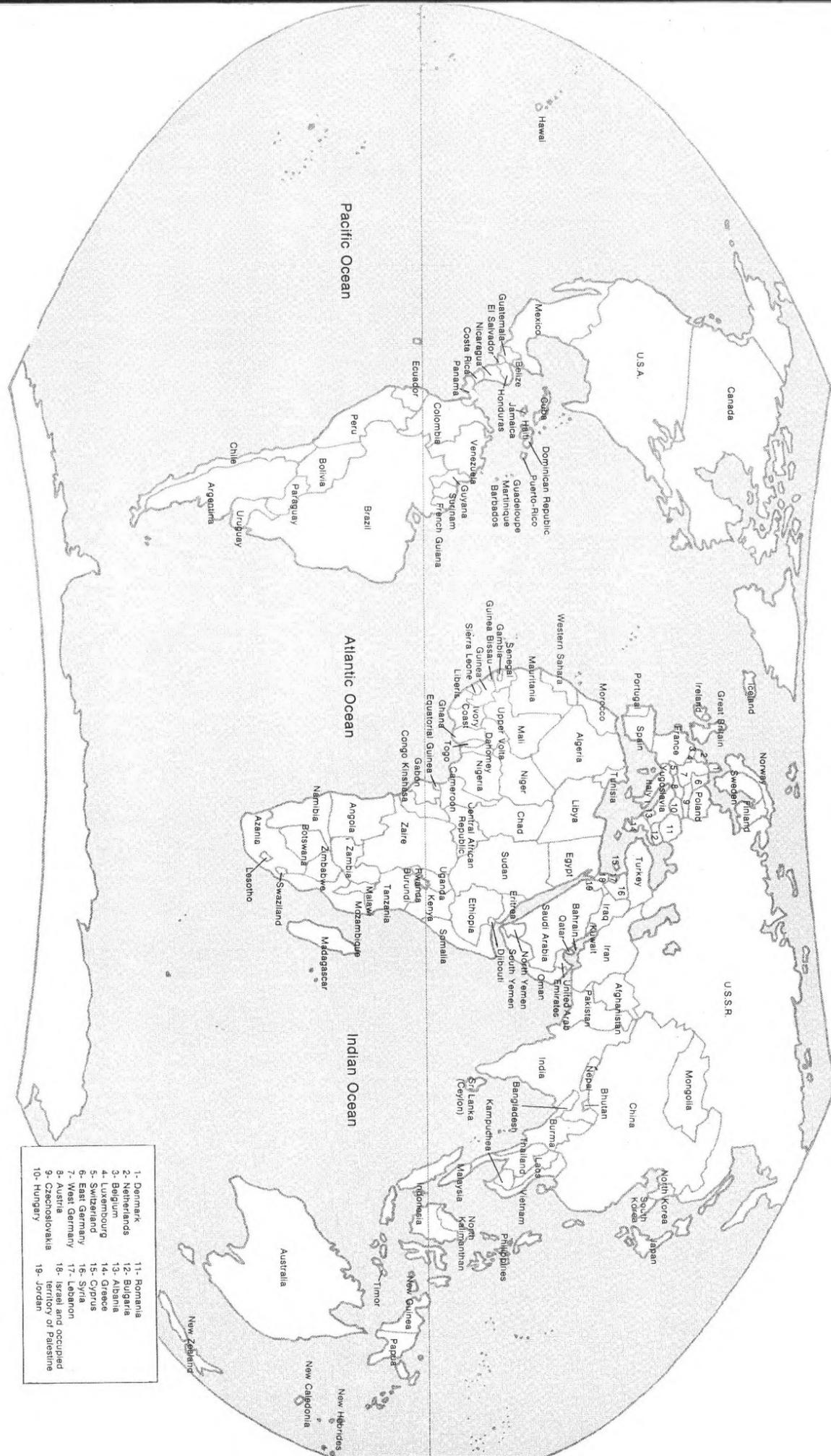
BOOKSTORES THAT CARRY COMMUNIST LITERATURE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Librairie
Norman Bethune
76 Bd. St.Michel
75006 Paris, France

Librairie internationale
2 rue Boulard
75014 Paris, France

Librairie L'Etincelle
325 Ste.Catherine St.
East, Montreal,
Quebec, Canada

NOTES



- 1- Denmark
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- 13- Greece
- 14- Albania
- 15- Cyprus
- 16- Syria
- 17- Lebanon
- 18- Israel and occupied territory of Palestine
- 19- Jordan

What is the MLOC IN STRUGGLE!?

The Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada IN STRUGGLE! was created in 1972 when **For the proletarian party** was first published. **For the proletarian party** issued a call for the creation of the Marxist-Leninist party that could give leadership to the struggle of the working class and people of Canada. At the beginning, IN STRUGGLE! confined its activities to Quebec, one of the nations which is oppressed by the Canadian capitalist State. (Canada is divided into ten provinces and two federally-run territories in the North. The population is 23 million. The majority nation is English Canada. There are many other smaller nations including Quebec, which is mainly French-speaking, the Dene Nation and the Inuit in the North. There are also a number of immigrant communities in various parts of the country. Seventy per cent of the active population are part of the proletariat; less than 5% belong to the peasantry. A little over 20% of the people are in the petty bourgeoisie.)

Today IN STRUGGLE! is active in all the main cities and regions of the country. Its central organ, the weekly newspaper **IN STRUGGLE!** appears regularly in French and English and is distributed in all parts of the country. It is also available in many other countries. IN STRUGGLE! also publishes a theoretical organ, the journal **PROLETARIAN UNITY**, every three months in both French and English. IN STRUGGLE! has also printed a considerable number of agitational and propaganda booklets on the different important struggles going on in Canada and internationally: on the struggle for the creation of the party in Canada, on the national question, on the revolutionary struggle of the Iranian people, on the fight against women's oppression, on the various revisionist organizations and theories in Canada and around the world.

The political and organizational basis of IN STRUGGLE! is expressed in the **Programme for the proletarian revolution in Canada** and the **Constitution of IN STRUGGLE!**, which were adopted at its Third Congress in March 1979. The goal of the struggle of the Canadian working class is to overthrow the Canadian imperialist bourgeoisie which holds State power in Canada and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat under the leadership of its vanguard party and to build socialism as a transitional stage leading to the abolition of all classes and class differences. Its historic mission is to achieve communism. The Canadian working class will make its primary contribution to the achievement of communism by getting involved in the fight for socialism in Canada. Communism is only possible in a world

which has been completely rid of imperialist domination, capitalist exploitation and bourgeois ideology. That is what underlies our solid support for proletarian internationalism. It is what inspired the Appeal issued at our Third Congress, **For the political and organizational unity of the international communist movement**. The international proletariat will not be able to develop its unity in the struggle for socialism and communism unless there is a greater unity of thought and action amongst its Marxist-Leninist vanguard at the international level.

IN STRUGGLE! has considerably increased the scope and intensity of its communist agitational, propaganda and organizational work in the working class and among all nationalities since it was first created. It has intervened in all the major struggles of Canadian workers. It has reached tens of thousands of workers who have taken up one or another of its tactical slogans. This was the case for example in the bourgeois parliamentary elections and in the fight for the absolute equality of languages and nations in Canada. IN STRUGGLE! has played a major role in the struggle to unite the Canadian Marxist-Leninist movement around a communist programme and within a single organization. The Canadian Marxist-Leninist movement is no longer dispersed. At the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies it was composed of a few dozen isolated groups and circles which were all trying to apply Marxism-Leninism and to develop their links to the working class. Now all Marxist-Leninists act under a single and centralized leadership in the struggle to build the vanguard party of the Canadian proletariat.

The results of IN STRUGGLE!'s work since 1972 confirm the general correctness of its political line. Despite some nationalist and economist errors, the members of IN STRUGGLE! are thoroughly involved in the work of rebuilding a genuine Marxist-Leninist party. The party will not be created in isolation from the class struggle in Canada. It will be developed by getting actively involved in the immediate struggles of working people and working to win workers away from reformism and nationalism over to the path of fighting for socialism.

If you want to get in touch with IN STRUGGLE! about any matter of a public nature, write to:

IN STRUGGLE!, P.O. Box 340, Station "M", Montreal, Quebec, Canada H1V 3M5

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What is **INTERNATIONAL FORUM?**

International Forum is a vehicle of information and polemical debate. Its objective is to step up the struggle for the unity of Marxist-Leninists on an international level. It is published in French, English, and Spanish and comes out about three times per year. The first issue was dated April 1980. It is published by the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada IN STRUGGLE! and is distributed in many countries for the benefit of Marxist-Leninist organizations and parties, democratic individuals and organizations and revolutionary national liberation movements.

International Forum will mainly contain material that serves the purpose of letting the reader know who the different revolutionary organizations and parties fighting revisionism and reformism are and what their views are. It will provide information on the ideological and political life of the international Marxist-Leninist movement. It will publicize the activities and struggles of the various revolutionary forces in different countries and the world. **International Forum** is trying to be a helpful instrument in advancing the struggle for the unity of the world's communists.

The subjects covered will be selected on the basis of what the ideological, political and organizational problems are that need to be resolved at present in the revolutionary struggle of the working class and peoples of the world: the unity of communists, building the Marxist-Leninist party, the path of the revolution in different types of countries, the building of socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat, communism. It is in this sense that **International Forum** will be open to polemic and to the criticisms of viewpoints expressed elsewhere in its pages.

International Forum seeks the active collaboration of Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary forces at all levels: in conducting ideological struggle, in writing letters and corresponding in various ways, by helping in production, mailing and local distribution in as many countries as possible.