

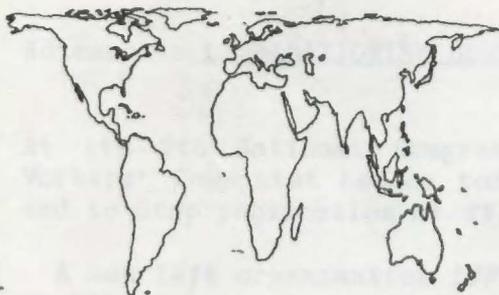
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# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



occasional internal bulletin  
of

**Revolutionary Communist League of Britain**



# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

-----No.8 Summer 1990-----

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This is the eight edition of an internal bulletin designed to circulate information on the international communist movement, and the analysis and developments within fraternal organizations.

There may be unacknowledged disagreements with positions expressed and these articles should not be taken as representing official RCL position.

Aotearoa : LIQUIDATIONISM DESTROYS THE WORKERS' COMMUNIST LEAGUE !

At its 7th National Congress held in January 1990, members of the Workers' Communist League took the decision to dissolve the organisation and to stop publication of *UNITY* after 12 years of existence.

A new left organisation *LEFT CURRENTS* was formed in the aftermath of the decision. It is to work towards building alliances for a new Aotearoa (New Zealand) - socialist, democratic, feminist and decolonised.

"This move was a logical follow-on to changes in the WCL over recent years which have seen the organisation break with key elements of what it criticised as the 'orthodox' communist model.

In particular, the organisation rejected the views that communist parties should have a monopoly on political power and that the class struggle had primacy over those for Maori self-determination and women's liberation.

Underlying the policies and work of *Left Currents* is the long term goal of building a broad based mass movement for social liberation based on a strategic alliance of the struggles of Maori, women and workers.

The organisation will be actively seeking dialogue and co-operation with other forces in the progressive movement, and is open to new members from different philosophical backgrounds."

[*UNITY* Volume 13:1 March 16, 1990]

The WORKERS' COMMUNIST LEAGUE was launched in 1980 with the perspective common to the new communist movement of re-building a genuine working class revolutionary party. It established itself as a major force on the New Zealand Left, it received much acclaim for its leadership activities around the 1981 Springbok rugby tour and tireless activity in progressive campaigns, particularly around Wellington, and in the trade union movement.

Like other ML forces it misjudged the seemingly sisyphian task and speed of progress possible to rectify the political errors of the past and re-root communist activity among the working class. In the wake of international developments, such as in China and Poland, and in response to the growing influence of the Maori nationalist struggle and the feminist movement inside the country, the WCL began to re-assess its basic assumptions and certainties.

That reassessment came to adopted anti-Leninists position as what was described as the traditional orthodoxies on the centrality of class were challenged and rejected, as was the concept that communist parties should hold a monopoly on power in socialist societies and in revolutionary struggles. The WCL membership argued that there were many important struggles and activists outside the issues promoted by the 'traditional communist movement'. Whilst many criticisms had some valid points about past practice in the international movement, there was the tendency to want to throw out the baby, the bathwater and the bath itself and begin with a totally clean slate. They concluded that "much of the communist movement today was itself irrelevant to struggles for liberation".

The Conference Resolution that dissolved the WCL and marked the abandonment of marxist-leninist political practices and objectives stated:

" We believe the word 'communist' is not suitable as a definition of our political programme and practical work because:

(a) the word 'communist' has negative associations with monolithic, patriarchal, excessively hierarchical, racist and/or national chauvinist, and environmentally exploititative actions of communist parties in power and many communist groups.

(b) the word 'communist' does not incorporate other key aspects of our policy, that is, the equal importance of liberation from the patriarchy, and the need for Maori self-determination."

As *UNITY* makes clear in its report of the proceedings. "The Conference decided that a clean break was needed with the communist movement and our previous methods of organisations." The association of the WCL with the international communist movement [meaning that despite its criticism it could not shake the "pro-China" tag] meant that "much of the organisation's good work was dismissed as irrelevant to developments in this country".

The triumph of liberalism within the WCL was marked by policy changes throughout the 1980s : the decision to reverse the judgement on the nature of the Soviet Union and to regard it as a socialist society demolished the demarcation lines that had been drawn between modern revisionism and marxist politics.

What was argued was that "the main trend in the communist movement internationally these days is a reactionary one. The violent repression of democratic opposition forces in the 'socialist' countries is the clearest example of this. The undemocratic monolithic practice of most communist parties in the West and in the third world has also caused major set-backs for movements for revolutionary change" .

Thus criticism of the Soviet and Chinese experience involved a political rejection of marxism from which a liquidationist belief drew strength. The very ability to "know" anything was questioned, and correct criticisms of bad practices [ arrogance, sectarianism, errors of democratic centralism and monolithism] both within the WCL and the international movement was taken as evidence that "the communist movement as it was today was not up to the challenges before it."

In seeking to understand the complexities of class societies, and overcome the ideological baggage of *Stalinism* , what became obscured and eventually rejected was the continuing relevance of the marxist method, of the contemporary validity of an analysis based on the philosophical foundations of dialectical materialism.

The adoption of more diverse and pluralistic politics marked a retreat from a simplistic concept of class dynamics that had not taken on board the issues and priorities that had developed. The WCL opened itself to the corrosive impact of activists of "different philosophical backgrounds" weakened the ability to apply the science of revolution - Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong Thought.

The focus became criticism of "classical marxism", "orthodoxy" and generally past standards considered no longer appropriate and the development of a radical critique that incorporated those criticisms and conclusion.

What emerged dominant within the thinking of the WCL was the attractions of the prospects of building Left Unity based upon the strategic analysis of Aotearoa that sees three fundamental contradictions : between settler colonialism and indigenous Maori nationalism; between patriarchy and the women's movement for liberation, and the gay and lesbian movements; between capital (especially financial and transnational) and labour (especially low paid and unemployed).

