

International VIEWPOINT

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INSIDE:

East Germany

Millions demand an
end to Stalinism

plus

Opposition groups
emerge

Ireland

British frame-ups
begin to unravel after
Guildford 4 release

Czechoslovakia

A bastion against
glasnost? — Interview
with *Petr Uhl*

Brazil

Workers' Party
programme for
Presidential elections

Italy

Communist Party —
model or exception?
An analysis by *Livio
Maitan*

Soviet Union

The new thinking on
religion

plus

Divide and rule in
Lithuania

Cuba: The Meaning of the Ochoa case



Contents:

EAST GERMANY 3

THE PERSPECTIVES created by the East German mass demonstrations — *International Viewpoint*.

PLUS

THE MUSHROOMING opposition movements — *Hans-Jürgen Schulz* describes the political alternatives to the Communist Party that are arising.

IRELAND 4

THE UNRAVELLING of frameups of Irish people in Britain has dealt the British repressive system and its Dublin allies a severe blow — *John Meehan* describes the impact of the release of the Guildford Four and the prospects it opens up.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA 8

AFTER the mass upsurge in

East Germany, this country remains one of the last major bastions of rigid Stalinism. Is the Communist Party really impervious to winds of change coming from Moscow? *Petr Uhl* analyzes the strains in the Czechoslovak CP.

CUBA 10

WHAT the executions and purges have revealed about the problems of the Castro regime. "The most serious crisis that the Cuban leadership has yet experienced." — *Janette Habel*.

BRAZIL 15

IN THE RUNUP to the presidential elections, the Workers' Party defines its Governmental Action Program for using the executive branch to open the way for socialist transformation — *Juarez*.

ITALY 18

THE ITALIAN CP has been the leading party of Eurocommunism. What

has Gorbachev's liberal turn meant for it? What role can it play now in the "crisis of Communism"? — *Livio Maitan*.

USSR 20

OUSTED president of Council for Religious affairs explains the problems created by denying freedom of religion.

PLUS

DIVIDE AND RULE in Lithuania. Moscow's manipulation of the Polish minority against Sajudis, and the attitude of Solidarnosc — *Zbigniew Kowalewski*.

Around The World 26

- USSR ● Albania
- Bulgaria ● Sri Lanka

Obituary: Ken Shilman 27

PORTUGAL 28

TROTSKYIST militant murdered by fascist thugs.

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Millions demand an end to Stalinism

EVERYWHERE, the demands have been the same. The demonstrators are demanding democratic freedoms and full and unfettered sovereignty in the framework of the social and economic order that exists in the country.

In other words, they are declaring themselves for a democratic, social and self-managed GDR. Without any reservations or reticence whatever, we support this orientation that the masses themselves have chosen. They are demanding the end of the monopoly of power by the SED [Communist Party]; the end of all the police repression that underpins the dictatorship. They are demanding the right to demonstrate, freedom of association and of the press, as well as the right to strike.

Masses act without bureaucratic authorization

They are demanding cultural and political pluralism, a multi-party system, fair access for all associations and parties to the media. They have moreover begun themselves to create such associations and parties, without waiting for authorization from the bureaucracy.

The masses in struggle are demanding free elections with universal suffrage for the parliament, the regional councils and the municipalities; the elimination of all restrictions on the freedom of people to go abroad; and an end to the bureaucracy's material privileges. They are fighting for just objectives, with a dignity and political sense, with a unity that has commanded the respect of all, just as the demonstrators in Tiananmen square in Beijing did.

Facing this explosion of popular will, the bureaucracy is at bay, and rocked also by a wave of opposition within the SED. It has begun to retreat. Honecker has been sacrificed. The demonstrations are no longer being repressed. The media are a bit more open.

However, everyone realizes that with or without Krenz, this is only a start of a transition. It cannot last long. Bureaucratic dictator-

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, hundreds of thousands of citizens of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) have come into the streets. In East Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Plauen, Scherlin, Halle, Madgeburg, Stralsund and Zwickau, the great majority of the population, and thus the working class, have participated in this impressive mass upsurge. This mobilization has been nonviolent. It is nonetheless beginning to look like the start of a real political revolution.

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

ship and a mass movement of such scope and dynamism are incompatible.

Today, a reform faction of the bureaucracy is emerging. It is trying to channel the growing mass movement. So far, it has had hardly any real impact. Could another faction halt the movement by violent repression, as happened in China? In view of the relationship of social forces in the GDR and its geographical position, this would, in any case, be far more difficult than in Beijing.

It is, therefore, the mass movement's own dynamic that for the moment is determining the course of events. It remains full of promise. Today, the main weakness of the East German movement lies in the lack of self-organization of the masses and of an organized vanguard

openly working for democratic and self-managed socialism. In the immediate future, it is necessary to concentrate on overcoming this deficiency. The revolutionary Marxists must forge an organization of their own that will operate in a collaborative and loyal way within such groupings.

The peaceful uprising in the GDR is a response to the crisis, to the total political impasse, to the desperate lack of perspectives (especially for young people) inflicted by an inept, geriatric and ossified bureaucracy. The lack of freedom exasperates everyone. A working class, an intelligentsia and a youth among the best educated in the world, with the oldest and firmest socialist tradition, finds itself subjected to unremitting tutelage in every area of their lives.

Attraction of higher living standards

For a section of the population, revolt first took the form of flight to West Germany. The attraction of a higher standard of living has obviously been a factor. But the main motivation of these refugees has rather been a quest for greater liberty. The great majority of the young people, the workers and the intellectuals have not, however, chosen this road. To the accompaniment of "The Internationale," hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, ten times more numerous than the refugees, have been shouting: "We are not leaving.

We are staying here. This is our country. We have built it with our labor. We are the country."

They want to win democracy and freedom in the GDR itself and not somewhere else.

All revolutionaries, workers' organizations, all workers in Germany, Europe and the world, must express their full solidarity with the demonstrators in East Germany.

To counter any threat of repression and interference, by the Kremlin, West Germany or the European Community, it is necessary to defend the sovereignty of the masses of the GDR, and their right to decide their



fate freely.

With near unanimity, all working-class organizations, as well as the Greens, in West Germany have taken such an attitude, and opposed any questioning of the East German frontiers. In the present conditions, such an attitude would involve in practice the absorption of the GDR by imperialist West Germany and the Europe of the trusts.

This is the first time since 1920 that the German working class has appeared on the European political scene in this way, with its united power, with class independence and an anticapitalist potential, even if it lacks clear views about where these positions lead. This stance by the workers' movement and all the West German far left, in accordance with that of the masses in the GDR themselves, is in full conformity with the class interests of the proletariat. The workers of the GDR today have a chance to change the situation radically in their favor, much more radically than those in West Germany. What is on the agenda in the immediate future is the overthrow of the East German bureaucracy.

For a democratic socialist East Germany

A democratic socialist East Germany could become a lever for a socialist Germany and a socialist Europe. A democratic socialist East Germany would become a powerful pole of attraction for the working class, for the youth, for the environmentalist and peace movements in Poland and Hungary, throughout East and West Europe, and even in the USSR itself, if the East German workers won freedom, democracy and political sovereignty; if they established self-management in their enterprises; if they generalized the functioning of organs of direct democracy; if they set up workers' and people's inspection that assured real protection of the environment; if they immediately introduced a 35-hour workweek.

Then, an immense hope would arise throughout the world. Then, there would be an attractive socialist model that offered an alternative to the joint failure of Stalinist despotism and of the social democrats trying to manage the capitalist crisis. Then, all this commotion about the "end of communism" and the "end of socialism" would evaporate overnight.

This is still only a hope. It is still only one possibility among many others. But this Monday, October 30, 300,000 persons came out again into the streets in Leipzig. In Schwerin, a city of 100,000 inhabitants, 80,000 people demonstrated in the evening.

On Saturday, November 5, a million people are expected to demonstrate in Berlin. The chance for a victory in East Germany has to be seized and a decisive defeat dealt to the bureaucracy and to imperialism. ★

Political platform of New Forum

WE PUBLISH below the political platform of New Forum one of the main opposition groups in East Germany
DOCUMENT

IN OUR country, communication between the state and society has now clearly broken down. This is proved by the fact that, while some retreat into private life, others leave the country en masse. Elsewhere, migrations on this scale are caused by need, hunger and violence. This is not the case in the DDR (East Germany). The breakdown in communications paralyzes the creative forces of our society and prevents the solution of both national and local problems. We do nothing at a time when we could be doing things of great importance for our life, our country and for humanity.

Different parts of society isolated

In the state and the economy, the balance of interests between social groups and layers is not adequately maintained. The different parts of society have ceased to talk to each other. In private circles, people put their point of view quite easily and propose what should be done.

But there are very different desires and aspirations and there is hardly any possibility to compare and verify their viability. On the one hand, we want an improvement in services and an increase in our consumption of goods, on the other, we recognize the social and ecological consequences that this implies and demand the establishment of limits to economic growth.

We want more space for economic initiative, but we reject a decline towards a marginal society. We want to retain the social gains make space for the renovation of society, in the framework of a development that is less hostile to nature.

We want rational social relations, but not a society under tutelage. We want to create free men and women, forming an aware community. We want to free ourselves from violence and not to live in a state composed of

toadies and hierarchies. The idlers and incompetents must get out, but we do not want to punish the weak and destitute in our society. We want real social justice of which nobody can take advantage at the expense of others. We want to develop exports and be a part of the world market, but not by becoming debtors and subjects of the most industrialized countries, nor by becoming the creditors and exploiters of the economically weakest countries.

Democratic dialogue necessary

To take account of all these contradictions, to listen to and discuss different opinions and arguments, and to distinguish general from particular interests it is necessary to develop a *democratic dialogue* on the tasks of a State of Laws, on the economy and on culture. We must discuss and reflect together in all these questions in an open manner *throughout the country*. This is the indispensable condition for finding a solution to the present crisis. Today, social development is marked by the fact that a large number of people are participating in the process of social reform and by the fact that the multiple activities of groups and individuals lead to common initiatives.

As a consequence, we are working out a common political platform for the whole of the DDR, that will allow citizens — whatever their profession or association or party affiliation to take part in this debate on the major problems of our country. To develop such an initiative, we have chosen the name New Forum.

New Forum's activities rest on social bases. We base ourselves on article 29 of the DDR's constitution which gives us the possibility to defend our political interests. We demand our legalization on the basis of the law of November 6, 1975 on "the foundation and activity of associations." All the demands raised by New Forum have their roots in the aspirations for justice, democracy, liberty and the desire to defend and preserve nature.

This aspiration and these desires inspires our social action. We call on all the citizens of the DDR who wish to change society to become members of New Forum. The time is ripe. ★

Opposition groups emerge as mass upsurge deepens

On the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic [DDR], October 7, there was a historic turn. It is true that over 100,000 members of the Free German Youth (the CP youth organization) marched past the party leadership once again. But on the same evening, according to the CP organ *Neues Deutschland*, "hooligans in cahoots with the Western media...formed a mob." This demonstration was brutally broken up. But in the following days, 150,000 people came onto the streets to protest. In the week after October 15, at least 400,000 were involved and in the following one well over 500,000. The spontaneous mobilization swept the country. This has changed the situation, even though the state apparatus has not really been shaken. Nonetheless, small groups of police have refused to attack demonstrators and been arrested.

In such a situation, it has become clear how isolated the bureaucracy really is. There have been no demonstrations in its support. It might like to stage a brutal crackdown like the one in China against the democratic movement (in fact, it solidarized with the actions of the Deng leadership). But it is politically unable to do so. If it did *perestroika* in the Soviet Union would lose its credibility throughout the world. And the DDR cannot exist without the political support of the Soviet Union. When police clubbing and mass arrests could no longer hold back the wave of protests, the tactic was changed.

Regime adopts stalling tactic and makes promises

All demonstrations are being tolerated, even if the central organ of the Communist Party continues to talk about agitators and thugs. What everyone knows already is even being reported openly in the media. The regime is trying to channel the demonstrations with a stalling tactic of vague promises and avowals of readiness to talk. Trips abroad are going to be permitted. There are going to be more consumer goods. And political prisoners (4,000 of whom are people who tried to "flee the country") are going to be amnestied.

The previously unapproachable state power is being opened up to dialogue with the citizens, although this remains strictly

THE RULE of the bureaucracy in the countries of "actually existing socialism" rests on two pillars — the power of the state apparatus and the passivity of the masses imposed by intimidation or terror. The mighty demonstrations of the past weeks have overturned one of these pillars. Hundreds of thousands of people have overcome their fear.

HANS-JÜRGEN SCHULZ

controlled. Hundreds of thousands of people have come to public forums at which leading politicians have accepted critical questions. Police officers have apologized publicly for attacking innocent people. All of this is intended to create the impression of a political liberalization.

However, it has not worked. The possibility of a political radicalization may have been staved off so far. But more and more people are becoming active. The November 4 demonstration in Berlin was a new highpoint. The rulers thus face a grave decision.

They have already reorganized themselves. On October 18 the venerable 77-year-old General Secretary Erich Honecker and two other Politburo members (Mittag and Hermann, responsible for economic problems and propaganda) were removed for "reasons of health", to be followed soon after by the president of the trade unions and the culture minister. They will not be the last to go.

Krenz responsible for general repression

Egon Krenz became leader. He had previously been the Politburo member in charge of defence and security with special responsibility for general repression. His appointment is thus hardly a clear signal that reforms are on the way.

In his inaugural speech he avoided any clear statement. It sounded like mockery when he said that the SED had already "placed itself at the head of the movement for a qualitative social change." The demonstrators see Krenz as the personification of the hated system, and he has been openly attacked. There are, however, forces in the SED fighting for a German *perestroika*. The regional secretary of Dresden, Modrow has explicitly

stated: "what has now started in the DDR will set off a revolutionary transformation." The Presidium of the writers' union spoke in a similar tone: "stagnation is a growing danger to what has been achieved."

The situation requires a decision. The SED Central Committee is meeting on November 8. Apparently concrete reforms are promised. Whether they really happen, and how far-reaching they are, depends not on the SED but on the strength and combativity of the

opposition.

The 1919 programme of the Bolsheviks stated that the bourgeois state only guarantees political rights in a formal sense. The workers are not able to make real use of these rights because their economic dependency and the way the system works prevent them. Only socialist democracy could make these rights real. The fact is, however, that the workers in the DDR would see even a formal guarantee of bourgeois rights as a step forward. So far their demands have been restricted to this, the ending of the SED's monopoly of political power and the release of political prisoners. All the demonstrations have been peaceful. There has been no pretext for massive repression.

For the first time, the movement has affected the factories.

Independent trade union founded in Berlin

There have been small and short-lived strikes and in one Berlin plant an independent trade union "Reform" has been founded. It has called for democratic rights, economic reforms along Soviet lines, an end to privileges, workers' participation and the right to strike. For the time being it is more of an idea than a reality; only some hundreds of employees have so far adhered to it. Nonetheless, it has set an example.

The mobilizations have created a political space for the establishment of opposition groups. The "New Forum", that raises general democratic demands and demands a dialogue with the authorities, is the most important formation. Formally it had already gained more than 100,000 signatures by the end of October and thus become a mass organization. The scarcely 100 original activists were overwhelmed,

especially since they lack all the basic means such as printing equipment. Even so, councils of representatives have been set up centrally and regionally in every district. Shortly a daily paper is to appear. This would break the party's media monopoly. The "New Forum" is a composite movement without a programme. Bärbel Bohley, one of its leaders, has explicitly claimed this as an advantage. It calls for dialogue with the authorities and hopes for a non-violent, if not more or less conflict-free reform. In this it expresses the hopes of the great majority.

But other groups have emerged from the shadows. The "Democratic Breakthrough" has a socialist orientation and claimed 6,000 members at its meeting on October 29, when some 200 delegates elected a coordinating committee with Wolfgang Schnur as its president. The Social Democratic Party and the locally organized "Democracy Now", which also has a socialist orientation, have some 1,000 members each. The "United Left" may have a similar number of members. The latter is the most radical grouping with the clearest programme [the Bohlen Appeal— see IV 172] It will become public at the end of November. So far it has maintained its largely conspiratorial structure.

The next task for these groups is to find a way of organizing their massive potential support and to build a structure at every level. This would break the SED's political monopoly. It would also ensure that, in the event of the wave of demonstrations dying down, a force would continue to exist that could not be simply smashed.

West German left unable to meet challenge

The events have taken the West German socialist left — along with everybody else — completely by surprise. In itself that is not a problem. But if these demonstrations had taken place in Paris or Rio they would have been greeted with enthusiastic solidarity. On this occasion, the left has been struck dumb. The BWK (League of West German Communists) openly sided with the East German bureaucracy. This may put an end to the planned fusion with the VSP (United Socialist Party).

