

restricted circular

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



occasional internal bulletin  
of

**Revolutionary Communist League of Britain**



1. Australia

Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Australia (ML)

Source: Australian Communist Jan/Feb 1989

2. Belgium

'Where We Stand! ..

source: Solidarie

3. Turkey

Briefing on "Towards 2000"

Source : Middle East International/ Christian Science Monitor

4. New Zealand

A comment on Chinese Thinking

source : Struggle \*52 March 1989

5. Correspondance

This is the sixth of an occasional internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, and the analysis and developments within fraternal organisations. There may be unacknowledged disagreements and these articles should not be taken as representing official R.C.L. positions.

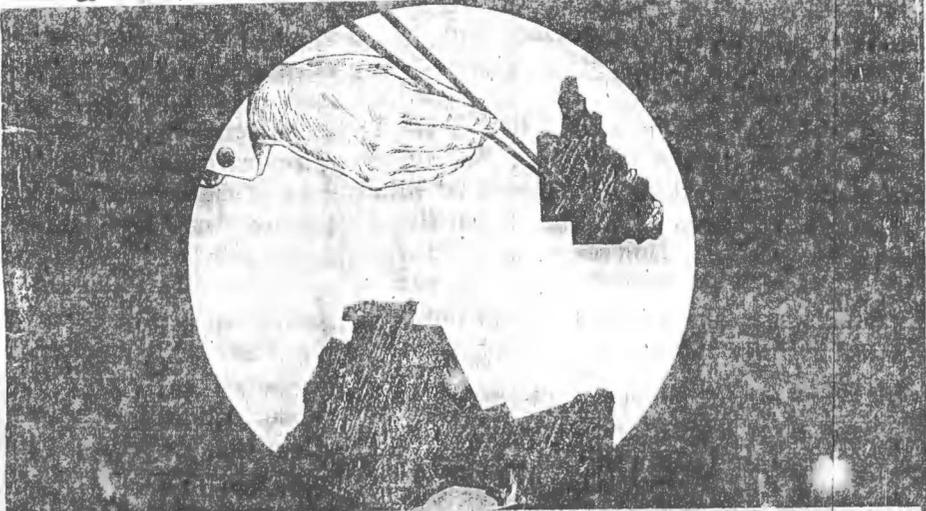
As reported in the last issue of International Review, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist Leninist) held its 7th National Congress towards the end of last year. There was widespread discussion within the CPA(ML) leading up to the Congress on the draft programme, organisational principles and rules of the CPA(ML).

According to the analysis of the CPA(ML) "the present stage of struggle in Australia is characterised historically as the stage of struggle for national independence, against foreign imperialism" -- confronting the multinational owners of the means of production.

**HELP!**

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**THINK-IT IS THE FUTURE OF  
OUR CHILDREN!!!**



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Reproduced from VANGUARD November 16, 1968

Furthermore, the CPA(ML) states " the struggle for socialism can only proceed through correct people's resolution of this stage."

We reprint the Central Committee report to the Congress and the CPA(ML)'s draft General Programme. The complete published resolutions of the Congress will be available in The Australian Communist priced 50p.

## Central Committee Report to the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist).....

**The Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) is held at a time of great restlessness in the working class and other patriotic people. That restlessness arises through disillusionment at the failure of Labor Party leaders and trade union leaders to resist imperialism. Imperialism, operating within the general laws of capitalism, takes great toll on the living standards of most Australian people. The federal Labor government has administered this system of exploitation for the multinationals.**

Fraser was tossed aside by the multinationals in favour of the Hawke leadership with its class collaboration of the accords, two tiers, privatisation and now restructuring thrusts. These concepts have dominated the ideological leadership of many organisations of workers and other sections of the people.

This leadership has been at odds with the experience of workers who wish to fight back against the attacks upon them.

Australian capitalism has been in much greater difficulty since early in the 'eighties. The foreign debt skyrocketed. Speculation is rife.

There has been unfettered access to Australia for foreign capital. Further inroads have been made on the limited independence Australia had won.

The rivalry of US imperialism with Japanese and European (including British) imperialisms is more directly experienced in Australian society. It has also meant that the Australian working class and other Australians feel all the instability and recession of the international scene. The rich have become much richer and the poor poorer.

The essence of the people's struggles remains the struggle for independence, the defence of living standards, democratic rights and the environment. The ruling class has attacked the working class and others viciously over the period. The struggles over the ID card, the Industrial Relations Bill, the deregistration of the BLF, work practices and contracts at Mudginberri and SEQEB, the attempts to privatise public resources, trade-offs, the two-tier wage system, the accord, etc., have all arisen from the domination by foreign imperialism over essential areas of Australia's economic and political life.

US imperialism has had particular problems. Its power and era of predominance are on the wane. US capitalism has gone from the world's largest creditor in 1980 to the world's largest debtor in 1986. This led to the export of capital from Australia to the US. The working class and other exploited classes of Australia consequently suffered declining living standards and unemployment.

US imperialist dominance of Australia is under challenge from Japanese and European imperialists who also challenge the US in the Third World countries of Asia as well as grabbing chunks of US capital in its heartland. The US experiences great difficulties in the Philippines and Nicaragua.

The general crisis of capitalism, which at times becomes most acute, is world-wide.

As a result of the struggle between US imperialism and the expansionism of the Soviet Union, massive armed forces, both conventional and nuclear, confront each other across the heart of Europe and North Asia. Millions of troops and tens of thousands of nuclear weapons remain poised on either side.

As a consequence the two superpowers have been stagnating economically. The last four years have seen a new period of detente emerge. It is now being consolidated. However there is nothing but people's struggle to guarantee the continuation of this consolidation. People's struggles, the struggle of the Third World nations for independence, and the development of new rivals have caused great difficulties for the two superpowers.

Third World countries are the biggest victims of the general economic crisis. The inability of capitalism to harness nature with the massive human, technological and natural resources available has been exposed in many natural calamities in North Africa and the Indian sub-continent. Unemployment, deplorable living standards, starvation, fascist repression and unbearable exploitation dog the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

National liberation struggles have developed to a high stage in Afghanistan, Eritrea, Palestine, Kampuchea, the Philippines, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. Many anti-imperialist, national democratic struggles have a great intensity in much of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The struggles in Azania (South Africa), Burma, Korea and Chile have been prominent.

In the developed economies many struggles against declining living standards and for independence from domination by the superpowers ebb and flow but are a constant feature of these countries.

The stagnation of the Soviet economy and resistance particularly of the Afghan and Kampuchean people have forced a policy of drawing back, the attempt at consolidation at home, concession in Eastern Europe and in its relations with the US and some yielding to pressure in Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

US imperialism has been forced to consider adopting a policy of attempting to consolidate at home, concessions to the Soviet Union and concentrating on resisting people's struggles.

This is sought by a mix of concession while stiffly resisting capitulation: for example the destruction of the Marcos regime in the Philippines while promoting military support to the Aquino regime; the stepping away from Pinochet while promoting limited democratic reforms in Chile; and the push for settlement in Angola.

The whole of the capitalist world has undergone recession in this period of US imperialism's decline. Notwithstanding this general decline and challenge from Japanese and European imperialism, US imperialism maintains its overwhelming military superiority over Japan, the UK, West Germany, Italy, France and the Netherlands.

Imperialist powers are currently vying for leadership in the Pacific region and for leadership of particular groupings. The Soviet Union, the US and Japan are instigators of such moves. They stand opposed to the peoples in the Pacific area with whom Australian patriots share the goal of opposition to big power domination. Independence forces need to give attention to the development of firm links of people's friendship between Australia and the region. Efforts to use Australia as an outpost for imperialist aggression in the Pacific must be vigorously opposed.

World-wide, new centres have and are emerging. In spite of inherent instability, the EEC threatens to have more or less developed a cohesive unity by 1992. This very fact calls forth counter-action by other imperialists. The US and Canadian monopolies investigate firmer economic relationships. Japan seeks to promote a zone comprising Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia with itself as leader.

The US further pressures the Philippines. Both Japan and the US pressure Australia.

The Soviet navy prowls this area incessantly. Gorbachev has advanced major proposals for the Pacific/Asia region.

It is in this situation that the imperialists concoct plans for Australia to emerge as a reliable base for their machinations.

The contradictions between all the peoples of the region and the marauding imperialisms run deep.

The people's struggles for national independence, democracy and socialism have isolated the superpowers and driven the international situation towards the major changes experienced over the last two years.

The situation is continuing to develop favourably for the people.

Communists share the anger, frustration and restlessness of the working class and other patriotic Australians at the increasing penetration of Australia by foreign imperialism.

No area of Australian life is free of such domination. Reflecting this, the ranks of the Communists have grown as new people commit themselves to the working-class struggle against exploitation and the people's struggle for independence. Renewed emphasis is needed to recognise the leading role of industrial workers.

The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) has consistently fought for acceptance of the fundamental view that while all international experience must be examined, Australia is our main area of struggle. Appropriate integration into all struggles of the working class is needed if the Australian people are to succeed in the battle for Australian independence — a necessary stage on the road to socialism in Australia.

