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Repression fans flames of Palestinian resistance



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The intifada revives and spreads

THE MASSACRE by an Israeli gunman of seven Palestinian workers at Rishon-le-Zion on May 20 has led to a qualitative new phase in the uprising of the Palestinian masses (*intifada*), marked by an increase in radicalization and, above all, by an extension of the uprising to new areas. For the first time since the beginning of the *intifada* in December 1987 the movement has spread not only to the "Israeli Arabs" — those Palestinians who remain in the territories conquered by the Zionists in 1948 and who have Israeli citizenship — but also to the Palestinian refugees in Jordan, some of whom have Jordanian citizenship. There are at least as many Palestinians in Jordan as in the territories occupied in 1967 by the Israeli state. The mobilization has even reached Lebanon and Syria. This geographical extent is unprecedented. At the time of writing (May 24) we are still awaiting the speech of PLO leader Yasser Arafat at the UN Security Council in Geneva in response to these events.

SALAH JABER

THIS NEW flare-up of the Palestinian struggle, in the 30th month of the *intifada*, confirms what the Israeli sociologist Meron Benvenisti predicted at the beginning: in the territories occupied in 1967 there was going to be a long-term struggle with many upsurges, similar to Northern Ireland or South Africa. However, contrary to all the evidence, a large proportion of the Zionist establishment has, even after May 20, continued to take its desires for reality and periodically announce the approaching end of the *intifada*. Thus General Mordechai, commander of the occupation troops on the West Bank, by May 23 believed himself to be in a position to partially lift the curfew imposed in the region since the Rishon-le-Zion massacre, and promise an imminent return to calm.

Israeli politicians reject political explanation

Israeli Prime Minister Shamir and his foreign minister Moshe Arens have protested vigorously against those who have given a political explanation for the flare-up after May 20, laying indirect responsibility at the door of the policies of the Israeli government. According to the government's spokesperson, all this is an accident, the act of someone "unbalanced"

which has been exploited by the usual professional agitators from the PLO and the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas. The perennial conspiracy theory of history!

However General Vilnai, commander of the occupation forces in the Gaza sector, cut through the soothing speeches of reassurance coming from the majority of the Israeli administration, recognizing the truth in front of Western reporters on May 21:

"The number of people amongst the Palestinians who have scores to settle with us is growing. It is not even a matter of a basic national conflict — Palestinians against Israelis — these scores are almost personal, individual, because some one in the family or social circle has been directly affected.

"There can be no doubt — there are more and more people who want to act, who want to take effective revenge" (*Le Monde*, May 23).

Inevitable effects of "restrained" repression

This is the inevitable effect of the kind of "restrained" repression of the type practised by the Zionist army on the West Bank and in Gaza since the start of the *intifada*. It has been "restrained" in the sense that, for both internal and interna-

tional reasons, the repression has not been able to reach the proportions of wholesale massacre, breaking the uprising by drowning it in blood. As a result the almost daily killings (700 dead since December 1987) only increase the resentment of those under attack and add further, "personal and individual" reasons, as the general explained, for them to revolt.

In this context, as the "enlightened" Zionists led by Shimon Peres and their mentors in Washington perfectly understand, only political means would be able to bring the rebellion to an end. And in fact in the first few months of 1990, the perspective of an indirect agreement between the Israeli government and the PLO, under American-Egyptian auspices, the famous Baker-Mubarak plan for elections in the territories occupied in 1967, had the effect of dampening down the *intifada*. It seemed then that the ball was in the Israeli court, where the *intifada* had shattered the "government of national union" (see IV 183).

Arafat calls for Arab deputies to vote for Peres

At the start of April, it seemed that Peres was on the way to forming a new government. Everything seemed to be ready for the start of a process of negotiated "settlement". PLO leader Yasser Arafat himself, thinking that he was on the verge of reaping the rewards of his policy of appeasement of the Americans and Israelis, called on the Arab deputies in the Knesset (Israeli parliament) to vote for Peres. This was the first time ever that a PLO leader had called for a vote for a Zionist leader. However, owing to the caprices of various rabbis, the perspective turned out to be short.

As always the collapse of perspectives, or rather of political illusions, reinforced the exasperation and the need to react of the masses. Such a process was at the origins of the *intifada* (see "The dynamic of the *Intifada*" in IV 158) and its revival could only lead to higher levels of radicalization, as *Le Monde's* Jerusalem correspondent, Alain Frachon noticed:

"If we are to believe remarks made in some military circles, the new form taken by the clashes are particularly worrying the army. The soldiers have confronted crowds of hundreds, even thousands of demonstrators, who, defying the curfew, are pouring out into the streets and around the army posts. This type of action, which recalls the first months of the Iranian revolution, is limited to the Gaza Strip, but they have taken on a breadth not seen since the first days of the *intifada* in December 1987" (*Le Monde*, May 23).

While the clashes have, as usual, been most violent and massive in the Gaza sector, if only for demographic reasons (600,000 people in 360 Km²), they have also spread in an unprecedented fashion. In the first place to the "Israeli Arabs".

Most Palestinian localities and quarters

3

inside the 1948 frontiers of the State of Israel have witnessed scenes previously seen only in the territories beyond the "Green Line". Above all in Nazareth, where the Zionist forces have used rubber bullets, which can kill, as has been shown often on the West Bank and in Gaza. On May 21 some ten Palestinians were injured there.

The resentment of the Palestinians of Israeli citizenship has been nourished by the spectacle of the growing immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union to Israel. These immigrants are pampered and privileged according to racist criteria and the expansionist ambitions of the Zionist authorities, while the status of the "Israeli Arabs" continues to get worse.

But the most significant aspect of the new upsurge is, without doubt, the entrance on the scene of the Palestinians in Jordan. It is true that since the start of the *intifada* there have been some demonstrations of solidarity in the Palestinian refugee camps, which have been quickly repressed. King Hussein, who has more Palestinian blood on his hands than any Zionist leader, having drowned the Palestinian organizations in his kingdom in blood in 1970, has realized the size of the danger.

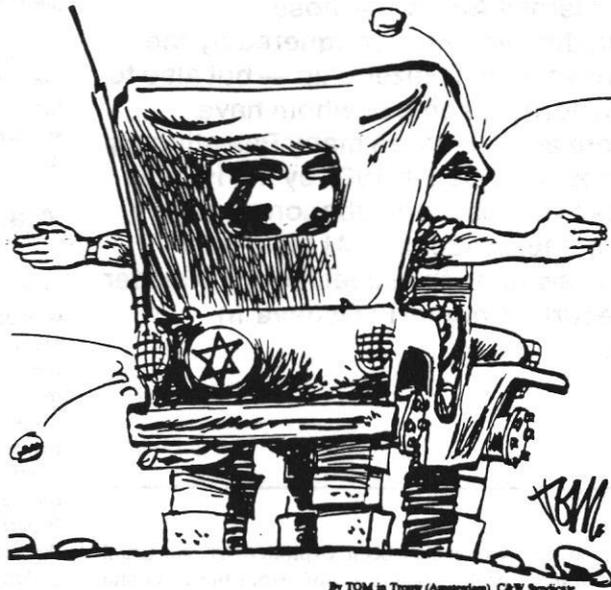
With the aim of limiting the contagion of the *intifada* on the Palestinian and Jordanian masses, an effect that is all the more to be feared given the economic crisis in Jordan, he has taken some far-reaching measures. The first was the breaking off in July 1988 of legal and administrative links between Jordan and the West Bank, which until then he had demanded back as an integral part of his kingdom. The idea was to demobilize the Palestinians in Jordan, who could then wait for the birth of a Palestinian state on the West Bank all the more calmly, in that the Jordanian decision would permit a new epoch of fraternal relations between King Hussein and Yasser Arafat.

The King's second measure was to open a safety valve by singing in tune with the political liberalization in vogue on a world scale. A certain space for political liberties, albeit strictly controlled, was opened up, culminating in (very relatively) free elections last November, which were to serve as an outlet for popular passions. Here too an old political law has been confirmed: such openings, however small, under conditions of great pressure, tend to be rapidly transformed into gaping holes.

4 Already, a few days before May 20, a massive demonstration, the most important in Jordan for a very long time, met

with violent repression when the demonstrators tried to move towards the crossing point between Jordan and the West Bank. On May 21 a riot broke out in the very centre of the Jordanian capital Amman, when 15 thousand demonstrators, mostly Palestinians, ransacked American symbols. Since then demonstrations have been continuing in the Jordanian refugee camps and the cities. The repression ordered by Hussein has already meant several deaths and dozens of wounded.

Events in Jordan are of decisive importance for the future of the Palestinian struggle. This is not only because there are so many Palestinians in Jordan but



By TOM in Trouw (Amsterdam), CAW Syndicat.

also and above all because they are the majority there, including in the army, and in the framework of a balance of forces that makes victory possible — a unique situation for Palestinians. Furthermore Jordan is, with the Zionist state, the other jaw of the vice around the West Bank, and if it is not broken, any perspective of independence for the West Bank is illusory. For all these reasons the overthrow of the Jordanian monarchy is a key objective for any viable national revolutionary strategy for the Palestinians.

PLO leaders try to appease Jordanian masses

This unavoidable objective has always been a touchstone for our judgement of the Arafat leadership of the PLO. This latter, as one could have expected, has been making intensive efforts to appease the anger of the Jordanian masses:

"A Jordanian minister declared yesterday that the PLO 'has begun to intervene vigorously' in the Palestinian camps to reestablish calm and counteract 'the parties acting against Jordan' through protest demonstrations organized against Israel.

The minister also said that President Yasser Arafat had contacted Abdul Razzaq Yahia, the PLO representative in Amman and 'given him instructions on the subject of the camps and notably the Baqaa camp'.

"The Jordanian minister added that Yahia had indeed gone to Baqaa while 'other PLO officials had gone to the Wahadat camp to try to calm the situation there.' (*Al-Hayat*, an Arab daily published in London, May 23). However, the hold of the PLO leadership on the Palestinian masses in Jordan has been, for a long time, much weaker than in the occupied territories, where it remains quite strong (see IV 157). But in both cases, the

force that is challenging the PLO is, unfortunately, not that of the Palestinian left (except marginally), but that of the Islamic fundamentalists. Both in the territories occupied in 1967 and 1948 the role of the latter in the new upsurge has been remarked on; often it has been preponderant. They have grown in direct proportion to the concessions and compromises of the PLO leadership against a background of an impasse in the negotiated "settlement". This has led to a paradoxical situation in which, according to *Le Monde* correspondent Françoise Chipaux on May 23:

"Particularly conscious of the danger, King Hussein is said to have even encouraged the PLO chief to make

no more concessions for fear of finding himself bypassed, notably by the Palestinian fundamentalists....All of them, including the Jordanian Muslim Brothers, whose grip is strengthening (their performance in the November elections was impressive — SJ) are issuing appeals for 'a holy war for the liberation of the whole of Palestine.'"

Whether King Hussein has really given such advice or not, it has not been followed.

On May 23, Arafat reached a new agreement with Washington, sparing the Bush administration the embarrassment of issuing him with a visa for New York. The United Nations Security Council therefore moved to Geneva to listen to the PLO president demand the intervention of UN observers in the West Bank and Gaza. Whatever the outcome of these negotiations, one thing is certain: the American government is more determined than ever to put pressure on Israel to advance towards a *pax americana* in the Middle East, at a moment when the development of the Palestinian uprising is beginning to seriously threaten the imperialist order throughout the region. ★

The end is nigh

AFTER suffering reverses in regional elections on May 13, West German chancellor Helmut Kohl is pushing all the harder for the rapid absorption of East Germany by the West. On May 18 a transitional agreement was signed by the East and West German governments, concentrating power over the financial affairs of both parts of Germany in the hands of the West German federal bank.

In the autumn the East German parliament (the Volkskammer) is expected to vote the country out of existence. Chancellor Kohl hopes to transform the West German federal elections on December 2, 1990 into all-German elections — and beat off the challenge of his Social Democrat rival Oskar Lafontaine with East German votes.