All the socialist organizations are now paying the price for their failure to take a clear position on the societies of "actually-existing socialism". Certainly they have criticized some particular aspects of these societies or even the system. But as soon as real opposition develops there, the socialist left suspects capitalist influences and, in the best of cases, adopts a neutral position. In doing this it throws away the possibility of making its positions credible in the eyes of the workers. ★

Four victims of British frame-ups released, but others remain in jail

"JUST consider the course of events if this action is allowed to proceed to trial....If the six men win, it will mean the police were guilty of perjury, that they were guilty of violence and threats, that the confessions were involuntary and were improperly admitted in evidence and that the convictions were erroneous....This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say: It cannot be right that these actions should go any further" — Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, upholding the appeal of the West Midlands police against a civil action taken by the Birmingham 6 in 1980.

JOHN MEEHAN

THE Guildford Four were framed; so were the Birmingham Six; so were the Winchester Three; so was Judith Ward; so was Gilbert MacNamee. There are up to 20 innocent people who have been convicted in Britain in trials with "Irish/terrorist" connections since the early 1970s [see box].

The scandal was becoming so glaring that something had to be done. But as Lord Denning said so brutally — and accurately — to admit the frame-up would risk destroying the power and credibility of the British state. Why then did the releases happen now? Why are there so many similar frame-up cases?

Paul Hill, one of the Four, dismisses the state's explanation. The state knew "from day one" that the Four were innocent. That was the whole idea: jailing innocent people is an extremely effective way of terrorizing others. The message was: Irish = suspect. It didn't matter if you were not involved.

Once people see the cloak of state terror coming apart at the seams, then everything changes. The stakes in this and related cases are very high. They strike at the heart of the British state apparatus. Consider some of the cast in this frame-up alone (other "stars" appear later in similar show trials).

● **Lord Donaldson**, in 1974 the High Court Trial Judge. Now Lord, Master of the Rolls, Britain's senior judicial officer.

● **Lord Roskill**, who heard the appeal in 1977. Now Baron, a Lord Justice of

Appeal in Britain's highest court, the House of Lords.

● **Lord Havers**, who was the Prosecution Counsel. Thatcher's Attorney-General 1979-1987, created a 'Life Peer' for his "services" to the government.

● **Peter Imbert**, headed the police who surrounded an IRA unit in Balcombe Street, London in 1975. Imbert was present when this IRA unit claimed responsibility for the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings, giving detailed forensic information that could only have been known to the real bombers. Imbert pressed no charges. He is now Britain's top-ranking police officer, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police in London.

Are any of these illustrious people to be investigated? No — an "enquiry" headed by a retired judge, John May, has been set up, and five junior-rank Surrey police (one dead, one retired five years ago) are being scapegoated. This approach is designed to limit the damage already suffered by the police. There is a widespread



State frame-ups — the victims

● **The Guildford Four:** Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon, Carol Richardson and Paddy Armstrong were convicted, solely on the basis of uncorroborated confessions, of planting bombs in two pubs in Guildford, Surrey in 1974. The 'confessions' followed days of threats, beatings and — in the case of 17 year old Carol Richardson — the administration of drugs. They contained more than 150 inaccuracies and contradictions.

● **The Maguire Seven:** convicted on the basis of Gerard Conlon's 'confession'. They included Giuseppe Conlon, Gerard's father. Although the last of the Seven was released in 1985, their convictions have not been overturned and they remain uncompensated.

● **The Birmingham Six:** serving life sentences for the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974. Convicted on the basis of confessions which had been beaten out of them and forensic 'evidence' since wholly discredited. Their appeal against their convictions was turned down in January 1988.

● **The Winchester Three:** sentenced to 25 years for 'conspiracy' (see article).

● **Judith Ward:** serving 30 years for allegedly bombing an army coach.

● **Gilbert MacNamee:** convicted in 1987 on extremely dubious fingerprint 'evidence' of conspiracy to cause explosions.

suspicion that one, at least, of the police officers who possessed evidence of the original frame-up was prepared to speak out in favour of the Guildford Four. What better way to prevent any further leakage, and protect the corrupt core, than to ruthlessly pursue those breaking the frame? Anyone familiar with Mafia treatment of former colleagues knows the logic and the pattern.

But the prospects for the State are bleak. The old terror tactics now provoke anger and outrage in Ireland. In 1988 the change in the popular mood in the formally independent 26 County Southern state forced the Dublin government's hand in the celebrated "Father Paddy Ryan" affair. (See IV 168 on Ryan's campaign in the EEC elections; a campaign for Ryan's extradition to Britain, on the vaguest charges of "terrorist crimes", was personally led by Thatcher. The Irish judiciary has now decided that there is insufficient evidence to warrant his prosecution). A contributory cause of this change was the rejection of the Birmingham Six appeal early in 1988. This in turn tended to make people suspicious of the Winchester Three frame-up. The Three had been arrested in the neighbourhood of King's massive estate, and charged with 'conspiracy'. There was no explosion, no ambush, no weapon, no event at all.

An odious feature of this show-trial was the behaviour of the then Northern Ireland Secretary-of-State, Tom King. The Three refused to make any statement while in police custody — a wise approach considering previous experience. They exercised their right to silence during their trial. It should be remembered that they were forced to spend more than a year in very

oppressive prison conditions. Such psychological torture is designed to curtail defendants' ability to conduct themselves well in court. King called a sudden news conference towards the end of the trial to announce that the "right to silence" was to be abolished in the North of Ireland. He said that anyone who exercised it was automatically suspect. A more blatant interference in the course of the trial could not be imagined. The Three — Martina Shenahan, Finbar Cullen, and John McCann — have appealed against 25 year sentences and await a date. This case is another time bomb under "British Justice"; instead of framing people on charges based on real events, the state has shifted the goalposts and alleges a "conspiracy". This avoids the need for physical abuse of suspects.

The released victims of the Guildford Four frame-up have no intention of keeping quiet. Why should they? Paul Hill spent an incredible 5 of his 15 years in jail in solitary confinement. He speaks with remarkable eloquence of his ordeal. No other British prisoner throughout the British prison system has spent so long in solitary. Hill was never given any explanation: "It's Stalinism. You could be taken on the word of absolutely anyone. They don't have to justify their reasons. For the last eight years I refused to work. I was a hostage and I wasn't going to work for my captors."

Gerard Conlon, the first of the Four to meet the public after the

verdict was announced, immediately called for the release of the Birmingham Six. His horror story concerns the death of his father Giuseppe. In a case directly connected with the Guildford Four, the Maguire Seven were also framed. One of them was Giuseppe, who died in prison in 1980. This is how his son Gerard remembers it: "He pulled the (oxygen) mask off and said he was going to die. He said not to worry, he had to die to clear my name. He told me to put my hands in my pockets when he died and not go off my head and attack prison officers who had treated him badly. I promised him. It was a very, very hard thing to do."

Conlon burns with indignation over British ruling class hypocrisy. "Innocent people should not be in prison....Britain does not have the right to speak on human rights. I'm going to dedicate as much time as possible to getting the Birmingham Six out of prison and to getting the Maguires' name cleared....I last saw Paddy Hill (of the Birmingham Six) at 11 a.m. on Tuesday morning when he was helping me push a cart with all my legal papers. I said "I don't know what is happening but if we get out I'll keep every promise I made to you guys."

The British Home Office [Interior Ministry] declared immediately after the Guildford Four were released that there would be no move on the Birmingham Six. It is a grotesque stance. Now that one frame up has collapsed, people have the confidence of a victory behind them — Guildford 4, British Justice 0. The next score will be Birmingham 6, British Justice 0. And then Winchester 3, British Justice 0. Just as in the sporting world, Britannia no longer rules the waves or waives the rules.

Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill and the Irish people have all seen a light at the end of a very dark tunnel. A particularly evil chapter in the annals of British ruling class crime in Ireland is coming to an end. ★



Czechoslovak Communist Party resists glasnost

THE CZECHOSLOVAK Communist Party (CzCP) seems completely impervious to the new impulses coming from Moscow. Last August the forces of law and order dispersed a demonstration on the anniversary of the Warsaw Pact Invasion of 1968 with truncheons. Recently a new wave of repression has been launched against the opposition. Petr Cibulka, known for his independent cultural activities is serving his fourth prison sentence in ten years, while two editors of the independent monthly journal, *Lidové Noviny*, Jiri Ruml and Rudolf Zeman, were arrested on October 12 and charged with anti-state incitement. Hundreds of people were arrested during demonstrations on October 28, the anniversary of the emergence of an independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918.

Some 30 oppositionists are currently serving sentences for political reasons. *International Viewpoint* talked to Petr Uhl, a revolutionary Marxist and a member of Charter 77, and the Committee in Defence of The Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS), in Prague, about the way the CzCP works.

PETR UHL: The first thing to get straight about the Czechoslovak Communist Party is that it is neither a communist party nor, strictly speaking, a political party at all. It is a structure that brings together 1.7 million people in a hierarchy of powers and responsibilities. Most of its members join in order to obtain some small benefits in their daily lives. They are not revolutionary Marxists nor any other kind of Marxist. In Czechoslovakia people do not say "I am a communist", they say "I am a party member".

Of course, some party members, especially those that work in the repressive apparatuses, who have unpopular jobs or who are subject to criticism, adopt Marxist phraseology. They come out with an anti-capitalist line that "in the West things are even worse", and so on, in order to motivate themselves and justify their activities. But this is nothing more than a psychological alibi.

Yesterday I read in *Rudé Právo* [the CP daily] a long interview by comrade Nyers from the Hungarian leadership. He explains the evolution of the Hungarian party after the re-establishment of its power in 1956 and the ideological currents inside it. After Kádár's death, the currents recomposed themselves. I was astonished that *Rudé Právo* published an article that admitted that tendencies existed inside the

Hungarian CP even before Kádár's death.

Here there are no debates in the cells or base organizations apart from about very concrete problems connected to the functioning of the enterprise or productivity. There are no debates about genuinely political questions in the party base organizations.

■ The party is thus a sort of white collar union....

It is a group that defends its own interests. The lack of discussion at the base is connected with the silence that surrounds the debates that one supposes go on at the top — debates that certainly exist. Of course these discussions get through to the middle cadres especially in the regional and district committees. I imagine that political debates also take place amongst the full-time officials.

The most interesting thing is what goes on at the top — in any case Western journalists always ask us about the currents in the party. They envisage contradictions between the party leader, Milos Jakes, and the Prime Minister, Ladislav Adamec. It is clear that after he became general secretary, Jakes and his circle cast off the extremes. On one side Vasil Bilak, who represented the hard dogmatic and conservative wing and on the other, a bit earlier, ex-Prime Minister

Lubomir Strougal. The latter, under the influence of Gorbachev and encouraged by developments in the Soviet Union, had expressed clearly, even publicly, his desire to carry out a very profound economic reform as soon as possible.

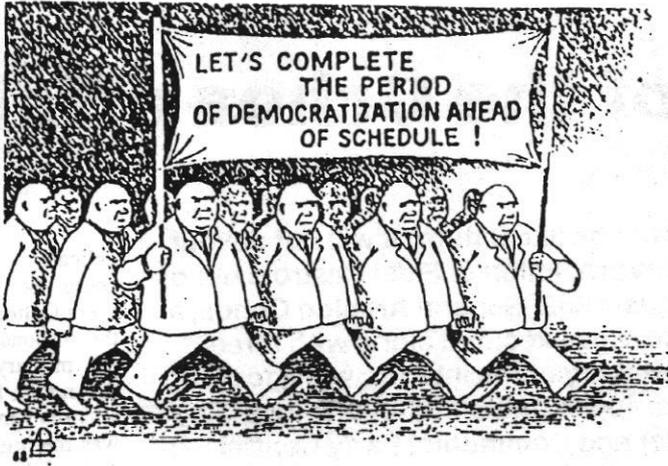
It seems that he was thinking of reforming the administration, not only economically, but also politically, in a way that involved issues of rights, freedoms, and cultural and social life. He was sacked and replaced by Adamec who continues Strougal's line but in a much more timid way. Adamec is careful. He avoids getting directly implicated in repression and does not explicitly support it, while trying to find excuses.

After casting off the extremes — not only Bilak and Strougal, but others as well — the current leadership seems united or reunited, although tensions continue to exist. Some want the reforms to go faster, while others warn of the dangers represented by a new Prague Spring. There are also purely personal tensions. It seems that Stepan wants to replace Jakes and is trying to compromise him in one way or another.

Unlike Poland or even Hungary and the Soviet Union, the CzCP — its leadership, its apparatus and its base — appears to be intact and capable of reacting and "managing" (that is dominating) the society. It retains the services of all the traditional transmission belts — the unions, youth organizations, women's organizations, other political parties and even a large part of the Catholic hierarchy, priests, journalists and so on. The whole hierarchical and bureaucratized system has functioned quite well up until now. But this is at odds with growing awareness among ordinary people, including active (in a critical sense) members of the party, who express their views openly, some (although not as party members) going so far as to get involved with independent movements.

■ Are there structured currents inside the party who would support reforms?

Not at the base of the party. But such a tendency does exist in the leadership — the Adamec current. There can be no doubt that Adamec has many political supporters in the party apparatus, even at a regional and district level. He has the sup-



port of a lot of ministers and directors of big enterprises who make up the technocratic current. On the other hand, Jakes has the backing of the many dogmatists who remain in the party apparatus. Thus one can say that there are two wings in the party, but that does not affect the base.

■ How do you explain the fact that, while in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union, the CPs are trying to reform themselves in order to survive, the CzCP remains so monolithic?

There are many differences among the so-called Communist parties. In Poland, the party is in decay, is completely bankrupt, in crisis, and is fighting for its life. The most favourable situation for the party is in Hungary. Thanks to its reform policy it is certain to keep a significant base in the society. It risks losing the next elections, but even if the opposition (for example, the Democratic Forum) wins them, the party's participation in the regime is ensured. The party will still be present in the political, economic and social system of the country.

I have the impression that in the Soviet Union, as in Czechoslovakia, but in a quite different context, there is a gulf between the leadership and the base. It seems as if the base has not yet been sufficiently "re-activated". It may be more active than in Czechoslovakia, but it is no more than defending itself.

It is worth noting, moreover, that the party is playing a conservative rather than a progressive role in the Soviet Union. The progressive role falls to the independent movements, to the People's Fronts, to the movements among the intellectuals and so on. Of course many party members are active in these movements, but not the party as an entity. But one feature of the Soviet Union is the shift in power, which goes from the chair of the party to the organs of state which are now to some extent democratically elected.

Nonetheless the differences between the Soviet, Hungarian and Polish parties does not explain why there is no similar movement in the CzCP. The reasons for this are historical. The leaders of this party came

to power, or else had their positions confirmed, through the Soviet invasion of 1968. It was this leadership that then carried out the repressive "normalization" which tied it irrevocably to Brezhnevism. The present CzCP leadership cannot now turn around and say "we have been lying for 20 years", "the Soviet invasion was a crime", "we must now more or less resume the path followed during the Prague Spring, since that was correct, Moscow is now doing the same thing, and it is the only possible way out." This is impossible and thus they are reacting defensively and sticking to conservative positions.

Thus, the CzCP finds its friends where it can, which is in East Germany, and now in China and Albania. Very friendly relations are being developed with the Chinese. When our Minister of National Defence spent a fortnight in China, very favourable reports appeared in our press, in particular concerning the Chinese army. Ambassadorial relations have been restored with Albania and not a word is said against Romania except for calling Ceausescu "comrade".

The Czechoslovak leadership knows very well that this profoundly displeases the population. For this reason they do not make a big show of these contacts. The strongest links are with East Germany, although recently they have been toned down owing to the Soviet pressure on East Berlin that has led to the East German authorities making concessions on the question of those leaving or trying to leave for the West.

■ There are other political parties. What about them?

There are several political parties in Czechoslovakia. They arose in the 1945-49 period when there was a National Front that was formed during the Second World War, coming out of the resistance. The Communists played an important role, but there were also social democrats who were swallowed up by the CzCP in 1948. Then there was Benes' National Socialist Party, which changed its name to the Socialist Party (SP), and a descendant of the People's Party (PP), a populist Christian party. There are also two other

parties in Slovakia — Czechoslovakia is a federation of the Czech Lands and Slovakia — whose origins I do not know. The largest postwar Slovak party, the Democratic Party, was suppressed.

Between 1945 and 1948 there was a system of controlled and limited democracy. The National Front monopolized power and the weight within it of the CzCP was very important. In 1948 the CzCP changed this system. It took all the power, but kept most of the other parties in existence in a gutted form.