In itself not an inaccurate description of New Zealand society, however members of the WCL no longer saw the organisation as one with which it was possible to implement the strategic programme devised by the end of the 1980s . The launching of *LEFT CURRENTS* , in the endeavour to "include rather than exclude" , the ex-militants of the WCL have abandoned the vehicle for revolutionary change and embrace the failed social democratic morass, seduced by the perspective of "left renewal", of a regenerated radicalism of the Left in the 1990s. What prospects are there for this project when the January Conference resolved that :

"Left Currents is ready to dissolve later this year if it is found that the conditions exist to form an even broader organisation and if this advances the strategic programme."

The disintegration of seemingly strong marxist-leninist organisations in Canada and West Germany in the early 1980s contained political lessons for young ML forces elsewhere , they were not acted upon in Aotearoa.

## Delegation visits China

**A delegation from the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) visited the People's Republic of China recently at the invitation of the Communist Party of China.**

The CPA (M-L) chairman, Bruce Cornwall, and vice-chair, Maureen Davies, were warmly received by representatives of the Chinese Communist Party.

**The delegation had the opportunity of visiting Beijing and several provincial cities and country areas for exchanges at many levels from the factory floor and farms to the national leadership.**

During the visit the delegation gained insights into the workings of democracy on the factory floor, workers electing the management of plants, deciding the breakdown of income of factories, determining the factories' expenditure and development in concert with state plans. Delegation members were introduced to the Chinese people's vigilance about the ideological and economic consequences of dealing with foreign monopolies in the New Economic Zones, the way the leadership of collectives is maintained while some peasants are working under individual contracts, and the active participation of workers and peasants in the management of factories and farms, in the social life of the cities and countryside and in running the country.

The delegation also saw active participation and a high level of conscious activity by party units in ideological development and practical steps taken about Marxist theory to strengthen the hold of Marxism and the practice of the mass line.

Every visitor to China can see that the people are well fed, well clothed and that they have televisions and stereos. Many are buying washing machines and fridges. Some in country areas are buying vehicles. The people's living standards certainly appear to be steadily rising over time.

The delegation was in China only for a short period. One has to say that the observations of outsiders cannot be based on the wide experience of China accumulated by the Chinese Communists, despite the fact that the discussions and insights shared with the delegation were extensive.

With that proviso, to sum up the delegation's impressions, they are that things in China are generally good. There are problems which generally speaking from the outside it would appear are being tackled. It seems that, if the efforts to overcome problems and the steps currently being taken are persisted with and carried right through, there are strong grounds for confidence in the future of China, socialism in China and the Chinese Communist Party.

The visit of the delegation continued the strong relations between Australian and Chinese Communists on the basis of our common striving to master the principles of Marxism.

The CPA (M-L) welcomes such opportunities for exchanges and gaining greater insight into the experience of Chinese Communists.

Bangladesh : On the U.C.L.B.

*United Communist League of Bangladesh* was formed in 1987 as the result of a unity process throughout the 1980s that brought together five marxist-leninist organisations. It goes some way towards restoring the original unity of the Bengali ML movement that first emerged in 1967 with the East Pakistan Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist).

From early on the MLs were afflicted by the tendency to split and form small groupings because of the immaturity of internal political life and secretarism of mainly an ultra-left nature.

The 1990 Congress of the UCLB upheld the task of trying to reunite the ML movement in Bangladesh. There are separate talks towards that end between the UCLB and the Workers Party of Bangladesh led by Mend, and the *Syammabadi Dal* group led by Najem.

There is a working relationship on issues with the *Communist Party of Bangladesh (ML)* and the *Revolutionary Communist Party of Bangladesh (ML)* led by Haq.

