

restricted circular

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



occasional internal bulletin

Revolutionary Communist League of Britain

**INTERNATIONAL  
REVIEW**

----- **No. 10 Spring 1991** -----

This is the tenth issue of an occasional internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, and the analysis and developments within fraternal organisation.

This issue incorporates the first issue of an international ML publication in line with decisions taken at the Essen Consultative Conference last year. There was to be a contribution from the MLPD in the International Press Correspondence which because of translation difficulties has not appeared.

As with previous issue of International Review there may be unacknowledged disagreements with positions expressed, and these articles should not be taken as representing official R.C.L. positions.

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COMMENTARY : The Self-Destruction of the Burmese Communist Party.

In a prophetic observation an observer of the Communist Party of Burma wrote: "The old leaders are soon going to pass into history, leaving behind ordinary soldiers and low-ranking cadres with little or no concept of communist ideology but who are basically nationalists" (1). As it turned out the Forty years of armed insurgency in Burma, with its stronghold in the minority areas along the northern borders with Thailand and China, collapsed within itself at the very time that mass revolt was shaking the densely populated urban areas of Burma.

In September 1990, Thakin Pe Tint, the CPB's vice-chairman died aged 74 in exile in Beijing. His 76 year old comrade, the exiled chairman, Thakin Ba Thein Tin was hospitalised in Beijing at the same time. Most of the ageing leadership of the CPB resided in China, where they were not allowed to engage in political activities.

The once-powerful CPB revolutionaries had been driven into China across the Nam Hka river border from their main Panghsang headquarters on 16th April 1989 when the ethnic Kokang Chinese, Wa and Shan rank-and-file of the CPB's 12th Brigade mutinied. This proved to be a body blow to the existence of the Communist Party of Burma (military analysts estimated that more than 90% of the CPB's armed forces came from the minority peoples that constituted the liberated base areas of the Burmese Revolution).

Some "rebel" Wa troops had taken over the CPB's northern headquarters at Mong Ko near the Chinese frontier in northeastern Shan state in March 1989. These former CPB army forces abandoned communism and set up the *Burma National Democracy Front* proclaiming adhere to "multi-party democracy" and federalism to resolve the national contradictions in Burmese society. The BNDF supports the National Democratic Front - an umbrella organisation comprising ten minority peoples anti-government resistance forces - as well as the student-led pro-democracy movement in the towns.

The initial revolt by Wa army members was supported by the vast majority of the army rank-and-file reflecting a deep division between the party leadership and the army it nominally led. While nearly all of the the CPB's military commanders were from minority people, the leadership had been dominated by aging Burman marxists. While ethnic Burman political commissars were attached to various units, long time military commanders were, against all maoist precepts, not party members. The "rebel mutineers" following the seizure of the CPB's clandestine radio station denounced, what they termed, "the narrow racial policies" of the CPB leadership and charged them with "having lived in comfort in Panghsang while ordinary soldiers were dying in the battlefield".

The journalist Bertil Linter, commenting on the destruction of the CPB as "an inside job", describes the Party as having been "isolated in the wild and remote hills along the Chinese frontier", failing "to link up with the anti-government movement that swept the Burmese heartland in the mid-1970s" (2)

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(1) Far Eastern Economic Review 14 April 1988

(2) FEER June 1 1989.

For more than 20 years, the entire length of the border between the Chinese province of Yunnan and Burma's Shan state had been firmly controlled by the Communist Party of Burma in a *de facto* alliance with minority insurgencies primarily in the Shan and Kachin states. In the aftermath of the revolt the Communist Party of Burma army splintered into at least four separate armies. The split appears, now the former unifying factor of communist ideology had been discarded, to have been along ethnic lines.



Only a third of Burma's estimated population of 38.8 million lived in the minority areas which accounted for 60% of the country's territory. There is little evidence that the Communist Party of Burma could maintain a clandestine urban network in the successful manner of the Communist Party of Philippines. The CPB was effectively contained in its Shan stronghold when the Burmese army dislodged the Party's army units from central Burma bases - principally Pegu Yoma - in the mid-70s.

The proximity to China initially provided a source of ideological and material support, not least rice supplies to feed the 15,000 strong Communist Party of Burma army, and a ready market for timber and minerals mined in the base areas. In 1972, the original radio station "People's Voice of Burma" was set up with Chinese aid, and Chinese military instructors were attached to Communist Party of Burma units in the field. Reportedly Chinese volunteers made up the bulk of the Communist Party of Burma's fighting forces until the mid-70s. Then sufficient new recruits from the minority people defended what Rangoon termed the "Northeastern War Zone". The base areas had been the subject of intense military offensives launched by the Rangoon military regime. The Communist Party of Burma army had co-operated with Shan and Kachin rebel armies of the NDF in resisting a major series of military campaigns launched by the military in late 1988.

Over the years the Communist Party of Burma had squandered the goodwill it had benefited from in the aftermath of the seizure of power by the military led by General Ne Win in 1962. Communist Party of Burma units in Pegu Yoma in central Burma

had been reinforced by those activists who fled the capital in the wake of the massacres of students at Rangoon University. However a purge in Pegu Yoma of intellectuals, who were executed along with Party veterans, during the influence of the Cultural Revolution, made Left-leaning Burmese wary of working with the Communist Party of Burma. As a result, the anti-government movement of the 70s and 80s - in spite of the allegations of the Rangoon military authorities raising the "communist spectre" - were not influenced by marxism.

The weakness of the Party's links with the people was illustrated with the military take-over on September 18th 1988, and the subsequent bloody repression of the regime's opponents. After decades of facing jungle-based insurgency, the authorities cracked down on mass urban rebellion. The 'Far Eastern Economic Review' commented, "not since the anti-British demonstrations of the late 1930s have so many protesters risen up against the central authorities". (3) Thousands of students fled to areas along the Thai and Chinese borders to get arms and military training : they did not move towards the Communist Party of Burma .