This has been used to pretend that Czechoslovakia has a multi-party democratic system. In this sense I agree with the objections that the Czechoslovak leadership makes to the new thinking in the USSR about multi-partyism. They say "In Czechoslovakia multi-partyism has always existed. It is the Soviet Union that must now introduce it."

■ Do these parties have parliamentary groups and are there different candidates in elections?

Each party has a parliamentary group. The National Front presents a single slate of candidates which does not specify who comes from the CP, the SP, the PP, from other parties, from a union, from the women's organization and so on. This works for elections at every level. The Communists always have the decisive majority and, of course, the slate is first of all discussed by the CP before being presented to the National Front, who make a few corrections.

Finally the list is put forward as the single list of the National Front and there is only one candidate for each position. The CP has, of course, an absolute majority in Parliament, and it is ultimately the CP that has chosen the deputies from the other parties, selecting from among those who are the most loyal and servile to the regime.

However, something very interesting is happening. Although there is no sign of movement in the CP, massive opposition is appearing at the base of the small parties and also among the middle cadres — that is, the fulltimers and elected officials at regional and district level. Opposition to the leadership is showing up openly in their internal bulletins but is also being reflected in the newspapers that these parties control.

Although these parties have only a small membership and weight, both the SP and the PP have a daily paper. The PP has *Lidová Demokracie* (*People's Democracy*) and the SP has *Svobodné Slovo* (*Free Word*).

In *Svobodné Slovo*, in particular, there are really interesting things. For example, the SP's proposal on the new law on association is really very progressive and could never be voted through parliament. The discussion at the base is beginning in the other parties rather than in the Communist party. ★

The meaning of the Ochoa affair

NEVER have historic cadres of the regime taken such a beating. This time most of those affected were not old Communist officials accused of sectarianism or complicity with Moscow but root and branch Fidelistas. That is what makes this crisis the most serious that the Cuban leadership has yet experienced.

Dealings in currency and ivory in Angola by "internationalist"

fighters, embezzlement by the Cuban *chargés d'affaires* in Panama, fraud and drug trafficking. These were the bases of the accusations of "negligence in carrying out duties, corruption, improper use of resources and illegal appropriations of state funds for purposes outside the functions of the Ministry of the Interior," and "weaknesses and cronyism that led to serious problems in the ministry and to the creation of unauthorized enterprises involved in activities related to foreign trade."²

The cross-examinations of the accused³; and that of Padron in particular; the indictment by the prosecutor Escalona, the Justice Minister; and Castro's speech to the State Council⁴ show the extent of the corruption and the violation of regulations and laws by those who were responsible for applying them.

However, what is the meaning of the publicity given to the trial and the heavy punishments? These need to be looked at from both the legal and democratic points of view — the proof of the facts, the conditions under which the trial was held, the rights of the defence and so on. Many questions have to be asked, for example about responsibility at all levels, questions to which there are as yet no answers. Analysis has to be focused on the political meaning and ramifications of these events, coming three years after the start of the rectification process.

In 1985 Castro said: "Cuba has more than once been offered fabulous sums of money in return for our cooperation in drug trafficking, but, although we are blockaded by the Americans, we have never accepted any business connected with drugs. For this reason I say that it is a

"THIS revolution will not be like Saturn; it will not devour its own children". Is this prediction of Fidel Castro's out of date? In July and August 1989, General Arnaldo Ochoa, a hero of the republic, was executed along with three officers from the Ministry of the Interior, while four Ministers have been stripped of their functions including the Interior minister and Communist Party Central Committee member, José Abrantes. The latter, despite a public reaffirmation of confidence by Castro in June, was sentenced to 20 years in prison a few weeks after the execution of Ochoa. His arrest was followed by that of other officials of his ministry, and many others were demoted. The ministry has thus been more or less dismantled.

JANETTE HABEL

shameless slander to try to implicate Cuba in the drugs traffic. I state categorically that not a cent of drugs money has entered this country, and I know of no case in the 26 years of the revolution of any official being involved in the traffic.... We have the best record in the continent on this question."⁵

On July 4, 1987, the director of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) declared: "Cuba is deeply implicated in the drug traffic in our hemisphere. The Cuban government, or certain persons belonging to the government of that country, are using Cuba to promote the narcotics traffic in this hemisphere."⁶ Two years later, the Ochoa scandal was to erupt in Havana.

Charges hit Cuba like earthquake

There seems to be no doubt about the existence of the drugs traffic. It is hard to see what possible benefit the Cuban leadership could derive from publicizing something so damaging and so contrary to the principles and ethical values espoused by the revolution. In Cuba the charges hit like an earthquake.

Even so, the course of the trial was not such as to eliminate a profound uneasiness. It neither clarified the extent of the responsibility, nor the final aim of the drug traffic nor the motivations of those condemned to death and the other accused. Ochoa, the La Guardia brothers and Abrantes were certainly part of the revolutionary elite. They belonged to the Fidelista "hard core" in the state apparatus, those to whom the most difficult and

delicate missions could be entrusted.

For Ochoa, this was the responsibility for the military mission to Angola; for the La Guardia brothers, it was the highly secret and perilous task of setting up an organization to circumvent the American blockade (department MC of the Ministry of the Interior). Such backgrounds and such responsibilities merited more than a summary trial before a special court.

As is the custom, the defence limited

itself to seeking for signs of repentance among the accused.⁷

These defence lawyers were appointed. Given the Cuban tradition, it is not at all surprising. However, a short time after the trial of these Cuban officials, Elizardo Sanchez, a well-known dissident and leader of a human rights organization who had been arrested on August 6 with two others for describing the executions as "assassinations" was permitted by the Ministry of Justice to choose his own defence lawyer.⁸ Even given the charges of high treason, the difference in the treatment of an opponent of the regime and one of its heroes is astonishing.

Despite some displays of his customary humour, Ochoa did not cooperate with the court so as to clarify where the money had been going. Overall, he took responsibility for the operation — "I have said from the beginning that I am the person responsible for this business" — but he denied that he had been working for his own private benefit, justifying his activities by military requirements.

Although this does not make the crime any less serious, it is striking that the law-

1. See Carlos Franqui, *Life, adventures and disasters of one Fidel Castro*, 1988, ed. Belfond p. 111. See also *Granma*, July 23, 1989.

2. *Le Monde*, August 2, 1989.

3. *Granma* July 16, 1989.

4. *Granma* July 23, 1989.

5. Castro, *Cuba Socialista*, March/April 1988, quoted by Juan Marrero.

6. *Ibid.*

7. The understanding and self-criticism of the mistakes made were recognized as mitigating factors. See Jorge Valls, *Mon ennemi, mon frère*, Gallimard, 1989.

8. *Le Monde* August 20, 1989.

yer made no reference to the issue of motives. The prosecutor concentrated on Ochoa's treason, but the inner connections remain unclear. As Ochoa himself said, many of the witnesses questioned by the Tribunal of Honour were not produced during the summary trial conducted by the Special Court Martial and much information to which he referred was neither published in *Granma* nor mentioned by the defence.

Ochoa did not fail to point out, referring to the swops of sugar for diamonds or ivory on the Angolan black market: to get the money needed to build an airport, that this was in accordance with "a business that has always existed in Angola....At the Tribunal of Honour the two things were mixed up, but this is not right; this was done on the side, under the control of the Finance Department. When Estupinas [one of the accused] went to Cuba to ask for 80 million kwanzas⁹ and did not get it, I decided: 'We will have to sell some of these things....and get the airport built.'....That was how the whole thing started." That is, the various swops took place under the aegis of the Finance Ministry and of the Interior Minister (whose chief committed suicide last July), and such trading operations were, apart from the drug traffic, more or less business as usual.

Preparations for Angolan battle

It is impossible to be sure about how things developed, given the disparate and fragmented character of the information. It is clear from Ochoa's statements that building airports at which Cuban planes could land in preparations for the battle of Cuito Carnavale was an urgent necessity. Fidel Castro said that at the time, and stressed the speed and efficiency with which their work was carried out.

From Ochoa's account, it seems that Havana did not come up with the necessary funds, and it was necessary to raise money by the means at hand. The context of these events should be recalled. The Angolan army was encircled, and the Cuban units were threatened by the South African army after military errors referred to by Castro, who implicitly put the blame on the Soviet Union. Tension was high, and Havana decided to send massive reinforcements in record time.

There is no point in whitewashing Ochoa. In Angola he himself ordered the execution of three young Cuban soldiers accused of raping Angolan women. Raul Castro recalled this in his statement to the State Council¹⁰; Ochoa was probably crushed by his own hammer.

Nonetheless Ochoa enjoyed a definite popularity during his trial¹¹ unlike Abrantes whose punishment — 20 years

in prison — was felt by some to be too light, no doubt partly on account of his poor public image, as minister of the interior. The reason is that Ochoa appeared to have been guided by "professional" considerations. But also because in his more political statements he exposed the lack of restraint on the high ranking leaders, their almost unlimited powers and the personal degeneration of old revolutionary militants, who had turned into cynical power-holders, confirming the old saying that absolute power



Fidel Castro

corrupts absolutely....

When the prosecutor asked him if he was accustomed to taking these kinds of decision, Ochoa replied straightforwardly: "I did a lot of things without authorization. I think that in this particular case it was not illogical to do what I did."

The habits were established and the mechanisms were there. It is clear that in Angola, away from any control, the Cuban military were not fussy about their means and that this provoked a lot of tension with the Angolans¹². In Panama, the agents of the Interior Ministry (MININT) strove to get round the US blockade by creating front businesses and using all available financial and commercial means for undertaking "fraudulent" operations that profited Cuba.

Such operations were quite legitimate, given the 30 year long embargo, which has been in no way moderated by Bush, despite some optimistic predictions.¹³ There can be no question of casting doubt on Cuba's right to defend itself, whether economically or commercially. Even so, the dubious relationships involved in this type of business are not conducive to virtue.

The MININT agents evolved in a gangster milieu. The virtually unlimited mate-

rial means, including hard currency, at the disposal of Department MC made them a state within the state. Nobody watched over the officials, and these latter exercised no control over those under their command. This special department had its own special logic. The boat owners who were employed to break the blockade, like the businessmen who served as go-betweens, made no distinction between carrying drugs and other activities. As the defendant Martinez explained: "I was seen as someone involved in illegal business." And cocaine trafficking was only one more illegal business.

You also have to consider pressure on these external businesses to bring in hard currency. In the beginning they ran at a loss when the need for hard currency in the Cuban economy was immense. Thus one thing led to another, from the tasks assigned to the department to the type of practices and contacts that these tasks involved. The slide was facilitated by the connections and the extent of the powers of the ministry, an absence of control and pervasive corruption.

When the prosecutor asked him "was there a mechanism for controlling your officers?" La Guardia replied along the same lines as Ochoa: "I could not do that, I was alone....I could not control them....The officers had become attendant parts....I could not manage the whole thing....only direct involvement would have permitted control of operations....I was sure that the officers would hand over the money to me."

The temptations of personal fraud

It was not only necessary to increase income, however. The money had to be laundered and made to appear as income from regular commercial operations. Personal fraud was a temptation.

The acceptance of drug trafficking has other explanations. Ochoa mentioned "countries that live on that, forced by the nature of their economies." But the political risks these operations involved for Cuba were considerable, and it is difficult

9. In June 1989, the official exchange rate for the kwanza was 30 to the dollar, but 500 to the dollar on the black market.

10. *Granma* July 23, 1989.

11. This popularity was officially recognized in an editorial in *Granma* September 10, 1989, which mentioned the "goodwill of the public towards the principal accused."

12. *El Pais*, September 15, 1989.

13. The blockade is so strict that the US Treasury Department forbade the ABC television channel from buying exclusive rights for transmission of the Pan-American games which are to take place in Havana in 1991 and for which it had offered \$9m.

14. *Marielitos*: name given to Cubans who left from the port of Mariel for Miami in 1980.

to imagine that Ochoa undertook the whole business solely on his own.

For example, six tonnes of Cocaine were transported on Cuban territory and in Cuban seaspace by Colombian pilots and Marielitos¹⁴, who exchanged dollars at black market rates for pesos for their families in Cuba. But some of these people were evidently connected to the CIA. The meeting between Ochoa's aide-de-camp and Pablo Escobar was, besides other considerations, extremely compromising and risky for the Cuban state.

This is one of the facts that seem to support a belief that Castro is telling the truth when he says that did not know what was going on. Escobar is one of the top people in the Medellín cartel, and was responsible in March 1985 for the massacre of several dozen Colombian peasants and the murder by death squads, in collusion with certain sectors of the armed forces, of agricultural workers suspected of being guerrilla sympathizers.¹⁵

Speculation about Ministry's arms deals

Were irresponsibility, cynicism and personal corruption the basic motives in this affair? There have been other theories, including much speculation about the purchases of arms by MININT which Castro mentioned in his speech to the State Council. Some have found here indications of an attempted plot. The available information does not support such a conclusion. It was part of the ministry's remit to buy arms for other countries (Nicaragua and Angola were mentioned in the trial) even if purely speculative arms deals were also carried out. In any case, large grey areas remain.

How did things get so far? The accused, and in particular Ochoa, gave certain hints: "In the first place, I believe that there was a moment when I went off the track, departed from the objectives of the revolution. I think that this came about in the following way. What right did I have to deal in money, something that I had never in my life had. I was never someone who yearned after money, I have never had money and have had absolutely no need of it. Far from it. But I must also say that a moment came in my military life when I felt tired. That is to say that I am not, objectively, the same person that the prosecutor talked about, the person who fought here and led over there. The light went out. In Angola I several times found myself in difficult, very difficult and very complex situations. Add this to the fact that...how shall I put it...I have spent many years acting alone, I took a bad road and a little bit lost my sense of reality.

"Furthermore, people have often tried to claim that I was not working. That is not true. I have made an enormous effort to carry out my duty, although perhaps not my whole duty. Many people think that I concentrated for the most part on my busi-

ness deals. That isn't true either. I sent other people to do deals, but personally I did not devote myself to them....I think that we could spend a long time searching and reflecting. I cannot explain it to myself. I don't know why I did that. There is no reason."¹⁶ Or these remarks: "You grumble when you get an order, and the moment comes when you end up thinking that every order coming from a superior officer is bad. Once started on this slope, one acquires an independent way of thinking and you begin to think that you are right."

Saverio Tutino, the ex-correspondent in Cuba of the Italian Communist Party daily, *L'Unità*, asked himself: Ochoa, Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde? Probably neither. The factors at work here are fatigue, solitude, demoralization and skepticism. Ochoa's statements have the merit at least of throwing light on the way that the functioning of the leading group can grind down even the best people, which is what really happened in this case. In the infernal mechanism of the Castroist headquarters, there is no room for failure: the chiefs are alone, as in war, heroes or traitors, paragons of virtue or scapegoats.

The buck passing typical of the leading circles is thus hardly surprising. Who can stand up to such tests, apart from the commander in chief? Paradoxically, the trial leads inevitably to a questioning of Fidel Castro's own role, something that he certainly did not expect.

Crushing condemnation of type of leadership

If what the accused said is true, if the commander in chief knew nothing in a regime that is so centralized, so hierarchical, so vertically structured, then the condemnation of this type of leadership is crushing and it needs changing. Such insulation is intolerable and can only, as experience shows, have very serious consequences.

Moreover, it is perhaps because some people had begun to pose precisely these questions that the whole business erupted. Officially the "national prophylaxis" proposed by Raul Castro is justified by the extent of the corruption and the need to fight it, starting from the top. This assertion can hardly be doubted, and certain measures have already been taken to back it up. But why now? As Fidel Castro rightly pointed out, the problems are not of recent vintage, and there was no lack of warnings, especially as far as MININT is concerned.

In his opening address to the second Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in 1980, the First Secretary declared that: "As regards the Ministry of the Interior, it has been noted that in some sectors there has been a falling off in efficiency and in the exemplary attitude that its cadres had always shown in the years of extraordinary and heroic struggles....There have

been signs of bureaucracy and of a relaxation of demands and discipline."

Prophetically, he added: "We will continue to be able to see the wood despite the trees, but we would prefer the Ministry of the Interior to remain a wood where trees don't have to be cut down."¹⁷ Nine years later and three years after the start of the rectification process, not only has it been necessary to cut down trees, but, as *Granma* sellers shouted: "The Ministry of the Interior has been cleaned out."¹⁸

Abuses of power, embezzlement, all sorts of perks, clinics, restaurants, private places of entertainment, televisions, video-cassettes, tape-recorders, to say nothing of cars and even yachts: this is the description that Fidel Castro gave of some of the most notorious privileges of the Cuban *nomenklatura*. This cannot be taken lightly in a country where reaction against corruption is one of the main reasons for the breadth of the revolution's social base. Corruption was rampant not only under Batista's dictatorship but also under the parliamentary regime of Prio Socarras, overthrown by Batista in 1952. It should not be forgotten that Chibas, the president of the Orthodox Party from which Castro came, was a champion of "honest administration". He killed himself in the middle of a radio broadcast to protest against the corruption of the regime. During the revolutionary struggle, corruption was one of the fundamental themes taken up by the July 26 Movement.