In the two articles below, taken from *SoZ*, the paper of the German United Socialist Party (VSP), Marxist economist Winfried Wolf analyzes the May 18 agreement and the history of the GDR's economic failure.

WINFRIED WOLF

“WHETHER unification comes a year sooner or later, is of no importance”. Thus spoke an expert on East Germany from the German Industry and Trade Conference (DIHT) in the face of the existing and already signed “State Agreement” between the FRG and the GDR. This agreement is, from a political point of view, nothing but a diktat by West German capital and business for the unconditional annexation of the GDR. The document of total surrender was signed on the East German side by the parties of a “great coalition”. On the federal side, there is a similarly broad coalition.

The West German government has not held back from symbolically underlining the character of the state agreement. Although Kohl has presented this document as “the birth of a free Germany” — which is true if he means the freedom to exploit — the text of the agreement was received by the governments 18 hours before they were to sign it. The GDR delegation was taken to the signing in a jet plane of the West German airforce. The agreement is emblazoned with the insignia of the Federal Republic. And already CSU (Christian Social Union) and CDU (Christian Democratic Union) parliamentarians

are demanding that the East German interior minister, himself a fully-blown conservative, “kindly remove the flag of division from the negotiating room” (CDU General Secretary Volker Rühle).

Striking confirmation of Marxist theory

The base, that is the capitalist economy, determines the superstructure, claimed Karl Marx; Friedrich Engels added “in the last analysis”. And the Bonn coalition has concretized this with regard to the GDR — on the double! On the double! Get the base into line by July 1, 1990! The expected all-German elections will then give some form of superstructure after the State Agreement has laid down the base. And, while the formulations in the agreement concerning the superstructure are vague (“thanks to the fact that in autumn 1989 a peaceful and democratic revolution took place in the GDR, the leaders of the parties to the accord have reached an agreement”...) the stipulations about the economic base are quite precise.

● On July 1, “the Deutschmark will become the common currency” of the



FRG and GDR. It is made clear where the coins will be minted, the notes printed and the circulation of gold controlled. “The Deutsches Bundesbank (the West German central bank) in Frankfurt am Main is the currency and note bank for this currency region.” The question of whether the GDR should have some kind of seat in the central banking activities of the high temple of West German capital does not get a mention.

● On July 1, proclaims the agreement, the “social market economy will become the common economic order of both parties to the agreement.” And the unsocial character of this “social market” is spelt out. “Private property, free prices, and unrestricted activity of labour, capital, goods and services” (article 1). All “opposing prescriptions of the GDR’s constitution”, especially those that flow from the “pre-existing Socialist social and state system” are declared invalid. (article 2)

● The agreement hints that in some cases of industrial branches that are in danger of immediate collapse as a result of the currency union, shock-absorbing transitional measures, such as a GDR tax on FRG products, are possible. However the fictional nature of these rules and their shock absorption is demonstrated by the talk of the “discontinuation of controls on the inner-German frontier” (article 12), in the face of a border that can in fact no longer be controlled, especially with West Berlin in the middle of the GDR. The currency union is also a customs union, that means: direct competition from July 1, 1990.

This applies implicitly also for the world market. Article 13 rules: “Through the establishment of free foreign trade, the GDR is establishing the basis for free international trade.” Generously, here the text notes that the FRG will “extensively

offer their own experiences for the broader integration of the GDR into the world market."

● Finally, in article 17, we read that "freedom of association, free collective bargaining, freedom of workers' struggle" and so on are to be established "according to the rights established in the FRG." The Socialist Party (SPD) in both East and West rejoiced at this, because the right of employers to lockout did not appear here as emphatically as in the first draft. Pure cosmetics! In West Germany the right of employers to lockout their workers is a part of the legislation on industrial conflict. Furthermore both here, and thus after July 1 also in the GDR, political strikes are forbidden, including those opposing the *anschluss*. Even purely economic strikes are subject to restrictions (for example through the new anti-strike paragraph 116 of the Labour Support Law).

● Article 24 explicitly limits collective bargaining rights in public employment. Wage agreements in this area must "correspond to the general economic and financial conditions in the GDR." No money, no salary, no collective bargaining.

● And finally, articles 25-28 lay down the principle that the last word with regard to all the public spending and above all with regard to new credits lies with...the West German finance minister.

The state agreement is an agreement between two parties, one of which is the buyer and the other of which wants to be bought. On this level, that of the governments, the "game is played out". The FRG has all the trumps and the GDR government has nothing to offer, because they have not wanted to bring forward the very strengths that made autumn 1989 happen — the people of the GDR

and their interests.

Now those in power both in Bonn and Berlin are coolly calculating the consequences of the agreement. Towards the end of 1990 there will be a massive reduction in jobs. The GDR's interior minister Diestel spelt it out, talking of "three or four million unemployed." In order to be prepared for this eventuality, Diestel is demanding the rapid arming of the police and the setting up of special units from what still exists of the Stasi (secret police). After all these are "wholly new people; the bodies are still the same, but the heads are different." It is to be feared that not even the head is any different. And it is to be hoped that the really existing process of brain washing can be stopped for a large proportion of the GDR's population so that a broader resistance to the state agreement, the annexation and its consequences can be mobilized. ★

The failure of the East German economy

BOTH WESTERN and eastern judgements on the present economic situation in the GDR are contradictory. Nonetheless there can be no question that the real condition of the industrial and agricultural enterprises, trade, energy, construction, transport and means of communication is far worse than had been suggested by the propagandists of bureaucratic management. Even the pre-November assumptions of the GDR's western trading partners have been proved over optimistic over the past few months. No doubt the GDR's efforts to maintain a good payments record with foreign creditors gave a distorted impression of the reality. This reputation was bought with a constantly deteriorating trade structure with respect to the developed capitalist countries, and an enormous increase in exports to balance declining proceeds.

WINFRIED WOLF

THE sinking proportion of exports made up of modern technical manufactures was balanced by increasing exports of raw materials (potash and brown coal) fashionable clothes, supply and labouring, meat and livestock, and fruit and vegetables. As with all the so-called "real-socialist" countries, long before the "change", the GDR had become more and more a low wage back-

up zone for the EC, and above all, as a result of the inner-German customs union, for West German industrial and commercial concerns.

The rate of exchange by which East German marks were turned into hard currency was 1:2.4 in 1980, but 1:4.4 in 1989. This deterioration in the terms of trade found its economic expression in the fact that between 1980 and 1988, while the annual growth of produced

national income was 4.2%, the growth of available national income was only 2.2%. The difference between produced and available national income, representing the losses on foreign trade, developed from 27 billion marks (sum from 1970 to 1979) to 325 billion. More than one sixth of the net product of the GDR's enterprises was thus being lost on average in the 1980s. In order to finance the sinking export income, the share of exports to the capitalist countries rose from 21.4% of produced national income in 1980 to 45% in 1988.

Here are some indicators that express the state of our economy.

At the end of the 1950s, labour productivity here was 35% behind that in the Federal Republic. In the 1960s it briefly touched 25% and today it is 40 to 50% behind. While in the first half of the 1980s productivity rose by 4.3% per annum, after 1985 it fell 3.5%. The result: while the gross social product of each FRG citizen is around 65,000DM per year, the disposable national income produced by a GDR citizen is some 30,000DM.

Resounding phrases about intensive growth

Despite the resounding phrases of Honcker, Stoph and Mittag at party conferences and central committee meetings to the effect that the core of the SED's economic strategy was the changeover from extensive growth to intensive growth, the exact opposite process took place from 1981 to 1989:

● growth in basic stock (fixed capital) 45%;

● growth in national income 41%.

The rate of productive accumulation developed in line with such figures and was catastrophic, sinking from 16.1% in 1970 to 10% in 1988, a development reinforced by the ambitious maintenance of a

social policy that was in many ways exaggerated and out of touch with the real needs of the population.

This meant that in many sectors of the economy, not much more than the simple maintenance of production was attained. In order to pursue ambitious prestige projects (for example in the sphere of electronics), and to finance a wholly disastrous energy policy, the central authorities took from the enterprises, many of which therefore lacked the means to renew their technically and structurally worn out buildings and equipment. This of course also had the additional effect of worsening the impact on the environment.

The branch of industry where the equipment is the least worn out is mechanical engineering. Even so, the number of installations in this branch that are more than 20 years old rose from 54,900 in 1986 to 60,000 in 1989. Things are much worse in the chemical, textile and food processing industries. Energy production is in an especially ghastly state. In 1985, 56% of the capacity of brown coal-based power stations came from stations that came on line before 1970, with the corresponding low level of functioning and high output of pollutants. The antiquated nature of the structure has not changed in recent years.

All kinds of strange reasons for this development have been given both from left and right.

Those who have been accused — both from right and left — to employ the label "socialist" for the GDR are now arriving at quite opposite conclusions.

Apologists seek excuses for failure

The champions of capitalism assert that the failures of all the countries of so-called "really existing socialism" prove that socialism is now on the way out. On the other hand the apologists of the allegedly socialist character of the system are reduced to attributing the failures of the GDR's economy to the following factors:

- The hugely inferior starting point of the GDR after the Second World War (lower level of industrialization, higher war losses, the burden of reparations, sharpening of disproportions as a result of the country's division and so on);

- The disastrous economic policies pursued by Honecker, Mittag and Stoph from the mid-1970s, and especially from the mid-1980s.

But just as it would be unreasonable to blame unemployment, cyclical crises and mass poverty in the Third World — products of the capitalist system — on the economic policies of specific governments, even if they can have a certain influence,

it would equally be wrong to blame the faults in the system in the GDR on preceding conditions or individual bureaucrats.

The economic history of the GDR is a chain of short-term upturns, crises and periods of stagnation.

The enthusiasm for reconstruction after 1945 was soon followed by the changeover to administrative economic planning. This involved a forcing of the pace in favour of heavy industry on the model of the Stalinist industrialization drive, and was perceived by the working class and other economically active layers to be against their interests. The result was the uprising of June 1953.

A changeover to a "new course" was soon bogged down in a burgeoning mini-



sterial bureaucracy. The building of the wall and the subsequent "call to production" resulted in a brief upturn, which with the "New Economic System of Planning and Economic Management (NÖSPL)" resulted in something of a boom. It turned out in fact that this type of economic leadership — which was demagogically presented as democratization — was the most successful, involving the transfer of responsibility from the central bureaucracy to lower levels with more competence in dealing with details and increased use of so-called "economic levers". But this period was short-lived, since it soon came up against the contradiction between the drive of the economic bureaucracy to increase their own power and the claims of the party bureaucracy to determine aims.

The eighth SED Congress in 1971 marked both the end of this policy and the start of the Honecker era. The announced new guiding principle of the unity of economic and social policy was no invention of Honecker. It was merely a transformation of Stalin's "discovery" of the basic economic law of Socialism into an economic and political directive. In the first years this policy was sustained by the ruthless commercial exploitation

of the oil price rise in a way that had catastrophic consequences for the GDR's own energy policy, and the enormously easier terms for credit at the start of the 1970s.

This brought about a new economic breathing space. It was used to gradually change the relatively stable balance of forces between the party, state and economic bureaucracies established in the second half of the 1960s, which might then have seemed like an ideal form of post-Stalinist bureaucratic rule, back towards a neo-Stalinist regime.

This culminated in the mid-1970s with the thoroughgoing changeover to the combine structure, which involved the sacrifice of all the advantages of the rich production and marketing experience of the middle and small enterprises, their many sided productive structure and their capacity to react quickly to new needs. In their place came the disadvantages of the centralization of industry into vast monopolies in terms of the development of prices, costs and their real expression, capacity for innovation and the length of time it took innovations to be introduced into production.