The spring protests by students had developed beyond the scope of the last major student unrest in 1974; demonstrations broke out in practically every major urban area demanding "democracy and human rights". 'The Economist' reported "The students want Burma to be a parliamentary democracy. They say the countries they admire are the United States, Britain, West Germany and Japan. Visiting American congressmen who speak up for the democratic movement in Burma are flattered that yet another third-world guerrilla group has gone against the fashion of the past and declared itself pro-American." (4)

Unrest spread despite the imposition of martial law on August 3rd. The shooting of more than a thousand protestors by the military failed to deter an angry people. A military junta under General Saw Maung assumed power in September 1988. The BCP was nowhere to be seen in the clandestine-organised student revolt in Rangoon. Some student leaders criticised the Communist Party of Burma : "These rebels have guns which they have obtained from foreign countries. This could lead in the future to a dependence on these foreign powers, which we don't want." Twenty years of army propaganda had made an impact upon the thinking of these activists. In a real sense, the demonstrations were for reformist demands, demands for a Burmese *glasnost* appealing for support from amongst the military for a multi-party political system and free elections.

Since the student spearheaded months of anti-government confrontation in 1988, the main opposition has been represented by the National League for Democracy led by Tin U, who served as army chief-of-staff and defence minister in 1974-76 (and retains a considerable following within the army) and Aung San Suu Kyi, an Oxford University graduate and daughter of Burma's assassinated independence hero, Aung San. They were both placed under house arrest in August 1989.

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(3) FEER August 18 1988.

(4) The Economist October 1 1988.

With the imposition of military rule, the misnamed *Burma Socialist Programme Party* - for two decades Burma's only legally permitted political party - renamed itself the National Unity Party to disassociate itself from its retired leader, former General Ne Win. Under him, Burma had been ruled with an iron fist and little tolerance for political dissent. Ne Win formally resigned as BSPP leader on July 23rd 1988; his successor, Sein Lwin, resigned a month later after continued violent protests at the authoritarian grip.

Burma's proclaimed "socialist" way cloaked the rule of an inefficient and corrupt military administration ruling through the BSPP. The army provided the core of the BSPP, with about 90% of its ranks being BSPP members. To give the system a semblance of socialism, all organs of state control and the nationalised industries were prefixed with the word "people" such as the state-run "Working People's Daily". Membership of the BSPP was an essential career requirement and provided a political cover : 60 - 70% of all Burmese civil servants were ex-military.

The experience of Ne Win's army-imposed one-party "socialist" rule had widely discredited the term 'socialist' and many of the demonstrators drew upon Burmese nationalist traditions dating back to the 1930s, such as the peacock symbols of independence and the flag of the *Dobhama Asiayone* (Our Burma Association), the main nationalist movement under British rule. The military tried to label the opposition National League for Democracy as troublemakers and Suu Kyi as a "red". Suu Kyi replies that she and the NLD were anti-communist : "What this campaign is all about is a fight against socialism" she says in a reference to the sham socialism still maintained by the military junta.

The bourgeois-democratic forces are in the ascendancy in the urban struggles while the rebel national minority peoples continue to resist Rangoon's rule from their rural stronghold. In the past, anti-government Burmans have failed to come to terms with such forces as the Karen rebels. The Burmese communist party was the only oppositional force to undertake such an alliance.

There is a rich experience for third world revolutionaries to draw upon from the history of the Communist Party of Burma. Founded on 15 August 1939, and after its emergence in the 1940s fighting the Japanese occupation of Burma, the Party wielded considerable influence among labourers in Rangoon, the oil fields of Yenangyaung and Chauk, and in rural areas in the Irrawaddy delta and around Pyinmana in central Burma. The Communist Party worked with the nationalist *Dobhama Asi-ayone* under the banner of the "Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League" for independence from the British. The gap between nationalist and communist widened after independence on January 4 1948. The CPB maintained a simmering armed struggle throughout the 1950s. There was a split in the Party during the Sino-Soviet polemics, with a majority of the Party taking an anti-revisionist line. The seizure of power by the military led by General Ne Win brought the CPB into the forefront of the struggle. The Communist Party of Burma upheld a glorious tradition that offer examples to emulate; it also had practices that corrupted the political life of the organization. The disintegration of the Party weakened the movement to free all the peoples of Burma from the military grip. That self-destruction was the outcome of serious political errors, and as demonstrated in the Philippines, avoidable errors.

Contributed December 1990.

## BOOK REVIEW

In the 1970s, Daniel Burstein was a talented journalist who edited the American ML newspaper, The Call. In the wake of the liquidation of the CP(US), he turned to free lance journalism. The extent to which his politics has altered in the preceding years was demonstrated, in the spring of 1989, with the publication of "YEN! Japan's New Financial Empire and its Threat to America".

"Yen!" describes the emergence of Japan in the 80s, and in particular the role of the big four securities houses (Normura, Daiwa, Nikko and Yamaichi) as global financiers. Behind Burstein's alarmist, almost hysterical, tone is the wish to spur US policymakers and the public to get their act together before it is too late. As his bookjacket puts it, this "may well spell the end of the American Dream for most Americans."

Burstein offers dire predictions: part three is called "Snapshots from the Trenches of the Coming Financial War". He points out that Japan, home of most of the 10 largest banks in the world, now finances some 30% of the US budget deficit. Between 1982-86, Japan's financial institutions overseas operations was worth more than twice those of its carmakers and consumer-electronics firms put together. Japan's gross external assets trebled in this period to \$727 billion. But Burstein, in his attempt to construct the spectre of Japan's neo-colonisation of America, neglects to mention that Japan is still only the 3rd largest foreign investor in the USA, overshadowed by Britain and the Netherlands. Japanese investors comprised only 5.5% of all foreign direct investment in the US during 1982-87.