The Castroist leadership could not sit back in the face of the growing moral degeneration of the leading layers, and at the same time go on demanding daily sacrifices from the people. The rectification process was a further warning. But the current crisis is on a wholly new scale.

Granma indicts the bureaucratic enemy within

As an editorial in *Granma* on September 10, 1989 put it: "the problems which the country has confronted this summer go far beyond a handful of corrupt and disloyal men".

Underlining that what was at stake was a step of far greater importance than the rectification process, the editorial writer (often Castro himself) continued: "It is necessary to say clearly; in what has happened there have been a whole series of errors which have engulfed, in one way or another, all the institutions of the revolution....One of the essential characteristics of the situation....is that what is involved is not the work of enemy agents but of people from our own ranks. We have not had to deal with a confrontation between

15. See IV no.170, October 2 1989.

16. *Granma* July 16, 1989.

17. *Main Report to the Second Congress of the CCP*, Ediciones Políticas, Havana, 1981.

18. *El País*, August 1, 1989.



EN MARCHA HACIA NUEVAS VICTORIAS

400,000 party members have been interviewed by members of higher bodies and by their cell comrades. More than 6,000 have received disciplinary punishments, and some 2,000 expelled. The most common reason why these punishments have been inflicted is for violating the statutes (about 40%) and then for carelessness and lack of discipline at work (31%).²¹

The Cuban leadership has related the Ochoa trial and its aftermath to the rectification process. The latter has therefore been accelerated at the political level, at a time when at the economic level it is marked by numerous ambiguities. This acceleration can only be understood in the light of the worsening of disputes within the state apparatus. These can be described schematically as a conflict between the Castroist leading nucleus and its supporters and the

new generation of technocrats and officials, often influenced by Moscow, who are increasingly challenging the "outdated and "voluntarist" (as one top official put it) leadership style of the Fidelista team.

Of course, under these tensions lie social and economic problems that have been aggravated by Gorbachev's policies.²² But they are also the specific product of the Cuban power structure and of the duality of powers that exists at the top of the state as a result of the historic development and the revolutionary process.

Any analysis that doesn't start from this history, or equates the Cuban leadership with the bureaucratic dictatorships of the East European countries, cannot explain the current evolution. The Castroist group (evidently Castro himself but also including the faithful veterans of the Sierra Maestra) has not come out of a bureaucratic apparatus, even if, through their method of functioning, they have produced one. In its origins, its preoccupations and its methods, the Castro leadership is different.

Although the political and infrastructural institutions have been directly copied from the USSR, the Cuban political system has no counterparts in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union. The charismatic lead-

revolution and counter-revolution; the hard and heavy lesson to be drawn from these facts is that, without going over to the enemy, people who have fought for our cause can do more harm than any counter-revolutionary, and serve, in practice, the aims of imperialism, which has not given up the hope of destroying us."

"In this sense, the first and prime lesson of this trial...is that respect for the law is the duty of citizens, whatever ranks they hold in the political hierarchy or the state....The greater the responsibility that has been entrusted to a citizen, the more he or she is obliged to act in a dignified and honest fashion, in the public domain, as well as in private life."

From the political point of view, the most important part of the editorial is the following: "What sort of revolutionary is it that has respect neither for law, nor for morality, and acts as if he or she belonged to a caste elevated above everybody and everything?"

"What kind of socialism and revolution can we talk about when people do not have the sensitivity to grasp that privileges, arbitrariness, abuses, and distance from the masses are the main reasons for the difficulties and crises that today afflict the socialist system, whose mission was precisely to eliminate such capitalist calamities."

This declaration is surprising from more than one point of view. In the first place, the difficulties of the "socialist system" are attributed to the existence of a privi-

leged and corrupt bureaucracy. Usually, emphasis has been put on the subjective mistakes of leaders, on the bad effects of market reforms, while oppositionists have been considered counter-revolutionaries in the pay of imperialism. This time, the enemy is within.

The declaration is unambiguous. The Ochoa trial was not the result of the work of "enemy agents", and it was not a question of dealing with "a confrontation between revolution and counter-revolution." And this is even more serious, because these people "coming from our own ranks" are capable of doing more harm to the revolution than any counter-revolutionary. The diagnosis is quite clear and the target identified: in the midst of the rectification, unscrupulous people profiting from their positions and responsibilities have been carried away by infatuation with power and have committed crimes against the morality of the revolution and its standards.¹⁹

Cuban communist party purged

Punishments must be exemplary, and the party itself should not escape. It must be not only the subject but also the "the object of the rectification,"²⁰ inasmuch as the negative tendencies "have generally not been exposed through the party." The first measures were soon to strike the CCP. A purge has been carried out through a check of party cards. More than

19. Pedro Miret, statement to the State Council, *Granma* July 23, 1989.

20. *Granma*, August 10, 1989.

21. *NRI*, September 1989.

22. See IV 167.

ership of Castro, supported by a relatively small group (only three of the Politburo's 16 members are not former fighters from the Sierra Maestra) justifies the politico-military preeminence of an elite at the centre of the system. This leadership has traditionally relied on organizing and mobilizing the masses, in distinction from the Soviet bloc, on the basis of anti-imperialism and defending the social gains of the revolution.

But, as Hugh Thomas has emphasized, the power of this leading elite was eroded by the effects of institutionalization in the 1970s and by the fact that "a new generation of Cubans has arrived since 1959. A new generation of administrators, of bureaucrats and of technocrats who enjoy significant authority. This new generation differs in many ways from the little elite of guerillas who have ruled for 25 years. It has different priorities from those of the veterans of the revolution."²³

While the differences should not be reduced to a division between economic officials on the one hand and the political apparatus on the other (this latter is also divided), it is clear that the market reforms have meant a definite weakening in central control. Insofar as the extreme centralization of the Cuban economy is the corollary of the centralization of political power, it was predictable that Fidel Castro could not observe this evolution without reaction.

Unprecedented banning of Soviet publications

The banning in August 1989 of *Moscow News* and *Sputnik* — something without precedent in the history of Cuban-Soviet relations — is explained as much by such internal problems as by differences with Moscow. It was a warning addressed to all those who might be tempted to break the Castroist *credo* of "one chief (himself), one discipline (his)", and "unlimited confidence in his deeds and his words."²⁴

The statement by the party leadership²⁵ justifies the severity of this step by ideological and political considerations. The two journals supposedly were apologizing for bourgeois democracy as the highest form of popular participation; they were fascinated by the American way of life; they denied the existence of imperialism; they praised foreign investment and private property; they called internationalism into question.

However, the statement admitted that such material had got a response amongst some ill-informed youth, including some people who were impelled to justify their copying of Soviet models. Such an attraction is undeniable. *Moscow News* had been disappearing from the news-stands instead of mouldering there as in the past. But in order to combat these ideas, the CCP leadership resorted to censorship, and even admitted that they had had to

"several times dissuade journalists, cadres and specialists who wanted to polemicize with this or that Soviet article and thus enter into a confrontation." This is an explicit recognition of the fact that the CCP monopolizes the right of expression and prefers to have no debate to a discussion, even one that it controls.

If there is something in common to the Ochoa trial and the banning of *Moscow News*, it is that of a warning to all those who might be tempted to believe, along with the American administration²⁶, that at 64 Fidel's time is coming to an end. It is clear that a power struggle is in the making, and that there are those who think that they can take advantage of the present international climate to prepare for the succession. The official nomination of Raul Castro as second secretary of the CCP at the party's third congress was aimed precisely at putting a "lid" on the leadership problems.

Even if there is no evidence that Ochoa and Abrantes were engaged in a political struggle, their condemnation has had the effect of making it clear to everyone that any chiefs can very quickly find themselves reduced to the ranks or even imprisoned. The conflicts are not between two ideologically identifiable factions, but rather involve all those who, rightly or wrongly, question the way that revolutionary legitimacy has become embodied in Castro.

Fidel now faces some hard choices. The fact that they go against his history and tradition leaves little hope that he will change. And his recent international alignments — however conjunctural they may be and despite his pragmatism, which allows him to change from one day to the next — does not make for optimism.

Is Castro counting on Gorbachev's fall?

How can one explain his joining — even provisionally — in the anti-Gorbachev campaign alongside of the German Democratic Republic (DDR), even if the latter is a special commercial ally? Castro is usually more prudent, whatever his disagreements. He is counting, presumably, on Gorbachev's fall, or at least on a defeat for his present policy that will make him change course.

Fidel probably believes that he has an interest, on the international level, in reinforcing the camp of Gorbachev's opponents in order to counter attacks that Cuba has suffered. His attacks on Poland and Hungary are not gratuitous.

The polemic with the latter country became openly envenomed after Hungarian enterprises unilaterally altered the conditions of their commercial exchanges with Cuba and increased prices by 20% in the space of one year.²⁷ Such things make the Cuban leadership fear that agreements made with other Comecon countries will

break down.

Cuba's openly acknowledging the delivery of arms to Nicaragua²⁸, after Moscow's promise to suspend them, is a direct challenge to Soviet diplomacy. Gorbachev cannot ignore Cuba's weight and influence not only in the Third World but also in the other Communist parties. But the Castroist leadership does not have the necessary maneuvering room to repeat such gestures too often.

The events of October 1989 in East Germany, one of his most faithful allies, should make Castro reflect on the irreversible evolution of bureaucratized societies. All the more in that the Cubans can have no reason to suspect the East German leadership of heterodoxy. The flight of a significant proportion of East German youth can be explained by the depressing quality of life in a society that is politically immobile and culturally anesthetized. It is no use the Cubans blaming the surrogates for revolt such as rock or blue jeans or "anti-social" elements, if the regime is not ready to offer other perspectives. If the youth, who make up more than a half of the population, are to be mobilized, there will have to be something better on offer than voluntary work in micro-brigades.

Old schemas have to be got rid of

In a country like Cuba, which has proclaimed its determination to build socialism and resist and hold out in a hostile environment at least for several years, the old ways, the old schemas, both political and material privileges of the caste denounced by the CCP have to be got rid of, in order for new generations to fulfill themselves and for their potential for revolt to be harnessed to the service of the revolution. Before it is too late, the old leader must, if he does not want to be swept away, take advantage of the rectification to rectify his own regime, which is decaying.

Sooner or later, as elsewhere, thousands of young people will speak out against the rule of the old guard. They will affirm their own collective strength. The young people who, in East Germany, as in China, sang the Internationale and waved red flags, embody the only alternative to the crisis of socialism denounced by Castro, which is a crisis of more than just bureaucratic management. At their sides, Cuba can regain the revolutionary energy that is the condition for its survival. ★

23. See *La revolución cubana 25 años después*, Hugh Thomas, Georges A. Fauriol, Juan Carlos Weiss; Playor, Madrid 1985.

24. Carlos Franqui *op. cit.*

25. *Granma* (International edition), august 13, 1989.

26. See P. Brenner *Cuba after Fidel* in *NACLA*, March/April 1989.

27. *Granma*, September 1, 1989.

28. *Le Monde*, October 5, 1989.

29. *Le Monde*, October 6, 1989.

Workers' Party: Towards a People's Democratic Government

MORE THAN 80 million Brazilians will go to the polls on November 15 to elect a president after 21 years of military dictatorship and five years of an indirectly elected civilian government. This is a particularly difficult situation for the ruling class. In recent years, the country's economy has virtually stagnated, and an explosion of hyper-inflation now looms. In response to a deteriorating social situation, there have been cycles of explosive and generalized strikes. The high point of this process of trade-union radicalization was the general strike of March 14-15 against the wage squeeze. According to the estimates of the Central Unica dos Trabalhadores [CUT, United Confederation of Workers] this strike involved 35 million workers.

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WITH THE grave crisis of the two strongest bourgeois parties, the PMDB and the PFL, the ruling class is going into the first round of the elections in a profoundly fragmented state. On the other hand, the working class is represented by a political front dominated by the PT [Workers Party]. In it are participating the PC do B [CP of Brazil, an Albanian-line party that originated in a split in the Communist Party in the 1960s] and the PSB (a party with a bland social democratic policy). The Brazilian CP (PCB) opted for putting up a candidate of its own in the first round.

Still more important, the elections are coming at a time when the PT's influence is clearly on the rise. Formed ten years ago, in the November 1988 municipal elections, it elected 36 mayors and nearly a thousand councillors.

Today, the PT holds an overwhelming majority in the CUT, which is the main trade-union confederation, since the CGT, led by bureaucrats, has split into various wings and is losing strength. It has the majority in the National Union of Students, and is growing rapidly in the countryside (especially through the militant Movement of the Landless).

The Sixth National Meeting of the PT reflected this growth, bringing together 600 delegates (each one representing a thousand members). Of the 600,000 members, it is estimated that about 60,000 are active.

The growth of the PT's social influence has not been accompanied by significant advances in the construction of its organization. Grave imbalances persist between its activity in government bodies and its party work in the class struggle.

There are great weaknesses in the base organizations and a lack of centralization. (For example, the PT still does not have a national mass journal.) Above all, its internal currents are still evolving, and its leadership is still in the process of formation. The main value of the Sixth National Meeting was to prepare the party

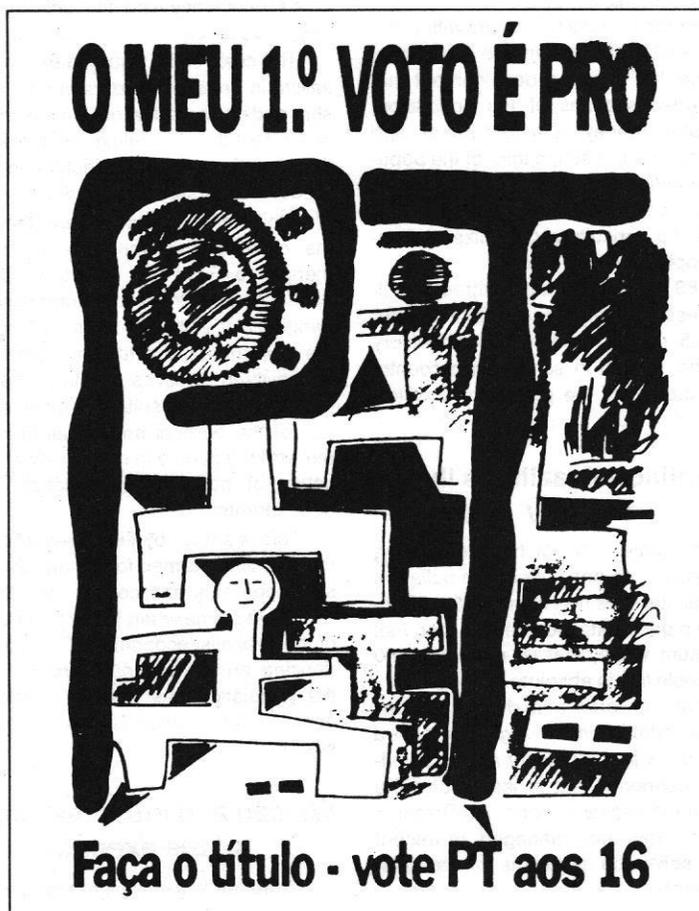
politically for the great presidential contest. It confirmed the historic character of the PT in advancing its program in response to the concrete challenges posed by the class struggle.

Of the documents approved at the Sixth Meeting, in general by a broad majority, the outstanding one is the "Guidelines for a Governmental Program." It is important for four reasons:

(1) It offers an assessment of the ongoing crisis and of the rapid change underway in the relationship of forces in favor of the working people. (2) It declares, without any illusions, that a government dominated by the PT would inevitably come into conflict with big capital, imperialism and the existing state institutions. (3) It puts forward a clearly transitional method for working out a governmental program. (4) It establishes an unbreakable link between the struggle for democracy and building socialism.

This is a document of profound significance in the party's history, and it will certainly be of great interest for the international socialist movement.

Major excerpts are published in the following pages. ★



Document:

Guidelines for the elaboration of a programme for government

FOR THE WHOLE postwar period, Brazil has maintained a growth rate of 7% in Gross Domestic Product and 9% in industrial production, which has given the country the ninth biggest economy in the international capitalist system. In the last decade, however, the country's GDP has grown at a rate of about 2.5% per year, and per capita income has hardly grown at all.