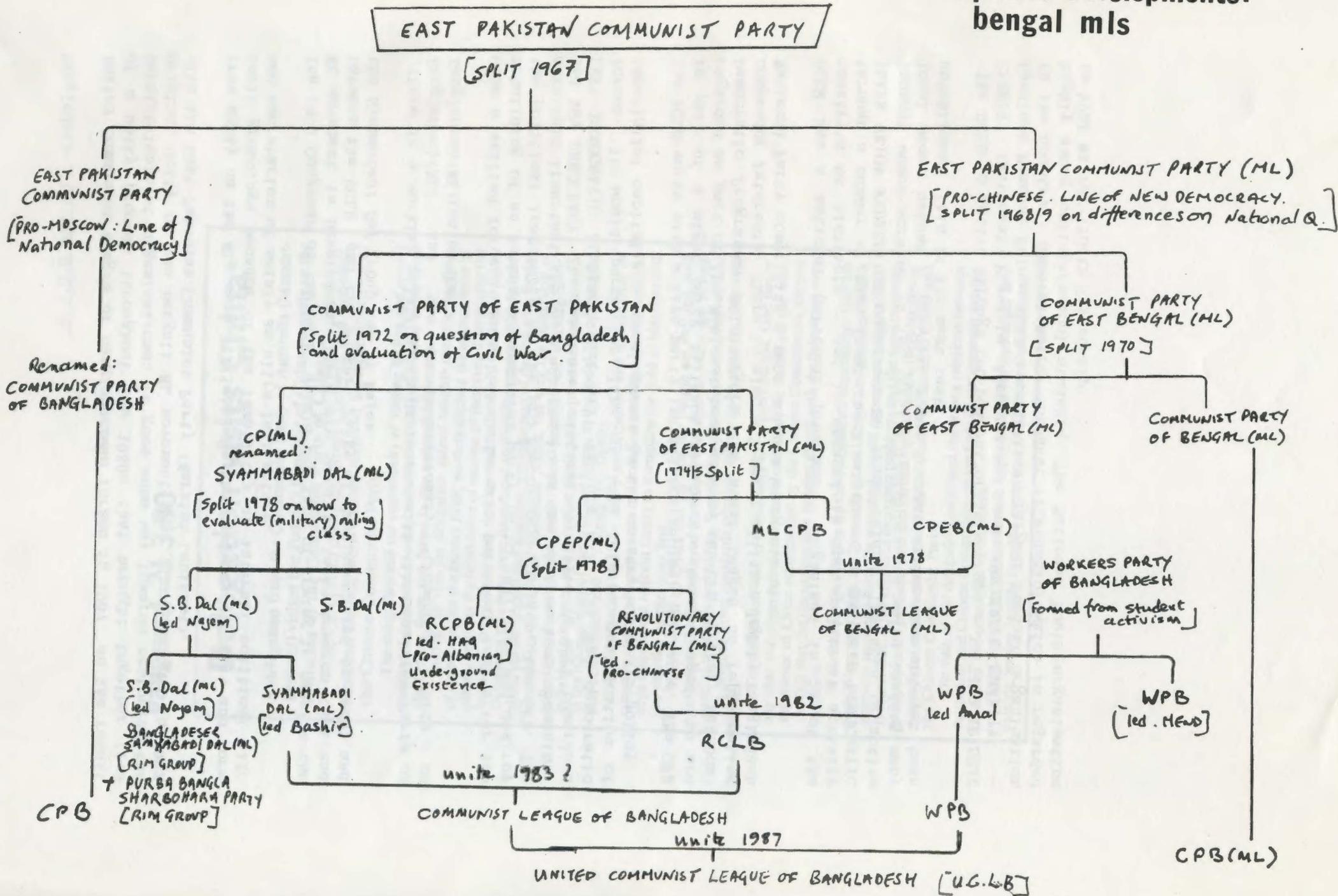
Once a unified force is established the main political task after the rebuilding of an authentic communist party is to challenge and destroy the political leadership of the pro-Moscow organisation, the CPB. The strategic line that the UCLB adheres to is one that seeks a communist-led NEW DEMOCRACY. The immediate political objective is work towards a LEFT DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE that will include all left and democratic forces. It would pursue the line of land reform, confiscation of imperialist capital and non-alignment in the country's foreign policy.

The UCLB works with a five party (petiti-bourgeois) alliance. The CPB is part of a eight party alliance led by the Awami League who are regarded as part of the National bourgeois by the CPB in their National Democratic Programme. UCLB regard the Awami League as representing comprador interests. There is also a 7-party alliance led by Bangladesh National Party comprising a more uniform bourgeois bloc.

UCLB has a national political presence - organised in 51 of the country's 64 districts - and is engaged in open political activity through a number of mass front organisations. The NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION FEDERATION organises 28 trade unions. The UCLB is active amongst women workers in the textile factories and while leading many local women unions a national women's organisation has not yet been established. This is the next task.

The UCLB is active through two peasant organisations - JATTIYO KRISHAK SHAMITY (National Peasants Association) and KHETMAJUR SHAMITY - Landless Peasant Union. UCLB has the third largest student organisation in the country - SHHATRA MAITRY (Student Friendship) which is regarded highly among college/school students. The National Youth organisation is YUBA MAITRI (Youth Friendship).

# simplified developments: bengal mls



Bangladesh is divided administratively into 64 districts. These are sub-divided into 464 sub-districts rather like UK's borough councils each returning a candidate. These have a semi urban H.Q. of local government and seats of judiciary, militia, police.

In the local government elections in March 1990, UCLB put up 17 candidates to "test the water" of electoral procedure. They stood on a policy for free and honest polling - elections tend to be "directed" or rigged by government/military intervention. They won 3 seats, came second in 4 others and third in 5 other seats. CPB who stood 76 candidates also won 3 seats. The UCLB has a perspective of utilising electoral support for mass propaganda and creating a base to support insurrectionary political activity.

In the city council elections last year they contested 3 seats and had two elected. At the lowest tier of government administration, union councils, they had 5 candidates in 1987.

Briefly, on the questions of the day the UCLB support the line of 1917 and the need for the dictatorship of the Proletariat. They don't accept the Soviet view of the world with its talk of a "common home", and whilst supporting the reforms in Soviet party and society are doubtful about their success. They regard the Soviet leadership as rightist deviationists.

UCLB supports the Chinese Party's right to reforms (although no conclusions have yet been drawn on use of the market economy) and its right to suppress counter-revolutionaries - while having tactical differences on how that is achieved (June 4th).

They regard events in Eastern Europe as a setback for socialism internationally but also as vindication for past criticisms of revisionist deviation in policies of those parties. The Romanian situation is seen as an army coup influenced by (unspecified) outside pressures.

Albania is supported as building socialism but not seen as an organising centre of the international communist movement. The UCLB recognises no leading party and has relations only on a bi-lateral basis.

On Mao Zedong Thought: UCLB has a negative assessment of the Cultural Revolution. They believe that given similar conditions to its development, Mao Zedong Thought has international application. It is upheld as the highest development of revolutionary marxist thought.

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For another perspective: an article by Nurul Amin [of the Department of Political Science at Dhaka University, Bangladesh] entitled "The Pro-Chinese Communist Movement in Bangladesh" can be found in The Journal of Contemporary Asia Vol. 15 No. 3 1985 pp349-360.

## Philippines : On Events in Eastern Europe

The Communist Party of the Philippines [CPP] declared that its task "can only be to study and learn lessons", and that "no amount of mocking of the so-called failure of socialism" in Eastern Europe would deter it from pursuing its national democratic revolution "in a self-reliant and independent way."

The CPP considers itself "in an advantageous position to benefit from the positive and negative experience of other parties ahead of it achieving victory in national and socialist revolution."