Increase in power of combine directors

The change however served its purpose of ensuring, for more than a decade and a half, the domination of the party bureaucracy inside the bureaucratic system. As a consequence of the concentration and reduction in numbers of the economic bureaucracy, the power of the combine directors, who were in fact directly subordinate to the party leadership in the person of Günter Mittag, grew. Thus the state bureaucracy (in the Ministries and above all the planning commission) were excluded from a share in power. This meant the replacement of all economic sense with the subjective decisions of Mittag; the combine directors became the satraps of this economic potentate.

There can be no doubt that the persistence of this form of exercising power even after the mid-80s and its dogmatic presentation was decisive for the quick and almost unchallenged collapse of the post-capitalist system of rule. Here, however, I am only concerned with the internal problems and contradictions of the system that existed in the GDR for four decades.

Proponents of the idea of so-called "market socialism" overlook the fact that Marx considered all the contradictions of capitalism to be concentrated in embryo in the commodity form.

Thus anyone who sees the reason for the failure of the GDR's economy in the insufficient use of market mechanisms

and thus puts the plan/market alternative in the centre of their attention is overlooking the fact that it was precisely the capitalist expressions of the law of value (capital, surplus value, average rate of profit and so on) that have led to the enormous growth in the forces of production. A "socialistically" restrained law of value will miss out on these results. This is why nearly all the political forces in the GDR, including the majority who were in the opposition in earlier years — from Eppelmann to Böhme — went in a few weeks from masking their ideas in phrases about the "socialist market economy" to the non or even anti-socialist demand for the "social" market economy on the West German model.

Process of transition

The main reason for the failure of the GDR, as in all the other countries of "real socialism" is the absence of any process of transition from the abolition of capitalist property towards the development of socialist relations of production. That means, it was not enough to legally relabel the appropriated means of production as people's property. Socialism really begins when the producers are organized in forms of grassroots democratic decision-making and have in their hands immediate power over the means of production and the results of production, both in the enterprises, and at a regional and national level.

The economic motivation resulting from a sense of responsibility based on control of the means of production, combined with the advantages of economic planning in the form of economic regulation related to need, offers the only alternative to capitalism. There would certainly still remain for a long time the need for economic categories not based on utility, under conditions of a constantly deepening process of workers participation. I therefore fully support the brief expression of opinion in the position paper of the United Left (VL):

We "need...not less, but more planning — but this time an economically sound form of regulation, using value and price relations, and based on self-management and corresponding to needs. This will be realized through the use of market mechanisms."

8 But the alternative of a society of socialist freedom and democracy has, at least in the GDR, been wasted. While the



By PALOMO in La Jornada (Mexico City). C&W Syndicate.

few real socialist forces inside the SED wear themselves out in the struggle to renew their party and have therefore withdrawn from work in the factories, the United Left argues about the content of a socialist alternative, and everybody else has long ago set off in the direction of reunification.

Trade union movement disintegrates

It is noticeable that in November 1989 the movement stopped outside the doors of the enterprises. From this the captains of industry, now freed from Mittag, have drawn a huge increase in their power. The workers had no response to this, especially since the FDGB (trade unions) had gone downhill and the attempts at renewal from above have so far had little success. The bruising struggles over the forms of enterprise representation had a harmful effect on the politicization of the workers.

All possible variants were proposed:

- "Enterprise councils as organs of self-management!"
- "Enterprise councils as organs of struggle for limiting the negative consequences of capitalist restoration!"
- "Enterprise councils as legitimate

representatives of the interests of all the workers!"

● "Enterprise union organizations as a part of stronger unions and also as representatives of enterprise interests!"

● "Enterprise council and union leaderships as work-sharing cooperating organs of representation!"

● "Only one enterprise representative for the interests of the producers!"

This confusion was hardly the key to the development of the ability of the workers and employees to fight.

The situation is now slowly beginning to become clearer given the increasing perception of the social risks that accompany the development of the market economy. A not negligible contribution to this is the compromise reached by a large majority between the VL, the FDGB and the SPD (Socialist Party) at the central round table whereby the agreement of the SPD was bought with a concession on illusions about "parity participation".

The idea seems to be steadily gaining ground that the key thing for working class activists in connection with the gradually awakening class consciousness is the creation of stronger forms of enterprise representation, using the space created by the present lack of legal definition. In this way rights and conditions can be fought for and protected, which can form a better starting point for resistance to the approaching massive attack from the side of the the new union of West German private capital and GDR/German state capital.

Where the enterprise union organizations have been renewed from top to bottom, their leaders, insofar as they are ready to represent the interests of all the workers, are to be prioritized, since up until now they still have a better legal position in the GDR. Where the forces of the union are so weak that no self-renewal is possible, the councils must take on this task. Delegations from the left in the unions and councils in the FRG are very helpful here. They can nail many illusions about West German "freedom". ★



A brief inventory of the left

SOME 23 parties and movements are running candidates in the Czechoslovak elections in early June. Given this fragmentation, the question of possible alliances looms large in everybody's political calculations. The following article was first published in the May 1990 issue of *Polarita*, the paper of the Czechoslovak Left Alternative. The demand that the Communist Party return its property to the state, which is referred to in the text, was the occasion for a widely observed ten-minute work stoppage and a (relatively small) demonstration on April 11.

DOCUMENT

IF WE survey our political spectrum, which is taking on a more stable form with the pre-election campaign, we have to say that the overwhelming majority of the new and so-called renewed parties and movements are, from a programmatic point of view, on the right or centre-right. There is, furthermore, not much difference between their programmes. All of them espouse the conservative/liberal principles of a free market economy with a dominant private sector and the "return to Europe", understood as a totally uncritical endorsement of the traditional values of so-called Western Christian civilization.

Worthy of more serious consideration are those parties and movements which in one way or another consider themselves to be of the left, or which could at least serve as some sort of counterweight to the right.

No guarantee of good faith of CP

Let us begin with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC) which, at least according to its highest representatives, wants to change into a "modern left party". Leaving aside the disservice that this claim does to the real left, we have not the slightest guarantee of its good faith. This has been shown by the remarks of the KSC's chairperson M. Machalík, the attitude of leaders of the party to the question of the party's property and so on. Such things show that this party is not ready to honestly repent all its mistakes and crimes and is therefore also not presently capable of democratic renewal.

Everything suggests that the party's functionaries have yet to awaken from their dreams about a return to the old

order — a dream which is at once reactionary and counter-revolutionary. There is nothing surprising in this if we remember that the KSC had already degenerated a long time ago from a workers' party into a party with a hardened bureaucracy, defending its total control over the whole of society, including the rank-and-file Communists. With the collapse of the Stalinist regime, the KSC has lost its *raison d'être*. Whether or not it continues to exist as a retrograde structure that significantly hinders the democratic changes, and at the same time discredits the real left, depends on the success of the latter in winning over the uncompromised rank-and-file Communists and isolating them from the "healthy core" of Stalinist functionaries.

A sign of the breakup of the KSC is the emergence of splinter groups such as the Czechoslovak Democratic Forum and the Independent Left. For the time being their programmes are very unclear and it will take some time before they are able to develop a definite political profile.

Socialist Party breaks with progressive traditions

I am not sure whether or not to include here the party of the "balcony revolution", the Czech Socialist Party (CSS). After its last congress this party has nothing leftist about it apart from its name. This latter "oversight" was dictated above all by the technical aspects of the election campaign, and it seems that the name will be "adjusted" soon after the elections.

The CSS' election programme does not mention the word "socialism" once and amounts to a break with its best traditions, especially with the very progres-

What is Left Alternative?

THE article printed alongside is from *Polarita*, the journal of the Czechoslovak Left Alternative-Movement for Democratic and Self-managing Socialism. This group held its constituent congress on March 17, 1990. According to the report on the congress in *Polarita* no.1, April 1990, some 80 members and sympathizers are involved, from a variety of political tendencies, including anarchists and independent Marxists. Among its members is Petr Uhl, a noted human rights activist and revolutionary Marxist, now head of the Czechoslovak press agency CTK. Membership is open to people "interested in searching for, and implementing, different forms of self-management and direct democracy" (see the programmatic statement in IV175). The group is interested in reaching workers as well as intellectuals. LA considers itself an integral part of the Civic Forum movement.

On April 21, LA held a further conference which included a contribution from Hubert Krivine representing the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. In his speech Krivine gave an analysis of the likely perspectives of the East European countries as they move into closer association with really-existing capitalism. He also explained the history, nature and current role of the FI and offered practical and political collaboration between the USFI and Left Alternative. ★

sive programme of 1918.

As against the CSS, the Czechoslovak Social Democracy (CSSD) carries a banner untainted [by collaboration with the *ancien régime*]. It is however torn by internal strife resulting from the personal ambitions of its prominent representatives. It is attempting to add lustre to its vague programme by noisy appeals to all the glorious traditions of the workers' movement. At the same time, however, and shamefully, it defines itself as a party only of the centre left. The break with its left-wing identity has become very apparent over the party's confusion about the use of traditional left-wing symbolism. It is certainly not without interest that a

1 A reference to the balcony of the Socialist Party's offices in Prague's Wenceslas Square from which speakers addressed the crowds during the November 1989 events.

The fate of the Czechoslovak Communist Party

After the "gentle revolution" of November 17-27, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC) moved quickly to get rid of the group of leaders, including party secretary Milos Jakes and President Gustav Husak, most directly responsible for the neo-Stalinist regime after 1969. They are also widely suspected of direct collaboration with the Soviet intervention of August 1968. The speed of the changeover suggests that preparations had been made well in advance of the November upsurge.

The party congress on December 20, 1989, elected Vasil Mohorita, formerly leader of the party's youth organization, to the post of First Secretary and Ladislav Adamec as chairperson. The new leaders have pledged to turn the KSC into a "modern left party."

The party's election programme pledges support for the full range of democratic freedoms, along with a market economy with a strong state sector. In terms of internal organization, moves have been taken to strengthen the role of the central committee, which now directly elects the party chairperson, the party apparatus is to be cut by 77% and 8,000 functionaries are to be dismissed — causing the party significant financial problems, since they are obliged under Czechoslovak law to pay the wages of dismissed employees for six months.

A separate party organization for the Czech Lands now exists, a move intended to enhance equality between the Slovak and Czech sections of the party. At the same time, after a dispute about its right to organize as a faction, Rudolf Prenosil, a leader of the party's Democratic Forum claimed that his group had not been allowed to participate in the discussions.

The party's paper membership has dropped by about a third from its pre-November figure of 1.4 million while two factions have broken away (see article). The party will consider that it has done well if it gets more than 15% of the vote in the June elections. At the same time, its newspaper *Rudé Právo* is still the country's leading daily and the party retains strong positions throughout society, the economy and the repressive forces as well as in the trade unions and also in the countryside, where it hopes to make an alliance with the Agrarian Party after the elections. ★

whole series of older, honest Social Democrats have not liked this.

The Green party is in a similar position, for its rather moderate programme (including for example, a readiness to compromise on the question of the nuclear power stations) has met with sharp criticism from the Western ecological parties which in many cases incline towards the radical left.

The only consistent and authentic left forces today in Czechoslovakia are the left-wing political movements that arose as independent structures before November 17, 1989.

Defending the left's traditional values

This means the Left Alternative, the Czechoslovak Anarchist Association and Obroda-Club for Democratic Socialism. (Even in this latter case there are definite tendencies towards following behind the social democracy). In this situation it is very difficult to defend the left's traditional values — social justice, solidarity and the real equality of all people — without

which a free and dignified life is unthinkable in modern society.

Together with other social movements, (such as the Transnational Radical Party, independent peace and ecological initiatives, alternative cultural activities and so on), this new left must be the continuation of the best traditions of Charter 77 and the other independent structures, in an uncompromising struggle for human rights, including social rights, and in the struggle for tolerance, democratic dialogue, the free search for the truth and a truthful life.