The crisis of the Brazilian economy has been aggravated by the exhaustion of the economic development model imposed by the military dictatorship and which the "New Republic" was incapable of confronting. The whole pattern of financing the economy went into virtual collapse. On the one hand, every year the country has transferred 4.5% of the GDP abroad in the form of payments on the foreign debt. On the other, the extremely grave national debt has been blocking the resumption of public investment and paralyzing the fundamental instruments of economic policy.

The economic crisis is aggravating the social one, which is the heritage of capitalist development in Brazil, a development that has excluded sections of the population, concentrated money in a few hands and been predatory. In 1969, a third of the population consumed less than 2,240 calories a day, which is the threshold below which the UN Food and Agricultural Organization considers people undernourished.

In 1988, two out of every three Brazilians eat less than their requirement. In education, 8.5 million children of compulsory school age are not in school, in a country where a quarter of the population is illiterate.

Forty million Brazilians live in poverty

Half of homes do not have electricity, and 13 million persons suffer from pellagra. The official statistics reveal that 35% of families have a per capita income less than half the minimum wage, that is, more than 40 million people live in absolute poverty.

However powerful and dynamic it has proved in establishing a highly diversified industrial plant in the country and in developing an economy that ranks among the greatest in the capitalist world, the Brazilian bourgeoisie has not managed in recent years to solve the problems of capitalist development.

Moreover, its political strategy for controlled transition from military dictatorship to an authoritarian civilian government under the late president Sarney has clearly failed. All the attempts of recent years to guarantee the political domination of the ruling classes through the PMDB and the "New Republic," through the successive economic plans and austerity drives, have been defeated mainly by trade-union and popular mobilization. These efforts have been frustrated mainly by the position of the PT and the CUT of intransigence toward the policy of cooptation and subordination that the PMDB and the elites have tried to impose on the country from the Electoral College.

Outstanding among these experiences has been the failure of the Social Pact. In the Constituent Assembly, in the trade-union struggles and today in the 1988 elections, an alternative has been built to the "New Republic" and to the conservative transition. It has been concretized today in Lula's candidacy and the political front of people's parties.

The crisis of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism in Brazil after years of open dictatorship and controlled transition is summed up in the fact that the ruling class risks losing the [direct] presidential election on the hundredth anniversary of the republic.

While this crisis is real and the signs of the crisis of the transition are manifest, there is no doubt either that today the domination of the Brazilian bourgeoisie is not hanging in the balance. Despite the fact that the government institutions have lost their credibility in the eyes of a large part of the population and despite the relative unification of the political and social struggles of the working people in recent years, the continuity of bourgeois domination has not been threatened.

This is shown by the power of the state, the role of the armed forces and the repressive apparatus and control over the mass media. At a time when the productive forces of the capitalist economy in Brazil are experiencing an extraordinary growth, most of the population has not yet developed an anticapitalist consciousness rejecting this system.

We can and must take control of the executive

However, it is also clear that the present

period is characterized by a resumption of social and political struggle by the working people, by the reconstruction of their class-struggle organizations and by the beginnings of a political project representing the working people themselves. This is what is meant when we talk about an accumulation of strength and a change in the relation of forces. Over the 21 years of dictatorship the ruling class got used to imposing its domination by repression and not through political contention.

A new period has opened of contending for the leadership of Brazilian society, in which the PT and CUT are playing a notable role.

We seem to have reached the end of the terrible dilemma that distressed a generation of trade-union, popular and workers' party leaders — to support the nationalist and/or reformist projects of the bourgeoisie or else get caught in isolation, in a political and cultural ghetto. The PT's project of trade-union, popular, student, peasant, environmentalist and women's liberation struggle, and of a fight by Blacks and youth over the past 15 years has marked out a road and opened up the historic opportunity for the PT to be the government, to contend for hegemony and to build a social and political force.

Chance to initiate rapid and deepgoing process

Although a revolutionary crisis does not exist, nor even a prerevolutionary situation, we can and must win the executive branch, the presidency of the republic, and inaugurate a new period in which, with control of the government — that is, an important part of the state power — the contest for hegemony will be waged on another level. The PT and the democratic and popular forces will have a chance to initiate a rapid and deepgoing process of economic reforms and of political and social struggles. All this will create conditions for the conquest of political hegemony and for socialist transformations.

To this end, it is necessary to offer answers to the innumerable problems that the new situation raises for us. In the first place, it is not sufficient to run in elections with a platform of economic and political struggles by the working people and the middle strata of society. Nor is it possible to propose a socialist program, which would

not be understood and would isolate us.

We have, therefore, to put forward a Governmental Action Program that will reflect the main demands of the working people and economic and social reforms to get the country out of crisis, and combine this with political and ideological struggle, that is a struggle for hegemony in the society. By stimulating the growth and reinforcement of the social movements, by promoting the self-organization of the working people, by opening up channels for popular participation, by creating instruments of local power, by aiding the emergence of a real socialist movement, we will not only be giving viability to a democratic-people's government but be forging the political and social conditions for socialist transformations in the country.

We intend therefore that both the government and the program will have a democratic-popular and revolutionary character, because they will be linked up with the action of the PT, both in the political-ideological, anticapitalist and socialist struggle and in intervention in social struggles, in the tasks of self-organization of the workers and in their decisive participation in the social and political struggle that has now opened for the center of state power, the presidency of the republic.

Who will a PT government serve?

The constant objective of a democratic people's government is building an Alternative Power, based on a commitment to promote social equality and oriented toward a thoroughgoing quest for freedom.

This requires broadening and consolidating the democratic gains, eliminating military tutelage, perfecting the system of political representation and the electoral mechanisms, consolidating trade-union freedom and workers' rights, democratizing the judicial system, putting an end to the monopolization of the media, salvaging or redefining the concept of citizenship, based on raising the level of consciousness of the workers and on the political and ideological ripening of the social movements, giving impetus to the forms of self-organization of the workers and preparing the political conditions and accumulating strength for making the socialist revolution.

Moreover, a people's government will have to put itself at the service of the interests of the people, the workers, the small producers, the small owners and of the middle layers of society. It will thus have to be a government that redistributes income, that fights to eradicate poverty, to eliminate social and regional inequalities, that redefines the role of the state. Today, the state is under the control of private interests and their representatives, who manipulate the civilian and military bureaucracy. A people's government will have to be one that promotes economic growth, which is the precondition for assuring jobs, houses, food, access to education and the possibility for

cultural expression for all the people.

A government like this will have necessarily to confront the dominant interests in Brazilian society, which are today bound up with the foreign debt, the monopoly of land, the role of the state and the domination of financial, industrial monopoly capital over the economy.

Therefore, our main adversaries are the international creditors, the latifundists, the bankers, the big oligopolies, besides the private groups associated with the civilian and military bureaucracy that control the Brazilian state. This is not a historic pronouncement or a sociological assessment; it is a political and economic reality in Brazil today. Thus, any policy aimed at solving the country's social and economic problems will have to confront the interests of these sectors of the ruling class.

It seems clear that there are objective limits, constitutional limits, to the PT presenting a program of social and democratic forms today. This being the case, the PT and the other parties and forces that will elect Lula president will have to organize a social mobilization in order also to amend and create the conditions for implementation of the Governmental Action Program.

Neither the constitutional limitations (the 1988 constitution, lack of a majority in the National Congress, a reactionary judicial branch), nor the non-constitutional limitations (military tutelage, the political hegemony of the bourgeoisie, the monopoly control of the media), can determine our party program and our historic objective of building a socialist society.

The meaning of the Lula candidacy

The PT is supporting the Lula candidacy in the conviction that in the present Brazilian conditions the constitutional struggle has to be waged aggressively and boldly, that any preconception that might still persist among us about electoral action, action through legal means, about a contest for hegemony even within a state controlled by the bourgeoisie has to be abandoned.

The Lula government will represent an experiment unprecedented in our history and one with few parallels internationally. It will demand a great capacity for innovation to guide this original political process. In the absence of parallels offering a basis for comparisons, the rich experience of Chile under the Allende government (1970-1973) suggests itself as a historic example to be studied, in order to take advantage of the lessons that can be drawn, and in particular to prevent a similar defeat.

Even realizing that the government and power are not the same thing, and that therefore Lula's victory cannot be seen as a full conquest of political power, the PT understands that in Brazil the federal executive branch concentrates so many resources and so much constitutional power that controlling it will make it possible to start changes of such scope that they can alter

the entire conjunctural picture, initiating a process that will guarantee the implementation of our People's Democratic Program going in the direction of socialist transformations.

As a starting point, it is necessary to realize that at the outset the new government will be seriously restricted by a constitution that prohibits agrarian reform, that absolutizes the role of private property and formally endorses the tutelage of the armed forces over the civilian authorities.

Obstacles and resistance will also appear in the functioning of the bureaucratic machine of the state, which has been perverted by the contradictions of patronage, corruption, idleness and arrogance in dealing with the public.

But we will have extraordinary conditions for accelerating the advance of the social struggles and the growth of mass pressure. The Lula government will come into being conscious that all its chances for success depend on broadening the mobilization of the working people, on a gigantic scale, for the conquest of the objectives included in the People's Democratic Program.

Socialism and democracy

This is why our tactic for competing for the presidency with Companheiro Lula's candidacy and with a people's democratic program is linked to our policy of accumulating strength and to our conception of contending for hegemony over the society. Any separation in this line can lead to the adventure of putting the conquest of power on the agenda today, or leading to the political retreat of falling into the deviation of trying to reform or administer capitalism.

In the political-ideological debate throughout the electoral campaign, we will make clear our option for socialism, socialism with democracy, with freedom of expression, with freedom of organization for the workers, a socialism that rejects the bureaucratic conception and vision of the single party.

Our political project goes beyond winning the presidential election. Its historic meaning is to transform the country, to carry through a political and social revolution. To win the presidential election and achieve a people's government, we need to change the relationship of forces. This challenge can be met only through the growth of the PT, of its organization and its capacity for struggle and for proposing policies both in the social movements and the municipal governments.

We know that the people's democratic program clashes with interests that will do anything to undermine our government, or even to demoralize the PT and the democratic and people's will during Lula's term of office. The answer to such attempts to destabilize our government is to break with constitutionalism, an instrument used historically by the ruling classes. The only answer is the broadest possible popular mobilization and social struggle.

A government of the PT and the Brazil People's Front can carry through the democratic and popular tasks in the country, which have an anti-imperialist, anti-latifundist and anti-monopoly character.

Carrying out such measures, even if they are not explicitly socialist, will clash directly with the structure of capitalism here, and they can only be adopted by a government of social and political forces in conflict with the bourgeois order, a government under the hegemony of the workers.

The PT does not believe in the possibility of a stage of "people's capitalism" in the country. To the contrary, through a simultaneous process of accumulating strength, confrontations and victories for the workers we will create the conditions for beginning social transformations in Brazil.

In these conditions, the people's democratic government and the beginning of the transition to socialism are parts of the same process. The passage from one to the other, however, is not automatic, nor a result of a "withdrawal from the scene" of the privileged minorities, who through their power and by denying democracy have historically subjugated the workers and people of this country. The full People's Democratic Program can only be carried out with a socialist revolution.

From our point of view, our intention, our political determination, our programmatic proposals go in the direction of winning power through the will, the mobilization and the struggle of the majority, and not through a vanguardist putsch. We want to gain power and build socialism through victory over the bourgeoisie and its ideological apparatuses of domination.

The PT does not believe in a socialist party without workers. Nor does it consider it possible to build socialism without the decisive action of the workers, in the process of building socialism itself. Historical experience has left us the conviction that socialism will either be the achievement of the workers, or there will be no socialism.

The experiences of building socialism — especially where bureaucracies have usurped political power in the name of the workers and alienated them from the exercise of power — shows that no real socialism can exist without a deepening and thoroughgoing defense of democracy.

In the process of building socialism, the workers have intransigently to defend party pluralism, freedom of trade-union activity and of the press, the existence of real conditions for exercising these freedoms and consistent respect for human rights, which are major gains for humanity.

We do not consider democracy a concession from the ruling class, from "those on high," nor as an occasional formality, as the bourgeoisie has done in our country, striking it down every time the workers broaden their rights. Democracy is a gain for the workers, won in political struggle against the ruling classes.★

Italian communist Party — exception or model?

THE reaction of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) to the events of the last few months in the USSR, Poland, Hungary and China has been no great surprise. The party broke its decades-old links with the Soviet leadership a long time ago, and no longer considers itself part of any International Communist movement or current, in any form whatever. It could, then, only seize the opportunity offered to reaffirm its condemnation of "actually existing socialism", its definitive abandonment of revolutionary conceptions, its reformist vision, and its adherence to the foreign policy of the Italian bourgeoisie.

LIVIO MAITAN

TWO examples, among the more significant, confirm this. On 7 June 1989, after the crushing of the mass movement in Beijing, party secretary Achille Occhetto declared that "the PCI today is taking a step forward" in declaring that "not only has the propulsive force of those models and those societies of so-called 'actually existing socialism' been exhausted"¹, but also that "the PCI is, irreversibly, outside of, and opposed to, such experiences".

Democracy conceived as universal values

The PCI could not be reproached for condemning the bureaucratic regimes, but more than that is involved here. In its view, what has to be rejected is the communist project in its entirety, and, in the last analysis, the October revolution itself. Its alternative is the model of democracy conceived as a "universal value", above classes and historic contexts; in fact, a capitalist parliamentary democracy, more or less improved and developed.

The second example is still clearer. In an article published 21 September 1989, Wlodek Goldkorn, a Polish collaborator of *L'Unita* (organ of the PCI), stated unambiguously that, in the future, humanity must follow a course opposite to that of the Bolshevik revolution: "one must attempt a transition from totalitarian communism to a pluralist democracy. (...) The transition from a centralized economy to a free market, from a totalitarian regime to democracy must come

about, not by a revolutionary road, but by a gradual evolution. The task facing the élite that governs the Polish state is truly of historic dimensions. It adds up to a reversal of all the dogmas that for a hundred years have been the basis for the activity of the European left".

I cannot recapitulate the trajectory of the PCI since its foundation. But it should be remembered that this party accepted, after the end of the 1920s, the Stalinist dominance of the international Communist movement and endorsed all the mistakes, all the betrayals, and all the crimes of the Soviet bureaucracy.

PCI supported crushing of Hungarian revolution

Moreover, it did so despite the disagreements that were expressed, including at the leadership level, and despite the criticisms that Antonio Gramsci made from prison. It was only after Khrushchev's report to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU that it began to take its distance and mark out a partially independent course (supporting, meanwhile, the crushing of the Hungarian revolution by the Soviet Army).

Two other important dates have marked its evolution. In 1968, the PCI condemned the intervention of Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia. In 1981, after General

¹ The idea of the exhaustion of the "propulsive force" of the October revolution had been advanced by Berlinguer, after Jaruzelski's coup in Poland.

Jaruzelski's military coup, Berlinguer made a resounding declaration about the exhaustion of the "propulsive force" issuing from the October revolution. The party leadership drew from this the conclusion that henceforth, the party would maintain its relations "with all the Communist parties, as with all Socialist, revolutionary and progressive forces, without any special relationship with any of them".

Since then, the PCI has continued its evolution, distancing itself more and more explicitly, not only from Togliatti, but also from Berlinguer, the hero of Eurocommunism and of the "third road", in other words a road different both from the Soviet model and the social democratic model. The positions taken at the 1986 party congress marked the culmination of this process, with the PCI clearly proclaiming its "integration into the European left".² Its long march towards social democracy was coming to an end. Despite all the fuss about a "new course", the readjustments registered at its last congress were very much more tactical than strategic, and these were combined with the introduction of ideological formulas of a more overtly "liberal socialist" coloring.³

Leaders preen themselves on their originality

Today, the question is whether or not the transformation of the PCI represents an exceptional case. Its leaders like to preen themselves on their originality and their merits, and do not conceal their satisfaction at being considered a "model" by a whole series of other Communist parties. Certainly, one cannot ignore or underestimate the specific factors that have influenced the evolution of the PCI over the past decades. But if you focus on these alone, you cannot grasp the essential thing.

The essential thing is that the "Stalinized" Communist parties have been marked, since the 1930s, by an intrinsic contradiction. They were fundamentally governed by the interests and changing orientations of the Soviet bureaucracy. It should not be forgotten that, for a whole period, this link represented an essential element of their strength. But at the same time, this subordination went contrary to their need to root themselves more deeply in their own national workers' movement, to respond to its needs and aspirations, to follow its rhythms of political, theoretical and organizational maturation. In 1938, Trotsky had already evoked this problem and sketched out a perspective that was later shown to be correct: to wit, that the crisis of the "Stalinized" Communist International would break out before the crisis of the bureaucratized system within the USSR.⁴

The history of the PCI can only be understood correctly from the perspective of this contradiction. During the period

from 1944 to 1948, this was not clear, inasmuch as there was a large enough convergence between the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy and those of the PCI bureaucracy. In 1943, Stalin had dissolved the Communist International in the context of his agreement with the imperialist powers. For the Communist parties, notably in Western Europe, he advocated a policy of national unity and integration into the bourgeois democracies for the post-war period. The leadership of the PCI, which had already since the mid-1930s renounced any revolutionary perspective, accepted this approach without difficulty, and resolutely set itself on the path of rooting and developing its party in the framework of post-fascist bourgeois society.