Major attention was given to the need to arrive at a correct understanding of the relationship of Communists to the spontaneous struggle of the people. While there has been some improvement in our understanding, much still remains to be done.

The people make history. Correctly integrated with every level of mass activity and working appropriately with the politically advanced, less advanced and more backward sectors of the people, every Communist participates fully in the historic work to change society. A good way of putting the question is that we never ask anyone else to do that which we have never done or are not willing to undertake ourselves.

Notable development took place in the understanding of the process of experience of the Labor Party and its leaders, as well as the ACTU leaders and their collaboration with the big monopolies. We campaigned continuously for the most politically advanced sections of the people to get Labor governments returned to office on the basis that the people can only reach complete understanding of the position of the Labor Party as a party of capitalism by their continued experience of that organisation. Tactically, we have concentrated on the activities of the Labor leaders while endeavouring to work in the spirit of unity with the Labor Party rank and file and supporters.

At the same time the Party stood firmly for the mobilisation of people's struggle — independent of the big monopolies and bourgeois parliamentary politics — as the clear road of advancing the struggle for independence. The Party has rejected standing parliamentary candidates or supporting candidates apart from those who arise as a stage of advancing people's struggles in the sphere of real political activity — the independent, extra-parliamentary, mass activity of the people against imperialism. In the complex situation

of disillusionment with the Labor Party and the parliamentary alternative of a Liberal coalition government, we have promoted people's independent struggle as the way forward which can challenge the power of the multinationals.

The *Vanguard* and *Australian Communist* reflected the struggle of the Australian people and the efforts of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) to provide its principled ideological leadership to this through study of Australian practice and the general principles of Marxism and the practice of criticism and self-criticism.

There has been an improvement in the number who contribute to *Vanguard* and the *Australian Communist*. The number contributing to both, but particularly the *Australian Communist*, is still unsatisfactory. The *Australian Communist* is the Party's main theoretical organ. It occupies an important position in the struggle for clarity about the correct road to socialism in Australia. Understanding of its theoretical tasks will certainly result in more and more taking up the task of regularly contributing to it. This problem must continue to get attention from the leadership.

Together with other parties and individuals, we worked to strengthen the overall activity and unity of the various left political forces in Australia. The previous era of sectarianism, characterised by political brawls disrupting the development of many people's struggles, has been largely left behind. Leadership of the people is decided in active struggle against the imperialists, with the emphasis on the broadest possible unity of the anti-imperialist forces.

The period since the last Congress marked the first stage in the transition of the Party leadership from the old to the new. This Congress is the first in the life of the Party that is conducted without the wise counsel of Ted Hill. At the last Congress Ted Hill had recommended that he be permitted to relinquish the chairmanship of the Party to allow the further development of younger leading cadres. Still his contribution to the Party extended until his death on 1st February 1988.

His leadership helped greatly the investigation into the major ideological questions that faced the Party, workers and people until his death. The Party and people have lost a great leader.

There is a continual movement of accepting new or different responsibilities by both older and newer comrades. This is an inevitable part of the process of development. The varied experiences of both older and younger contribute to balanced leadership. This will continue throughout the entire life of the Party. It is a transition which requires to be handled with maturity and service to the working class to the forefront. All those who serve the people in a revolutionary party must

strive unceasingly to master a scientific workingclass outlook which in turn must embrace revolutionary practice.

Fuller use is being made of bourgeois democratic rights to publicise the policy of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). An office has been established and spokespeople have been appointed in various regions and in areas of struggle. There has been a greater use of these means to establish the position of the Party and to encourage suggestions and criticisms. While there remain dangers of too much being exposed to the enemies of the people, both the organisation and the people have benefitted from these moves.

The Party organisation has been able to ensure the Party's continuing activity in all its aspects: publications, consultations and other public and internal functions, through making appropriate arrangements and through management and collection of funds, as well as through the support offered by the people.

Organisation exists at many levels across the whole country. Communist methods are based on the fullest democratic consultations and the fullest expression of democratic centralism possible within the constraints of the Party's current methods of operation. To strengthen the Party's internal life, the responsibility of all comrades is to take the initiative in raising practical matters of winning support for policy and leading the ideological development of the Party. The leadership has seriously striven both to raise its own ideological level and that of the whole Party. This included endeavouring to concentrate on the application of Marxism to the practical tasks of the Party arising from an examination of Australian reality, and avoiding diversion into abstract examination of principles. Much attention was paid, amongst other theoretical questions, to the relationship between practice and ideas; to gaining a greater insight into the basic laws of capitalism and their working out in Australian conditions; and to the fundamental content of the dictatorship of the ruling class which stands diametrically opposed to the rule of the working people under socialism. In all cases, much work remains to be done so that general Marxist principles are fully integrated into Australian reality. To set clear organisational tasks, the process requires further strengthening.

The circulation of publications has increased and the transmission of Communist views to the workers and people was stepped up through the activity of Party members and the publication more regularly of Party pamphlets and leaflets as well as using other methods open to the Party's members.

It is our view that socialism and Marxism are under serious attack from the ruling class at present. We re-affirm our belief that there is no way forward for the world's people without socialism and Marxist ideology.

Upholding Marxism and the role of the working class as the leading class in Australian society is fundamental to the existence of an Australian revolutionary Party. The basis of our thinking, actions and ideology is the working class and its revolutionary role in history.

We will continue to struggle for the application of Marxism to Australian society in all our work.

We will continue to fight for Australian independence from imperialist domination and exploitation. It remains the present phase of the Australian revolution. We fight for independence and socialism as the immediate stage of the Australian revolutionary process.

We will continue the struggle against US imperialism whilst raising the vigilance of the working class and other Australians against Japanese and European imperialisms. We will draw attention to the danger of Soviet penetration of the Pacific area. We will fight imperialism and reaction in solidarity with

workers, oppressed and exploited people the world over to whom we extend our solidarity and greetings. We send our warm fraternal greetings to all those striving to overcome difficulties hammering out the correct steps to build socialism.

We will continue to support the struggle of the Aboriginal people for liberation from oppression, exploitation and dispossession.

We will continue to struggle to uphold the leading role of the working class and its ideology of Marxism and to defeat bourgeois ideology.

We will continue to strengthen our organisation by raising our ideological level, recruiting new members and by increasing the influence of the Party amongst the working class and other working Australians.

We will continue to try might and main to serve the people in the struggle for national independence.

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## Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) — Draft General Programme.....

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### 1. The Draft General Programme of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) aims to examine Australian and world reality from the standpoint of Marxism.

Marxist philosophy holds that the material world — matter — is primary. Ideas — consciousness — are the reflection of this objective reality.

Marxism is a guide to action, based on practice. It recognises all things in nature and society as constantly coming into being and passing away.

From this basic standpoint the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) views Australia as a capitalist society characterised by production for profit.

Profit is derived from unpaid labour time.

Workers' labour power is purchased on the market by the owners of capital. Put to work in Australia, on average in half the working week, it produces values sufficient to cover wages to maintain a worker and family. The value produced in the remainder of the working week constitutes surplus value, the source of profit.

The commodities produced by workers' socialised labour are privately appropriated by monopoly capitalists. They will continue to be produced so long as they can be sold for profit on the market.

This factor is the cause of the alternating cycle of boom or crisis of capitalism.

It is inevitable that sooner or later these social conditions will impel people to organise to end the conflict between the socialised labour process and private ownership of the decisive means of production, the big factories, mines and corporate farms by the establishment of socialism. With socialism, production takes place for people's use.

To prevent the tiny minority of previous exploiters destroying the newly-established socialist system, the working class and its allies, who together can call upon the support of the majority of the people, will set up a new political state apparatus.

In the socialist era, the material and moral conditions are laid to proceed to the higher epoch of classless Communist society in which the full potential of all human beings is realised and the needs of all can be met.

2. We live in the era of imperialism, that stage of capitalism when monopolies and finance capital (i.e. bank and industrial capital merged) dominate; when the export of capital as against the export of commodities assumes pronounced importance; when the world has been divided amongst big trusts and multinational corporations and when there are no longer any new territories to be seized without imperialist conflict.

3. The present phase in the struggle to end capitalism in Australia is the battle to win Australian independence from the foreign imperialist interests and their local allies which constitute the core of Australian capitalism. Though Australia has achieved an important measure of independence, big foreign powers have maintained decisive political, economic, diplomatic, military and cultural influence. The US took over from Britain as the dominant imperialism in Australia. Japanese imperialism now rapidly expands its Australian interests, challenging US pre-eminence. The key sectors of Australia's economy are dominated by giant foreign multinationals and a few big local monopolies which are bound up with them (through joint ventures, foreign borrowings, trade).

4. The great cause which unites the Australian people is the struggle for Australian independence. The nation's wealth is concentrated in fewer and fewer, chiefly foreign monopoly hands. As a result millions of ordinary Australians suffer intensified exploitation, falling living standards, growing poverty and unemployment, increased repression and discrimination, bankruptcy. Australia's natural wealth and heritage are looted for monopoly profit. The resulting struggles against foreign imperialist domination at the heart of Australian capitalism are objectively struggles for Australian independence, although the participants in most cases may not make this connection.