When it wins, the CPP said it "will be able to see with greater clarity how to undertake socialist revolution and construction...[and] prevent the restoration of capitalism through all-rounded revolutionary process, avoiding both bureaucratic and ultra-democratic excesses."

The Central Committee criticised Gorbachev's doctrine as mainly aimed at promoting Soviet interest to build a Soviet national economic power in a peaceful environment, but that could merely lead to the Soviet Union and the United States turning into "super partners".

The pursuit of *detente* had made the Soviet Union appear as a "benign superpower...promoting ideological and political disarming". Gorbachev's doctrine "proposes that super rivals can become super partners." This is having an adverse effect on the socialist cause.

The objectives of *perestroika* to make the Soviet Union be guided by world market prices in dealing with other countries, even socialist countries, warned the CPP, might likely result in socialist nations getting "the worst of two worlds".

The effects on socialist countries has been adverse. The 'new thinking' identified with Mikhail Gorbachev was the propelling force behind the cathartic social upheavals. Aside from the "rapid over-throw of rulers of the ruling parties" in Eastern Europe, there is also "the weakening of the anti-imperialist and proletarian international bond of the Warsaw Pact countries."

The crisis have given rise to adverse ideological trends, these included "bourgeois liberalism, nationalism, religious differences, cynicism."

There were other factors, as imprisoned NDF leader Satur Ocampo told *The Manila Times*: these governments had failed to sustain their "leading role in revolutionizing their societies" partly attributed to the fact that they did not lead successful social revolutions. [4.1.1990]

The CPP cited the failure to improve the general economic conditions of their peoples - to forward the cause of socialism - and blamed the "evils of capitalism" and "long-term subversion" by its "agents of counter-revolution" for the political turmoil.

The Polish United Workers' Party and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party "have been repeatedly split and discredited among the people because of the economic mess wrought by submission to demands of their capitalist creditors." Ceausescu was, according to the CPP analysis, overthrown mainly "due to large amounts of foreign debt incurred, the squandering of oil resources and then the drive to pay back the foreign debt at the expense of the people's well-being."

Sonora Ocampo, imprisoned CPP Central Committee member offers a different a different analysis of *perestroika*: he views Gorbachev as a "bold innovator" whose doctrine was "two steps backwards, one step forward" to put socialism "back on track". He argues "how this is to be carried out in concrete steps, while warding off the incursions of pernicious capitalist ideas and practices, will be the subject of intense debate worldwide."

The West is "wont to proclaim too soon the decline of socialism worldwide as a consequence of the dramatic events in Eastern Europe. I don't believe there is sufficient basis for this prognosis." Ocampo told *The Manila Times* in early January.

The CPP pointed out that:

"In gloating over the crisis in the socialist countries, capitalist countries seek to obscure their own crisis and their responsibility for the crisis in Third World countries."

Most of the Third World, long integrated into the world capitalist economy and debt-strapped, had "not been lifted from conditions of underdevelopment and poverty" compared to a "mere handful" of newly industrialising economies. This the CPP stated "cannot prove the beneficence of capitalism for the entire Third World" but illustrated that "socialism is bound to gain the upperhand on a world scale, simply because the world cannot afford too many capitalist countries."

According to the CPP, capitalist countries "are bleeding the people of Third World countries mainly through debt service." The former now find no need to put in new productive investments, especially because they are given the option of converting unpaid loans into equity in local enterprises in the Third World. The foreign debt was "an important neocolonial lever of the capitalist powers for extracting economic and other privileges"

The socio-economic and financial crises in capitalist countries was plain to see. The CPP judges the "crisis of overproduction on the international scale" to had resulted in "a rearrangement of economic and financial strength."

The U.S. had "declined from a position of being able to dictate economic and security policies to its capitalist allies to that of having to arrive at a consensus and combining with equable and increasingly strong partners."

China, in the CPP's opinion, exemplified what bleaker future awaited socialist nations now buffeted by political turmoil, and likely to yield to proposals for the restoration of facets of capitalism in their economies.

Economic liberalization had brought about "grave imbalances" in the Chinese economy and spawned "evils of capitalism" causing widespread social unrest and stirrings for political liberalisation.

This bourgeois liberal trend gained headway until it took the form of a "counter-revolutionary attempt" to overthrow the Chinese Communist Party and peaked at the mass actions of Tiananmen Square.

"What is ironic about the counter-revolution" the CPP noted, "is that the bourgeois liberals took advantage of the social discontent brought about by the evils of capitalism and gained hegemony over the mass actions."

[Adapted from *Carry out Rectifications, Further Strengthen the Party and Intensify the People's Revolutionary Struggle*, a 19-paged document dated 26.12.1989]

# China: "A matter of serious concern"

Statement of the Communist Party of the Philippines on the June 4 event in China

**O**n behalf of the Filipino people and its own behalf, the Communist Party of the Philippines expresses deepest regrets and grief to the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people over the tragic event on June 4, in which hundreds of civilians and troops were killed and thousands injured in Beijing, and the events which followed.

This bloody incident is a matter of serious concern for the proletarian revolutionaries and the entire people of the world even as we appropriately consider the event, the circumstances leading to it and those following it as basically an internal matter for China to settle.

We observe that although counter-revolutionary agents were definitely involved in the mass demonstrations in Tiananmen Square and elsewhere in China, the overwhelming majority of participants were a wide array of students, low-income intellectuals and working people expressing their grievances and demands.

It is up to China, its people and leaders, especially the Communist Party of China, to determine the root cause of the widespread social unrest that has been going on and has resulted in crisis, bloody turmoil and tragedy. It is up to them to determine to what extent the unrest is caused by errors in policy and, possibly, in line in socialist construction; what exactly is brought about by counterrevolutionary sabotage by capitalist powers and Chinese reactionaries; and what can be attributed to the continuing imperfections, limitations and difficulties in building socialism.