The shifting of production by Japanese firms across the Pacific is, for Burstein, even worse than their export. For him, Japanese firms are thought to be turning the United States into a low-wage colony controlled from Tokyo. More orthodox capitalist thinking would disagree with Burstein's chauvinist fears: The Economist argued that the "argument that ordinary people do not want to lose control of 'their' companies carry much weight. Ownership is no longer the main source of economic power and well-being. It is not the American ownership of GM that is of worth to America; it is the jobs and investment and access to technology that GM manages to provide. The only long-term guarantee here is the rightness of its business decisions - and this might be as solidly delivered by Japanese management as by the bosses of Detroit." (February 27 1988)

The fact that international capital recognises no national boundaries ought to be something that Burstein is familiar with from his past. The french author, Servan-Schreiber, voiced similar fears about US investment in Europe in the 60s when American firms such as Ford, IBM and Dow Chemicals acted in a similar manner.

The experience of trans-national operations is not that unknown, but Burstein wants to reinforce the reputation of Japanese companies sandbagging their competitors by their singleminded performance to capture markets. In reality, in the US market, Japanese companies are clear leaders in only 4 of the 20 largest manufacturing sectors in which they compete; consumer electronics, cameras, microchip memories and semi-conductor manufacturing equipment. In addition, only six of the largest Japanese industrial companies selling in the US have more than a quarter of their worldwide sales there.

The image of Japanese capital buying out America is very far from reflecting reality. Such arguments employed to paint the picture of the US being defeated from within do not bear close inspection. Its proponents, like Daniel Burstein, are, not surprisingly, too undialectical in their treatment of US-Japanese relations. There is competition between these economic powers, there is manouvering for position in the world economy as Japanese capital challenges (what remains) the dominant individual power. But in marshalling his arguments, Burstein's writings remains partisan, propagandist for that revisionist school of bourgeois thought associated with the likes of Karel Von Wolferen's "The Enigma of Japanese Power", Clyde Prestowitz's "Trading Places" and journalistic fears of a "Japanese invasion of America".

Burstein's book is a deliberate contribution to the emerging debate within US policy circles focused on the issue of the containment of Japan. This "revisionist school" argue that Japan operates along a different set of economic and political imperatives than other Capitalist powers. As such it should not, they argue, be given the benefit of 'laissez faire' policies -- protectionism in its naked form raises its head. More orthodox capitalist critics of such thinking say that it reflects resentment that America is no longer king of the mountain. They acknowledge that the international order is changing with the emergence of different poles of attractions at the economic level. Some even call the revisionist argument "Yellow Peril Revisited"; and there is more than a hint of racism in the more crude expression of such thinking. Burstein does not stop so low, but he has reached a low in joining the camp of "ex-communists" who offer their service to the bourgeoisie.

The emergence of Japanese Capital as a major influence on the world economy is a subject worthy of serious attention, but not such a flawed treatment whose intention is to defend the "national interest", by reverting to the familiar anti-foreigner remedy, peddled when all else fails.

Burstein "Yen! Japan's New Financial Empire and Its Threat to America  
Simon & Schuster 1989 335 pages

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## REVISIONISTS IN CRISIS

### ITALY: The Party is over.

The PCI - Partito Comunista Italiano - abandoned its hammer and sickle in favour of an oak tree at the Rimini Congress at the end of January. The Italian revisionist PCI transformed itself into the PDS (Partito Democratico della Sinistra - Democratic Party of the Left). the new PDS is much like the old PCI : the change of name reflects the reality that the PCI has spent 30 years abandoning communist ideology and policies. In the cradle of euro-revisionism, the transformation has been on the agenda for a long time, drawing on the legacy of Togliatti and Berlinguer's misuse of Gramsci's ideas. It is appropriate that they acknowledge that what they wish to achieve can no longer be called communism. The PDS will lose about 3% of the old PCI membership in the creation, by dissidents led by Armando Cossutta, of an old style PCI tentatively called the Communist Refoundation (most likely, as in the British experience, to repeat the errors of the past).

The PDS - still Italy's second largest party with a membership of over a million - hopes to be a rallying point for a coalition alternative to the Christian Democrats who have ruled for the last 45 years. The PDS resembles the British Labour Party, and is widely seen as an attempt to arrest the steady slide in the PCI's popularity. There has been an electoral decline - the share of votes down from 34.4% in 1976 to 26.6% in 1987 elections - and in membership. As one commentator observed: " Many of those who left were young labourers from the industrial north who formed the backbone of the PCI during the mid-1970s. They have also become disillusioned with its apparent inability to defend their interests in wage negotiations." In many northern areas, the PCI had responsibility as the local ruling authority, it has proved that capitalism is safe in its managerial approach, now it wants rewards at the national level.

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### BRITAIN: Unity, what Unity ?

In a conference designed to path the way for unity between the CPB and WCP, the prospects for a united party were artificially "talk-up" . At the CPB-initiated 'Consultative Conference on Communist Unity' on January 19th, the unbridgeable political differences remained untackled. Both the splinter groups from the revisionist CPGB are in profound ideological crisis : they supported the opportunism and revisionism throughout two decades of organizational decomposition.

They make for strange unity partners: each opportunistically driven, willingly, it seems to forgo principle to salvage an existence now that the subsidies from the *ancien regimes* of Eastern Europe is at an end. The Communist Party of Britain - former tankies - is tied to the failing *Morning Star*, which despite its support for Gorbachev and perestroika has suffered the "suspension" of the paper's daily order destined for the Soviet Union. It was formed on the basis of defending the 1978 version of the British Road to Socialism. The New Communist Party was formed on the basis of opposition to the 1978 programme and has recently condemned Gorbachev's revisionism.