5. The working class is the leading class in this struggle. While imperialism's action takes heavy toll on the lives of the majority of Australians, farmers, business people, shop-keepers, black and white, irrespective of ethnic origin, the centre of its attack is aimed at the working class from whose labour it derives maximum profit. Large-scale production forces the Australian working class, the most numerous class, to be the most disciplined, cohesive and politically-conscious class.

6. To maintain and protect foreign imperialist domination of Australia, a powerful state machine has emerged. It consists of the bureaucracy, police, courts, gaols, armed forces, intelligence outfits. It seems to stand independently over Australian society but in fact it exists to enforce imperialist domination. Parliamentary democracy with its limited formal democratic rights operates within this context. While such rights have positive aspects, imperialist domination, capitalism and the state machine's repressive, violent character are still the central feature of the capitalist state. A whole system of ideas is pushed ceaselessly through Australia's mass media, education system, culture, etc., which disguises imperialist domination and monopoly exploitation and presents them as inevitable. Capitalism's

"natural" tendency is towards erosion of democratic rights and more open repression, particularly in periods of deep economic or social difficulties for the imperialists. There is always a danger that Australia's imperialist overlords will discard the democratic facade and rule through systematic, open, ruthless violence — fascism.

7. Imperialism means grave international instability and the possibility of world war. The greatest danger of world war comes from the rivalry between the two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. This overshadows world events and greatly influences the situation within Australia. At the same time, Japanese imperialism challenges the world pre-eminence of the United States. Tensions arise from the rivalries among US, Japanese and European monopolies; a trade war can easily lead to a shooting war. Ordinary people everywhere demand the right to live in peace. They want an end to all nuclear weapons, chemical and other means of mass destruction. In their millions they are actively fighting to force their governments to abandon all aggressive policies and actions.

8. The struggle for national independence embraces all people's actions to improve their lives.

In struggle people will conclude that parliament and the main political parties exist to administer on imperialism's behalf.

As an alternative to foreign imperialist domination, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) supports demands to nationalise the key industrial and financial institutions, to expropriate and re-distribute foreign-owned corporate farms, to end the oppression and exploitation of the Aboriginal people who were dispossessed by British imperialism, to tax the top monopolies and the rich to the hilt to provide finance necessary to raise wages and living standards and provide adequate social services; and that US ownership of bases in Australia ceases. In order to achieve adequate presentation of the people's case for national independence, there would need to be people's radio, press, TV, etc. Measures such as these would strengthen Australia's independence.

Foreign imperialists will fight all moves towards independence. In the face of probably ruthless and violent suppression by the capitalist state machine which serves foreign imperialism, and the necessity for defending people's democracy against aggression, interference and subversion, the people must be prepared for all means of struggle, and their hopes for a better life demand that they take power into their own hands.

The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) supports all demands which arise out of people's struggle against imperialism.

9. The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) exists to assist the process of winning Australian independence and through that, Australian socialism. The Communist Party arises from the struggles of the Australian people. It aims to embody the highest ideals and hopes of the majority of Australians. It endeavours, from the scientific standpoint of Marxism, to examine Australian and world reality and participate in changing Australian society in accordance with the process of development which Marxism shows is actually going on. It strives for the most intimate possible knowledge of Australia, its history and its present situation.

The Party acts with complete confidence in the Australian people. Its organisation is among the people. Its work is in accordance with the degree of understanding of the people at a given time and with the object of step by step raising that understanding towards an understanding of the overall social process.

Whether or not people have little or much social knowledge, the job of the Communists is to be with them. The Party seeks to inspire the workers to develop all progressive Australian forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the handful of reactionary enemies of the people. It must be able to function under any circumstances and be able to maintain its work through rapid changes of conditions. In particular, full attention is paid to the hostile activities of the state machine serving foreign imperialists. The Party insists upon members of the highest quality. Members of the Communist Party accept a lifetime commitment to the welfare of the Australian people and the great cause of Communism.

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*Together with the Draft Programme, Congress agreed upon Organisational Principles and Rules compatible with a continuing Marxist analysis of Australian society, and also giving full attention to the existing bourgeois dictatorship concealed under the cloak of parliamentary democracy.*

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# VANGUARD

February 8, 1989



de

UITGAVE  
REDAKT

IN DE KOMMUNISTISCHE ARBEIDERSORGANISATIE MARXISTISCH-LENINISTISCH (KAO-ml)

# RODE MORGEN

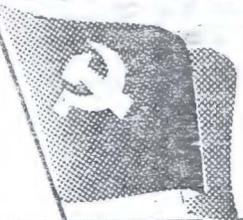
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# SOLIDARITEIT

# GNISTAN

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# ΗΛΑΙΙΚ



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# 人民新報

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人民新報社発行

BELGIUM : Where We Stand.

Each edition of Solidaire , weekly paper of the PTB, carries a column that sets out an introduction to the PTB and what it stands for. This is an unofficial translation of that column.

## **PARTI du TRAVAIL de BELGIQUE**

The Party of Labour of Belgium is:

An active party of workers and other labouring people for socialism.  
A party that has dedicated itself totally to the service of the workers struggle against capitalism.  
A party searching for an autonomous means towards revolutionary socialism in Belgium.

The founding congress of the PTB was held in May 1979. We had been working under the name of the TPO-AMADA since 1970. In this organisation, intellectuals who had participated in the struggles of 1968, communists who had left the Belgian Communist Party, and members of different revolutionary organisations, militants of the FGTB and the CSC, were united.

We are a national party that unites the workers of Wallonia, Brussels, flanders and immigrant workers.

### AGAINST WHOM IS THE PTB FIGHTING ?

The PTB is fighting against big Capital: against the banks, the large enterprises, the multinationals. The means of production are their private property and that is why the bulk of production and society is managed according to their hunger for profit.

They are the cause of exploitation and misery, the repression and reduction of democracy, the social distress of the working class.

The PTB directs its struggle against the present state machinery, which is the instrument with which Big Capital maintains its power. The present state is not neutral, it is designed for and by the bosses. Each year, it transfers billions to the capitalists drawn from the taxpayers pockets. It is the gendarmerie and the private militia of the bosses.

### WHAT DOES THE PTB WANT ?

The PTB wants to expropriate the big capitalists without compensation: their means of production should be the collective property of all workers. The economy should be organised through a national plan and by the needs of the population. The PTB wants the destruction of the present state machinery, the construction of a socialist state based on the self-management of the workers. A state in which the senior civil servants will be elected and controlled by the people and whose activity would be totally public.

The PTB wants a socialist army and a socialist militia made-up by workers and other labouring people, linked to the people and controlled by the people.

In Belgium, the way for socialism will be through a long process.

The PTB is in favour of united action on concrete matters with all parties, all labour and workers organisation.

### THE THIRD WORLD

The imperialist powers have amassed a large part of their riches by exploiting and oppressing the third world. After a very long retreat between 1975 and 1981, following their defeat from Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos, in Iran, in Ethiopia, in Nicaragua, the United States has done all that it could to regain lost territory. Amongst other things, under the cover of NATO, it has drawn the European countries into open political confrontation with the Third World (Libya, Zaire, Iran, Nicaragua).

The PTB supports Third World revolutionary movements fighting to gain independence and popular democracy. The blows they inflict on imperialism weaken "our" capitalists and help to prepare the overthrow of our systems of exploitation. The workers of the whole world are but of the same class and have to be in solidarity with each other.

### THE TREAT OF WAR

The PTB fights against the arms race by the two Superpowers who carry upon them the menace of a new world war. The PTB denounces American imperialism as being principally responsible for the military menace facing the world; the PTB opposes the politics of rivalry with the United States undertaken by the Soviet Union on the continent, on the ocean and in space.

### THE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF SOCIALISM

The PTB is undertaking its fight inspired by the historic experience of the international communist movement. The October Revolution in Russia, led by Lenin, then the construction of socialism in one country, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and of Stalin, have given a new orientation to the course of history. The Chinese Revolution in 1949 has opened the way for socialist development in the Third World.

### THE BIG DEBATE

Since 1956, Khrushchev had developed an opportunist line in the USSR: unprincipled attacks on Stalin, fantastic plans without a scientific basis, the "peaceful way" towards socialism. Under Brezhnev, a hegemonic politics was embarked upon: the course of an arms race with the United States, the politics of "nuclear parity", aggression against Czechoslovakia, Kampuchea, Afghanistan, interference in other countries affairs.

Gorbachev has criticised a large number of these negative phenomenon and introduced certain positive reforms. The PTB observe these changes with attention.

### THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

The PTB is in favour of the unity of the international communist movement based on marxism-leninism, mutual solidarity, independence and the autonomy of every party. The PTB is in solidarity with the countries seeking their best way to construct genuine socialism. We study their positive experiences and we express fraternal criticisms on all that seems to be at fault to us.