They should seriously look into the possible harm and dangers to socialist society that have been brought by the introduction of capitalist methods and practices into the socio-economic base; the growth of bourgeois-liberal ideas in the superstructure; and the overly intimate relations with capitalist powers, especially the United States.

For quite some time now, in the pursuit of rapid modernization, big foreign and Chinese capitalists as well as petty entrepreneurs, merchants at all levels and rich peasants have been allowed to enjoy the right to own means of production and distribution, reap private profits, and exploit the work-



*Protesters on hunger strike: Crisis, bloody turmoil and tragedy in Beijing*

ing people. It can be observed that as these capitalist elements are given freer rein, evils associated with capitalism, such as profiteering, gross economic imbalances, overinvestment in nonproductive fixed assets, consumerism, inflation, corruption and unemployment, arise and intensify.

It should also be asked whether the policy of giving too much importance to foreign investments and capitalist methods in the process of socialist modernization was precisely what spawned the evils that gave rise to the mass unrest now being exploited by the reactionaries.

We condemn the efforts of the United States and other capitalist powers to intervene in Chinese affairs and manipulate Chinese counterrevolutionaries, capitalist-roaders and Right opportunists.

The imperialists and all sorts of reactionaries all over the world, including our Aquinos, Ramoses and Sins, are gloating over this unfortunate development in China, branding this as proof of the failure of Marxism and socialism. They distort, exaggerate, if not outrightly fabricate, news reports that tend to show that socialism is oppressive of the Chinese people and is in turn hated by them. They seek to manipulate both the socio-economic crisis and the outrightly capitalist elements in the economic base and bourgeois liberal influences in the superstructure, as they try to overthrow the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China.

But all these will surely fail. China has been tempered and steeled in the past four decades of socialist revolution and construction, not discounting

the many decades of revolutionary struggle against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism. Historical experience has shown the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people that socialism is the only path to salvation and progress.

It is socialism that has enabled China to rise from the abyss of national shame and indignity, backwardness, poverty and inequality to become the strong, modern and powerful nation that it is today — in the front ranks of the nations of the world in the areas of social equality, industrial growth, agricultural development and all-round social progress. Under the proletarian dictatorship, economic upliftment and socialist democracy become a reality more and more.

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, we extend firm support to the proletarian revolutionaries and the broad masses of the people in China in their struggle to uphold the four cardinal principles of keeping to the socialist road, upholding the people's democratic dictatorship, leadership by the Communist Party, and using Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought as their guiding light.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is confident that the Chinese people and government under the leadership of the Communist Party of China will be able to surmount the present crisis, rectify errors to further strengthen socialism, defeat the counterrevolution, further raise the anti-imperialist vigilance of the Chinese masses, and move forward on the road of socialism under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism.

CPP Central Committee

## Philippines: CPP SELF-CRITICISM

In one of its periodic assessments of its work the Communist Party of the Philippines acknowledged its short-comings and errors but the CPP dismiss as "a mere pipe dream" the Aquino's government "boast" that it can defeat the revolutionary forces by 1992.

Speaking from prison, CPP leader Ocampo said, "Along its growth trail, the CPP has had failures big and small. But I cannot think of any such strategic character as to be considered 'devastating'."

The Central Committee said the "worst" of the party's errors was the "recurrent hysteria" and "deadly panic arising from mere speculation" that has led to the liquidation of alleged government agents in its ranks. There had been lapses in guidelines covering "pre-arrest investigation, determination of prima facie evidence, investigation of the arrested suspected suspect, trial, evaluation of evidence, calibration of penalties and the appeal process."

Other errors noted were:

- \* in the expansion of the CPP there had been a "dearth of theoretical and political training" of members;
- \* "Bureaucratism which dampened the initiative and development of advance mass activities and Party members";
- \* Since the fall of Marcos there has been a damaging "laxity" of party cadres in security, resulting in the arrest of CPP leaders. The Party pointed out the need to "prohibit over-recording and dependence on computer equipment" in the methods of keeping information. [There were seizures by government forces of CPP documents contained on computer disc last year];
- \* "There has been a tendency to hasten the formulation of larger units, companies and even battalions, without sufficient consideration of logistics, reserves and mass support." These units have absorbed the "best cadres and most resources at the expense of mass work in the localities." These enlarged units "can be rendered passive, highly visible and vulnerable to the superior military forces of the enemy."
- \* There is an uneven distribution of cadre with too few in rural area, and in view of the series of arrests, it said the "urban basing and style of work" of CPP members on the wanted list were "under serious study and action is being undertaken to ensure security." It concedes that it would maintain a low level profile in urban-centred politics
- \* There is a "sectarian tendency" in the National Democratic Front with alliance building being concentrated on the intelligensia class when there is an "acute need for educated cadres who can be assigned to work among the toiling masses, the people's army and in spheres requiring professional and technical competence."

Conditions for the revolutionary forces advance, and eventual victory, remains "exceedingly favourable" said the CPP. The Aquino administration was "incapable of solving the fundamental problems of the people...it had failed to cleanse the country of the stench of corruption and bloody crimes of the previous regime, but is surpassing it in corruption and human rights violation."

TURKEY : Talk given by London-based Supporters of the SOCIALIST PARTY

The roots of the SOCIALIST PARTY are in the Turkish Marxist-Leninist movement through past membership of the TIKP - Workers & Peasant Party of Turkey. With the military coup in September 1980, the Workers & Peasant Party of Turkey implemented a strategic retreat. The leadership of the TIKP was divided into a clandestine section while the most publically known defended the Party in the courts.

There developed an ideological two-line struggle within the organization in response to the coup. It centred on whether it was right to discuss the merits and failings of marxism or simply to defend it in the face of bourgeois hostility. There was an unwillingness to address the issue of stalinism from those organised illegally.