When they speak of unity, the question must be around what ? A reformed communist party is needed but it is not about to spring forth from the wreckage of those who have a record of past betrayal and failure.

[See also: *International Review* #1 Autumn 1987]

FROM  
THE  
PRESS

## Rebels to lay down arms

**Bogota** — Commanders of Colombia's Popular Liberation Army (EPL) guerrillas have signed a draft agreement with the government to stop fighting and become a legal political party, writes Tim Ross.

The Maoist EPL has about 2,000 combatants organised in 18 fronts. They gained political control of large areas north-west of Medellin, especially among banana workers.

Under the treaty, to be ratified by the rank and file later

this month, they will hand in their weapons on 1 March. In return the government has promised two seats in the Constituent Assembly, financial help for EPL troops re-establishing themselves in civilian life and protection from revenge killings.

Commander Jaime Fajardo said after the signing: "We are telling all other guerrilla groups it is time to come out of the hills and take their politics to the public squares."

## No olds barred

A number of former leftwing politicians from Singapore who were active in the 1950-60s, including some who were members of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM), have been allowed to enter Singapore after more than two decades of being barred from the country.

But political activists from the 1970s and more recent times who are still in exile have not been informed of any change in their status, which makes it difficult to determine whether the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) is easing its hardline policy against its critics, or simply taking a humanitarian view that opponents now so old that they no longer pose any political threat should be allowed to visit their relatives.

Among the most prominent personalities involved in the recent relaxation exercise are the some of the founding members of the PAP such as Abdul Samad Ismail and James Puthuchery. The others among the nine who are now allowed to visit Singapore are Dominic Puthuchery, S. Woodhull, Fong Swee Suan, Jamit Singh, Lim Shee Ping, Yap Ser Jin and Chan Chiaw Thor.

With the exception of Samad Ismail, who was banned in 1976 when he was arrested in Malaysia as being part of a communist plot, everyone on the list has been banned since 1966. A number of them were accused of being part of a communist plot to overthrow the government and were arrested by the British in Singapore in 1963 during the crackdown called Operation Cold Store. They were sent to Malaya and, though they were soon released, they were prohibited from entering Singapore.

One of the more dramatic developments is the decision by a government-controlled Singapore company, Singapore Technology Holdings, to hire Guan Shao Ping, the son of one of the most prominent Singaporean communists, Fang Chuang Pi. Nicknamed by Lee Kuan Yew as "Plen" — short for plenipotentiary — and described as one of the most dedicated communists, Fang is now living in southern Thailand with other CPM cadres.

Guan, who changed his family name, was living in Peking before being hired as an engineer by the Singapore company. He seems to have got his job largely through the efforts of the former deputy prime minister of Singapore, Goh Keng Swee.

Goh, who acts as adviser to the special economic zones in China, was contacted by former CPM leader Eu Chooi Yee, who was living in Hunan until recently. Eu, a former classmate of Goh in Singapore's Raffles College, is described as a brilliant student and an economics graduate, and he seems to have persuaded Goh that Guan deserved a job in Singapore. Goh has also been instrumental in the decision to allow the 72-year-old Eu to enter Singapore on condition that he gives up all political activity and lives with his two daughters. The daughters, who grew up in China, are now working in Singapore as translators.

Age brings its rewards, it seems, but the radicals of the 1970-80s, such as student leader Tan Wah Piow or lawyers Francis Khoo and Tang Fong Har, do not appear to be so lucky. Although they are not technically forbidden from entering Singapore, they can be arrested if they step on to Singapore soil, since arrest warrants are outstanding for all of them. These people, in their 30s and 40s, may have a long wait for their rehabilitation.

■ N. Balakrishnan

# CHANGE IS CHANCE



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▷ JAPANESE INVESTMENT INTEREST IN EASTERN EUROPE

## Peru's guerrilla leader taped

By Sally Bowen in Lima

MR Abimael Guzmán, the former university professor who has led the Maoist guerrilla group Sendero Luminoso in Peru since it was founded in the early 1970s, is the object of a vast police search and some 20 of his closest associates are already behind bars.

An intense personality cult has grown up around him during the many years that Mr Guzmán has shrouded himself in impenetrable secrecy.

So Peruvians were amazed at the weekend as they watched, on national TV, a cassette made by one of his inner circle. It showed him carousing with the higher echelons of the group, drinking and clumsily dancing Zorba's Dance, to the giggles and applause of adoring female followers.

The tape - believed to have been made in 1987 and late-1989 - has provided provided police

with irrefutable proof of the identity of many associates.

The celebrating revolutionaries were dressed in uniform blue shirts, but the pictures contrasted sharply with the austere, moralistic image Sendero has cultivated.

The tape was discovered during a recent police and naval intelligence operation. President Alberto Fujimori decided to let excerpts be broadcast, a pirated copy having been offered to local television stations for \$20,000.

He claimed the scenes revealed Mr Guzmán as "a man of flesh and blood, who likes parties, jewellery and expensive drink - quite unlike the austere image which he has fabricated of a revolutionary leader".

The president underlined the success of his "new" counter-subversive strategy, aimed at

capturing Sendero leaders rather than hitting "bumble peasants forcibly led by a handful of militants."

Mr Gustavo Gorriti, writer and expert on Sendero, applauded the strategy but said Mr Fujimori was wrong to claim it as new. Peruvian police intelligence techniques have been improving steadily over the last year or more, said the writer.

The recent operation was the result of painstaking police work following the discovery last June of Sendero party archives and records in another temporary Lima headquarters.

Mr Gorriti said the operation's success was "important because it has reduced Guzmán's mythical secretiveness. It has also created a serious security problem for him - he is now easily recognisable."