Party of Labour of Belgium

National Secretariat  
Bd Lemonnier 171, boîte 2  
1000 Brussels

## "Towards 2000"

In Turkey, revolutionaries have always faced great restrictions even during periods of "democracy". Under the Turkish constitution, it is illegal to advocate the dictatorship of one class over another—a rule clearly directed against communists. Leftists have faced harassment from right-wing thugs as well as the state's forces. In the early 1970s, the major Marxist-Leninist party in Turkey was the Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Party. It had a mass circulation daily paper, "Aydinlik". Eventually, it was banned, and there was a mass trial of party members, mainly leaders. The head of the party in those days was Dogu Perincek.

The party could not be legally re-established under its old name, even during the present phase of "democracy", but a magazine which represents what it stood for was launched. It was called "Towards 2000".

The following article describes what has happened to that publication recently, and how it has achieved a growing impact. It appeared in a recent issue of the magazine "Middle East International".

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# *Ikibine Dogru* - the thorn in the Turkish Government's side

by Jasper Mortimer

Every week a magazine called *Ikibine Dogru* (Towards 2000) appears on the street corners of Turkey. It is a controversial publication – highly critical and criticised, but notable in achievement. Written largely by intellectuals with no journalistic training, *Ikibine Dogru* has risen in under two years to become Turkey's second biggest-selling magazine and certainly the most influential.

Liberals respect *ID* for its stories on corruption and human rights. Right-wingers, such as Professor Aydin Yalcin of Ankara University's politics faculty, lambast *ID* for waging "communist psychological warfare" by its "continuous attacks on Turkish institutions". Diplomats regard *ID* as a "major source of news on delicate subjects". And Prime Minister Turgut Ozal sees it as a downright nuisance. His government took *ID* to court 21 times in its first 18 months.

*ID* was first published in January 1987. The editor, Dogu Perincek, with a PhD in law, and the Ankara bureau chief, Halil Berkay, with an MA in economics, are former university lecturers. They had never written professionally before, but were well-versed in oppositional politics. Perincek, Berkay, and other staffers have been jailed for "illegal political activity" by one or more of Turkey's juntas. They have a hard-forged cynicism for the pillars of Turkish authority, and an eye for news that can shake them.

For all the claims that Turkey, aspiring to join the European community, makes of its democracy, it is still a tightly controlled society. The 1980-83 junta outlawed strikes and demonstrations and enforced the suppression of the Kurdish language; the present government finds it expedient to maintain many of these repressions.

### **Jolts for the government**

*Cumhuriyet*, the country's most authoritative newspaper, and *ID* are the only journals which consistently attack the lack of human

rights. *ID* is the more left-wing, but also the more daring. Its biggest success to date was a story on a national intelligence organisation (MIT) dossier. This disclosed that back in 1983 an MIT clique had tried to ingratiate itself with the newly elected Ozal by smearing others in the security forces with allegations of sexual and mafia adventures. When *ID* published the story in February, President Kenan Evren and Ozal denied the dossier existed. Then one of the targets of the slanders, General Necdet Urug, spoke to the press. The dossier certainly did exist. Somebody had left a copy in his post box and he had written to President Evren about it. The story exploded. The big papers published the full text of the dossier. MPs asked in parliament what MIT had been up to. And *ID*'s circulation leapt from 12,000 to 40,000. Ozal was said to be furious. He now had to admit the dossier's existence, fire its author – an MIT man on his staff, and answer a defamation suit from General Urug. He ordered that *ID* be prosecuted for divulging state secrets.

In August, the magazine gave the government another jolt. It published a list of 127 torturers employed at the so-called Deep Research Laboratories (DAL) in Ankara. Compiled from interviews with former detainees, the list even gave the torturers' service numbers.

The two stories showed how *ID* is pushing the limits of Turkish journalism. In the MIT case it turned out that the established papers had also received the dossier, but were apparently scared to publish. Again with the DAL story, the older papers knew where to get the information, but they had not pursued it. In the same vein *ID* has tackled some of the most sensitive issues in Turkey today. It is the only Turkish publication to speak of the "invasion" and "occupation" of Cyprus. Others say Turkey "intervened" in Cyprus. In March it ran a six-page report on the 1,619 missing Cypriots of the 1974 invasion – a scandal that Turkey has yet to face up to.

It is one of three journals which attack the government for its

oppression of the Kurds. In 1987 it published a facsimile of an alleged Turkish army "capture and kill" order, supposedly issued to soldiers pursuing Kurdish rebels in Tunceli province. The army denied the order existed. But a diplomat in Ankara said "the general pattern of military behaviour in Tunceli would tend to confirm it". (To be fair, the Kurdish rebel group PKK has a notorious reputation for civilian atrocities.) Ankara bans the Kurdish language, claiming it is merely a dialect of Turkish. *ID* found and published an official report which showed that deep down the government knew otherwise. Almost certainly written by MIT, the report classified the Kurds according to their tribes and Kurdish dialects. It also said whether they were "loyal" or "ready to betray the state". The state charged *ID* with "undermining national morale". (*ID* believes the state should have charged MIT.)

### Assailing the Ataturk cult

The tallest pillar that *ID* has assailed is the cult of Ataturk. Editor Perincek is an expert on the national idol and loves to present how far the government has moved away from its founder's principles. Last year *ID* ran an Ataturk analysis of the Prophet. It was typically non-religious, speaking of Muhammad's life in the desert, and in striking contrast to a government whose president quotes the *Qur'an* and whose prime minister makes the *haj* to Mecca. In the accompanying editorial Perincek said the government found Ataturk's secularism embarrassing, for all the fetish it makes of him. The state charged Perincek under the Protection of Ataturk Law. Next *ID* dug out of the national archives that in 1923 Ataturk had recommended autonomy for the Kurds – an idea which is anathema to the state today. In publishing this, *ID* performed a public service for part of the archive had been available only in Ottoman's script. The official transcriber had mysteriously omitted Ataturk's view of the Kurds. The state security prosecutor was appalled. He ordered the police to confiscate every *ID* copy they could find. Again he charged the magazine with "undermining national morale", arguing it was not Ataturk's words which were illegal but *ID*'s "ulterior motives". ("The trial is Kafkaesque," said Berktaç, "what is legal for others is not legal for *ID*.")

### How *ID* survives

Many people cheer *ID* for its iconoclasm. But its anti-nationalism has also alienated people, and so has its editorial support for the Socialist party – which the government has asked the courts to ban. There are two levels on which *ID* is judged. Some Turks put the magazine down as the journalistic extension of its left-wing editors. Professor Yalcin, a former MP for the right-wing Justice party, slammed *ID* as "die-hard Marxist". Asked if its stories had not contributed to higher accountability in Turkish government, he said *ID* was so anti-establishment he took all its stories "with a pinch of salt".

Yalcin also wondered how *ID* breaks even on its limited advertising. Berktaç replied that *ID*'s advertising had risen, but so had costs. The journal survived by drawing on capital from its roughly 1,500 shareholders and by paying low salaries. He said he had not drawn his salary for "months". "We're struggling but we're not going to sink." Berktaç angrily rejected the suggestion of covert funding. *ID* is registered as a *société anonyme* with himself, Kamil Arslanturoglu and İlhan Kirit as the major shareholders. "Both the ministries of finance and commerce are entitled to look into our books and have done so. It is unthinkable that a journal with our reputation would not be subject to financial surveillance."

### The courage of the journalists

On the other level are those who judge *ID*'s reports on their own merits. When the International Press Institute met in Istanbul this year, the local English daily printed a Perincek article that told the delegates what was going on in Turkey. The piece was far more critical of human rights' abuses than the Turkish *Daily News*, but the editor ran the article and it was quoted in *The Economist*. A Western diplomat said *ID*'s foreign affairs stories were "speculative and not sound", but those on human rights were "as reliable as you can make them in Turkey – I check them".

However, occasionally the lack of proper training in *ID* shows. In January it published that Ozal had failed to finish paying for some gold jewellery. In August it ran an interview with an *agent provocateur* who claimed he intended to shoot Ozal on the day of the attempted assassination of the prime minister. In both cases the chief source changed his story after publication. *ID* is facing charges. It believes the sources were pressured. But it should have sought *affidavits*. A professional would not accuse a prime minister of financial dishonesty on the basis of quotes in a notebook.

### Draconian laws

Hanging over *ID* all the time is the draconian press legislation, and this is the bane of the entire Turkish press. The prosecutor's chief weapon is Article 142 of the Penal Code which Turkey adopted from Fascist Italy. It outlaws the "undermining of national morale". When the prosecutor deploys this catch-all it is every editor's headache. The state did not deem *ID*'s list of DAL torturers injurious to national morale. But when the *Milliyet* daily published the second instalment of an interview with the PKK rebel leader, "Apo" Ocalan, the police confiscated the entire edition. *Milliyet*'s "legally responsible editor" and chief reporter are now on trial under Article 142. The minimum sentence is 7½ years.