In the mid-1980s there was open discussion on the issue. There were wide discussion with a call to the Turkish Left to debate the road ahead. There were many intellectual discussions but when it came to organising in a party, they were against organising, against proletarian dictatorship. It is noticable that other Left forces are organised in the student movement but not the workers movement.

Those militants who were to form the Socialist Party argued that the legal way of an active and accessible party organisation was favoured by the workers and peasants.

The United Socialist Party Organising Committee set up to accomplish this task comprised 80% of former TIKP members. Thus when the SOCIALIST PARTY was formed in 1988 it had an overwhelming worker/kurdish based membership. The party approach could be summed up as : " The legal way, defend yourselves - attack ! " . Today the ruling class wants the Socialist Party to revert to an underground existence. But this is being resisted, and party militants are using whatever democratic space there is to continue an open struggle. The Socialist Party plans to participate in any elections and is organised in 50 cities, 350 towns and thousands of villages throughout Turkey.

There are three main forces on the Left: the PKK who are waging an armed struggle on the basis of Kurdish nationalism; the Socialist Party, and the United Communist Party of Turkey (UCPT) - they are pro-Gorbachev, have declined from having a worker basis to that of intellectuals, and receive promotion in the Turkish bourgeois media, they promote membership of the European Community

Socialist Party sympathiers have been active in the publication of "Towards 2000" which has been subject to constant government repression, especially when it reports on the struggle of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). There has been an increase in attacks on Left publishers with government threats to close down publishers of unacceptable material.

[Articles on "Towards 2000" / 2000e Dogru can be found in International Review No.6]

The Socialist Party is resisting the move to a clandestine existence, as the progressive forces in Kurdistan regions have been forced to adopt, because the dynamics of the class and national struggles provides the opportunity for the Socialist Party to be seen fight at the front. The Party slogan is : " Where there is oppression, we are organising !"

The party understands the strategy of the ruling class to be an adaption of the Kissinger Programme that saw the Shah of Iran try to hold the lid on society and then implement some reforms. They place some significance on the roundtable talks held on May 28 between representatives of the civilian and military bourgeois camp.

The Socialist Party identified the sharpening contradictions within Turkish society as comprising the rising national question of Kurdistan, the deepening economic crisis reflected in mass actions by workers and peasants and the women's struggle against feudalism in Turkish society.

**KURDISTAN :** the Socialist Party has a membership that unites Turkish and Kurdish revolutionaries, gives full support to the PKK and has active members within it. They favour a federal solution to the national question.

**WORKERS:** the Socialist Party faces problems of semi-feudal life, division by nationality and Islamic influence in building influence in the trade unions. It is engaged in factory organizing under existing unions. There is a rising struggle waged by workers. One million workers stopped work for this year's May Day. In the capital, a joint union organising committee was established by 8 unions, influenced by Socialist Party supporters. The party is actively engaged in preparations for a workers' committee to organize a general strike in 1991.

**WOMEN:** the Socialist Party supports independent women associations in Turkey. It had discussion with feminists in Turkey but while some joined the party , others were anti-organising. The Party stands against feudal ideas.

Today the membership of the Socialist Party has grown from 150 members to over 10,000. Old members of the TIKP make up only 20% of the membership. The fast growth of the party has caused problems of consolidation. There is a deficiency in cadre as organisers. Party schools are being established to solve this problem. In the 1970s there were many intellectuals/professors in the movement. Today the membership is overwhelmingly worker and peasant and intellectuals are rare.

Briefly, the stand of the Socialist Party is that there can be no revolution without Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. With regard to China, they have had misgivings since the late 1970s and support the line of the Cultural Revolution believing that a lot of things are wrong but that education of the Cultural Revolution can still be brought to bear. On the Soviet Union, they see the Gorbachev reforms as principally aimed at the resolution of internal problems, and they characterise it as a second-rate imperialist power. The Party is against joining a united capitalist Europe as represented by the 1992 Single Market.

[notes from meeting of May 25th 1990]

## COMMENTARY: MAY DAY IN BRUSSELS

The 1990 May day celebrations organised by the *Parti du Travail de Belgique* [PTB] was a highly impressive events and morale boosting experience, particularly against the background of the collapse of socialism in the Soviet bloc and the global counter-offensive by the imperialist bourgeoisie.

This May Day rally irrevocably destroyed the notion which has gained some currency in some sections that socialism is dead !

### INTERNATIONALIST GATHERING

Participations came from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. I had the opportunity of having, albeit brief, contact and discussion. Of crucial interest was the opinion of the Peruvian comrades on the question of Sendero Luminoso in that country's revolutionary process.

The Peruvian comrade took the view that Sendero took a very sectarian approach. They resorted to killing people who could be won over or politically neutralised. Some of the comrade's own party members had been killed by Sendero militants but they had refrained from launching a counter-attack. He was firmly of the opinion that most Sendero members were genuine revolutionaries but had been misled by the leadership. In the future, they hoped they could have a closer relationship but only after Sendero had abandoned its sectarian political approach.

The culmination of the celebration was a rally with some 2000-strong audience to hear the main speakers - progressive writer Martha Haneker, Jose Maria Sisson and PTB leader Ludo Marten - relate their position *vis-a-vis* the dynamics of global events.

There were many debates taking place beside that in the main hall. Although the main theme was SOCIALISM, there were other important themes: on the media and its role; the Palestinian Question; on racism. [The latter I went into but had to leave because of the absence of any translation].

### IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY

Throughout the day there were thousands of people listening or attending the various debates, or inspecting the impressive displays and stalls that filled the exhibition hall - some 50 metres in length and the same in width.

I came away from the May Day event convinced that what the PTB had achieved we can do likewise. Britain is no way unique from the rest of Europe in particular or from the world in general. The ML forces in this country have a very big responsibility to transform this unhealthy situation. Furthermore, May Day in Brussels has reinforced my confidence in marxism-leninism and proletarian internationalism.