All these values, cultivated in the past 20 years by a handful of brave individuals, at the cost of considerable personal sacrifices, cannot be pursued under the pressure of a pitiless competitive struggle, soulless pursuit of consumption, property and power, a commercialized mass culture and the sale of Czechoslovakia to foreign capital. Such values should be the property of the broadest layers, but this also is not possible without democracy and social self-management. It is the establishment of such a society that is the main aim of the new, democratic left in our country. ★

"We need an ideology"

DESPITE a chorus of reassuring comments in the Western press about negotiations beginning between the Kremlin and the representatives of the Baltic peoples, the confrontation has escalated. On May 15, Gorbachev issued two presidential decrees declaring "unconstitutional" the resolutions of the Estonian and Latvian Supreme Soviets opening the way for independence for the two countries.

GERRY FOLEY

ON THE same day, violent demonstrations by neo-Stalinist unionists took place in the capitals of the same two countries. In Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, a few thousand demonstrators tried to break into the Supreme Soviet. They were stopped only when the premier appealed over the radio for a mass mobilization to defend the government. In Latvia, groups of Soviet military officers staged incidents at the Supreme Soviet. But the unionists seemed capable only of provocations.

Even in Latvia, where the titular nationality represents only 52 per cent of the population, according to Bernard Guetta in *Le Monde* of May 17, attempts to organize strikes among the non-Latvian workers against the independence moves fell flat.

After these incidents, the Kremlin sent additional troops into the two republics. In the same period, the monarchical powers of the president of the Soviet Union were reinforced with a law making it a grave penal offense to "defame" the Kremlin chief executive.

The Kremlin has not relaxed its economic blockade of Lithuania, and stocks of petroleum are reportedly nearing

exhaustion. Lithuanian representatives say that not only are the Soviet authorities blocking the supply of Soviet petroleum but they are banning any deliveries from abroad, thereby escalating their economic reprisals to the level of a siege.

The Soviet authorities have continued to reject any negotiations with the representatives of the Baltic peoples on a basis which implies accepting their unqualified right to independence. As for what the Kremlin claims is the constitutional way to leave the Soviet Union, Yuri Afanasiev, one of the leading liberalizers in the Soviet CP, has acknowledged, in an interview published in the May 5 issue of the Estonian creative workers' paper *Reede*, that the new law on secession makes separation "100% impossible."

Afanasiev said, "Even if two thirds of the population are for it, the next to the last word belongs to the other republics and the last word to the 'center'. Let's suppose that at the political level, it [separation] is 'permitted'; even then there are a lot of monetary-economic 'buts' that ultimately make leaving the Soviet Union impossible."

In the May 11 *Reede*, Kaarel Haav made a sharper answer to the "constitutional" argument. "The constitution of the USSR has never been applied. The rights inscribed in it have never been defended. It is only a scrap of paper, which besides is full of contradictions. For example, one paragraph declares all the republics sovereign, while another takes that right away. So, anyone can be accused of anti-constitutional and anti-Soviet activity."



Suspension of independence declaration

The latest "breakthrough" in the conflict sighted by the Western mass media was the meeting May 18 between Gorbachev and the Lithuanian premier Kazimiera Prunskiene. The latter claimed afterwards that Gorbachev had made an important concession, agreeing to accept a "suspension" rather than an annulment of the declaration of independence as a basis for starting negotiations. On this basis she called a special session of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet to discuss meeting Gorbachev's demand.

Libération's correspondent, Pierre Briançon commented that Prunskiene was clearly trying to make the best of a bad bargain because that had been the Kremlin's position for a month. But in his own article he said that a division over accepting Gorbachev's condition had appeared for the first time in the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet. The fact is that the Lithuanian independent CP has been waging a

furious war of words against the nationalist movement Sajudis for many weeks in the name of "moderation," "prudence" "realism" and therefore of "dialogue" with the great liberalizer in the Kremlin. And its reporting of debates in the Supreme Soviet has also indicated differences.

In its enthusiasm for "realism," the independent CP's central organ, *Tiesa*, has served as a mouthpiece for all sorts of pressures on the Lithuanian leadership to retreat from its March 11 declaration, from the Western governments and media and even apparently from émigrés. Thus, the May 4 issue of *Tiesa* carried a long article by Algis Klimaitis, described as the general secretary of the

European Parliament Baltic Group and manager of the mixed enterprise Litkomerc in Hamburg. Called "Between Demands and Truth," it criticized the strategy of the Lithuanian government, much more outspokenly than the independent CP itself could probably dare.

"I do not doubt that the decision of the Lithuanian parliament and government was motivated by patriotism. Nor do I doubt that, as they interpret the March 11 declaration, they thought it served the interest of Lithuania. Unfortunately, patriotism in itself is no protection against error.

"The error is not what the declaration proclaims. The error is that the declaration involves leaving the USSR now!...Such a stance...blocks dialogue, which all the protagonists (Lithuania, the USSR and the West) say is their objective."

No help from Washington or European Community

Klimaitis continued: "Telling ourselves that after March 11 Lithuania is already an independent state is fateful self-deception. Reality has shown that there was no political, economic, diplomatic...or technical preparation for real independence, and there was no guarantee from Moscow, from Washington or

from the European Community. The Radicals' political prognoses were based only on an untested assumption that Mr. Gorbachev's resistance would be limited to threatening gestures, while the West (and first of all the USA) would be quick to recognize Lithuania's independence.

"Not a single one of those Western States that never recognized Stalin's annexation [of Lithuania] has recognized the Lithuanian republic in accordance with the interpretation given to the March 11 declaration. Except for words of concern and cautious warnings about possible sanctions, except for urging that both sides take the road of dialogue, the West is not going to help us."

This "line" of moderation is also being following by the CPSU press. For example, *Pravda's* correspondent, I. Teterin, wrote in the May 15 issue of the Soviet CP organ:

"Personally, I am convinced that there is nothing reprehensible in the attempt of the Baltic republics to become real subjects of international law, to collectively defend their regional interests in the USSR and beyond its borders. The whole question is how to achieve that goal. Judging by all the facts, the leaders of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia chose the most radical road. But, as is well known, in the conditions of the world today, radicalism does not lead to integration in the community of civilized nations but rather to being rejected by it." Recently, *Pravda* has also noted expressions of bitterness at the Western states' attitude on the part of the Lithuanian leaders.

United majority formed in parliament

At the same time, *Tiesa* has been complaining that Sajudis is on a anti-Communist rampage, in particular since its recent congress. In the May 12 issue, Alvydas Sedzius, first secretary of the independent CP city committee in Siauliai, complained that "autocracy prevails in the parliament. If you think differently, if you talk of differences (even if it is realistic, even if it is true), you are an enemy of the people! A united majority has formed in the parliament. But this unity, I dare say, is not based so much on a real alliance as on fear that you might be called an enemy of the people."

In the context of the independent CP's line, this sort of argument seems clearly intended to counter the pressure for maintaining national unity behind the republic's leadership against Moscow's threats. This also fits in with Moscow's propaganda that the national democratic move-

ments are trying to institute a "new totalitarianism." So, it would hardly be surprising if the party representatives in the government tried to break ranks to push for a more accommodating attitude to Gorbachev at the first opportunity. But the lamentations about "new totalitarianism" on the part of the independent CP also indicate that the pressure for national unity against Moscow and behind the declaration of independence has been extremely strong.

This is not to say that there may not be "moderates" in Sajudis as well. The parliamentary debates opening up now may reveal some. Prunskiene's actions after her discussion with Gorbachev suggests she could be one. But the "moderate" line and logic of the independent CP, as put forward by *Tiesa*, seem quite consistent.

Ironically, while the independent CP is denouncing Sajudis for anti-Communism, the May 4 issue of the Russian weekly *Russkaya Mysl'* published in Paris ran an interview with a Lithuanian Christian Democratic personality, Viktor Piatkus, who argued that the front was a shadow of the Communist Party:

"Last year, some young lads from Moscow visited me and asked: 'Why are there middle-aged people in Sajudis and old people and youths in the other camp.' I said, 'I might answer your question with another. What do you think.' They told me that in their opinion Sajudis included people who must be a continuation of the Soviet administration. Almost half the Council of Sajudis were members of the Communist Party. I was struck how in two or three days they had managed to assess the situation."

Waves leave Baltic Communist Parties

Before the political changes in the USSR, the bulk of the intelligentsia was in the Communist Party. With the rise of the national-democratic movements, waves started leaving the Baltic CPs, whose cores also eventually shattered. But political experience is accumulating very rapidly in the Baltic, and undoubtedly changing people's views both about the Soviet bureaucracy and the Western states.

Disappointment with the attitude of the Western powers seems to be sinking more and more deeply into the consciousness of the Baltic national democrats. The May 11 *Reede* ran a long article by Edgar Savisaar, the Estonian People's Front's economic expert and now premier of the republic. He dissolved the problem of the Western government's attitudes into a broad exposition of historical and economic evolution. But he did have to take it up.

In the same issue of *Reede*, an article by Kaarel Haav was outspokenly radical. It used anti-Communist-sounding language, referring to the Soviet Union for

example as an "empire of evil." But Haav also wrote: "Mr. Gorbachev has not condemned the Stalinist regime, but he calls it Socialism, and he is ready to defend this regime by any means, sacrificing human rights as well as the rights of national majorities.

"J. Stalin did not threaten to crush peoples but he did it. J. Stalin did not send tanks to the capital of any republic of the USSR [as Gorbachev did to Lithuania] or executioners with sappers' shovels [the April 12, 1989, massacre in Tbilissi]; he did his killing in the shadows. J. Stalin was many things to many people. Some saw him as a great national leader, others as a bloody hangman. Mr. Gorbachev is also many things to many people. The world sees his shining smile. Only the Soviet peoples see his big teeth."

Further on, Haav also denounced the West. "The whole world is used to this empire and does not want to see new free peoples or countries."

He also criticized the national democratic movements themselves. "Lithuania and Estonia will not free themselves if they do not raise their freedom struggle to the ideological level. Great state [*suurriikliku*, this term has become a characteristic negative term in the Estonian national democratic literature] lies, violence and dependency ideology (Stalinist Socialism) have to be opposed with an ideology of truth, human rights and freedom.... We cannot defeat Soviet totalitarianism socially, politically or economically. We can only defeat it ideologically, only with the truth."

Haav pointed to a basic problem, which is likely to become more and more acute as the confrontation between Moscow and the Baltic and other peoples of the USSR deepens.

The political line of the national democratic movements has largely remained stuck in legalisms, diplomatic formulas and commonplace pragmatic notions. In order for them to be able to mobilize the sort of international movement necessary to break the grip of the Soviet bureaucracy, they will need to offer perspectives that can inspire the support of all oppressed peoples and of democrats among the majority populations of the great states.

Along with a fundamental critique of Stalinist national oppression, the programs of the Baltic people's fronts, especially the Latvian one (See *International Viewpoint*, No. 169, September 18, 1989) offered a perspective of radical democratization of social relations. But these conceptions have now to be deepened and extended internationally in order for the fronts to begin to appeal directly to the peoples. That is the only way forward now in the face of the unholy alliance of the Soviet bureaucracy, the Western states and all the establishments against the Baltic peoples' struggle for their national rights. ★

IN ADDITION TO Beijing, many other Chinese towns experienced demonstrations and violent repression during these weeks, notably Chengdu, in the heart of continental China, and Shanghai, where the movement continued for several days after the Beijing massacre. The interpretation given to this movement by capitalist press and governments alike was simple enough — for them the demonstrations showed the will of the youth, followed by the rest of the population, to see the reforms go more quickly in the sense of the development of both democracy and a capitalist market economy.

Hu Yaobang and after him his successor Zhao Ziyang represented the current of the CCP open to reforms and opposed to the Stalinist old guard represented by Deng Xiaoping. In putting a bloody end to the movement, according to the western media, the old guard demonstrated its desire to put a brake on the reforms and the opening to the capitalist countries.

Through this explanation, the western media wished to signify not only that the opening to the capitalist market and democracy went hand in hand, but also that the maintenance of the bureaucratic planned economy was inevitably accompanied by a ferocious dictatorship.