Newspapers debate politics in lively fashion. Comment is sharp and cartoons aggressive. Yet when the sensational *Gunaydin* showed Ozal baring his flabby chest on the beach in August, and teasingly put black squares over his nipples as with "girlie" pictures, the prime minister phoned the owner. The next day *Gunaydin* apologised.

Sometimes the penalties seem outrageous. *ID* exposed that Evren's daughters had bought two apartments for the puny sum of Lira 2m (£800). The story quoted the deed of sale. But the court found it "disrespectful to the presidency" and sentenced *ID*'s legally responsible editor, Fatma Yazici, to 16 months. She will go to prison shortly.

Turkish journalists say the state picks on *ID* because it lacks the esteem of the established press. A similar victim is *Medya Gunesi*, the new magazine for the Kurds. So far its editor, Cemal Ozcelik, has been arraigned under 142 for each of its five issues. Ozcelik told this reporter in August the prosecutor objected even to his use of the word "Kurdistan". Three weeks later he was arrested for printing a poem by an Iraqi Kurd. With all this going on, one wonders how Turkey expects the European Community to respond to its membership application sympathetically. One also wonders how the Turkish journalists have the courage to risk such heavy sentences.

When asked how he coped with the threat of jail, Berktaç said: "You think what you are doing is important. So although the feeling of danger does not disappear, it becomes like the noise of traffic in the street outside." Next week, as the traffic drones on, *ID* will hit Turkey's street corners again. One hopes.

## Background

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL issued a report in January 1989 on the "brutal and systematic abuse of human rights" in Turkey. It provides testimonies of those on the receiving end of the extensive violations of basic civil rights.

In the eight years following the military coup of 12 September 1980:

- \* some 250,000 political prisoners were detained and almost all of them were tortured;
- \* thousands of them were imprisoned for non-violent political or religious activities (prisoners of conscience);
- \* over 60,000 political prisoners were convicted after unfair trials;
- \* over 700 death sentences were passed;
- \* over 200 of those sentenced have exhausted all appeals;
- \* over 50 executions were carried out between October, 1980 and October 1984;
- \* over 200 deaths in custody occurred, many alleged to be the result of torture.

Although martial law was lifted in July 1987, political trials are continuing in military courts that do not meet international standards for fair trial.

Since 1983 the formation of new political parties has been allowed provided they were not connected with proscribed parties. Heavy sentences were passed on hundreds of members of previously legal political parties such as the Turkish Workers' Party (TIP), the Turkish Socialist Workers' Party (TSIP) and the Turkish Workers and Peasants' Party (TLP).

Yet time and time again you'll read in the international press that Turkey is travelling the road to democracy, that with the prospect of entry into the European Community Turkey is in the process of "liberalisation".

Turkey signed the UNO Conventions on torture at the beginning of 1988. According to these defendants cannot be charged on the basis of evidence and proof obtained by force and torture. So far the courts have refused to accept the submissions of the defense counsels.

Amnesty International believes that any person who is detained on political grounds is in danger of being tortured.

Last August, defendants in the trial of alleged Devrimci Yol members, secretly passed information to "2000e Dogru" including evidence about the 'Laboratory of Confession' (DAL) set up in the 70s inside the building of the security police in Ankara and a detailed report about the setting up of mini-cells and the use of torture.

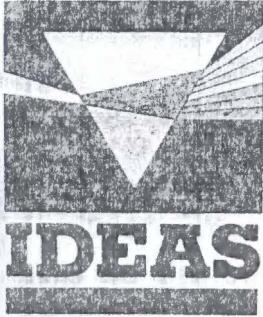
In addition they supplied the names of over 100 policemen who were responsible for what happened in 'DAL'. According to their reports, there are dozens of special teams working in the counter-insurgency department, each which is responsible for a particular faction of the revolutionary Left. Only the weekly "2000e Dogru" carries regular and detailed reports.

In using the possibilities available progressive journalists have a constant threat that shadow their activities. That is the knowledge that several editors and journalists have been arrested and tried because of articles they had written or published prior to the military coup of September 1980. These journals were then legal publications.

As the articles reproduced here demonstrate, the fragile legal space for normal journalistic activities is in constant danger. It is the courageous dedication of many activists, with marxist-leninists in the vanguard, that is securing, and expanding, a basic civil and human right in the face of uncondemned military sanctions.

As the editor of 2000e Dogru Doug Ferincek is quoted as saying:

" Journalists in Turkey are free, but you are also free to go to jail. We can publish things, but then we must pay the price."



## IDEAS

**'We can't speak of press freedom in Turkey. There are some people here who are just afraid of ideas. It's always one step forward, one step backward.'**

— *Nezih Demirkent, Istanbul Journalists Association*

### PRESS CENSORSHIP IN TURKEY

# Where Journalism Can Lead to Jail

*To avoid prison under Turkey's penal code, reporters must treat certain topics with care*

By **Aliza Marcus**

*Special to The Christian Science Monitor*

ISTANBUL

**V**ELI YILMAZ, a Turkish journalist sentenced to a 748-year prison term, is a stark reminder of the limits journalists face here.

A writer and editor for a Marxist publication, activities that were legal before the 1980 military coup, Mr. Yilmaz was convicted of having spread communist propaganda a year after the transition to democratic rule under Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in 1983.

"You cannot say the press in Turkey is free, and you will not be able to say it until journalists like Yilmaz are freed and changes are made in the penal code articles which are used against the press," says Mahmut Ongoren, an executive member of the Turkish Human Rights Association.

Despite the appearances of a lively press — the country boasts 10 national daily newspapers and scores of magazines on the right and left — journalists and editors say they often come under legal and not-so-legal pressure to censor what they write.

"Journalists in Turkey are free, but you are also free to go to jail. We can publish things, but then we must pay the price," says Dogu Perincek, editor of the left-leaning weekly 2000'e Dogru (Toward the Year 2000), against which 33 government-sponsored cases are pending.

In the past two months, 29 journalists and writers have been charged with various offenses stemming from their writings,

ranging from a sociologist who published an article about the country's oppressed Kurdish minority to a lawyer who compiled a book from public court documents dealing with a political trial.

At least 23 journalists and editors arrested during the three-year military regime remain in prison, four of whom, including Yilmaz, have sentences exceeding 100 years. The recent spate of cases against the press is seen by human rights activists and journalists as an attempt by the government to intimidate a press that only in the past few years has begun to address such sensitive subjects as the Kurds, police torture, and other human rights abuses.

"Journalists are taking more chances, and the government doesn't want these types of ideas to appear," Mr. Ongoren says.

The frequent charges against journalists have drawn harsh criticism from the International Press Institute, which in a recent letter to the Turkish government said: "Your country's press laws and laws that concern freedom of speech run counter to those of every other country in the [European] Community, not to mention the other countries of Western Europe. We urge you to fundamentally change them without delay, according to the most basic principles of democracy."

Turkey continues to operate under the restrictive 1982 Constitution drawn up by the military regime, which limits freedom of speech and the press, trade union activity, and political freedom.

The penal code makes it a crime to insult the government, president, or Army, harm Turkey's reputation here or abroad, and spread communist or separatist propaganda.

Lawyers say although the same penal code has been in effect for decades, interpretation of what constitutes an offense has become stricter — and prison sentences harsher — since the 1980 coup.

A cartoonist for a weekly news-magazine, Güneri Icoğlu, recently received a 10-month prison sentence for referring to Turks as "ignorant" and "barbaric" in a cartoon. Mr. Icoğlu served one month before being released under a limited amnesty. Human rights officials believe international pressure is behind government promises to enact democratic reforms and change the penal code, but they say the gap between words and deeds remains wide.

For months, Justice Ministry officials said they were considering reducing penalties for various political offenses, but a draft of

penal code amendments submitted to the parliament early in February did not include the expected reductions and added a clause that could further restrict press freedom, some lawyers said.

Government officials have said the clause, which would make it a crime to publicize "actions which may lead to panic" or "showing certain people or institutions" as targets, is not directed at the press, but critics say the wording is vague enough to threaten news reporting.

Press coverage of government



ISTANBUL STREET SCENE: Newspapers and magazines are readily available.

corruption, alleged torture, and threats by terrorists all could fall under the clause, says Hülya Vural, a lawyer who specializes in human rights cases.

"It's very abstract law that could be applied in any direction. This legal arrangement makes writing news stories impossible," says Nezih Demirkent, chairman of the Istanbul Journalists Association and publisher of a daily business newspaper.

The draft amendments are not expected to be discussed by parliament for several months. If they come to a vote, they could easily be passed by Mr. Ozal's Motherland Party, which controls a majority of seats in the parliament, lawyers say.

"We can't speak of press freedom in Turkey. There are some people here who are just afraid of ideas. It's always one step forward, one step backward," says Mr. Demirkent.

When Turkish journalists covered recent allegations by villagers from Yesilyurt, in the southeast, who said security troops tortured them in an attempt to extract information about Kurdish separatists operating in the

region, they were later accused by the interior minister of supporting terrorists' aims by reporting the story.