# International Press Correspondence

Defend Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought

International Press Correspondence

January 1991 / Nr 1

Contact: Cercle Hans Adam a.s.b.l., B.P. 9, L-3901 Mondercange (Luxembourg)

## COMMUNISM IS NOT DEAD.

On april 18 Jorge Brega's book "Is communism dead? Maoism in Argentina, conversations with Otto Vargas" was presented. The place was the international book fair in Buenos Aires and the audience packed the auditorium where the presentation took place.

The presentation consisted of a dialog between the author and Otto Vargas with questions from the audience afterwards. Here is a part of the dialog.

Jorge Brega: The question posed in the book's title and to this discussion is a contemporary one in a way we all understand, mainly derived from the events in Eastern Europe. These events have for many theoreticians been a confirmation of the death of communism. Has there ever been such a difficult situation for communism in the world before?

Otto Vargas: One has to admit that this is not the first time communism has been considered dead. Communism is like the Phoenix - this creature of the egyptian priests which was appropriated by greek mythology - who always arose from its own ashes. Expressed in a better way: when it died there arose from the bone marrow a worm which became the origin for a new Phoenix which was to burry the old Phoenix and continue the species.

Marx said that history's first communist party was Babeuf's party. Babeuf and his friends were convicted and guillotined in 1796. Before they were convicted people talked of extremist agitators and the communist threat in the country. When they were guillotined the bourgeoisie gave a sigh of relief and thought they had finally crushed the communist spectre. Communism, which represented a new social class; the risen proletariat.

But in 1828 Babeuf's closest comrade, Felipe Buonarotti, published his book about the conspiracy of equality and thereby showed the world the deep communistic character the movement had had, a movement which had risen in the heat of the french revolution. Then the bourgeoisie understood that communism wasn't dead, this was soon to be made obvious through the revolutions in 1830 and 1848 and through the activities of the secret communist circles, separate from the bourgeois movements. These communist movements spread to Austria, France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy.

These were the ones who inspired german artisans like Wilhelm Wetlig or the great french revolutionary Blanqui, who sat in jail half his life time. This is the movement which explains the spread of socialist and communist ideas that Marx and Engels encountered in Paris in the 1840's, and which was the reason they in the beginning of The Communist Manifesto in 1848 wrote, "A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of communism."

Repressed in 1848, repressed after the Paris commune in 1871 when 70 000 were shot, communism really did seem to be dead, also here in Argentina. Because here in Argentina there were also groups organised in the First International, and in 1875 they were subject to a great repression. They were accused of being arsonists and conspirators, and one thought that also here in Argentina communism was dead.

#### THE DIFFICULT MOMENT

Perhaps the most difficult moment for communist ideas was when the parties in the Second International collapsed and the social democratic parties went over to become an evil tool for the bourgeoisie in each their country in the bloody slaughter that was the First World War.

Many of you probably have fresh in your memory the scenes from the movie which shows Rosa Luxemburg in her lonely cell, the same loneliness her brother in arms Karl Liebknecht felt in the prussian trenches. And Lenin's and the other bolshevik leaders' loneliness in exile, and the loneliness of Stalin and others who were banished to Siberia. When the russian revolution exploded and the telegrams arrived which said that there existed a bolshevik party and a revolutionary, whose name one didn't know whether was Ulianov or Lenin, who would have believed that those who were just a handful of people when they met in Zimmerwald would lead this gigantic mass movement? Who would have believed that Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht would lead masses of millions like Lenin did, like other communist leaders did who had survived the collapse in the Second International. These were hard years. That's why I talk about the Phoenix. And since we remember one movie we can also call to mind "1900" by Bertolucci. Do you remember the scene when the communist embraces the christian democrat, the landowner, at the end of the movie, as a kind of symbol of the end of the communist party who threw down their banners to unite with the bourgeoisie. In this symbolic scene comrade Bertolucci momentarily shows us a mole. This scene brings to mind Marx's sentence about the revolution's old mole who digs under ground and seems to have disappeared but who suddenly surfaces in a forceful and unexpected form, because in this way communism has surfaced in the past and in this way it will surface again. What I say may be described as a dogmatic excuse but it is important to remember that there are two types of dogmatic thinking. One is of idealist or, if you like, religious origin which places dogma before reality because it denies the concrete character of truth. Then there exists another dogma of mechanic, materialist origin which has its philosophic roots in Feurbach, which is a dogmatism that believes that history is like a "fixed" cardgame where it is predestined what will happen, independent of peoples practice.

And let us note, as Mao did, who spoke of the ten thousands of years that the struggle against revisionism would last, and who wrote a poem during the cultural revolution where it says, "The world rotates, time runs. Ten thousand years is too long. One must take the day, take the hour." I believe that one finds maoism's revolutionary idea in the dialectical tension between ten thousand years and the moment.

## THE NETHERLANDS ARE SICK OF CAPITALISM

According to Lubbers (Dutch prime-minister), the Netherlands are ill. If at other occasions we are told we're living in paradise; this is different cook. "Lubbers himself is leading the opposition"; NRC, a Dutch newspaper wrote. What is going on here?

One day before the cry of anguish of Lubbers, a two-yearly review of the Social Cultural Planning-Agency (SCP) was published. It contained a series of revelations about conditions in the Netherlands. 'Revelations'? Only for those persons who believed in the paradise-story.

**THE AVERAGE SPENDABLE INCOME** of the Dutch is low, compared to the other West-European countries. Only in Belgium, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland, average spending is less. About 15% of the population is living beneath the poverty-level, and nothing has changed in their situation during recent years.

We say: there's nothing strange about this conclusion. The Netherlands are champion in moderating incomes. Social security payments and the incomes of civil servants and people following this trend, have suffered down-cuts for years.