The reality is otherwise, for inasmuch as the second assertion is true, the first is obviously not and some hundreds of millions of men and women have sad experience of the fact every day.

Movement a result of Deng's policies

The deep roots of the 1989 movement came from the multiple and sometimes contradictory consequences of the policy implemented since the end of the 1970s under the leadership of Deng. It is necessary to recall only the broad contours of this policy.

This policy had four major economic and social characteristics:

— in the countryside, it rested on a return to family-based cultivation with the aim of encouraging the peasants to diversify their production and move into small private industry. The consequences were many; an important social differentiation with a broad improvement of the standard of living, and an important growth of cereal production with the partial freeing of prices, but also the development of massive unemployment.

— the opening to investment from foreign capital on the Pacific coast (in the "special economic zones" and the "open cities") with an important state subsidy for the equipment and industrialization of these regions to the detriment of the interior of the country. Even if only four million workers (out of an active urban population of 128 million) are involved in these enterprises, which represent 1% of the industrial production of the country,

One year after the Tiananmen massacre

THE DEATH on April 15, 1989 of Hu Yaobang — general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from 1981 to 1987, and right hand man of Deng Xiaoping prior to being dismissed by the latter 15 months previously — was the signal, in the two months that followed, for the most important popular movement China has known since the end of the Cultural Revolution. The most important, because it catalyzed all the social demands of the urban layers ten years after the introduction of Deng's reforms. The most spectacular, because for six weeks Beijing's Tiananmen Square, a place symbolic of the history of People's China, was under the control of demonstrators who erected a Goddess of Democracy there in defiance of the regime. The "Chinese May" movement received a broad international echo because the international media had kept television teams in Beijing following Gorbachev's visit in mid-May. They maintained a consistent coverage of the events until the morning of June 4, 1989, when the army put an end to the movement by a massacre (see IV 164, 165, 166, 167).

LAURENT CARASSO

they have shown the will of the Chinese leadership to open up to the capitalist market and the new technologies.

— the urban population, for their part, have hardly been favoured by the past ten years, even if there are few Chinese people who regret the period of insecurity of the Cultural Revolution. The modest advance in the standard of living has been counterbalanced by the precariousness of employment and, above all in the last few years, by galloping inflation.

— finally, the introduction of elements of the "free" market, even outside the special economic zones, has led to an impetuous development of the black market and corruption, even in the industrial domain.

Moreover, in the field of civil liberties, beyond the grand declarations on the separation of party and state, the grip of the bureaucracy on political and economic life has been heavily maintained, leading notably to growing discontent among the intellectuals and student youth.

All the economic and social contradictions began to come to a head in 1988, when, faced with an unsettled economic situation, the party leadership, advised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), launched a sweeping austerity plan, in the context of "the policy of rectification".

The effects of the liberalization in the

countryside and the growth of corruption were beginning to combine, notably through a vertiginous growth in prices of fertilizers and of cereal production. The state could no longer pay cash to the peasants without the repercussion of price rises in the towns.

Massive increase in prices of basics

In a few weeks, during the summer of 1988, the price of basic necessity products in the towns increased by more than 50%, leading to widespread panic. The austerity plan, launched in the autumn of the same year, sought to arrest this inflation by putting a brake on the freeing of agricultural prices and concentrating the weight of the restrictions on the urban population. Parallel to this, popular dissatisfaction grew, as is shown by a survey made in 20 Chinese cities. In this study, it appeared overall that the price rises, the mounting of inequality, and insecurity about the future constituted the main preoccupations of wage earners¹. The authors of the survey denounced the abuse of power of party cadres, particularly the corruption and the shameless self-enrichment of some.

At the same time, rural underemploy-

ment began to seriously inflate the urban population of "clandestine" workers — estimated at between one and two million in each of the three principal cities of the country (Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou).

Discontent was spreading throughout the urban population, apart from those newly enriched, and, as on other occasions, the intellectuals were the ferment of the revolt. It should not however be forgotten, and it will be necessary to return to this point, that the profound and durable crisis in the countryside would inevitably have, in other forms, a considerable importance in a country where 80% of the population is rural.

The Chinese tradition has always seen the intellectuals as the despised lackeys of the regime. The Chinese revolution, originating from the countryside, did not change this tradition, even aggravating it when the Cultural Revolution made the intellectuals a target. Deng's modernization policy was nonetheless supposed to rely on the support of the elites, notably the researchers and academics who were asked to become the ambassadors of China to the capitalist countries.

However, during the ten years from the introduction of Deng's reforms, the intellectuals not only remained isolated from the regime, but, more importantly, their basic living conditions and their salaries remained below those of other social layers.

Obviously, this feeling of injustice was accentuated for all those, researchers and students, who were able to compare their position with the high status accorded to their equivalents in the capitalist countries.

Expulsion of intellectuals becomes symbolic

The expulsion in February 1987 of three intellectuals, Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan and Wang Ruowang, became a symbol for the mass movement. The real role of impulsion played by these intellectual circles in the launch and stimulation of the mass movement has been amply shown².

This network, often linked to the reformist current (Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang), was central to the affinity felt by the movement of 1989 with the Beijing Spring of 1979-80, a movement more limited than that of 1989 but the occasion for numerous radical critiques of the bureaucracy, in conjunction with the movement of "plaintiffs", victims of the Cultural Revolution who demanded justice from Deng Xiaoping. At the time Deng severely repressed this movement and its principal figure, Wei Jingsheng (author of "The Fifth Essential Modernization — Democ-

1. Zhu Qingfang, "The frame of mind of urban workers in 1988", *Liaowang*, Beijing no. 2.

2. See in particular the survey by Romain Franklin in *Libération*, April 25, 1990.

racy"), is still imprisoned³. But this impulsiveness and the role played by these university circles should not obscure the essential characteristics of the 1989 movement.

If it did not have the political sophistication of the 1979 movement, the 1989 movement was marked by a remarkable breadth and extended itself to the totality of the urban population — it was above all the occasion for the birth of organizations independent of the regime.

Some dozens of student organizations, among them the Independent Union of Beijing Students, grew up in a few weeks. The preceding movements to which that of 1989 could be compared seemed to define themselves in terms of factional struggles within the party. The essential characteristic of the 1989 movement was that the basic demand for the right to organize freely was rapidly raised — the population wished to form its own associations and a number of speeches and leaflets explained that the only guarantee against corruption and for democratic rights was organized vigilance.

No moves towards formation of new party

Practically no genuine current advocating the creation of a new party emerged, both because of a wish to avoid a frontal collision with the regime and because of a lack of a sufficient maturing of the movement. The dominant tendency wished to put the party "under surveillance", knowing that no faction, even the current of Zhao Ziyang, was genuinely favourable to its demands. To appreciate the limits and the impact of the movement of May-June 1989, it is necessary to situate it in the context of the political conflicts at work within Chinese society.

Since 1948, the Chinese Communist Party has monopolized political life in China. But, in contrast to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) or its satellites in Eastern Europe, the CCP has a tradition of fierce public factional struggles, undergoing numerous turns and torments, most obviously that of the Cultural Revolution. The apparatus and leadership of the Party represents then the sum and cumulation of the totality of these policies. For, at each new turn, only a small part of the protagonists of the previous policy were pushed aside. Thus, after the death of Mao and the elimination of the "Gang of Four"⁴, most of the provincial Maoist cadre remained in place. There is a very great cohesion of the apparatus inside a bureaucracy which, in contrast to the Stalinist bureaucracy, moulded itself directly from the leadership of the revolution. It is necessary also to note that this intense factional struggle has until now translated itself by very few physical eliminations in the higher ruling sphere (apart from the death of Lin Biao in 1971 and the jailing of the "Gang of Four").

The 1989 movement attacked the whole

of the bureaucracy and the leadership of the Communist Party, judged globally responsible for corruption, inequality and the absence of democratic liberties — this proved the growing disillusionment with the bureaucracy in its entirety. The democratic movement of 1979, for its part, had wrongly placed its confidence in Deng Xiaoping to establish a genuine socialist democracy and render justice to the victims of the bureaucracy.

This difference constitutes a fundamental break in mass consciousness — no longer did any party leader seem capable of restoring confidence in the CCP. The demand for, and the setting up of, independent organizations was symbolic of this absence of confidence in any wing of the bureaucracy.

At the same time, and this is not contradictory, the students, at least those in Beijing, had the feeling of being supported by a wing of the Party. In 1986, Hu Yaobang had been dismissed for having refused to send the army against the student movement⁵ — since then, he had become a sort of martyr in the eyes of the students. In 1989, also, the student leaders consciously applied pressure on the so-called liberal wing of the leadership around first secretary Zhao Ziyang to meet their demands, which, over several weeks, had been limited to a simple reprise of official slogans (against corruption, for the independence of the National People's Assembly and the government from the CCP).

Refusal to evacuate Tiananmen Square

This policy in relation to the CCP explained the enormous sense of legitimacy which the movement had (reinforced moreover by the support of the whole of urban society), its insolent audacity towards the regime — illustrated by its refusal to evacuate Tiananmen despite the proclamation of martial law and the demand for negotiations with the regime on the basis of equality. The movement was also marked by a fanatical legalism which, up to the end, refused to envisage a direct test of forces. It is in this context that it is necessary to understand the role played by several intellectuals who were at least close to Zhao Ziyang, if not in the leadership itself, in the permanent liaison between the leaders of the movement and the high cadres of the Party. It is in this context also that the demand for independent unions and organizations, which was quickly raised in all the principal cities of the country, can be seen as the expression of a profound political maturation. There, the experience of the previous movements (1978, 1986) bore fruit.

It is, on the other hand, striking to note that so far as a more global vision of society and economic and political demands is concerned, the students fell well short of the 1978 movement and in fact echoed the themes developed by Deng and Zhao

themselves on the opening to the west and liberalization. But these demands remained practically at a secondary level — the questions put most often to the fore were those of democratic rights and corruption. The general pro-market orientation appears more visible today in the declarations made by the spokespersons of the Federation for Democracy in China, issued from the movement in exile.

The other major element of this movement was the entry onto the scene of the urban workers. Already the year 1988 had seen a multiplication of strikes. The stimulus of the student movement led to the discreet emergence of workers contingents on April 27, 1989 and a massive workers' presence during the big demonstration of May 17, 1989. On this day the Independent Union of Workers was founded in Beijing, a union which — despite its short existence and its some hundreds of members — received a great echo in all the factories of Beijing, inspiring the creation of identical unions in all the cities of the country.

"We have the right to overthrow all tyrants"

It is incontestable that, even in their limited and elementary character, the declarations published by the Independent Union of Workers of Beijing showed clearly the demand to see the workers genuinely assume power: "The People's Republic of China is under the leadership of the working class, we have the right to overthrow all tyrants". In the face of the more confused political character of the student declarations, those of the workers could give a powerful dynamic to a movement in which the workers and unemployed of the big cities could participate. However, the regime, all factions together, could not accept the development of a movement which directly contested the bureaucracy and in which the workers began to organize themselves.

The massacre of June 4 was the result of the crisis within the leadership and obviously an admission of weakness, given that the population of Beijing had defied the declaration of martial law.

It was not a military coup d'état, but a decision consciously taken by the leadership of the party in its entirety, even if the first secretary paid the price for it — it meant then neither a radical turn in the

3. In 1978, the dissident intellectuals who had been driven out of the universities and sent to work in the countryside became the spokespersons for all those who had suffered injustices during the Cultural Revolution.

4. This group of leaders of the CCP (among them Mao's widow) had supported Mao in launching the Cultural Revolution against the other factions in the party. In power after the fall of Lin Biao, they pursued the policies of the Cultural Revolution. They were arrested after the riots of 1976 and tried and condemned in 1980-81.