Nevertheless, journalists say their situation is much better than eight years ago, when an estimated 100 publications — including three daily newspapers — were shut down and an untold number of journalists and editors were detained.

The ending of the military regime brought a certain loosening of restrictions, but beyond that, some say the government's bid

for membership in the European Community made democratic concessions a must, while others say publicity by international organizations has made it impossible for the government to punish journalists for reporting cases of torture and government misconduct.

"We have more freedom now because by fighting and facing the oppression we are earning it, not because the government gives it to us," says editor Perincek.

But no loosening of press restrictions or changes in the penal code will help Yilmaz get released from prison. Unless there is a general political amnesty, something considered unlikely to happen under the present government, he must serve 36 years of his sentence before he can be released.

"My punishment, and those against other journalists, did its job. It warned journalists what would happen to them if they stepped out of line. I must hope they don't listen to the warning, because that is the only way we can get real freedom," Yilmaz said in written response to questions submitted to him in writing.



JAILED FOR 748 YEARS: Turkish journalist Veli Yilmaz in his prison cell, serving time for writing material that was retroactively judged subversive.

We reproduce an article from 'Struggle', publication of a fraternal New Zealand Marxist-Leninist organisation, Organization for Marxist Unity.

This organisation was formerly known as the Preparatory Committee for the formation of the Communist Party of New Zealand (Marxist-Leninist).

It comments on the article 'Modern Capitalism Reassessed' carried in Beijing Review January 9-15 this year. That article was reproduced in the last issue of International Review.

## Has capitalism turned into 'social capitalism' today? (Some points for reasoned discussion)

An article in the Forum column of the 'Beijing Review' (No. 2, 1989) requires comment. Normally, Marxists of one country do not comment on views and policies in a socialist country where these affect only that country itself. But, where theoretical statements are made of world-wide significance, then the matter is not just the business of those who made the statement. So, since certain views of that character have been published in the Forum column of an influential journal, presumably they are open to discussion.

The article in question sets out to propound a theory that is clearly of strategic and programmatic importance for all Marxists everywhere. It is regrettable that the publication of such a theory should have been finalised without prior extensive exchanges of view, with and between Marxists of capitalist countries. This would have resulted in a far more balanced approach based on a far more accurate listing of the facts from which the truth was sought.

The article calls for a 're-understanding of modern capitalism' in the light of recent developments. It turns out that 're-understanding' means re-evaluating the features and nature of imperialism. Moreover, to avoid being bogged down by the classic Marxist teachings on capitalism and its imperialist stage, this 're-understanding' should not be based on 'dogmatic doctrines'. Rather, there should be a 'close analysis' of capitalism's 'new practices'.

However, 'close' turns out to mean restrictive, narrow, one-sided and ignoring the principal contradictions. For, in truth, the 'new' practices of capitalism are only more

developed OLD practices. They are new only in form and appearance. In content and essence, they are not a whit different.

For example, 'the universal development of the joint stock company' is regarded as having 'certain socialist features'. In New Zealand we have some reactionaries who specialise in sniffing out 'socialist features' with noses like tracker dogs. But, to our knowledge, even they have never raised the alarm about joint stock companies.

What is the essence of a joint stock company? It is a device used by a few wealthy investors to gather and concentrate under their control the savings of the middle classes, and more lately of some workers; and to control that accumulated capital to further exploit the working people and the consumers. It is a means to further enrich the wealthy, to exercise a form of economic and ideological control of the middle classes and such of the workers who have bought shares and at times to render their savings worthless — as all too many found out in the 1987 sharemarket crash.

In order to 're-understand' modern capitalism, the Forum article lists capitalism's three stages: From its birth to the late 19th Century; from then to the 1950's — its imperialist stage; from the 1950's to today — the stage of 'social capitalism'.

The article says of this reputed last stage that, 'with the development of social capitalism, the world entered a period of peace and progress in which the capitalist system and the socialist system co-existed and competed peacefully for the most part'. To make such a claim is to remove oneself from reality. For this period was marked by the enormous growth of mass resistance to imperialist aggression and war. Millions of patriots laid down their lives in Korea, Viet Nam, Algeria and again in Viet Nam. Hundreds of thousands were injured in street battles in the US and most Second World countries. Thousands were tortured by police and death squads in Third World lands whose fascist regimes were, and still are, propped up by US arms and money.

The arms race awakened ever wider circles to the

madness of the nuclear threat, resulting in huge mass demonstrations.

A key element of Marxism is its view that the people are the makers of history. Since the 1950's the peace movement, the non-aligned movement, the defence of the environment, the upsurge of the movement for women's rights and the rights of the indigenous peoples have, wave upon wave, battered the imperialist powers. A third of the people of the world are engaged in socialist construction. Why ignore the role of the people? For history teaches it is when the people take the cause of peace and progress into their own hands that the world is made safe, a nation's independence is protected and socialism is introduced. The facts of history cannot be re-written or 're-understood' — as the people of Nicaragua and other Central and South American countries are re-proving over and over again.

The Forum article lists 'six chief features' which it says indicate the basis of change from imperialism to 'social capitalism':

1. The latest scientific and technical revolution which has provided capitalism with a more solid material foundation.

*Marxism has always acknowledged that capitalism can produce and use scientific discoveries and new technologies. But Marxism also asks: Who benefits? The private ownership of this technology does not enrich the people. Rather, it throws many out of work and increases the exploitation of the rest. It only aggravates the fatal weakness of capitalism to result in crises of overproduction.*

2. The socialisation of capital in joint stock companies.

*This view is not new. Others have previously counted up the number of small shareholders, reached a total and cried 'Eureka — people's capitalism!' Much is also made of the fact that owners are not managers, as if this weakened private property ownership. The system buys up many who have no private*

property in the means of production, but who are the most ruthless defenders of capitalism — as managers, as bureaucrats, as members of the police and of the armed services.

3. The 'state has improved the macro-regulation of the economy. It has overcome the faults of pure regulation by the market and excessive monopoly. It has weakened the anarchic nature of production, helped ease economic crises and ensured stable development of the social economy'.

It is impossible to recognise any of these items as applying to New Zealand. For their own selfish interests, the finance sector, backed by the largest overseas and local corporations, has dictated a series of 'reforms' that have devastated less favoured businesses. Monopoly power has increased. The NZ Business Roundtable proposes and the Labour Govt. disposes. There is no stability in economic development and the economic crisis is worsening.

4. Marked changes have taken place in the class structure

One of the usual practices of those who 're-assess' Marxism, or paint pretty pictures of capitalism, is to assert that working people in capitalist countries have a good life and there are not many poor people. They never look at, say, India nor at any but the better off workers in countries where the capitalist rulers suck the Third World people dry to provide a better standard of living for their own workers. Lenin drew attention to this decades ago. Regrettably, the Forum article places itself alongside the capitalist professors who earn their money undermining the revolutionary will of the working class.

The article says: 'Since the 1950's, both real wages and social welfare expenditure have increased by a large margin and the livelihood of all working people has been ensured.' Tell that to the 150,000 unemployed in this country. And here real wages are continuing to fall while there is a great clamour from reaction to cut spending further on the welfare

system. Social disturbances, youth suicides, armed robberies, — increasing violence and homelessness are all at levels never previously experienced. Taxes are up on the poor, down on the rich and the big corporations.

5. Developed countries have significantly changed their foreign policies

What explanation does the Forum article give for this 'change'? It says they changed from 'mainly threats of war to mainly relying on science, technology and commodity economy.....to achieve the same objectives by peaceful economic means'. In short, they changed because they changed.

Where there is an effect there is a cause. This is the view of Marxism. But the article tiptoes once again past the dominant cause — the power of the people's struggles. But is the effect nothing but 'peaceful competition'? Is it 'peaceful economic means' when imperialism supports reactionary governments and their terror and murder? Or when, to put down a government where the people have torn down the old, US imperialism (sorry, social capitalist United States) arms vicious mercenaries like the Contras?

Because of the people's struggles, there has had to be a bit less sabre rattling. But it would be a gross error to put forward any theory that lulls the vigilance of the people in defence of peace and opposition to nuclear war and Third World subversion. The 'change' will be made real and permanent only by continued people's struggles — right up to the achievement of people's power.

6. Democracy is being increasingly stressed and the legal system is constantly being improved.

Has there been any law or stress on democracy in our country that has increased or supported 'socialist features'? Or has weakened the position of the people's exploiters? But there certainly has been legislation that strengthens the position of the employers and weakened the position of the trade unions. And is not the Roundtable crying for more

of the same every day.

As for dialectics, the Forum article ignores its principal law — the law of the unity and struggle of opposites. It had to do this to accommodate its later assertion that 'developed capitalism will gradually evolve socialist factors and begin the transition to socialism. It is likely to complete this process through peaceful means'.

Up till this article was written, the Marxist view has always been that the contradiction between the capitalist class and the working class was an antagonistic contradiction, solvable only by violent struggle. This was not because the working class chose that form of struggle, but because the capitalist class would force it upon them. The article would infer that this contradiction is no longer antagonistic.