### DM May 1990

ON SOCIALISM : main session of May Day Celebration \* Notes that follow are, because of translation difficulties etc., a rough indication of the main contributions at the May Day rally. As they have not be checked against original text, as accurate representation, they should not be publically quoted.

Jose Maria Sisson

The collapse of socialism is too a sweeping statement. Events as they have unfolded in Eastern Europe have casted doubts on socialism. Turmoil and crisis led to the overthrow of the ruling parties in Soviet Bloc. Capitalism is seen in former socialist countries as a salvation.

In Eastern Europe the liquidation of the revisionist parties, largely marginalised or destroyed. The transnational corporations began the process of buying up industries. Events as they unfolded led to conclusion that socialism is defeated and capitalism is winning. That is sheer propaganda.

Socialism was born out of the capitalist crisis of over production. Subsequently there was steady progress towards socialism, although the advancement of socialism did not manifest itself in a straight line. Before the Bolshevik Revolution the opportunism of the 2nd International was in the ascendancy. The collapse of the 2nd International and the outbreak of WW1 was a prelude to the Bolshevik Revolution and its subsequent victory. In Western Europe before WW2 fascism destroyed the Socialist parties of Germany. This was followed by war against the Soviet Union: the outcome was several socialist countries in Europe and Asia.

The present era similar to that of the collapse of the 2nd International. Socialism is facing a zig-zag course. Series of capitalist crisis of overproduction dating from the late 60s even before the Scientific Revolution in the West in the 1970s. The Big 7 of OECD attempted to find a way out of crisis. This led to lending of finance to the Third World to purchase goods, funds for infrastructure, knowing full well the inability to repay the capital loaned. Clearly the capitalist world would not allow the emergence of NEW capitalist states which would mean competition with the West.

Note the lengthening of credit for the Third World but not for China: they found important recruit in China for financial capital; Teng has done more for international capital than Khrushchev. Khrushchev's USSR praised New Economic Policy to cure war communism. The problem is bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is one thing, bureaucratism is another.

You cannot argue against concentration and centralisation regarding industrialisation if socialism is going to advance. A country with low technology and economic development requires a high degree of concentration. Stalin was a socialist without whom there would be no socialism. What is worse is to have bureaucratic socialism. It is wrong to equate bureaucracy with Stalin or socialism. Khrushchev encouraged emergence of a rich peasant class.

Production for use - important thing. Managers in industry are given higher powers. Economic managers are laying off workers to increase bonus. Brezhnev was not a neo-Stalinist. He was a revisionist. The Soviet working class subjected to a double squeeze. Misallocation of resource (re: military build-up).

Gorbachev copied somethings from Yugoslavia. The reformist is pushing reforms in agriculture and other areas. Some 70% of price related goods deregulated. Gorbachev attempting to incorporate "hidden economy" into co-operative: the continuous charges of corruption are diversionary tactics. .

## Martha Haneker

Gorbachev represents a balanced position between progressive and reactionary forces. Bureacrats are people who defend their privileges either of the party or the state: popular forces must impose their will. Prefer to use concept such as *popular democracy* instead of Dictatorship of the Proletariat - the masses must participate in the revolution. You cannot continue to blame everything on the enemy; you can use the enemy to continue with the wrong mistakes: socialists and communists make mistakes.

The parties who talk of the dictatorship of the proletariat are the small parties. They donot have the responsibility of government. People who take the flag of democracy to denounce imperialism and the bourgeoisie - they are advancing the revolution.

In Latin America, dictatorship is associated with militarism and military juntas. They prefer to use popular democracy. Stalin and the Communist Internation have bad associations for us, and for China. Mao had to fight against Stalin's interventions. Latin American parties copied what Stalin said. Their policies were detached from the masses.

Cuba signed important agreement with USSR. Contrary to what many people thought, it was advantageous to Cuba.

## Ludo Martens

Provided historical analysis to the unfolding events in Eastern Europe beginning in 1950s saw emergence of revisionism. Comrades spent many years analysising the phenomenon : collapse of socialism in Eastern europe and USSR. It was not a simple occurance, very complex developments, therefore important in finding out the root of its demise.

Current leadership (and Khrushchev) attacks Stalin, claiming they could do better. The PTB was in agreement for sometime with critics of Stalin.

Imperialism supporting revisionism in socialist countries. Simultaneously undertaking low intensity conflict and killing many people in the Third World. Imperialism lauches psychological attacks on revolutionary parties world wide in many different forms. Attacks by imperialism more vicious than ever. The development of technology gives imperialism an advantage.

Socialist countries continue in to exist in the east. Some countries are no longer socialist. Those who promote the linkage between socialism and financial capital is now removed from power. Solidarity government using neo-liberal economic language, strong possibility of using religion to push facism against ML forces.

He stressed the importance of maintaining the dictatorship of the proletariat. The party and cadre must be deeply intergrated with the masses. Democracy must align to class struggle as means of forstalling the machinations of imperialism and their agents inside the proletarian parties.

# Maoists emerge from woodwork

THE FIVE men, each wearing a frayed blue Mao suit and a hound-dog expression, had a familiar story to tell. They were intellectuals, they said, shambling nervously into my hotel room, and had suffered for their views. They had been mocked, scorned and humiliated. Magazines had shunned their articles, publishers their books.

But, they went on, things were suddenly looking up. Their years in the wilderness seemed over — bizarre remarks at a time when most Chinese writers and scholars are diving for cover. However, for these five, and many more like them in Mao Tse-tung's home province of Hunan, China's recent retreat into ideological obscurantism has stirred not fear but hope. Finally they can come out of the closet. Their creed, Maoism, is back in fashion.