**OFFICIAL UNEMPLOYMENT-FIGURES** have decreased these last years according to the SCP. As everyone knows, this is because of the increase of part-time and flexible jobs. But the SCP also has to admit that prolonged unemployment has increased; from 15% of the total number of unemployed in 1986 to 19% in 1989. For migrant-workers these figures are twice as high. In reality: employers impose ever increasing demands. Someone whom they presume to be not for one hundred percent facing up to their standards, they much rather leave on welfare. Besides, many employers won't contract migrant-workers if they aren't forced to do so.

**THE NUMBER OF DISQUALIFIED, UNFIT WORKERS** has increased by factor 5 between 1968 and 1988. It now involves about one million people. We say: small wonder, considering the continuous increase in pressure and flexibility for the workers. Some researchers have calculated that every four minutes of a working-day, somebody is sent-off because of psychological complaints.

**CRIME** is on the increase in the Netherlands, especially the number of thefts. We say: no mystery here, the capitalist masters and their government are themselves setting the example at a great scale. First, they rob hundreds of thousands of people of their jobs and of a large part of their income; while they themselves bathe in luxury. Anyone who pulls this off, without it becoming known that he has offended against capitalist law, is praised as a good manager and businessman. But he lives on the revenues of the theft of the labour of the working people. And they who are exposed as offenders even against those laws because of swindle and fraud... will keep on doing so without being punished.

### THE CAUSE OF THE DISEASE

We agree with Lubbers: The Dutch society is ill, and the 'discoveries' of the SCP-review are things which are day-to-day reality for workers and people on the dole. They are the inevitable result of the capitalist system, which reveal themselves more strongly even in the developing countries.

But surely Lubbers won't share this analysis? Indeed not, but he and the other capitalists do notice the signs of crisis in their system and they are worried. Not about the income, the jobs or the health of ordinary people, nor about the possibility of the houses of ordinary people being robbed. They are worried about the stability of their system: more and more people don't believe in their fine slogans and promises anymore. People that for years have applied for jobs in vain, often don't see the point in working anymore. People who year after year were able to expend less, choose to provide for the supplement on their own. And a large part of the population doesn't go to the ballot-box anymore. Because the discussions, promises and laws of the politicians have yielded nothing for the workers. The fine gentlemen themselves discuss the topic that maybe there is too much policy. SCP-director Van der Staay: 'Perhaps it's a disadvantage of democracy: that there is a parliament, which is deemed to be continuously asking for improvement of society, and a government that has to carry this out neatly. In this ensemble a cue tends to appear.' We say: obviously all these fine measures don't work, if they are made only to make the people believe something is done about their situation. And if the evil isn't seized by the root: the capitalist' lust for profit.

## LUBBERS' MEDICATION

But the power of the capitalists must remain intact, according to Lubbers. If this might is in trouble, harsh measures need to be taken. People talk too much about their rights, instead of their duties, says Lubbers.

- Wages and social security payments will not be raised. Kok (social-democratic finance-minister) has said that next year we should be content with only the compensation for increased prices. De Vries (christian-democratic minister of social affairs) has announced that the coupling between wages and social security payments is in danger.

- If there are no jobs available, then you'll have to work for nothing in a pool of workers or in a job where you can acquire experience. The unemployed in the town of Stadskanaal, near to the border of Germany, must work on the bulb-farms, even if they are the whole week from home. And even if they are made redundant again after a few months.

Vice-minister Elske ter Veld (PvdA - social democrat) has introduced a new social security law, which states that everyone who receives social security payments, should be available for work, even mothers with children under the age of twelve, when the local Social security Service finds this feasible. Decisions in this matter are more and more transferred to local level. Thereby increasing the chance that resistance against these measures will not be massive, nation-wide. And the local administrators are easily kept in harness with the use of supervisors and the disperse of funds.

- Furthermore, 'intermediate structures' should be given more space; private enterprise as in sports and cultural events. Not only is this cheaper for the state. It's also possible to apply for sponsoring of for example the neighbourhood-club. The Dutch government hopes to establish ideological and practical control, as it was in the past exercised by the churches and other social institutions. In short: 'social renewal'.

Not only covert, but also openly, with brute force. We are used to hearing ministers speak about cuts in expenditure, certainly when the new government-budget is presented. But in his speech in the city of Nijmegen, where Lubbers complained about the illness of the Netherlands, he announced with pride that the budget of the ministry of justice made the fastest growth of all! The most sophisticated means are used; computer-databases linked. Penalties should be increased, the judges hear from Lubbers. And: 'how does privacy have to be considered in proportion to the need of using databases for the control on the execution of regulations? What is democracy and consulting the people, in proportion to the ability to make decisions?'

And there is no need for illusions: this richly endowed repression-apparatus will not be aimed at the prevention of theft from poor people. Criminal in the definition of Lubbers c.s., are those that threaten the stability of capitalist society. And that includes someone who's entitled to a social security payment, and hustles to keep from going under. And that includes certainly the people who get organized to fight for the radical change of this society.

To further the demands of the common people. And to eventually overthrow all capitalists. And so be rid for ever of all ailments, inflicted on us by the cancer of their lust for profit.

GML

## PUBLIC PEACE AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Dordrecht's deputy mayor P. Janse faced the critics on August 28th. Community council delegates of VVD (liberals) and CDA (christian-democrats) attacked him because he prohibited Dutch and Belgian fascists to hold a press conference on August 7th.

### FASCIST PRESS CONFERENCE

The deputy mayor offered as a reason for this refusal his fear for 'a break in the public peace'. 'Vlaams Blok' (Belgian fascists) and 'Centrumpartij '86' (Dutch fascists) wanted to hold a so-called press conference, to express their dissatisfaction with the exposition 'Eigen volk eerst' ('Our own people first') in the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam; where the conduct of the extreme right-wing Vlaams Blok was exposed.