That would be news to many unionists in this country, especially the seamen treated so cavalierly by the NZ Shipping Corporation.

Insofar as there is use in the article of the dialectic process of quantitative growth resulting in qualitative change, it has been directed at the wrong elements. The essential elements for change lie not in the 'socialist seeds' of the joint stock companies, but in the various components of the people's forces — especially the working class and its allies.

It is the accumulation of strength by these forces to which the theory of quantity turning into quality should apply. Studiously ignoring the role of the people, of the industrial working class, of its vanguard party and of Marxist dialectics, political economy and the role of the state is very clear evidence that all is not well with this new-fledged theory of 'social capitalism'.

The basic requirement of Marxism is described as making a concrete analysis of concrete conditions. Mao Zedong summarised this as 'seek truth from facts'. The article makes its case from a far from thorough examination of those of the facts which seem most favourable to it. New Zealand readers will rub their eyes in sheer disbelief to read that 'the distribution of income by gov-

ernments and the development of social welfare measures have narrowed the gap between rich and poor, basically ensuring reasonable living standards for all working people'.

All social welfare measures are paid for by taxation. The proportion of taxation paid by the working people in New Zealand has steadily increased, especially recently. To ensure they do not escape this burden, there has been the introduction in New Zealand of first PAYE and, more recently the GST. The latter is forecast to rise this year. For the wealthy, however, there have been huge tax reductions at the same time as their most reactionary spokespersons call persistently for further cuts on top of those already made in welfare payments.

Capitalism in New Zealand is very far from becoming 'social'. On the contrary, it is becoming daily more ANTI-social, more restrictive and dominating — and there is widespread and growing dissatisfaction among the working people, family farmers and medium and small business persons.

Most extraordinary is that the Forum article ignores the state apparatus as an organ of force for the subjection of those exploited by capitalism. It confines itself to the its economic role, thus studiously glossing over a difficult problem to fit in with its theory. Marxism states that the central question of politics is state power. It says that a parliament is portrayed by capitalist propaganda as holding power, but, when the people try to use it to challenge the capitalist class, the latter soon show the real source of their ruling position by calling out the police and, if necessary, the armed forces.

The ruling class are a minority. To maintain their rule, they must ensure without fail that all positions in the organs of suppression are filled by persons loyal to them — and especially the positions of command within them. The ruling class are not ready to give up their position of power and privilege voluntarily. In New Zealand in 1981 they mobilised thousands police and members of the armed forces just to make sure a mere football game went ahead. Could it be suggested they would do less to

4  
defend their most precious possession — the power to exploit other people's work?

Certainly, study of the balance of class forces and changes within the capitalist system should be done regularly. A clear analysis of class forces, of their material interests and their policies, is most important. But the Forum article does not do this. That it has received wide-publicity is disturbing. It is hard to imagine it will play a positive role in the education of the youth regarding the true nature of modern capitalism.

Rather it would seem that, in order to raise the spirit of revolutionary commitment and sacrifice, it is crucial to show the clear distinction between capitalism and socialism.

Regrettably, the Forum article quite wrongly merges aspects of socialism with capitalism by factually inaccurate statements about the latter and by downgrading the former.

*The above is a contributed article, printed for discussion by our readers. So we would welcome the opinions of readers on these basic issues of Marxist theory — though, of course we cannot print them, but only some excerpts in a summary at a later date.*

*Send your opinion to:*

*The Editor,  
68 Larchwood Avenue,  
AUCKLAND 2.  
NEW ZEALAND / AOTEAROA*

**- PS** : Excerpt<sup>+</sup> from a letter from PJ 11.3.89

... I haven't finished 'digesting' the Beijing Review articles, but already I've seen a lot of plain rubbish, showing a complete misunderstanding of the state in 'modern developed capitalist societies', - I'm referring to the Xu Jiatun article, which I haven't completely finished yet, and haven't 'digested' the others. I wrote some time back (2 ? 3 years?) that it was clear that there were more problems to the consolidation of socialism than had been anticipated, and that these problems would lead to some to panic and despair, but that obviously the task for true marxists was to first of all identify what the problems were, and then to make sure that we ourselves properly understood what marxism dialectical materialism, indicated to us was the best way to overcome these problems. I haven't space to go into detail but I firmly believe that we have been poor marxists in the sense that we haven't understood exactly what dialectical materialism had told us about the relationships between man and the environment, especially the fact that human attitudes and culture et lag a long way behind changes in the superstructure. And surely this must be of the greatest significance when the 'superstructure' of a socialist state has been achieved -- the 'base' has to somehow learn to adapt not only from its immediate capitalist past, but in effect from the whole of its previous history (except primitive communism), from antagonistic competition to comradely co-operation. I think we hadn't faced the fact that marxism plainly told us that the transformation would inevitably take generations...most of us 'assumed' that once a socialist state superstructure had been won, i.e. a successful revolution, then the base 'culture would change overnight! I'd better not go on, but I hope you can see what I mean !

....

Long Lartin.

Initial thoughts on International Review \*5

When Marx wrote of the spectre of communism haunting Europe, what he did not conceive of the impact of capitalism upon the communist orientated nations. Communism was not only created out of capitalist experience but has been shaped by it.

Communism still possess a powerful critique of capitalism but it is noticeably wanning as a vehicle for socialist economic development. In part, communism is a theory about social transformation. It can be used to understanding the nature of 'existing socialism' as much as providing a critique of the imperialist countries.

We would accept that socialism -- the transitory period between capitalism and communist society -- would have many remnants of the former society. But can basic socialist elements be retained, let alone developed, while accepting at the same time the need to adopt the capitalist features of the already successfully developed societies ?

The development of that fragmented collection of discordant nations that was onetime called the 'socialist camp' has been affected by the enduring achievement of capitalism's own historical pattern of development.

Today, capitalist societies produce  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the world's gross national product while claiming only a  $\frac{1}{5}$  of its population. While capitalism in the heartland rests on world exploitation,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the world's industrial capacity is situated in the USA, Japan, W Germany, France and the UK. They still form a magnet of attraction because of their standards of living.

The high level of development of the means of production has attracted the attention of elements within the "socialist camp". The dominant economic trajectory is one which now encourages those "capitalist remnants" at the expense of collectivist forms and the communist aspirations that inspire the revolutionary movement.

There is a convergence of thinking on the need for reform on the foundering economies of socialist-orientated nations. The answer that ALL seem to be turning to is capitalism.

The series of article in Beijing Review (and similar articles can be found in Soviet Weekly) are indictative of a trend that merges the capitalist and socialist project. This no longer sees a break between the different stages. There is an economic determinism in the Beijing Review articles reminiscent of the analysis found in Marxism Today: both are devoid of class interest.

There is a logic to the Chinese argument that because China's feudal influences have not been surpassed then capitalism is still a progressive means to develop China (That is without questioning the basic proposition). But to promote a general theoretical line on the nature of the modern state that belittles its role as an instrument of bourgeois rule is far from acceptable. The attempt to remove ideology from the sphere of foreign relations seems to have its counterpart in political accomodation in the sphere of understanding those capitalist socities that remain dominant on a world scale.

## Notes on Sino-Soviet Relations

Recent RCL publications have been very unclear on several questions relating to Sino-Soviet relations and recent developments in the two countries. These notes particularly address the Introduction to Winter October, 1988, which includes the following paragraph:

"Internationally, things seem more complicated. The sharp and obvious differences that there were a few years ago, between Soviet and Chinese internal and external policies, no longer exist. The changes that have occurred need to be analysed thoroughly and assessed, but there's no doubt that they have left many with a lot of questions about what socialism is, and whether it is necessarily superior to capitalism."

### 1. Aspects of Chinese Foreign Policy Towards Kampuchea:

To improve Sino-Soviet relations China, for a long time, has posed three actions that must be carried out by the Soviet Union:

- a. withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Sino-Soviet border
- b. withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan
- c. withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea

China sees these demands as essential as the first steps towards a more peaceful and secure world, as well as self-determination for the Afghan and Kampuchean peoples. They have long been part of China's aim of "peace and development, as it is only with peace for 3rd World peoples" that the road to development will remain open.

In the article on Sino-Soviet relations in the latest International Review, Autumn 1988, these demands of China are covered, saying the troops on China's borders and the Afghanistan withdrawal have been "largely settled". At the time of writing, a question mark still hangs over how completely the Soviet Union will withdraw not only troops but supply of arms or whether there will be as re-introduction of Soviet troops or advisers, when efforts for a new government are being worked out - in horrendous conditions and with great disunity between both the Mujihadin themselves and with the present Kabul government.

However, Kampuchea still remains the main area of conflict between the two governments and the same International Review article on this matter is liberal and woolly on China's stated policy towards eventual peace in Kampuchea.

By turning to the pages of Winter 1988, October, and reading the important documents released by the Democratic Kampuchean Party and signed by Khieu Samphan, the proposals clearly set out the DPK Party's proposals for a settlement for Kampuchea once the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces is assured and actually taking place. If one then reads the many statements made on behalf of the Chinese Government on the same question over the last six months or so, it is clear that China is in agreement and echoes the DPK proposals almost exactly (see Beijing Review for documentation). The report of Premier Li Peng's statement on the question is a good example to refer to (Beijing Review No 47, 1988).