Adaptation to Italian bourgeois society

The difficulties began with the turn in the world situation which culminated in the Cold War, the formation of the Cominform⁵, a new international structure which was partial and ephemeral, and with the Stalinization of the "People's Democracies". As the PCI reinforced its national roots, acquired its own strength, and adapted itself to the socio-political mechanisms of Italian bourgeois society, its interests came increasingly into conflict with those of the Kremlin bureaucracy, pushing it to act in a more or less independent fashion.

Nonetheless, it maintained its allegiance to the Kremlin for a decade after the war, despite the costs it incurred by doing so, notably in the electoral field, which had become most important for it.⁶ The PCI began definitively to distance itself from the Soviet bureaucracy only after 1956. From then on, it sought to overcome the intrinsic contradiction that had previously marked it. Its leadership realized that any attempt to resolve this contradiction without renouncing the concepts and practices of the Stalinist epoch would have had disastrous implications for its projects.

Certainly, this contradiction was not merely "Italian". Nor was the dynamic that impelled the PCI to overcome it by choosing a "national" road. In this sense, the evolution of the PCI, far from being exceptional or specific, was typical and corresponded to an underlying general tendency. The paradox is that there are undoubtedly special features that have permitted this general tendency to express itself in the "purest" and most far-reaching fashion in the PCI.

So far as the PCI's attitude to *perestroika* and *glasnost* is concerned, it would be wrong to see some contradiction between its support for *glasnost*, on which we are to a large measure agreed, and its support for *perestroika*, which we do not share. In fact there is an unquestionable consistency in the attitude of the PCI leadership.

They do not hail *glasnost* because it is creating a more favourable terrain for the struggle for socialist democracy as we conceive it, but because it represents in their eyes a confirmation of their theory of the "universal value" of democracy and, thus, a rehabilitation of classical bourgeois democracy (and a corresponding abandonment of the Marxist critique of this democracy). In their opinion, it legitimizes their position on the market economy which, if not a "value", will be at least a universal necessity.

Gorbachevism warmly welcomed

Finally, the conceptions sketched out by the Gorbachevite wing of the Soviet bureaucracy are being warmly welcomed by the PCI, because they seem to confirm its reformist conceptions. For the PCI, these conceptions are of universal validity, not only in the capitalist industrialized countries, but also in the under-developed countries, as well as in the bureaucratized transitional societies. In the case of the latter, in particular, the PCI leaders posit a self-reform of the bureaucracy that is translated today into their support for Gorbachev and their favourable attitude to the Polish "historic compromise".

In the context of their orientation, it is probable that the leaders of the PCI will undertake actions convergent with those of revolutionary Marxists, such as the demonstrations against the repression in China. But the conceptions and the orientations of this party can contribute nothing to a positive recomposition of the workers' movement in an anti-bureaucratic and revolutionary sense. On the contrary, they run counter to the fundamental political and theoretical clarification that is now more than ever necessary. ★

2) The PCI henceforth considers the Western European social democratic parties as its major partners. Its youth federation is now integrated (with a special status) in the Socialist youth International, and it sent observers to the last congress of the Socialist International. Moreover, it is no longer represented on the editorial board of the *New International Review*, which is conceived as a sort of residual link between a series of communist parties.

3) "Liberal-socialist" refers to a current in Italy in the 1930's that tried to occupy a middle ground between bourgeois liberalism and socialism. On the PCI's last congress, see IV number 92, 10 February 1986; number 99, 19 May 1986; and number 163, 15 May 1989.

4) Trotsky, *Writings 1938-9*, "A Fresh Lesson".

5) The Cominform was created 5 October 1947, to ensure the unity of action of Communist parties under the control of the USSR: nine Communist parties participated, namely the CPSU, the parties of Eastern Europe, the PCI and the French CP.

6) The PCI's support for the April 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia — the prelude to the installation of a bureaucratic Stalinist dictatorship — undoubtedly contributed to the defeat of the Popular Democratic Front, which had lasting consequences.

SOME STATISTICS: The census from the 1950s revealed some unexpected facts. It appeared that some 70% of the population of the Soviet Union were believers, that is, some 115 million people. According to scientific surveys it should have been only 20%. Church leaders give a figure of 70%. I am inclined to believe the church leaders. Of these 115 million some 30 million are members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Some history: The confrontation between the Soviet regime and the Orthodox church, when the Churchmen appeared as armed opponents of the Soviet regime, ended in 1924, when Patriarch Tikhon recognized the new regime. The years of collectivization and de-Kulakization were years of repression for the Orthodox church as well, since it was necessary to break the hold of religious ideology. In the 1930s, and especially in 1937 and 1938, repression against believers was as fierce as against party members.

Nazi occupiers re-opened churches

Under the pressure of the war, the Church unexpectedly underwent a revival. For ideological reasons the occupying German forces opened new churches.... (answer to a remark from the audience) In *Mein Kampf* Hitler speaks about the need to destroy religion and replace it by occultism. However, Hitler recognized the political significance of the religious question. It was necessary to go easy on the Church. Some 2,500 new churches were opened during the war. In the 1950s, there were new outbreaks of religiosity. Khrushchev expected a rapid transition to communism, and this meant that it was necessary to finish the Church in a short period. Between 1961 and 1964, 10,000 of the 20,000 existing churches were closed. Some 150 churches were being closed every day. In the period 1965-1985, 1,300 churches were closed. At present there are 6,800 churches functioning. There are 57 churches open in Moscow, and, despite the evident shortage of churches for the Muscovites, not a single application from believers for a new church to be opened has been received. At present in the USSR there are some 1,000 "points of conflict" where the inhabitants are demanding the opening of churches and the registration of religious communities.

Present trends in the party's policy: It is necessary to revise the 1929 legislation on religion and base ourselves on the Leninist decree on the separation of church and state, with which the 1929 law is in blatant contradiction. I do not agree with some things in the decree, especially the failure to grant the churches the status of legal entities.

At the present there is no tendency in

Top Soviet official explains the new thinking on religion

IN APRIL 1988 Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev had a meeting with the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Pimen of Moscow. Nothing like it had happened since the meeting between Stalin and leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1943, when the Soviet dictator sought to mobilize Russian patriotism against the Nazi invaders.

In the article published here the erstwhile president of the Soviet Council for Religious Affairs, Konstantin Kharchev, explains to a group of teachers at the Higher Party School in Moscow the new thinking on the possibilities for collaboration between Church and state. The speech was given in March 1988 and is translated here from the version that appeared in the Russian language version of *Atmoda*, the paper of the Latvian People's Front, of 18 September. Kharchev views the Church both as a possible source of charitable assistance to a collapsing social security system and as a place where a sense of social commitment can be revived. This latter theme has been taken up by a number of Soviet writers recently, while the Orthodox Church itself has been pushing for a greater role in social work.

Kharchev was removed from his post in June, having been put out of circulation since the start of this year. According to his own account, he fell foul of elements in the party apparatus, the KGB and the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church itself. This latter will have objected bitterly to Kharchev's support for the re-legalization of the Ukrainian Uniate Church which was suppressed in 1946. The Russian Orthodox Church collaborated closely with the Stalinists on this, taking over the property of the outlawed Uniates. In 1986 half of the functioning Orthodox Churches were in the Ukraine. It is generally reckoned that most Ukrainian believers would return to the Uniate Church if they could, an event that would have a massive impact on the material position of the Russian Orthodox Church. Kharchev himself described the Uniate issue as a problem on the scale of the Berlin Wall, at the Third World Congress on Religious Liberty in London on July 24. It is certainly an obstacle to one of Gorbachev's cherished public relations projects, a visit to the Soviet Union by Pope John Paul II, who is also the spiritual leader of the Uniates.

The Uniate issue is an aspect of the growing confrontation over national rights in the Soviet Union. Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev (in the Ukraine) has explained that if the Uniate Church were allowed to re-emerge it would be a source of religious and national enmity. Meanwhile his colleague, Metropolitan Pitirim of Volokolamsk and Yur'ev, turns up as a member of the council of a Russian nationalist formation, the Union for the Spiritual Revival of the Fatherland.

DOCUMENT

the USSR towards a lessening of religiosity. Each year there are a million funeral services in the USSR (20% to 30% of those that die) and, in my opinion, the funeral service is the most reliable proof of religiosity, given that, while alive, people have to watch out for their livelihoods. Some 30% of youth are Christians. Previously it was the practice to demand the production of a passport at baptisms. This provided the possibility of identifying believers and influencing them by administrative means.

The practice of producing a passport in church is not even in accordance with the 1929 law and, in general, inasmuch as the Church is legally separated from the state, no Church document has weight in any state institution, and no civil document (identity card, passport and so on) in the Church. Now, the practise of producing a passport in church has been changed on our initiative. And, strangely, those most opposed to this change were the priests themselves. The reason is simple: the fee for an official baptism is five or six roubles, but up to 100 roubles for a secret baptism.

Party loses control over believers

We [the party] fell into a trap in our anti-Church policy of issuing prohibitions and humiliating people. We divided the priests from the believers, but this did not inspire the believers to have more faith in the local authorities. The party and the government more and more lost control over the believers and in addition and as a consequence we saw the emergence of spiritless believers, that is, people who go through the ritual motions and are indifferent to communism. What is better for the party? A spiritless person or a sincere believer? IT IS HARDER TO

CONTROL THE INDIFFERENT! A paradox? But there is no contradiction here. Here we see something striking. Despite all our efforts, the Church has survived, and not only has it survived, but it is undergoing a revival.

And this confronts us with the question: what is better for the party? Someone who believes in God or someone who believes neither in God nor in communism? I think that is necessary to choose the lesser evil. According to Lenin, the party must bring all spheres of the life of citizens under its control, including believers, and history has shown that religion must be dealt with seriously and for a long time.

It is easier for our party to turn a sincere believer in religion into a sincere believer in communism as well. Here we come up against a problem. The development of a new type of priest. The selection and training of priests is a matter for the party!

Think-tank on party-Church relations

Comrades! Here the party must apply its scientific method. I appeal to you: as quickly as possible you must create, if not an institute, at least a think tank for the study of party-Church relations and for the relationship between socialism and religion. We will provide the necessary materials. But at present, we do not have any scientific apparatus, since in the period of repressions and in the time of stagnation things were allowed to take their course, in the expectation that in the right conditions religion would die away by itself.

The biggest successes in control over religion and the suppression of its activities were achieved amongst the priests and bishops of the Russian Orthodox

Church. At first this was a cause for rejoicing, but now it threatens to produce unforeseen consequences.

The activity of the Russian Orthodox Church is controlled and restricted, and its activities do not lead one to fear trouble, (although, the patience of even the most cowed servant is not unlimited). On the other hand, the strength of other confessions is worrying. This includes the Catholics, who are still managing to keep themselves afloat, and the stormily growing sects, amounting to some 57 confessions, with some 15,000 congregations.

Previously, we put pressure on the Orthodox Church and gave free rein to the sects, since we feared that they would go underground and we would finally lose all control over them. But in fact the Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Adventists and many others have centres and leadership bodies beyond the reach of the soviet regime with the result that their rapid growth is fraught with unforeseeable consequences.

The party is interested in a new type of Russian priest. At present the priests are often not connected with their parishes, often coming from other towns or even from other nationalities. They arrive once a week on Sundays in their parish by car, perform the liturgy and that's it. This suits a lot of people. They are not responsible for anything, not for their flock, not for the finances nor for the upkeep of the churches. When the license is used, the commissioner warns the priest: "take your 350 roubles and keep your nose out of things!" What goes on in the parish neither priest, nor the commissioner nor the party know. And we are talking here of the 70% [of the population] who are believers; it's no joke.

Need to influence and work with believers

Clearly we have to work with them and have an influence on them. And then there is the issue of the restoration and upkeep of churches. Two thousand of the 6,800 churches are architectural monuments. Would it not be better if this work were undertaken by those who use the churches?

Let us look at the question of the bringing up of children. Whether we want it or not, you cannot wrench their children away from believers. Although it is forbidden for children to serve in church, and this is applied strictly in the case of the Orthodox Church, we are not able to exercise control over the influences on children in the other confessions. In Lithuania, 20,000 children are studying the catechism, and this takes place underground. When such a child asks why there are shutters on the windows and why it is not possible to tell anyone that he is studying the Law of God, the adults reply: "The Antichrist rules here, and does not allow you to study the eternal truths of the



good." One can imagine what attitude such a child will have towards the Soviet regime when he or she grows up.

I can understand your perplexity. I too am opposed to the teaching of God's Law in school. But what to do? In Central Asia there are hundreds of underground Koranic schools where mediaeval ideas are taught, instilling a hostile attitude to the rule of the "infidels".

I raised this question of education and got into hot water. "Now we've heard everything; In the 70th year of Soviet power — Sunday schools. What will people say!" I ask you to understand what I am saying. I am against Sunday schools, but what to do?

The second point of Lenin's decree: the Church should not exist as a legal entity. But I also read on Lenin's writings: "every public organization enjoys the right to a legal status." If the Church is not a public organization, then what is it? In Jerusalem from the times of [Tsar] Alexander, there have existed church properties. We say, "give this property back to the Soviet people!" They reply: "We are not opposed to that, but tell us who it belongs to!" I must repeat: I am not trying to call the Leninist decree into question, but I want to remind you of the Leninist idea that politics begins when you start talking about millions of people. The party's policy towards the millions of believers must be as advantageous as possible.

And then again, how are we to understand the slogan about "the Church is separate from the state and the state from the church"? The priests are also Soviet citizens, and also regularly vote for us. And if you look at all these peace, cultural, children's committees and funds "these people" are everywhere (he describes in gestures the religious headgear and the long priest's beard — laughter in the hall).

Angry calls from party veterans

It is worth mentioning incidentally that when they were shown on the TV, I got a lot of telephone calls, including from party veterans. "Why has this been permitted? Why are they on film? This is some kind of religious propaganda!" I answered that I did not put them there. We have to change our way of thinking about the Church and the priesthood. If someone we know becomes a priest, we should not look upon this as something abnormal.

The conclusion could be drawn that an intensive process of penetration by the Church into the state's policy is taking place. And let us look at the thing soberly. Whether we like it or not, religion is entering into socialism. It isn't even walking in, but driving in like a train. And insofar as we have the whole power, it is I believe, within our power to adjust the rails to this side or that according to our own interests.

When we got to know of the experienc-

es of the Hungarian Communists, we were shocked: "you have a priest in your parliament!" They replied "The object of the parliament is to represent all social layers without exclusions." I can only recall one occasion when a priest was a member in a regional soviet of working people's deputies; I think it was somewhere in the Baltic. He did a lot of useful work.

I am not for the growing together of Church and state. The real task at the present time is for the party to take proper account of the Church. There are 60 of us in the Council for Religious Affairs and we are not in a position to deal either with theoretical or practical problems.

We interpret the law on the separation of Church and state as if it prohibits charitable activities. Now in Moscow, as well as in other large cities, there is a catastrophic lack of young medical personnel in the hospitals and of basic nursing staff. Moscow is short of some 20,000 staff. Church activists came forward with a request to be allowed to help as charitable volunteers. What to do — to give permission or refuse it? Give permission and let them carry out the bedpans. And what would it do for the political moral reputation of Communists if the dying people were to pass away with the thought that the Soviet state was unable to give them bedpans.

Mother Teresa has offered help

We cannot now permit such charitable activities because the Catholics would take them up (the famous Mother Teresa has already offered her help), along with Protestants, Baptists and Adventists. The Orthodox Church finds itself in such a depressed condition that it cannot muster the necessary resources for such work.

Many problems, comrades, many! Like you I used to think that it was just a matter of a few old women, but just take a look in a church! There are able-bodied people of our age, and many young people. Look at the social composition of the students in the seminaries. Some 70% are workers and peasants.

Answers to questions

■ **What type of infringements of Soviet law are met with from those working for the local authorities and from priests?**

The main infringement on the part of the local officials and bodies is a persistent resistance to opening churches. There is also constant interference in the personal lives of believers. For example where there are believers in work collectives they are harassed. Materially, perhaps dangerously so.

Efforts are made to crush them morally. Honors are not hung on the notice-board, certificates are not given, the collective will not celebrate their birthdays and so

on. As far as I can remember not a single local official has ever been punished for breaking the law on religion.