The 'press conference' in the Amsterdam city hall had been forbidden. The same thing happened in Dordrecht, where the fascists tried to hold a 'press conference' in a private home. Police blocked the street with fences, kicked in the front-door and arrested Vlaams Blok leader Flip Dewinter, who was bragging through a megaphone in an opened window. Fifteen others present, were arrested also.

Not bad for a deputy mayor!

'Very bad', say the community council delegates of VVD and CDA. Says NVJ: the Dutch Association of Journalists. Says the Dutch Committee of Lawyers for Human Rights (NJCM). The deputy mayor is attacked by everyone. Scared stiff, the only way out he sees, is to accuse anti-racist militants of threatening with violence.

What have we here?

### CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

'Our constitutional rights are threatened', according to a VVD-speaker in a local radio-broadcast. The prohibition of this fascist press conference '... must not be a precedent. This must not ever happen again. No doubt, these kind of press conferences will in future be held more often. If the public peace is threatened, well, for this we have in the Netherlands a police force. Because of the prohibition, constitutional rights have been violated. These kind of political parties will make it a game to provoke these situations: for then they receive maximum publicity'. Says the VVD-spokesman.

For those who are accustomed to the fact that in VVD's legal system, fascists have the right to speak and the police should be sent against anti-fascist militants, it is nevertheless perhaps a somewhat strange experience to hear an Association of Journalists and a Committee for Human Rights repeat exactly the same arguments.

'Our constitutional rights are at stake', says the Association of Journalists in the same radio-broadcast. Top official mr. O. de Jong has the opinion that the decision of Janse is: 'the final piece in a chain-reaction of cramped decisions of local authorities'. And: 'the extreme right has been served to its needs in a serious way'.

The Committee of Lawyers: 'the organizing political parties were limited in exercising their rights of freedom of speech and assembly... the entire show yielded the kind of publicity the people involved were aiming at... the Dordrecht authorities seemed to have handled the situation in an unjust and exaggerated manner. Freedom of the press was made impossible, several basic rights of the people involved were wrongly restricted in such a severe way. Besides, in our opinion this approach is counter-productive... to be absolutely clear: it is not CP '86 that we want to protect - we insist on upholding freedom of speech for everybody in the Netherlands. Also for those, whom we would grant it a little less'.

So far, the public peace according to a deputy mayor, members of a community council, journalists and lawyers.

What can we learn from all this?

### WHO MAKES 'PUBLICITY'

**ONE** Taking action against fascists would only 'play in their hands', because of the 'maximum publicity' they receive. For us to ask: who delivers them this 'publicity'? Aren't those the same people of the public media who now complain about the restriction of their 'constitutional right of freedom of the press'? Who clearly were eager to provide this press conference with the badly needed publicity.

**TWO** We do remember the discussion among politicians and some people of the press that 'not

paying attention' to the fascists is of no use anymore, because they were allowed to occupy some seats in parliament and city councils again.

The question rose: 'don't ignore, but what then?' The Dutch Association of Journalists even organized a meeting on this subject May 31st.

It can't be that complicated, ladies and gentlemen of the press: dip your quill in acid and write'm to pieces. Don't ignore them, don't give'm the chance to voice their opinion, but attack the fascists. In all possible ways.

Alas, clearly this is asking too much from the collectors of objective news. Instead, a small deputy mayor gets mangled in order to ensure freedom of speech for CP '86 and the Belgian Vlaams Blok.

**THREE** The Free Dutch Press is using its constitutional rights in such a way - with one or two exceptions - that all journalists are cheering as if coordinated, when Dutch warships are taking part in an imperialist intervention in the Gulf region. If the interests of the big monopolies are at stake, there is clearly the freedom of only one opinion.

Racist and fascist ideas do not appear out of the blue. They are consciously spread among the people. The soil is capitalism. The objective is to divide and to incite. In order to suppress the struggle of the workers and all progressive people. When dictated by the interests of the big monopolies, fascist groups will be provided with financial support and the publicity they need. 'Fascism and racism are reviving', they will write in the newspapers.

Freedom of speech for fascists is not a basic democratic right, but a crime. Marxist-leninists fight for the prohibition of all fascist and racist organisations, which would be a step forward in the struggle for real democracy for the working people.

'But we must prevent these organisations from operating underground', the committee of lawyers puts in as a last resort, 'because it would make it ever more difficult to fight them'.

Those who want to establish the impression that fascists and racists are not engaged in 'underground' activities, are out of their mind. But in any case, legalized the fascists have a lot more means at their disposal for provoking incidents, than when they are made illegal.

And once driven underground, it will become a lot harder for - legal - associations of journalists and lawyers to respect the fascist right of freedom of speech.

GML

AKP(m-1)'s position on the events in Eastern Europe

## THE COLLAPSE OF BUREAUCRAT CAPITALISM AND THE CRISIS OF SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

The dramatic changes which have taken place in Eastern Europe over the past year should be first and foremost welcomed by communists and revolutionaries all over the world. Even though these events have also given the bourgeoisie the opportunity of launching an intense political and ideological offensive against socialism and communism. At the same time they are of course implementing new forms of repression and exploitation of the people in the former bureaucrat-capitalistic states.

AKP(m-1) was created during the renewal of the communist movement caused by the struggle against these very regimes. They were ruining the attempts to build socialism and changing themselves into hegemonic and imperialist forces. The fight against social imperialism - its actions as an imperialist superpower on the world scene and its role in discrediting the esteem of socialism and communism - has been one of our major tasks in the years since we began. Therefore we applaud the setbacks of social imperialism. This both in Afghanistan and other places in the Third World as well as the Soviet Union's loss of control over its satellites in Eastern Europe. We also consider favorably the liberalisation and opening of the repressive political system within the Soviet Union itself following the attempts to stop the collapse in the domestic economy.