5. In December 1986, student demonstrations for democracy took place in several Chinese cities.



policy of the party, nor a massive liquidation of its liberal wing. This is proved by the fact that the National Assembly, in its majority favourable to Zhao Ziyang, accepted completely the consequences of the repression. As a counterpart Zhao himself, although removed from his post, has not been designated as responsible for the movement and a number of his collaborators have kept their positions.

On the other hand, the May-June movement found a favourable echo amongst numerous local members and cadres of the Party, very many of them participating in the demonstrations. The movement and the repression have shed light on a weakening of the role of the army in the ruling spheres of the bureaucracy, which is moreover shown by the greater role taken by Yang Shankun, president of the republic, and several of his collaborators⁶.

The Chinese situation has an essential difference to that of the countries of Eastern Europe. The country has experienced ten years of economic reforms and the movement of May 1989 was at once the bearer of democratic demands comparable to those raised in Eastern Europe and social demands derived directly from the negative effects of the reforms already undertaken. This double phenomena will inevitably weigh on future democratic movements.

The Chinese leaders have for two years implemented "the policy of rectification", of "reform within the reform", which seeks precisely to prevent and limit the most grave consequences of the economic measures, in particular the urban crisis. But the majority of the problems today are the direct effects of this reform, notably the disequilibrium between the interior of the country and the coastal zones, and the

development of corruption, nepotism and privileges.

Indeed, the basis of this policy of the introduction of the market, and appeals to capitalist investment has never been put in question by the bureaucracy. The capitalist countries, for their part, have above all used the situation to obtain better facilities and more profitable investments. A boycott or break in economic relations has been only an ideological illusion. Thus President Bush has opposed any "excessive" reaction from the U.S. Congress against the Chinese government, and sent an envoy to China in July 1989, only a month after the Tiananmen massacre.

Deepening crisis in the countryside

In the countryside, several features of the crisis combine; growth of unemployment among the peasantry, accentuated for the past year by the closure of a great number of rural industries; the government's inability to pay for crops at the prices demanded by the peasants; and reduction of all agricultural investments reflecting the general discontent of the latter. Thus, the layer of the peasantry which has profited from the reform is going to itself create a disequilibrium which will accentuate the scarcity and the dearness of food products in the cities.

Also, the maintenance of austerity against the wage earners in the cities can only increase the deep discontent of the urban layers and increase the number of jobless. As to corruption and the growth of inequality, it is the product both of the power of the bureaucracy and the pursuit of a socio-economic policy, as much as

the greed of some individuals.

The regime itself envisages that 20 to 30 million urban workers will lose their jobs in the coming years, which will add to the 30 million already unemployed today.

The reforms have accentuated the dismantling of the system of social protection. Thus, the financing of medical services by the state has continued to decline. In addition, rents, until now modest, must rise by around 500%, accentuating social discrimination in access to housing.

On the other hand, the international context is hardly favourable to the Chinese bureaucracy. The movements in Eastern Europe are only going to reinforce the will of the intellectuals to do away with the absence of democratic rights. Moreover, this context lessens the major political interest the capitalist countries have had in China as a counterweight to the Soviet bloc. At the economic level, the penetration of Eastern European markets could prove a more attractive proposition for the capitalists than investment in Chi-

na.

It is then certain that a new crisis will emerge in the short term, and moreover that the death of Deng, which cannot be far away, will upset the fragile equilibrium established in June 1989 at the summit of power.

Clandestine networks of opposition

Undoubtedly, some clandestine networks of opposition and resistance have been able to maintain themselves since last year. The government declared in November 1989 that it had smashed a new union of independent students in Beijing. The ferocious repression unleashed against the workers has, however, undoubtedly made it difficult to maintain any urban nuclei of resistance.

As for the Federation for Democracy in China, set up in exile, its leadership is dominated by those formerly close to Zhao Ziyang, like Yang Jiaqi, former director of the Institute for Political Science, or Xan Rennan, former director of a big private enterprise, who was at the head of the economic reform. These have now become the spokespersons of a restoration of capitalism, and they condemn the 1949 revolution. And yet it was the consequences of this "pro-capitalist" economic reform that the 1989 movement rose against!

However, supporters of a genuinely socialist and revolutionary perspective will have to work hard to get a hearing in a country where, in the name of socialism and planning, the bureaucrats have heaped poverty and injustice on the people. ★

6. Yang Shankun was one of the "28 Bolsheviks" (supporters of Stalin) who opposed Mao in the factional struggle within the party at the end of the 1920s.

Poverty and repression behind royal charade

ON MAY 3 AND 4, WITH GREAT POMP AND CEREMONY, the Moroccan king, Hassan II, celebrated the twenty-ninth anniversary of his coronation in the city of Agadir, "the gate to the southern provinces," as he calls it. This was a reassertion of the regime's presence in the territory of Western Sahara, the object of the 14-year-long conflict with the Polisario Front, which is fighting for independence for the area.¹

In December 1989, the Moroccan people voted massively in a referendum for postponing the legislative elections for two years, so that the vote could take place after a definitive settlement of the Sahara conflict under the auspices of the United Nations. All the opposition parties accepted this proposition, while demanding respect for the electoral rules — which are generally trampled on by the regime. This "national union" was essentially around the question of "territorial integrity." The opposition, on the other hand, intends to demand a new debate on the 1990 finance law, which calls for applying the IMF's drastic austerity plans to the letter. In fact, a grave economic crisis is afflicting this country, where the worst poverty exists side by side with the luxury and ostentation of the nabobs of the monarchy.

The following interview was given to Erdal Tan and Luiza Maria in Paris in January by Karim Maghrebi, a Moroccan revolutionary Marxist activist.

CAN YOU give a general picture of the political forces present in Morocco?

The main bourgeois party is Istiqlal, which led the national liberation struggle against France from 1940 to 1956, when the country became independent. There are also a series of parties created by the regime since the start of the "democratization" process in 1975, when there were elections. They include the Independents' Party, the National Democracy Rally and the Constitutional Union.

But even the regime does not have confidence in them. It wants Istiqlal to take part in the government, but in a subordinate role, with very narrow margins for maneuver.

You have to be aware that there is really a difference between Hassan II's policy and that championed by Istiqlal. After taking part in government from 1977 to 1985, Istiqlal was sidelined in the parliament and now finds itself in opposition. In Morocco, election results are always falsified. The seats are allotted before the vote,

sometimes weeks before. Even the press reports this!

The programs of the bourgeois parties are not clearly distinguished from that of the regime. They, above all Istiqlal, consider that the priorities today are the recovery of the Sahara and the unification of the national territory. In the last analysis, they tail-end the king.

The Istiqlal party, however, has a mass influence. It even has a base in the workers' movement, through yellow unions. The other parties of the right are groups of notables or technocrats.

On the left, the main formation is the Socialist Union of People's Forces (USFP), which comes from a split in Istiqlal in 1959. It has a petty-bourgeois composition, with transmission belts in the mass organizations, especially in the Democratic Labor Confederation (CDT), a union formed in 1978 under the impetus of the USFP. The party's program does not go beyond the limits of bourgeois populism, and it remains timidly reformist. The USFP also puts territorial integri-

ty above all other considerations. It recently asked to join the Socialist International, with which it has long maintained ties.

A left current emerged within the USFP at its Third Congress in 1978. This current claims to represent the radical populist tradition of the party and its historic leaders, such as Mehdi ben Barka or Omar Benjelloun.² Situating itself to the left of the present party leadership, this current rejected the "liberalization" offered by Hassan II and fought for a real democratization. It adopted "scientific socialism," implying Marxism as its reference point, and even declared itself for the creation of a revolutionary party.

After 1983, this current declined and was expelled from the USFP by the bureaucratic leadership. Since then, it has formed an independent organization but has neither clear perspectives nor a definite political and strategic line. It has been active in student circles, and presently it publishes a journal *Ettariq*, the most left-wing legal journal in Morocco, but its sales are dropping.

■ What about the Communist Party?

As for the Communist Party of Stalinist origin, the Progress and Socialism Party³, it joined the "national union" around the throne in 1975-1976, and is presently pursuing a policy further to the right than that of the USFP. Its general secretary is in parliament. This is the only party allowed to work in the Moroccan Union of Labor (UMT), the oldest and biggest union federation, which was founded in 1955. It is impossible to give an exact figure for UMT membership. But at the beginning of the 1960s, with about 600,000 members, it was the biggest union in Africa. Today, it is much weaker. It suffered a split in 1978, under the pressure of the USFP, which gave rise to the CDT. The new union justified itself by pointing to the UMT's bureaucratization.

This resulted in the development of a rank-and-file current that fought bureaucratization led by USFP activist Omar Benjelloun. He did not want to form

1. Under Spanish colonial rule up until 1975, the Western Sahara was claimed by Morocco. Polisario, the Sahara Liberation Front, which had waged a struggle against the Spanish, demanded the independence of the territory after 1974. The Spanish withdrawal gave rise to a war between the Moroccan troops, who had invaded Western Sahara, and Polisario. This conflict is still continuing.

2. Mehdi ben Barka, secretary of the National Union of People's Forces (UNFP), the future USFP, was sentenced to death *in absentia* by the regime of Hassan II in May 1963. In October 1965, he was kidnapped in Paris and has never reappeared. Omar Benjelloun, a leader of the USFP, was assassinated in 1974 by an Islamic fundamentalist in the pay of the regime.

3. It was called the Communist Party up until 1959, when it was banned for the first time. Then, it was called the Socialism and Liberation Party up until the end of the 1960s, when it was banned for a second time, until 1976.

4. The name "March 23" is a reference to the workers' struggle of March 23, 1965.

another union, but after his death his comrades organized the split. The CDT also rapidly became bureaucratized.

Another left organization, the Democratic People's Action Organization (OADP) arose in 1983 as a continuation of the old March 23 Marxist Leninist Organization⁴, which came out of the same current as the two USFP factions. The OADP publishes a legal journal, and lines up with the rest of the reformist left, notably by participating in the national consensus on

the Sahara. It is



an organization with little influence.

As for the far left, the underground organization Ilal Amam (Forward), the result of a split in the CP, was officially founded in August 1970. It then developed a rather superficial critique of the CP with Maoist populist coloring. It quickly ran up against repression. The great majority of its activists were arrested at the beginning of the 1970s. Those arrested in the repressive waves of 1971-73 and 1984-86 are still in prison.

Ilal Aman remains a revolutionary current, active mainly among students. It continues to declare the need for a revolutionary communist party. But this organization is not developing theoretically, and has no journal in Morocco. The political and theoretical education of its activists remains on a low level, which is a general feature in Morocco. Ilal Aman exists today only in the student movement and in the cultural associations in the big cities given impetus by veterans of the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM).

Ilal Amam activists have a sectarian attitude toward the workers' movement. They do not involve themselves in trade-union activity on the pretext that the unions are opportunist and reformist.

■ What is happening today in the workers' movement?

The CDT in general is more militant than the UTM. It is mainly based in the public sector (education, health), while the more bureaucratized UTM is in industry. In the mines, the influence of the two unions is equal.

Besides holding back struggles, the UTM does not even function like a union. It is a bureaucracy with links to the state,

although it remains independent, especially if you compare it with the Algerian union movement, which is closely tied to the government. Nonetheless, struggles take place despite the union bureaucracy and not under its leadership.

After the 1981 general strike, the CGT, which led the struggles, was practically dismantled. But struggles resumed after 1985. The Jerada miners waged a month-long struggle, but suffered a defeat because of the policy of the union leadership, which thought that priority had to be given to the Sahara war and that therefore you have "to be responsible."

At the start of 1986, the biggest struggle in thirty years in the phosphates industry was waged in the mines in Khormka and Youssoufia, the two biggest fields. In Youssoufia, the struggle, led by the UMT, lasted two

months. The CDT, which organizes the workers in the other mining center, did not even call for a solidarity strike, and limited itself to a 24 work stoppage! This defeat created a climate of demoralization among the miners.