Both parties recognise that there is a "Khmer Rouge problem" ('reasonable or not', says the DPK statement) and that policies must be worked out "to ensure that the DPK cannot return to power alone and any Kampuchean Party cannot dominate the others". The Li Peng report agrees with the DPK that each of the four parties concerned in the nominations for the provisional government should propose their own nominations - adding that these candidates should be "accepted by all other parties". The DPK does not make this latter point (saying that the setting up of this provisional government is an internal affair for Kampucheans). But it is clear that its obvious desire for a peaceful settlement for the future of Kampuchea would necessitate its agreeing this proviso stated by Li Peng. There would be absolutely no point in working for a provisional government if, at the same time, Pol Pot's name was put forward as one of the candidates. Many governments, agencies etc. and the world's press have over the years made sure of that. Nor would his name create the necessary confidence for uniting the vast majority of Kampucheans.

It should be added that the policy for the future of Kampuchea, as seen by the DPK in the August 1988 statement, is a government that will "work within a framework of a free enterprise system and liberal democratic regime". Their aim is for the same of "maintaining peace, security and stability within Kampuchean national society".

And it is important to stress that China's policy and support of the DPK has been consistent during the ten long years of Vietnamese invasion and that their policy for a peaceful settlement is still in accordance with the DPK and does not in any way show big power chauvinism or a Big Brother attitude. In fact, China's external policies have been remarkably consistent since the 1950's with the development of the five principles of peaceful co-existence and absence of aggression against any other country.

#### Differences Between the Soviet Union and China

Most will agree that there has been the beginning of startling changes of policy in the Soviet Union since the arrival of Gorbachev on the Soviet scene.

But it is too soon to equate China's and the Soviet Union's new developments in which China calls "the primary stage of socialism". The Soviet Union has a very long way to go to achieve the enormous economic and liberalising results now so obvious in China: on the plus side, very much higher living standards in food, clothes, housing and a general opening up of people's initiatives to work hard and thus earn more. These achievements also have brought China enormous problems of corruption, inflation, increasing crime, disparities in income that in some cases are too wide and many other distortions unacceptable to a developing, socialist society. But all these achievements and attendant problems have only been developing for a very few years and their successful revolution of 1949 is only now coming up for 40 years.

Given that Gorbachev carries the CPSU with him, and embarks on a similar road of development to China's, the base from which these reforms will or are starting is a different one in several ways. The long term effects of super-power aggression and domination will need real commitment and a whole change of attitude and policy before it can be overturned completely. Even with the final withdrawal of Soviet forces and advisers from Afghanistan and the similar withdrawal of the Soviet-backed Vietnamese army from Kampuchea, the harm, death and destruction brought by the Soviet invasion or support of will last for many, many years.

Similarly, in Eastern Europe. Given that there is no more Soviet interference either militarily or economically, it will take years for the peoples of Eastern Europe to live down the results of Big Brother's presence.

So, to my mind, the phrase "sharp and obvious differences no longer exist" is not really true even if Soviet external policies do fundamentally change. The backlog of these policies go back further than present analysis allows us to judge on present knowledge (of this writer, any way) and the ensuing practical, political and ideological results will make it unlikely that we can say China and Soviet foreign policies have few differences for years to come. And this supposes that even what appears to be happening in Soviet-thinking continues to develop similarly to China's own reform policies. If indeed it does, it will bring a revolution in Soviet thinking and practice.

Also, if we turn to the internal policies of the two countries, again we shall have to wait to see what seem similar roads of development appearing in the Soviet Union really develop as China's have done and with what results - generally good for the development of socialism or with too many unacceptable facets which could eventually overturn the good already done.

Internally, the basis for change in the Soviet Union is very different from what China's was in 1978. These differences start from what is perhaps a crude personification of their histories: the Soviet Union had a Stalin and China, a MaoZedong. Whatever Stalin's merits, and there were indeed some, he was responsible for wielding a mighty Party which lay an oppressive and all-powerful hand on the Soviet people. Party domination and bureaucracy proliferated and right up to the arrival of Gorbachev allowed little people's power to flourish - all power and merit remaining at the top. In addition to all this, because of the need to fuel their expansionist and aggressive foreign policy, funds and people needed for military spending have detracted enormously from the peaceful economic development of the country aimed at benefiting the masses not the military.

China's development, on the other hand, has not had anything like the burden of military spending to bear but has had tumultuous changes of policy over the last forty years - some bringing great benefit and progress to the Chinese people and some bringing chaos and a downturn in the economy.

There is also one aspect of the two countries' development which is immensely different and that is the nationalities question. China's policies towards its more than 50 nationalities has, on the whole, been remarkably successful as far as we can judge. Tibet, of course, continues to be troubled and dissatisfied to some extent. But here we are bordering on external policies and the part played by foreign powers still trying to separate Tibet from China.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, has not been successful in satisfying the needs and national aspirations of its different nationalities: with a long term policy of Russification over the years and now a burgeoning need for self-determination and national identification.

So again, as with external policies, the future policies of both countries, will, with the Soviet Union and have, with China, started with different historical backgrounds. There may be similarities with future developments in the Soviet Union but to say that "sharp and obvious differences no longer exist" is far too loose a concept to be useful.

However, given all their differences and consequent different developments in the future, the positive aspects of Gorbachev's new endeavours towards peaceful and closer relations with China should be welcomed by all as they certainly are by the Chinese Government.

### 3. 'What Socialism is and Whether it is necessarily Superior to Capitalism'

This quote comes from the latter part of the paragraph about the lack of differences between the two countries' policies discussed above.

If we look again at the Soviet Union's and Chinese examples, it is not difficult to agree that the Communist Parties of both countries realised the absolute necessity of overthrowing completely the state power of the regimes that they succeeded. And this goes for Cuba, too. All were successful in revolutions against their own ruling classes and the foreign powers that tried to defeat them by invasion and war. It is not a question of how to lay the first base for a socialist society to develop but how to continue that road to socialism when state power has been won and what China calls "the primary stage of socialism" has to be developed. Both countries started with war-ravaged economies, little industry, a mainly peasant-based society and very low standards of living with poverty countrywide and near starvation for millions of people.

The contradictions posed for these countries was how to balance improved material conditions for the people and at the same time, to educate them to understand the ideological necessity of developing a high enough political consciousness to achieve the greatest good for not only the individual, but for the collective and the state. In fact, the mass line of "serving the people".

It is hard for most of us in Western imperialist countries, to understand real grinding poverty and the constant, day to day, year by year, hard physical labour needed to overcome it; and thus to understand the depth of this contradiction. A family with hardly enough to eat, unless they are exceptional, and with high political consciousness, will naturally look after their own first. So, to keep material needs and socialist ideology in balance has been the source of great changes of policy in China to try and find a successful way forward to a higher stage of socialist development both material and ideological.

To free people from exploitation at the hands of capitalism and build a more equal and productive for use (not profit) society which benefits all the population and achieves good living standards, education, leisure and well-being is the aim of socialism. But the final steps to a full, socialist society have not been climbed by any country up to date. Such a country needs a literate population that can afford to look further afield than immediate material needs: then a full realisation of the meaning of "serve the people" becomes possible and relevant. Up till that time, people must be given material incentives to improve production and their own conditions and these incentives are the basis for the new policies that have been introduced in China and other socialist countries and appear to be going to be tried in the Soviet Union.

So more pay for more and better work to individual or co-op run industrial and farming enterprises, contracted labour: with some retained profit and many other inducements brought into a still mainly state-owned economy. Quite clearly, the results in China have been greatly increased production, higher living standards and a more satisfied population. More satisfied, and that is one of the aims of socialism: but, in some instances, these changes bring a more individualistic outlook which can lead to unreasonable profit-seeking. Also some corruption and learning some of the decadence of Western society as China turns outwards towards the world both for trade and technology.

Does China need another Mao Zedong to instil and encourage the true socialist spirit into Chinese society so that people recognise the need for socialist ethics with true co-operation to bring socialist ideology up to the standard of the better material life that is being achieved? This basic contradiction has not been overcome in China, or anywhere else, and shows us how very long the road to a true socialist society is.

So in my opinion, going back to the quote heading this section, it is not that people generally don't know the difference in theory between a capitalist and socialist society. Communist also know the only sure way to achieve state power which is a revolutionary overthrow of capitalist society. What no-one can be sure of at present is how to achieve a stable socialist society at a more advanced stage than China is at present. Other countries are trying and all we can do is to offer our fraternal encouragement and most importantly, deal with our own country. Our situation here is and will be very different from China's or the Soviet Union's. It may well be that new Marxist theory will have to be worked out for the particular conditions prevalent in developed capitalist countries for us to see the best way forward in a socialist Europe.

**BP**

Further References:

Beijing Review 1988, Nos. 28, 32, 36, 37, 40, 46, 47.  
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