The priests are punished at every step. A recent event made a big impression. A regional secretary was dismissed, although they let him stay in the party. But this was already too much. In a region in the Ukraine, they decided to launch a struggle against the increasing influence of religion. And what did they come up with? In the best 1930s spirit they surrounded the church in a big village with police.

They drove up trucks and barbarously broke down the doors and took away the icons. And this was surely the will of God! (laughter). The machine skidded in the middle of the main street — it couldn't go forwards nor backwards. And these statesmen could think of nothing better than, in front of the believers, to stick the icons under the wheels. They got the truck moving again and took the remaining icons and burned them in a field.

There was nothing for it but to get rid of the first secretary, the deputy for propaganda, the deputy for ideology and some others. We restored the church. But how long are young children going to be told when they come into the church that here there was the icon of John the Baptist that was burnt by the godless Communists. With such a policy, what kind of a relationship can the Soviet government have with the people? Do not forget, comrades, we have lost the game in a lot of cities.

■ When will it be possible to buy Bibles?

There are few bibles. There have been 350,000 copies produced in 70 years. Now, at the time of the Millennium [of the conversion of Russia] the Patriarchate is printing 100,000 copies. We are importing 100,000 from Switzerland, and we are allowing the Baptists to import 100,000 from abroad. This is not many, in my view.

When I asked the higher ups to increase the print run they said: "What a lot you want!" There is hardly any religious press here. The *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* prints 30,000 copies — it's a drop in the ocean. Now a *Moscow Patriarchate Herald* has begun to appear, and it is very nicely produced. But this is a purely publicity effort, counter propaganda for abroad.

Millenium belongs to whole nation

In general, in connection with the Millennium, the party's policy has undergone a certain transformation. Some years ago, it was decided not to take part in the celebration and to pass it over in silence. Now it has been decided to treat this anniversary as belonging to the whole nation and as a general cultural event.

UNESCO has been approached with the

idea of making it an event of world significance. A celebratory meeting will be held in the Bolshoi Theater. There is a plan for the members of the Council of the Clergy [Pomesny Sobor] to be greeted by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. So many problems with the separation of church and state!... Lenin only gave indications and a general outline. Our task is to find a concrete solution. What does it mean to separate the Church from the state, and to separate it by how much? And how is it possible to separate the people of the country from it?

■ **How many churches have been opened in the past three to five years?**

In the past year 16, and the year before that, ten. At present there are 68 dioceses and 20 monasteries. The Patriarchate is requesting the return of the Kievan-Pechersk lavra [monastery of first rank]. This question has now been resolved. The Danilov Monastery is going to cost the Patriarchate 32 million roubles; Tolgsky, 30 millions. In fact we did not manage to give back the Tolgsky Monastery before money started coming in from believers. They have already collected 1 million roubles.

From time immemorial, people have not spared money on churches and monasteries. The Tolgsky Monastery will house the first almshouse for retired priests. The Church does not have its own system of social security. I call on all our academics and specialists to work out a way of legally regulating such questions, in a way which responds to our interests.

■ **What is the income of the Orthodox Church?**

It has an official annual income of 312 million roubles (70% from candles and the like, 30% from collections.) The Church puts some 35 million of this in the Peace Fund.

These are the official figures. Nobody knows the real figure. One day of anniversary celebrations is going to cost a million roubles. I am talking here about the celebrations, the reception of guests, of pilgrims to Vladimir, Kiev and so on.

■ **Will there be processions?**

On the 900th anniversary in 1888 processions took place in Kiev. There were several processions, and they met at the Vladimir monument. There has been no request for this from the Patriarchate. They have only brought up the question of the meeting of celebration in the Bolshoi Theater.

■ **Is it possible that new churches will be built?**

Undoubtedly they will. It is not always possible to restore the old churches. There is even a question of a project for a standard church design. ★

Divide and rule in Lithuania

THE central authorities and press of the Soviet Union have accused the People's Fronts of the Baltic countries of violating the constitution of the USSR. However, when a local soviet violated the constitution on September 7 by declaring a Polish autonomous region near the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, TASS and the Moscow media rejoiced: "This is a great Polish festival." The Moscow correspondent of the official Polish daily *Zycie Warszawy* wrote in its September 9 issue that "In Lithuania the Polish population has to defend its rights more and more energetically since they are being more and more threatened."

ZBIGNIEW KOWALEWSKI

THE threat was supposed to come from the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement, or Sajudis, which is imposing the use of Lithuanian as the language of the republic. *Zycie Warszawy's* correspondent continued:

"The Poles will lose their ability to continue to hold leading posts if they do not master Lithuanian in two years. Moreover, according to the laws presently in force, unless you know Lithuanian you cannot either hold the posts of chair of a kolkhoz [cooperative farm], director of a sovkhos [state farm] and even that of proprietor of a large [private] farm. Thus a lot of people who have not had to speak Lithuanian now find themselves threatened. Even in those areas where the majority of the population is not Lithuanian, all administrative affairs are beginning to be conducted in Lithuanian."

Administration conducted in Russian

What *Zycie Warszawy's* correspondent — and the Soviet press — "forget" is that in those areas of Lithuania where a majority of the population is Polish, administrative affairs have not been conducted up until now in Polish but in Russian. That is, the tragedy for the Poles is that they now find themselves obliged to do their business in the language of the country, rather than in a foreign language that is not theirs either.

This correspondent misinformed his readers in Poland no less grossly when he said: "The juridical situation in Lithuania today is such that the Poles have lost a lot of their rights, including the possibility of doing their university studies in Polish."

This suggests that Sajudis forced the closing of Polish colleges. But there has not been a single Polish college in Lithuania. What Sajudis wants to close is the Russian colleges. The legislation backed by Sajudis authorizes teaching minority languages up to and through secondary school.

The majority of the Polish population in Lithuania lives in and around Vilnius. In 1920, the Polish state, which had just been reconstituted, seized this region militarily, provoking a sharp conflict with the Lithuanian state and people. On the basis of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, in 1940 the entire Lithuanian national territory was reunited and incorporated into the USSR. After this area was occupied by the Nazis, guerrillas of the Polish Home Army (AK), the armed force of the underground Polish state, operated in it. But they were regarded by the Lithuanian people as representing Polish national oppression.

In July 1944, the AK and the Soviet Army jointly liberated the city of Vilnius, which had been turned into a German fortress. A few days later, Moscow betrayed its allies and wiped out the AK. It presented itself to the Lithuanian people as the guarantor of the territorial unification of Lithuania against the Polish expansionist claims. But this ushered in a new domination, just as much hated by the Lithuanian masses. The combination of a bureaucratic-military elimination of capitalism and the imposition of Great Russian domination touched off a people's war of resistance. In the country's forests, the guerrillas of the Lithuanian Liberation Army were only crushed in the early 1950s.

In this situation, the Polish population — except the intellectuals, who were the

target of severe repression — enjoyed certain favors from the Stalinist regime, especially in the cultural and educational realms. Permission was given for establishing 260 Polish schools, Polish artistic groups and the only CP paper in the USSR in Polish, *Czerwony Sztandar*. In comparison with the situation of the Polish minority in other parts of the USSR, where every Polish national expression was stamped out, this can be termed exceptional.

The Russification of the Polish communities in Lithuania was not carried out with administrative and police methods. These communities became Russified by assimilating to what represented power, prestige and privileges, in short the power system of the Russian bureaucracy, its language and its culture. This was assimilation to the nation that oppressed the Lithuanians and not the oppressed nation.

As a result, today there are only 88 Polish schools left. The great majority of the Polish population opts for Russian schools. This does not mean that they choose them freely. If there is a Polish elementary school in a Polish town, but the Polish primary school is six kilometers away and the Polish secondary school is 15 kilometers away, while the Russian primary and secondary school are in the same town, then the Poles will send their children to the Russian school.

Path to university blocked for Poles

In the Polish towns, there are no Lithuanian schools. The sharp national rivalry between Lithuanians and Russians for access to university education has blocked the path for Poles. Lithuanians represent 80% of the population of the republic, and 84% of students. Russians are 9%, and 10% of the population. But Poles are 8% of the population and 2% of students. For every thousand Lithuanians, there are 200 intellectual workers, whereas for every thousand Poles it is only 32, that is, six times less.

Published in Polish but traditionally oblivious to the problems of the Polish minority, *Czerwony Sztandar* started to concern itself with these problems in the spring of 1987, facing the rise of the Lithuanian national movement. A year later, the Polish Socio-Cultural Association was founded, and held its congress in April 1989, at which it transformed itself into the Union of Poles in Lithuania. Its aspirations transcend the borders of the republic. It aims to create a national center in Vilnius for all the Polish communities that exist also in Byelorussia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Siberia.

In general, the demands and objections of the Union are legitimate. But its political dynamic soon proved to be very dubious. The Polish communities have been exposed for decades to Russification and not to Lithuanization. However, they

started to mobilize in defense of their national rights, not against the Russian bureaucracy but against the Lithuanian national movement. From the outset, the Russian bureaucracy supported this mobilization.

In its August 27 issue, the "liberal" but bureaucrat-controlled Polish weekly *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, summed up the problem as follows: "Sajudis did not extend a hand to the Poles, and the latter immediately lined up against this movement. The essential thing is the methods Sajudis used. In its official statements, it says that it is open, understanding and well intentioned. But secretly the entire movement is working under the slogan of 'Lithuania for the Lithuanians.'...To all these historic questions, the Lithuanians have only one answer — Stalinism. It is not so simple. The Poles say sometimes that until a little while ago everything was going well. But when Gorbachev gave democracy to the Lithuanians, they raised their heads. They say also that if the Lithuanians had governed after the war and not Stalin, there would not be a single Polish school."

Sajudis candidate defeated by Polish leader

In the elections for the Congress of People's Deputies, Jan Ciechanowicz, leader of the Union of Poles, ran in the same district as Virgilijus Cepaitis, secretary general of Sajudis. In the Brezhnev period, up until 1983, Ciechanowicz was one of the editors of *Czerwony Sztandar*. Cepaitis was one of the leaders of Sajudis who warned his Lithuanian compatriots against adopting anti-Polish chauvinist attitudes. In the second round of the elections, Ciechanowicz, who was backed by the Russian and Polish minorities and by the apparatuses of the bureaucratic regime, defeated Cepaitis.

In the first session of the Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow, Ciechanowicz entered a speech in the minutes that he had not been able to give. In this speech, he vigorously denounced the extermination of several thousand Polish army officers in Katyn in 1940, the Stalinist crimes against the Polish minority and the tragic situation of the Polish minority in various regions of the USSR. But he also tried to confirm the legitimacy of his own organization in Lithuania in the eyes of the central authorities by saying that "today People's Poland is the most important and most reliable military and political ally of the Soviet Union." (*Zmiany*, September 10). A Stalinist oath of allegiance of this sort could only reinforce Sajudis's suspicions that in the Union of Poles, Ciechanowicz and his friends are setting up a Russian-Polish fifth column.

In a region of Vilnius, a movement arose for Polish territorial autonomy. The local soviets, whose members are still the old nomenklatura bureaucrats, declared

30 rural townships and three towns Polish autonomous zones. The majority of the leadership of the Union of Poles decided to back this movement. In the course of the negotiations that took place then, the Sajudis leaders asked them to drop the demand for territorial autonomy and accept cultural autonomy.

The response of the Polish leaders was that this was a tactical maneuver by Sajudis, which they accused of really pursuing a strategy of assimilating the Polish minority. For its part, Sajudis feared that the emergence of Polish autonomous zones around Vilnius was in line with a strategic plan to open the way for annexationist pressures from the Polish state, combined with Soviet plans for smashing the Lithuanian national movement.

Old claims and fears revived by Interfront Journal

Sajudis leaders explained to the Solidarnosc daily *Gazeta* (August 21): "The idea is spreading that if we declare independence, Poland will demand Vilnius. Obviously, this fear is being instigated by the Russians. They openly tell us: 'If we leave, the Poles will take our place.' Incredible as it may seem, the publications of Edinstvo [the "internationalist" organization in Lithuania] intended for the Polish minority in Lithuania condemn the annexation [by the USSR] of Poland's eastern territories and call on the Poles to reestablish the Polish character of these territories. By sowing such illusions, they want to provoke a dispute among us."

Lithuanization is a corollary of the efforts of the Lithuanian people, subjected for decades to Russification, to reassert themselves and regain their national identity and their control over their historic conditions of existence. Like any mass movement of an oppressed people, Sajudis shows certain Jacobin-type and nationalistic tendencies toward a highly centralized national state. Such tendencies conflict with the rights of the national minorities, especially when the latter do not raise their demands within the framework of this national movement but rather seek support in the camp of the oppressor nation. Sajudis is not the first national-liberation movement to be torn by a contradiction of this sort. It is an extremely difficult one to resolve, even for exponents of internationalist socialism, and still more for those who, like the Sajudis leaders, are not.

However, it is interesting to note that in Latvia, where the Polish minority never enjoyed any rights under the Stalinist regime and where there have not been any Polish schools, the Polish Socio-Cultural Association set up at the end of 1988 is collaborating closely with the People's Front. This alliance is perfectly possible because, as its chair, Ita Kozakiewicz, explained in the August 23 issue of *Gazeta*, "The Latvians see that we take a totally

negative attitude to the Interfront, an organization of Russians living in Latvia who are trying to oppose the [Latvians'] aspirations for independence and democratic reforms."

Tomas Venclova, a leading Lithuanian poet who lives in exile, has said: "The old complexes, the senseless myths and fears of Polish influence are still alive in Lithuania and at times they take pathological forms. They are cultivated by a part of the older generation, but also cheerfully fostered by the authorities....But what most frightens me are the voices — although they are not very numerous — of Lithuanians who call for eliminating the Polish schools and folklore groups, who oppose the justified demands for cultural autonomy in those areas where the Polish population predominates, who prevent Polish flags from being carried along with Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian ones in the big demonstrations in Vilnius...or the celebration of Polish masses in the Vilnius cathedral, which was recently returned to the believers under the pressure of all the inhabitants of the country." (*Kultura*, Paris, March 1989.)

Poles distrustful of everything Lithuanian

For his part, in the weekly *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* of July 28, Bohdan Skaradzinski pointed out that "a Pole who visits Lithuania will be repelled by the concentration of nationalist feeling among his or her compatriots in Vilnius," and that Poles in Lithuania are "distrustful of everything Lithuanian." "I do not know when they are going to realize that their national survival depends on their capacity to establish good relations with the Lithuanians, because otherwise they will be condemned to Russification."

On August 23, the anniversary of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, the Sejm (the governing body of Sajudis) called on the Lithuanian people "to re-establish an independent democratic Republic of Lithuania, not subordinate to the administrative system and jurisdiction of the USSR." Together with the People's Fronts of Estonia and Latvia, Sajudis organized an impressive demonstration — a human chain of at least a million citizens of the three republics.

The chair of Sajudis, Vytautas Landsbergis, told the independent Polish press that the organizers hoped that next year they would be able to extend this human chain to Warsaw and Budapest, and if possible to Prague. For his part, Jan Sienkiewicz, chair of the Union of Poles in Lithuania, called on his compatriots to join in this demonstration. In this way, he wanted to demonstrate the falseness of the propaganda of Sajudis, which, he said, "is trying consistently in every way to present us Poles in Lithuania as fierce adversaries of the progressive national aspirations of the Lithuanians, as loyal allies of the Rus-

sians living in Lithuania and as champions of Moscow's great power policy." (*Tygodnik Powszechny*, September 24.)

However, with Moscow's aggressive political counteroffensive, the situation suddenly took a turn for the worse. On August 26, the Central Committee of the CPSU issued a very grave warning to the People's Fronts in the Baltic countries to rein in their aspirations for independence. On September 5, the boss of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Algirdas Brazauskas, recognized that changes were going too fast in these countries and that Moscow's worries, although overly nervous, were justified. He said that he did not exclude the possibility of military intervention by Moscow. At the same time in Vilnius, bureaucratic reaction, grouped in the Committee for the Defense of Soviet Power in Lithuania, held a rally.



TASS reported the rally in the following terms: "In the name of the working people of various nationalities and social strata in Lithuania, the participants in the rally demanded that the Supreme Soviet of the republic block the adoption of the laws and decrees leading toward separation of Lithuania [from the USSR]." They also demanded, according to TASS, assurance of real equality for the national minorities and confirmation of the leading role of the Communist Party of Lithuania."