Once again, in the name of the "national interest," the CDT took the same attitude toward the new struggle of the Jerada miners in December 1988 and January 1989, which lasted two months and was very militant. It should be said that the mine proletariat is young, recently unionized and lives and works in very difficult conditions. The 7,000 miners won a partial victory, even if the union leadership once again did everything possible to halt the conflict.

The workers' families, especially their wives, took part in the struggle, and the high-school students demonstrated in the streets. This gave rise to a nation-wide solidarity movement, but did not manage to touch off other solidarity strikes.

The Jerada mines continue to be organized by the CDT. Of course, the local leaders are militant, because they are under strong pressure from their base, which counterbalances that of the national union leadership. To give you an example, the mines were occupied when the union leadership called for an end to the strike after a week, and the union had to go along with the workers in their struggle. The lack of self-organization in Morocco is linked to the fact that the revolutionary left plays no role in these conflicts.

■ Most of the opposition parties join in the national consensus on the Saharan question. What is the attitude of the Moroccan working class and popular strata toward this

problem?

The masses make a direct link between the deterioration of their living conditions and the Sahara war. Among the political organizations, only Ilal Amam has courageously supported the Saharans' struggle, a position for which it has paid very dearly with prison terms as long as 20 and 30 years. Hassan II has said, moreover, that he could accept anything except a challenge to the "Moroccan character" of the Sahara.

In the unions during the upsurge of struggles between 1978 and 1981, USFP activists champed against the bit imposed on them in the name of the Sahara question. They said that the fight for the liberation of the Sahara had to go through battles against the bourgeoisie. Since then, the USFP has abandoned this position.

Among the people of southern Morocco, there is sympathy for Polisario's cause. But in other regions, the demagoguery of the regime and the reformist parties has led to the masses seeing Polisario as no more than a body created by Algeria for expansionist aims at Morocco's expense.

■ What is the state of the conflict in the Sahara today?

With the building of the walls in the Sahara, the war is being conducted in a different way. The conflict has subsided, and there has been a resumption of diplomatic relations with Algeria. But nothing has been settled. The two protagonists are sticking to their positions. Polisario is not inclined to give in, and Hassan II isn't either. With the renewal of relations with Algeria, the masses cherished the hope of seeing an end to the war and its expenses.

■ Can you describe the economic situation and its effect on the standard of living of the masses?

Since 1977, the economic crisis and the foreign debt have accelerated the decline in the standard of living of the population. With the 1978-1983 five-year plan, the debt problem grew, and in 1983, the regime agreed to apply all the IMF's recommendations — an austerity policy, attacks against the already weakened buying power of the masses and their social gains (spending on health and education has been cut respectively by 42% and 25% since 1983).

The state is no longer hiring people, while up until 1983 it was the main employer. We are seeing rising unemployment and unremitting inflation, which above all affects the prices of the main foodstuffs. This explains the explosive events of 1981 and 1984.⁵

5. In June 1981, Casablanca was the scene of popular riots and a general strike against price rises. According to official figures there were 66 deaths, hundreds of wounded and more than 2,000 arrests. In January 1984, the north of the country saw further uprisings against inflation. This time there were 29 dead, 124 wounded and many arrests.



The only area where the state is still hiring people is the police and the army. To deal with popular discontent, the police apparatus has been beefed up to keep all the mass organizations under surveillance. The cultural associations in the big cities have been virtually dismantled because of the involvement of far left activists in them. You have to realize that, unlike the Algerian regime, the Moroccan monarchy has conceded no reforms after the riots.

■ Does that have anything to do with the different weight of the Islamic fundamentalists in the two countries?

Over the summer of 1983, there was a wave of arrests in fundamentalist circles that led to people getting up to 30 years in prison. In Essfi prison alone, there is a group of 71 fundamentalists. But in general, the fundamentalists in Morocco are weaker than in Algeria. Nonetheless, they have been stepping up their activity in recent years in student circles (the bulk of the activists arrested in 1983 were students) and in the poor neighborhoods. The repression prevents the fundamentalists from appearing so openly as in other countries.

However, at the same time as resorting to repression against fundamentalists, the regime favors some of them who are close to it. This is the case of the group around the journal *El Islah*, whose main activity is confronting left-wing students in the universities in the cities where the student movement is most active — in Oujda in 1988, in Fez in 1989, and so on. They are already an auxiliary repressive force, which, for example wages slander campaigns against atheists.

In any case, religious talk is standard in Morocco, since the regime claims to rule by divine right, which helps to cut the ground from under the fundamentalists.

■ Is the student movement still structured by the Moroccan National Union of Students (UNEM)?

Since its Seventeenth Congress in 1981, UNEM has been going through an open crisis. It is no longer capable of

leading the student struggles, despite the willingness to fight that young people have demonstrated in recent years. The crisis came out into the open with the withdrawal of the USFP students from UNEM, which they realized they could no longer control. What is more, the students to the left of the USFP were not capable of taking matters in hand.

Since then, the UNEM has had no leadership bodies, nor any form of organization. The students continue to identify with it and are systematically repressed by the "university guard." Recently, the fundamentalists, especially the group around *El Islah*, a journal manipulated by the regime, are trying to speak in the name of the UNEM and work in it, which has resulted in almost daily clashes with left-wing students.

The UNEM has a lot of possibilities for development today because of the bad conditions for living and studying, bound up with the decentralization of the university system, and the building of very poorly equipped universities in several cities. All that favored the struggles in 1988-1989.

■ Are we seeing the appearance of a new leadership in the student movement?

No. Even within the Qu'idiyin ("Rank and File Students"), the current traditionally close to Ilal Amam, which is very broad and open, there are disagreements about whether to structure the organization. Another weak point of the student movement is that it is based mainly in the north of the country, in Fez, Tetouan, Meknes, Oujda, and not in the cities where the UNEM was traditionally strong, such as Casablanca or Rabat.

■ We hear very little about the Moroccan women's movement.

The women's movement had an upturn in activity in 1983, via the Moroccan Association to Defend Human Rights and in the cultural associations in Casablanca, Rabat and other cities. But this wave ebbed, without leaving any structures behind. On the initiative of activists close to the OADP, a journal called *March 8* was published between 1985 and 1988. Today, virtually nothing is left. The cultural organizations have been dismantled, and in the left in general disappointment and disillusion prevail.

The women's movement is virtually nonexistent today, and the three human rights associations no longer do anything in this regard. The women's associations mainly disseminate information. They no longer have a base in the neighborhoods, and the political differences among the organizations generally loom larger than their mass work. ★

WHAT is the Unión Patriótica's position toward the elections after the murder of your presidential candidate, Bernardo Jaramillo?

After Jaramillo's assassination, we held two national plenums, where we discussed the current election campaign. It was agreed virtually unanimously that we should withdraw from the election campaign. In fact, as we said publicly when Jaramillo was killed, we have been driven out of the election campaign at gunpoint.

We think that there are no guarantees for genuine democratic participation, inasmuch as the government has neglected one of its constitutional obligations — making at least some effort to safeguard the lives of those who involve themselves in national political life.

We think, moreover, that in 20 days (the time limit set by the electoral law) it was materially impossible to select a new presidential candidate able to wage a campaign that would enable us to present the UP's points of view on the national situation.

■ What person or persons do you think are responsible for Bernardo Jaramillo's murder?

We think that the paramilitary groups are behind it. The investigations have pointed up a strong involvement of the paramilitaries controlled by the drug traffickers. But the national government also bears a responsibility because of its negligence. The tragic episode represented by the Minister of Administration's absurd and inappropriate statements that the UP was the political wing of an armed movement are well known. Obviously, these statements were an incitement to the paramilitary groups. And this not only relates to Jaramillo's murder but also to other murders that are being plotted against UP leaders and the trade-union and peasant movement.

■ The Communist Party of Colombia (PCC) says that the people use many methods of struggle — election campaigns, armed self-defense, and so on. What is the UP's position regarding this?

Well, at the outset, I should say that the UP is not a political party. We are registered as a political party because the law requires it. But the UP includes Liberals, Conservatives, Catholics, Communists and so on. And none of these forces can impose their viewpoint about the line to follow.

The UP, for example, is not a movement in favor of fighting for socialism. It is not a socialist party. The UP is a movement that is working for democracy in our country, for a democratic opening that could restore peace for the Colombian people. This conception does not embrace the combination of different forms of

Colombia: the left and the crisis

THE COLOMBIAN LEFT and far left have been shaken by important changes against a background of repression. On March 9, 1990, with great publicity, the M-19 guerilla movement laid down its arms. In exchange it was granted the right to take part in the March 11 regional elections in which it succeeded in stealing an electoral march on the Patriotic Union, a front dominated by the Communist Party, previously the leading force on the left. In the capital Bogotá, M-19's candidates got twice the UP's score.

Since then the UP has gone into crisis. Eight of its 12 main leaders have left to set up a bloc with the M-19 and other political forces — the Popular Front, led by the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), the Colombian Union, and Democratic Socialism. This bloc supported the presidential candidacy of Carlos Pizarro, the historic leader of M-19, until his assassination on April 24, 1990, to be replaced by Antonio Navarro. Faced with this new bloc, which has a reformist line, UP and *A Luchar* find themselves in a difficult situation.

The UP, if it has remained able to keep its base, is seeing its political space shrinking, given that its political line is very close to that of the M-19 led bloc. For its part *A Luchar*, which is meeting fierce repression, is maintaining a radical line against the stream. Despite their differences, UP and *A Luchar* are certain to enter into discussions.

These realignments on the Colombian left are taking place in a period of retreat of struggles. The United Workers' Central (CUT), which in 1988 had almost 700,000 members, where all the forces of the left are found, is itself in crisis and is incapable of organizing a reply to the the Barco government's austerity policy.

The following interview with the vice-president of UP, Carlos Romero was conducted for *International Viewpoint* by Eric Toussaint.

struggle the PCC refers to. One of its components might have such an idea, but not the UP as a whole.

■ **Could you explain more fully the conditions required for achieving such a democratic opening in Colombia?**

We think that the worst problem facing the Colombian people is violence in all its forms, including that arising from the confrontation between the armed forces and the guerrilla movement.

We think that there is no possibility of a military solution to this problem. Conditions do not exist for a military solution either for the army or for the guerrillas. In

other words, the confrontation between these two forces could last until the year 2,000 and go on into the next century without any chance of a resolution.

Given this situation, we think that the only real possibility is to find a political, peaceful solution to the armed conflict. In pursuance of this orientation, we have knocked on all the doors within reach. The problem is that we have run into big problems, which everyone knows about, that have generated a mutual mistrust between the armed forces and the guerrilla movement.

In response to this mistrust, to the fact that there is no national political force capable of mediating in the conflict, and

to the fact that the traditional political leadership has not shown the political will necessary to attempt a solution to this problem, we have offered new proposals. These have the advantage of opening the way for forces outside the country to act as mediators. In the first instance, we sent a message to the Pope, asking not only for his solidarity against the violence, but also for him to approach the international bodies and offer to mediate in an attempt to bring about peace in the country.

■ **Would such an agreement be of the same type as those arrived at by the Central American presidents?**

No. We still do not envisage any agreement of that type. In the first place, we appealed to the Pope, and recently we turned to the United Nations. We are looking, for example, for a way in which the Ecuadorian and Venezuelan governments, which are headed by people linked to the international social democracy, can play a role in the search for mediation acceptable both to the armed forces and the armed movement.

■ **How do you assess the period the UP is going through since the departure of Montaña, Angelino Garzón and other leaders, who have formed a new bloc with other political forces?**

Well, in Colombia people have always said that any left movement is divisible by three. But the fact is that the UP national leadership is confronting a crisis that it has already begun to overcome with the holding of its last national plenum. On the other hand, it seems to me that it is still not facing up to the whole truth about the causes of this crisis.

My assessment of the situation is that the old leadership, led by Dr. Diego Montaña, showed considerable incoherence in regard to proposals for solving the crisis that the country has been experiencing.