"For years we were cold-shouldered, laughed at and attacked," complained Lu Kuihong, the vice-president of the Hunan Society for the Study of Mao Tse-tung Thought and deputy head of the Hunan Academy of Social Sciences. "No one paid us any attention. No one would welcome us." And if Maoism was treated so shabbily in Mao's own home, Mr Lu wondered aloud, imagine how much worse the situation must have been elsewhere.

Things got so bad, he says, that not even the Hunan People's Publishing House would agree to print a book he had edited, called *Develop and Uphold the Thought of Mao Tse-tung*. "They said I should change the title because no one would ever buy a book with Mao's name on the cover," Mr Lu said. The publishers suggested he call the work simply *Develop and Uphold* in the hope that readers might think it was about business and economics.

A fellow member of the Mao Tse-tung Thought Society, Mao Kuangsheng, chips in with another example of "persecution" under the old and now discredited order of Zhao Ziyang, the liberal Communist Party leader ousted last June. "We used to discuss how things were going wrong privately but could never publish our views . . . It was a difficult time," says Mr Mao, who has a particular duty to preserve doctrinal purity as deputy head of Hunan's Party School, an ideological seminary for local cadres.

Such humiliation, they hope, is now behind them. They make no attempt to disguise their joy at the fall of Zhao Ziyang, whose halting attempts at political as well as economic reform had put them out to pasture. "Everything is a lot better since he left," says Mr Lu.

Hunan's Maoists and probably millions more like them across China are the winners of last year's political turmoil and form a bedrock of support for the hardline leadership in Peking. It is a diverse but powerful constituency, ranging from genuine Maoist faithful to the brazenly opportunistic; from embittered veteran revolutionaries to ambitious novice cadres. Whether motivated by self-interest or lingering idealism, all share a common commitment to the past, the years when Mao's, the party's and thus their own authority and prestige went unchallenged.

But what is "Mao Tse-tung Thought?" After 40 years of "study", the answer is still elusive. Mao, though dead and encased in a crystal sarcophagus for 14 years, is still a moving target. Even the Hunan experts stumble when asked to explain. "It is the crystallisation of Marxism-Leninism with Chinese characteristics." Chinese characteristics? Their faces go blank. Loyal party members all, they cleave to the official line that economic reform must continue in tandem with political reaction. They insist that Mao's Thought has nothing to do with what everyone thought was his thought

## The Great Helmsman's ideals are back in fashion following Peking's crackdown, Andrew Higgins writes from Changsha

while he was alive, when he proclaimed "class struggle" as the "key link" and "perpetual revolution" as the answer to all China's problems.

Rhetoric aside, their commitment to reform is less than convincing. Many officials in Hunan are clearly upset not only with the political liberalisation pursued by Mr Zhao, but also with the entire policy of market-oriented change. "The market will not work. It's too chaotic," says Weng Hui, deputy secretary of the provincial government. "People want stability, not chaos."

For Hunan's Maoists, last year's political crisis, which brought rioting to their own doorstep, was a godsend — a vindication of their unfashionable views and proof that the party had strayed too far from its true path.

Indeed, there are some signs of a Maoist revival among ordinary people. But it is a revival based on nostalgia rather than conviction, and one that could prove no less threatening to the party than the reformist impulses of Mr Zhao. Of the few people who do wear Mao buttons, many are students, who look to Mao out of despair with the present leadership, not because they share his vision of communism.

In Shaoshan, Mao's home village, northwest of Changsha, local officials speak proudly of a sudden influx of pilgrims to the holiest of China's revolutionary shrines. This is proof, they say, of popular support for traditional communist values. In reality, nearly all come on tours paid for and organised by the party. Rare are those who are willing to spend their own time and money to make the pilgrimage. When a Chinese television crew arrived recently hoping to film evidence of popular devotion to Mao, they had a problem: there was no one around. Mao's Memorial Museum was deserted and Mao's boyhood home was empty apart from the occasional bored straggler. But propaganda has never been disturbed by reality — they had brought along a team of amateur actors to fill the empty rooms.

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SIMON LONG

This reappearance of some of the features of Maoism is a desperate effort to find ideological weapons to fight the onslaught of "bourgeois liberalisation", the aping of western ideas of individual freedom. Few people, in Peking at least, take it seriously. But there is also a revival of interest in Mao himself. New biographies of the great man sell well, as does a newly published *Dictionary of Mao Tse Tung Thought*.

The authorities claim huge increases in the numbers visiting China's Bethlehem, Mao's home town of Shaoshan in Hunan province. In fact, there do not seem to be many more pilgrims than last year. There is no real return to the old personality cult; more a resurgence of intellectual interest. Mao's grandson, a chubby 20-year-old student in Peking, draws enthusiastic campus audiences for fireside anecdotes of childhood encounters at his grandfather's knee.

But students' interest is not entirely of the sort welcomed by the authorities. Deeply disillusioned with current leaders, despairing of the vague democratic yearnings behind last year's student protests, some are re-evaluating their ideological heritage. They are looking for a hero. The university "study groups" discussing Mao are more a form of concealed dissidence than a sign of a return to Marxist basics.

It was workers, last year, who waved portraits of Mao during demonstrations. He was a symbol not of Marxism, but of incorruptibility. Mao may have been, indirectly, a mass murderer, but nobody has ever accused him of being on the take. Some students see Mao as basically honest, and, by comparison with China's current leaders, a historical giant.

Scouring the history books for analogies for China's current international isolation, Chinese theoreticians have come up with two answers. One is the early 1900s, when Lenin, in a minority after the Second International, denied that Marxism was "out-dated", and triumphed in the end. The other is the 1930s when Mao led a dwindling Red Army on the Long March to eventual victory in the revolution.

They are, for a beleaguered, unpopular leadership, comforting recollections. But in assisting the popular revival of Maoism, China's leaders are wielding a double-edged sword, which may hurt them as much as it does their opponents.

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