Parallel to this, in Moscow, an article appeared in the magazine *Politicheskoe Obrazovanie*, published for political workers in the bureaucratic apparatus and which has specialized in "proving" that all nationality problems in the USSR have been resolved in an exemplary way, "according to Leninist norms." It was written by S. H. Vysotsky, secretary of the CP Salcininkai district committee, who is of Polish origin. Vysotsky denounced the imposition of the Lithuanian language fostered by Sajudis, which he said would block the national and cultural development of the Polish minority. The only solution, according to him, was to set up a Polish autonomous region.

Scarcely two days later, on September 7, what was prefigured in Moscow by Vysotsky, became a reality. The soviet of

the Salcininkai district — 50 kilometers south of Vilnius, which has a population of 40 thousand, of whom 81% are Poles — proclaimed a Polish national district. Some of the Polish members of the soviet voted against. All of the Russian members voted for.

The session was attended by two big bureaucratic bosses of the republic, V. Astrauskas, chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania; and S. Gedrajtis, second secretary of the Lithuanian CP. Discredited as Stalinists in the eyes of the Lithuanian masses, these two tried to regain credibility by saying that the unilateral declaration of Polish territorial autonomy would contribute to the destabilization of the republic and put in danger peaceful coexistence among the nationalities.

On September 16, the soviet of the Vilnius Raion (that adjoins but does not include the Lithuanian capital) declared a second autonomous Polish raion. On September 21, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic annulled the decisions of the raion soviets in both Salcininkai and Vilnius.

Differences in minority leadership

Around this question, serious political differences rose in the leadership of the Union of Poles in Lithuania. Czeslaw Okinczyk, vice chair of the union, opposed the majority position, telling the *Solidarnosc* daily *Gazeta* (September 11) that the Salcininkai soviet's decision could not help but drastically worsen Polish-Lithuanian relations, which were already quite tense.

"What worries me most is the fact that in the rally that preceded the session of the soviet Polish banners appeared expressing support for the August 26 statement of the Central Committee of the CPSU. It is unacceptable to attack the Lithuanians with Moscow's threats.

The illusory character of what the Russian press called a 'Polish success,' can be appreciated if you take into consideration the fact that the Salcininkai soviet established trilingualism in the district, that is, equality of the Polish, Russian and Lithuanian languages. "In reality this changes nothing in the traditional situation, because it means that Russian will continue to be the language of communication among the nationalities. This means suspending the application of the law that requires citizens of the republic to know Lithuanian. Those happiest about this obviously are the Russians."

In the name of the Sajudis leadership, Landsbergis told *Gazeta*: "Moscow is trying to weaken us by inciting interethnic conflicts. For a long time, Moscow has been trying to convince the Lithuanians that it is only thanks to Russia that they can keep Vilnius, and that they have to beware of the intentions of the

Poles...Among the Poles, there are those who prefer an alliance with Russia....We are being blackmailed with the threat that if we do not meet all the demands of the Poles, they will create a Karabakh here....

"Only a week ago we met with the leaders of the Union of Poles in Lithuania. There was not even any suggestion of the possibility of what is happening now. We left convinced that we were heading toward an agreement. Now, it is evident that the real plans were hidden from us. The program of 'fragmenting' Lithuania into autonomous regions did not arise here. The Georgians, Latvians and Estonians are facing the same threats....This is how Moscow intends to block the process of the republics gaining national independence. Poles, please be reasonable. Lithuania is our common home."

For the bureaucracy, both in Moscow and Warsaw, the perspective of an alliance between Solidarnosc and the Baltic People's Fronts represents a major strategic threat. By fomenting interethnic conflict in Lithuania, the bureaucracy hopes to dispel this danger, to arouse nationalist solidarity in Poland with the Polish minority in Lithuania and a hostility of the Polish people toward the Lithuanian national movement. To this end, although very discreetly, it has not hesitated to exploit the old Polish expansionist claim to the Vilnius region.

Leszek Miller, secretary of the Polish CP and one of the leaders of the "reform" wing of the bureaucracy, accused some Solidarnosc leaders of "uncritically supporting some movements in the Baltic countries or in Ukraine, as if they did not know that the nationalism of these movements is not directed only against the Russians but also against the Poles." Adam Michnik, editor of *Gazeta*, answered: "The difficult Polish-Lithuanian questions can only be resolved in the context of Polish-Lithuanian dialogue. This is not an anti-Russian option but an anti-totalitarian one." (*Gazeta*, September 18.)

The national leadership of Rural Solidarnosc gave the most thoroughgoing answer.

In an open letter addressed to Poles in Lithuania, it said about the proclamation of an autonomous Polish district in Salcininkai: "This is a shameful thing, and no 'Polish festival.' The autonomist or separatist actions of Poles in Lithuania are not a Polish but a Russian political success. In the long run, this is an error and a negative development, both for the Lithuanians and the Poles. The policy of divide and rule can offer you a momentary success, but over time it can only produce sour fruit....If you seek external aid — in this case, Russian — to strengthen your position temporarily, you will become an alien element and rightly be treated as one in the future. A betrayal of Lithuania would be a betrayal of Poland." (*Gazeta*, September 15.) ★

AROUND THE WORLD



SOVIET UNION

Right of referendum established in Lithuania

THE SUPREME SOVIET of the Lithuanian SSR voted on November 5 to establish the right of referendum. Henceforward popular referendums can be called at the request of half of the members of the Supreme Soviet or 300,000 citizens. In reporting this step, the Western press has concentrated on the fact that it offers the means for asserting the independence of Lithuania. But it also has an important general democratic significance. It will be interesting to see if this measure is copied in the other Baltic republics, Byelorussia, Ukraine and beyond. ★

tion of ten groups, on the model of the People's Fronts in the Baltic, Byelorussia, and Ukraine. In its report of this meeting, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* of November 6 said that the new organization is not proposing the perspective of secession from the Soviet Union, but is demanding that legislation adopted by the Soviet Supreme Soviet not be valid in Armenia before being approved by the republic's Supreme Soviet. The People's Front of Azerbaijan has also raised this demand. The Estonian Supreme Soviet was the first to vote such a law. It was struck down as unconstitutional by the USSR central authorities. But such initiatives are clearly continuing to multiply. ★

ALBANIA

Hard line re-affirmed as isolation decreases

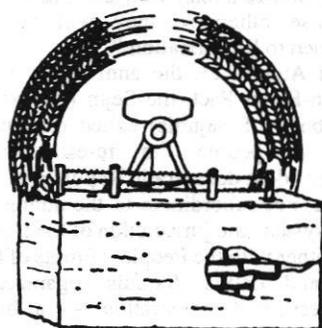
RAMIZ ALIA, leader of the Albanian Workers' Party, spoke out against the dangers of outside influences at the Eighth plenum of the Central Committee in late September. According to the party daily *Zeri i Popullit* (September 29), he admit-

Armenian national movement founded

THE FOUNDING conference of the Armenian National Movement was held in Yerevan on November 5. The new organization is reportedly a broad federa-



POLAND



EAST GERMANY



RUMANIA



BULGARIA

Obituary — Ken Shilman

Former Socialist Workers' Party leader dies

Ken Shilman, a leader of the Socialist Workers' Party for many years, died September 7 of cancer at the age of 47. He was a member of the SWP National Committee from 1976 through 1984 and served on other leadership committees. He was also a branch organizer in Minneapolis; New York city; Seattle; St. Louis; and Morgantown, West Virginia. He resigned from the SWP in 1987, but did not lose his interest in politics.

While serving in the US army in the South, he came in contact with the struggle against racial segregation. After his discharge from the military, he participated in the Freedom Rides to the South organized by the Congress of Racial Equality. He was arrested in Jackson, along with more than 100 freedom Riders, and put in the maximum security unit of Parchman state prison.

In his book *Negroes with Guns*, the famous Black militant Robert Williams notes that Shilman was responsible for saving the life of a fellow rider, Richard Griswold, who was beaten in his cell by a prisoner, an attack instigated by the cops. Shilman saw the beating and "started yelling at the top of his lungs, demanding that Griswold be removed from the cell before he was killed."

After being released, Shilman returned to New York and joined the national Committee to Aid the Monroe Defendants, who included Williams. About the same time, he joined the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Inspired by the fight against racism, in 1961, New York hospital workers, many of whom were Black, fought for union recognition. Shilman headed a Youth Committee for Justice for Hospital Workers.

In these activities, he came into contact the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance, which he joined. In 1968, he helped organized a teach-in against the Vietnam war in Berkeley, California, which set the stage for a demonstration of 15,000 people, led by 500 GIs. He played a pioneering role in the campaign to involve GIs in the antiwar movement.

In the late 1970s, the SWP decided to launch a campaign to reach coal miners. Shilman went to Morgantown, West Virginia, to help lead the work. He continued to play a major role in the SWP's trade union work after moving to Oakland, California, in 1984.

(Summarized from the September 22 issue of *The Militant*, the paper that reflects the views of the SWP.)★

ted that negative phenomena, similar to those in the Soviet Union, could be found in Albania. He spoke out against those who were inclined to "underestimate the factor of"...."the imperialist-revisionist encirclement"...."because our relations and contacts with the world are increasing and expanding." Substantial grants of aid have been accepted in the last few years from West Germany, while the Albanian regime has been taking a more active role in Balkan affairs, perhaps anxious about the possible threat to its own stability if the crisis in Yugoslavia's Albanian populated Kosovo region were to get out of hand.

Evidently worried by the economic situation, Alia insisted that party membership should not be mandatory for all responsible posts and attacked workers who, if suspended from one job, "merely trot along to another enterprise, without turning a hair....In my view" he continued, "these people can be left without work."★

BULGARIA

5,000 demonstrate for ecology and democracy

FRIDAY 3rd November saw the first independently organized rally to take place in Bulgaria since the birth of the Stalinist state, with four to five thousand people demonstrating outside government headquarters in Sofia. The demonstration was organized by the independent ecological movement Ecoglasnost, and had as its goal the presentation to the president of the Bulgarian parliament of a petition, signed by 11,500 people, protesting against various schemes menacing the environment. The march coincided with the final day of a 35 nation conference in Sofia on the protection of the environment. The demonstration quickly took on the character of a more overt challenge to the regime, with cries of "glasnost", "democracy" and "referendum"; Ecoglasnost's program

stresses that Bulgaria's environmental problems are linked to the lack of public and democratic control over economic policy. The police made no attempt to intervene, and the crowd dispersed peacefully after 15 minutes. The secretary of Ecoglasnost, Alexander Karakachanov, announced at the end of the demonstration that his organization would be establishing branches across the country. At the same time, the Discussion Club for the Support of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*, an organization of reformist intellectuals founded a year ago, has been authorized for the first time to hold a public meeting.

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SRI LANKA

Community workers disappear

MR. M. LIONEL, an advice worker at the Legal Advice Center, Katunayeka, Sri Lanka, and Mr. M.M. Ranjith, an employee of Floral Green Ltd. (a company operating in the Katunayeka Free Trade Zone or FTZ), have disappeared since Friday 27th October. Their case is one amongst many thousands of disappearances in Sri Lanka today.

Mr. Lionel had worked as an advice worker at the Legal Advice Center since 1985. This center provides legal advice to FTZ employees because the government does not allow trades unions in this zone. On 27 October Mr. Ranjith was asked by his employers to attend an internal disciplinary inquiry at the company premises at 4 p.m.. As lawyers are not allowed to attend such inquiries, Mr. Lionel accompanied Mr. Ranjith as an observer. Subsequent inquiries by Mrs. Lionel revealed that the two men had left the Floral Green premises at around 7.30 p.m..

According to information given by persons who do not want their identity disclosed, it appears that Lionel and Ranjith had been taken into custody by the police on their way home. They had been removed in a white Hiace van.

Two days previously, the Legal Advice Center's full-time lawyer, Mr. C. Kotelawala had been taken into custody whilst he was at home. Other lawyers intervened to secure his release, although he had been badly beaten and tortured whilst in custody. Mr. Kotelawala had tried to send word to Mr. Lionel about this incident but his message arrived only after the disappearance of Lionel and Ranjith.

The background to these disappearances is that the employers are trying to take advantage of the prevailing situation to eliminate worker activists with the aid of the police. Neither man was directly or indirectly linked with the JVP or other armed groups. Last year, the Legal Advice Center handled a total of 86 complaints from workers. In the first three months of this year the Center had already received 570 complaints. This is possibly why the employers are trying to prevent the Center

from functioning.

We request you to write to the President of Sri Lanka, President's House, Colombo, Sri Lanka calling upon the government to release immediately Lionel and Ranjith.

Addresses of the disappeared workers:
M. Ranjith, 686 Rice Mill Road, Katunayeka, Sri Lanka.

M. Lionel, 10/24, Santcraft Watte, Maithr, Mawatha, Ekala, Jaela, Sri Lanka. ★

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Latin American *Inprecor* published

THE PRESS of the Fourth International has expanded with the appearance of an *Inprecor* in Spanish for Latin America. The journal, which will appear monthly, intends to cover all important developments on the continent.

The 1980s have seen some profound developments in Latin America: the capitalist offensive launched through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) seeks to impose a new model of development on the continent, at the price of an exorbitant foreign debt; with a very high economic, political and social cost; the loss of national sovereignty; the establishment of a politics of austerity; the privatization of large sectors of the economy; attacks on the gains of the working class; and a steady decline in the standard of living of the population, etc.

But, in the face of these growing attacks, the 1980s have also seen a reorganization of the workers' and peasants' movements; the emergence of a popular urban movement; the self-organization of women; the political and moral perspective of liberation theology; the emergence of an ecologist consciousness; the development of civic movements, which have engendered a rich process of recomposition of the mass movement.

Forum for profound and critical discussion

Latin American *Inprecor* aims to provide a forum for profound and critical discussion on the situation of the mass movement and its revolutionary vanguard, as, for example, on the dilemmas of the Nicaraguan revolution; the state of the Cuban revolution and its role today; the character and the basis for the revolution; alliances and popular fronts; military strategy; the role of democracy in the construction of socialism; the character of the transition period, etc. In short, all the subjects which today are at the heart of the preoccupations of Latin American revolutionaries.

Moreover, the reactions of the Brazilian PT, the Salvadorian FLMN, the Uruguayan MLN and the Nicaraguan government

PORTUGAL PSR Leader murdered

OUR comrade José Da Conceição de Carvalho, a member of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), Portuguese section of the Fourth International, was assassinated in Lisbon on Friday 27 October. Aged 36, he entered working life at 14 and had been for 9 years in the leadership of a struggle against the closure of his workplace. He had joined the PSR during his military service in 1975.

The PSR, which since its last congress has been engaged in an anti-militarist campaign amongst youth, had organized on the evening of 27 October a rock concert at its party premises, which attracted more than 200 youth. Around 10 p.m., a group of skinheads tried to break in. Repelled the first time, they returned later, in greater numbers and armed. Almost as soon as the scuffling began, a young skinhead had planted his knife in the heart of our comrade.

Grief at José's death was felt throughout the country. All the parties and trade unions of the left united in denouncing this crime as a fascist murder. Television and radio gave extensive coverage to the murder and to the funeral of our comrade on the following Sunday morning, which was attended by some thousands of people, amongst them important personalities; all left and democratic organiza-



tions were represented, in particular the Portuguese Communist Party. The president of the Republic, Mario Soares, who could not be present at the funeral, sent his condolences by telephone to the PSR headquarters on Monday morning.

The group of skinheads (around 40) seem to have been well known to the police, having already organized similar attacks in the Lisbon area with impunity; after the emotion sparked off by this assassination, the police have arrested three of the fascists, amongst them, it appears, the presumed murderer.

The most important Portuguese rock groups have decided to organize, shortly, a large concert in memory of our comrade. ★

to the repression in Tienanmen Square evidence of a new sensibility running through the Latin American revolutionary vanguard.

Inprecor will seek to respond first to the prime necessity of accompanying and exploring these new positions which will determine also our activity in Latin America.

After a long period during which our forces have been dispersed, the establishment of a range of mechanisms of coordination has begun to yield its first results.

The appearance of the first issue of Latin American *Inprecor* is, perhaps, nothing more than the laying of the foundation stone of the building we wish to construct.

A mirror for the struggles taking place in Latin America, it seeks also to be an instrument for those struggles. Utopian? Perhaps, but utopian ideas can also lead to the building of great things. ★

INPRECOR

Correspondencia de Prensa Internacional para América Latina

Contents of issue number 0, November 1989:

Upheaval in the third world;
Colombia: interview with Daniel Libreros

Brazil: "The PT, an alternative government and an alternative power";
Glasnost and the crisis of the Communist Parties;

Nicaragua; interview with the Minister of the Economy;
Mexico: "The PRT faces the Cardenist project"

Uruguay; "The MPP and the challenges which it faces";

Cuba; "Soviet-Cuban economic relations".

The journal can be obtained from PEC, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108, Montreuil, France