The breakdown and failure of the bureaucrat-capitalistic system has of course also been taken advantage of by the other imperialist forces. Indeed they are promoting their position and are meddling in both the political and economic affairs of the Eastern European countries. The great illusions about the western market system on the part of people in Eastern Europe also paves the path for an expanded influence for western capitalism. Specially West Germany is strengthening its position, both due to its fast growing economic capacity and to the reunification process between the two German states. For the working class and the people of Eastern Europe the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie still prevails, though they now have gained better opportunities to organise political activities following the democratic revolution which took place in several countries. In the future we will see many of the same tendencies in these countries as we have seen in the West; a growing polarisation between rich and poor, people and regions, growing unemployment, and reductions in social welfare. Also the economy in most of these countries is far weaker than in Western European countries. The living conditions of the majority of people in Eastern Europe are not likely to improve in the years to come.

The apparent victory of market capitalism over bureaucrat-capitalism is covering up the deep crisis in the whole imperialist system. Its catastrophic consequences for the development of the Third World and for the global environment exposes its failure, as does the polarisation and increasing misery for broad groups of people within the industrialised countries. The fall of the so called "communist bloc" will therefore not give capitalism any longlasting new impetus, although it will greatly affect the changing balance within the imperialist system. In Eastern Europe the rivalry between

NOTICE: The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) is currently in a period of reorganization. The Central Committee is currently in a period of reorganization.

different factions of the bourgeoisie will continue. In many countries factions of the old nomenclature are still holding strong positions in competition with western supported groups. Neither the old bourgeoisie, reformed or not, nor the new westernlike one will bring a development in Eastern Europe in favor of the broad masses of people.

In this situation progressive forces and organisations will have to build up their strength in order to defend the interests of the people. Progressive organisations in The West must give their support, and struggle in their own countries against the increasing exploitation of The East by western capitalism.

AKP(m-1) has supported the struggles for national self-determination by the peoples in the Eastern European countries. We also support the right of secession of the Baltic states, as is happening in Lithuania now. The right of a people to form their own nation is progressive, in opposition to the nationalist chauvinism waged by bourgeoisie and reactionary forces in order to instigate pogromes and repression of minorities.

Oslo 6.6.90  
On behalf of the Central Committee  
Arnliot Ask

BRITAIN

- #1 The Revolutionary Party of Great Britain
- #2 The Communist Party of Great Britain
- #3 The Workers' Communist Party
- #4 The Workers' Communist Party
- #5 The Workers' Communist Party

IRELAND

- #1 CP of Ireland
- #2 CP of Ireland

CHINA

- #1 The Communist Party of China
- #2 The Communist Party of China
- #3 The Communist Party of China
- #4 The Communist Party of China
- #5 The Communist Party of China

NETHERLANDS

- #1 CP of the Netherlands
- #2 CP of the Netherlands

GERMANY

- #1 CP of Germany
- #2 CP of Germany

**AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND)**

- #6 Comments on recent Chinese thinking
- #8 Liquidationism destroys V.C.L.

**ARGENTINA**

- #10 Communism Is Not Dead

**AUSTRALIA**

- #3 CPA(ML) Socialism guarantees the extension of democracy
- #6 7th National Congress of the CPA(ML)
- #8 CPA(ML) Delegation visits China

**AZANIA**

- #1 Talk with Peter Jones of the BCM(A)

**BANGLADESH**

- #8 On the U.C.L.B.

**BELGIUM**

- #1 Outline of PTB/PVAD
- #2 PTB/PVAD Concerning Marxist-Leninist Unity
- #6 Solidarie "Where We Stand"
- #7 PTB/PVAD Solidarity without Boundaries

**BRITAIN**

- #1 The disintegration of revisionist forces
- #2 Sinn Fein on Manchester Martyrs Commemoration 1987
- #3 New set of initials: CPB
- #7 RCLB ML's and a united Europe
- #10 Unity, What Unity?

**BURMA**

- #3 CPB On the 40th Anniversary of the armed revolution
- #10 CPB's internal disintegration

**CHINA**

- #3 The primary stage of socialism and development of Marxism
- #4 Correspondence: On Sino-Soviet Relations
- #5 Special issue: Reunderstanding Capitalism
- #6 Correspondence: Notes on Sino-Soviet Relations  
Observation on International Review #5

**ERITREA**

- #4 Joint Statement of EPLF & TPLF  
Joint Communique of EPDM & TPLF

**GERMANY**

- #3 Outline of MLPD
- #7 MLPD People's Movement Wins Democratic Rights

## **INDIA**

#9 CPI(ML) Socialism Today

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- #7 Joint Statement of European MLs  
Resolution of Essen Consultative Meeting 1990
- #8 May Day in Brussels 1990

## **JAPAN**

#10 Book review: Burstein, Yen! Japan's New Financial Empire

## **KAMPUCHEA**

#2 Book review: Silber, Kampuchea: the revolution rescued

## **NETHERLANDS**

#10 GML Sickness of Capitalism  
Fascists and Free Speech

## **NORWAY**

- #7 APK(ML) Opinion on events in China
- #10 APK(ML) Position on events in Eastern Europe

## **PERU**

#9 The Shining Path of armed struggle ?

## **PHILIPPINES**

- #1 CPP A View of the current situation & revolutionary task
- #2 On the international relations of the CPP
- #4 NDF Declaration of Unity with FMLN  
The Philippines Independent Revolutionary Road
- #8 CPP On Events in Eastern Europe  
CPP Statement on June 4th Events  
CPP Self Criticism

## **SWEDEN**

#1 Outline of S.K.A.

## **TURKEY**

- #6 Briefing on "Towards 2000"
- #8 Talk by London-based supporters of the Socialist Party

## **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

- #3 LRS What do you mean when you say "maoist"?
  - #4 Outline of Freedom Road Socialist Organisation
-