For example, on one occasion, compañero Bernardo Jaramillo made a proposal, which no one understood at the time, for dialogue with the drug traffickers. Of course, Dr. Montaña's response was resoundingly negative. In big headlines, the press reported his disavowal and threat to resign from the presidency of UP, because he thought that dialogue with the drug traffickers was morally impossible.

You also have to take into consideration that Jaramillo made his proposal at exactly the time that the government, the DAS, the army and the police had come to an agreement and decided to make a thoroughgoing assault on the traffickers. It was a completely absurd proposal!

A month later, however, Dr. Montaña signed a joint statement with the "notables" (López Michelsen and others) that meant dialogue with the drug traffickers and something more. This was obviously a very grave political inconsistency for a movement that, like ours, has been experi-

encing very difficult conditions.

This whole business did us a lot of harm. But I think that we are in the process of recovery, and that, based on the work of the new leadership, headed by Oscar Dueñas, we are going to rejuvenate the UP's whole national leadership team and get all of the ranks moving.

We are going to try to do this through a policy that will not be simply a result of agreements at the top, but also and fundamentally, involve working with the ranks and the Colombian people, who these days are being left on the sidelines by political projects that fail to recognize that any change can only be the work of the Colombian people.

■ I'm still not clear about the differences between UP and the new bloc that has formed.

To be honest, I too still don't understand what the differences are. I think that we will have to wait until they are expressed publicly and coherently. After that, we can say what we agree with and what we reject.

I can refer to the positions expressed by some leaders of this new bloc. For example, with respect to the armed struggle, Garzón has come out for a negotiated peace. But if that is his position, I don't understand why he is with M-19, which was not able to achieve a negotiated peace and which, in fact, ended up by capitulating.

We made a distinction between capitulation and a negotiated peace. We think that the guerrilla movement has a very important role to play — to guarantee a democratic opening through negotiation. I think that it is possible to achieve this. I think that the guerrilla movement wants to negotiate and reach an agreement, including to demobilize itself.

But on the basis of offering something to the Colombian people. Giving up just so they grant us 15 minutes TV time a week doesn't seem to me to have any point. We are for peace, but for a negotiated peace. I think that on this point we differ.

As for the other questions, it seems to me that another political project is in the works that counts on the support of the international social democracy. It seems to me that it is a process very similar to the one that took place in Venezuela (through Carlos Andrés Pérez) and in Ecuador (through Rodrigo Borja).

In this regard, I'm sorry that elements external to our country have gotten involved in the divorce among the left.

However, we are not against the emergence of this new project. We think that it is a good thing for them to form a social democratic party. Maybe we will have points of agreement. For a start, we have already agreed on the need for a negotiated peace, a constituent assembly, pluralism and on on.

THE COLOMBIAN LEFT

Legal political organizations

The *Patriotic Union (UP)*, dominated by the Communist Party, was set up in 1985. Its General Secretary, Jaime Pardo Leal was assassinated in 1987. The UP has a considerable number of elected representatives at various levels. It has withdrawn from the current presidential elections after its presidential candidate, Bernardo Jaramillo, was assassinated on March 23, 1990. The UP continues to develop on a reformist line.

A *Luchar* is a revolutionary organization which has developed important mass work (unions, neighbourhoods, among women and so on). Militants of Castro-Guevarist origin, strongly influenced by the Cuban revolution, find themselves alongside ex-Maoists and Trotskyists. The Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR — Colombian section of the Fourth International) dissolved itself in 1989 to take part in the construction of *A Luchar*, while continuing to exist as a Trotskyist current within the organization.

The *Popular Front (FP)* is the political front of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (ex-Maoist and ex-pro-Albanian). It has just joined in a bloc on the initiative of the M-19 guerilla movement and an important split from the UP. The aim of the bloc is to create a social democratic force.

The guerilla movement in Colombia

The *Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)* are the oldest and the strongest of the Colombian armed organizations. They are implanted in rural areas. Led by the Colombian Communist Party (PCC), the FARC took part in 1983 in a truce initiated by the government of Belisario Betancourt at a time when the PCC was trying to integrate itself into the political state institutions, going so far as to envisage disarming itself.

The *National Liberation Army (ELN)* is led by the Camilloist Union-Army of National Liberation (UCELN) — named after the guerilla priest, Camillo Torres, who died fighting in 1967. It has about 4,000 guerillas and is the second largest armed organization. This organization, of Guevarist origin, was created during the high tide of Cuban-style *focism* at the end of the 1960s when it was joined by ex-Maoists and Trotskyists. After drawing a balance sheet of its strategy, it has turned towards the creation of stable zones and towards the peasantry.

The *People's Liberation Army* is led by the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). It has about 1,000 guerillas.

The *Quinti Arme Armed Indigenous Organization* has about a hundred fighters.

The *Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT)* is an organization of Maoist origin, with about a hundred fighters.

These organizations came together in the Coordinadora Simon Bolivar in September 1987.

The *April 19 Movement (M-19)*, which laid down its arms on March 9, 1990, had some hundreds of fighters. Very marked by left-wing nationalism, the M-19 was born out of a split in the FARC. In the 1970s it won considerable mass support, and became a pole of attraction for the radical union movement. It was able to carry out large-scale military operations.

After participating in a "dialogue" with the government in 1984 and after an important part of its leadership was killed by the repression that followed the collapse of the truce in 1985, the M-19 now defines itself as "civilian and democratic" as do the UP and FP. Its presidential candidate, Carlos Pizarro was assassinated on March 19, 1990. The M-19 is continuing to take part in the elections.

The unions

The *United Workers' Centre* was created in 1986. It brings together three previous union confederations, tied respectively to the liberal and conservative parties and the World Federation of Trade Unions as well as independent unions.

■ **What role did the international situation (perestroika, regional accords and so on) play in the division of the UP?**

The UP has never discussed such questions, or at least not since I have been a member. So, I was surprised by Dr. Montaña's statements that he had proposed a humanitarian socialism modelled on *perestroika*. I was also surprised, because I as told you, UP is not a party or a socialist movement. Its objective is not socialism. Its objective is to achieve democracy under capitalism. In the economic domain, for example, our proposal is for a mixed economy with social provision.

■ **Do you really think that you can achieve genuine democracy within the framework of capitalism?**

Well, I don't say that we will achieve perfect democracy. But I do think that the country can be given very extensive democracy. I am sorry that socialism is not on the agenda in Colombia. What this country needs is full democracy, that is, a democracy that would restore the rights of the workers.

Colombia is one of the few countries in the world where forming a guerrilla force is easier than forming a trade union. There is no freedom of association in Colombia. Those who try to associate are persecuted. Being a union leader in Colombia means risking your job, your family allowance, your life, everything! That is the way things are. We are fighting for a democracy in which it would be possible to form a union. That is an elementary right for the Colombian people.

Another important aspect has to do with the democratization of the means of communication. As everyone knows, the main Colombian TV channels are in the hands of the four presidential families. In these conditions, it is materially impossible to gain access to this important means of communication.

A third aspect is achieving peace with a perspective of establishing a pluralist government, that is a government that can include Liberals, Conservatives, Communists, UP, in short all those who are interested in building a fully fledged democracy in Colombia.

■ **What is your position on the constituent assembly?**

For a start, I think that a constituent assembly is a necessity to overcome the reality now facing the Colombian people. However in order for there to be some signs of democracy in Colombia a constituent assembly is not necessary. In order to end the state of siege, that has gone on for 35 years, a constituent assembly is not necessary; to restore the people's right and capacity to organize and mobilize, a constituent assembly is not necessary.

To guarantee the lives of people, a constituent assembly is not necessary. We do,

of course, need reforms to institutionalize all these constitutional rights.

But if there were the political will today on the part of the ruling classes, there would be no need for constitutional reforms to move on to a more or less acceptable form of democracy, to representative democracy.

■ **Don't such arguments weaken the demand for a constituent assembly?**

No, because if you read Dr. Carlos Lleras Restrepo's proposal, you will see that it says that the text of the constitutional reform has to be worked out by two delegates from the parliament, two delegates from the Supreme Court and two delegates from the Council of State. In other words, he is proposing that it be drafted by Liberals and Conservatives.

■ **What is your proposal, then?**

We think that the constituent assembly should be formed through two mechanisms. The first is direct elections. The second, is giving representation to the country's social and political forces — the business organizations, the trade-union movement, the political parties and the armed movement.

A pluralist, democratic constituent assembly confronting the country's problems can only come from these two sources. A constituent assembly does not involve just amending the 1886 constitution. A constituent assembly means above all electing people to discuss a political and peaceful solution to the armed conflict.

■ **What are you doing to get the masses to take up this demand?**

We think that there should be a referendum on the question of a constituent assembly. In this way, the participation of the source of constitutional authority, the Colombian people, would be guaranteed. If you think about it, you will realize that the proposal being made is an elitist one — to call on the political experts. As if the constituent assembly could be held in isolation from the country's problems.

■ **What other left forces does the UP hope to bring into its alliances?**

We think that Colombia has very great democratic reserves. Unfortunately, these reserves are dispersed because of very strong personal or regional differences. They, therefore, need a point of reference and a form of coordination that will make it possible to attract them to the search for the necessary reforms.

I think, for example, that there are important democratic sectors in the Liberal Part that we have to attract. In the Conservative Party, there are also such tendencies. In general, we think that we can find allies for the cause of democracy in all the social movements.

■ **Haven't you thought about making alliances with A Luchar or other left forces?**

Yes, of course. At the moment we are discussing a proposal by *A Luchar* to join the UP. On the level of organizations (*A Luchar* or the Popular Front), their incorporation should occur on the basis of respect for their organizational structure, with equal conditions for participating in the UP's national leadership and decisions being made by consensus and not by majority vote.

The PCC is a majority in UP, but we have come to an agreement that decisions will be made by consensus.

Some personalities are also asking to be given a special status in order to participate in UP. Some *compañeros*, for example, are asking that they be granted the status of permanent guests of the UP. We are discussing how to include them, without their necessarily having to become UP members.

■ **Municipal elections were held recently. What do you think of the results Pizarro and the UP got?**

I think that the UP results represent a setback. But there are many reasons for this. The first is the impact of the dirty war both in the countryside and the cities. It should not be forgotten that several UP leaders have been murdered in Bogotá. But the worst thing, it seems to me, is the discrimination against us as regards the lack of guarantees.

We were on the defensive not only with respect to the paramilitary groups but also with respect to certain authorities and military commands, which became organizers of a struggle against the UP. Another problem derives from internal conflicts generated by different political assessments both within the UP and in the various forces that make it up.

Even so, we got 255,000 votes throughout the country and have elected nine members of the House of Representatives, 18 deputies to the departmental councils, one senator, eight mayors (as the UP, about 93 in coalition) and 257 city council members. So, despite all the problems I mentioned, we have maintained our basic positions. ★



The Philippines, East Europe, Socialism and Democracy

Interview with Joel Rocamora

JOEL ROCAMORA has been active in the Philippine struggle, at home and abroad, for many years. He taught politics at the University of the Philippines in Manila, before he was imprisoned by the Marcos regime, after the declaration of martial law in 1972, and subsequently forced into exile. In the United States, Joel was director of the Southeast Asia Resource Center and later the Philippine Resource Center.

This interview was conducted in February 1990, in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, where Joel is now based and where he is associate director of the Transnational Institute (TNI). This interview was done for *International Viewpoint* by Jeroen Zonneveld and Rob Lubbersen.

Joel Rocamora analyzes here the impact of the recent developments in Eastern Europe on the Filipino Left and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). He presents his own views on the significance of these historic events for Third World revolutionaries.

What has been the impact of the recent events in Eastern Europe and the USSR on the Philippine Left?

THESE developments have put certain questions on the agenda in the Philippines, for the National Democratic Front and all the "national democrats". This is true for both the above ground and underground NDs.¹

Even if it is experienced by the CPP and the NDF people in ways that are quite specific, I think that what Marxists in the Philippines have to confront is the same as everywhere else in the Third World. We must deal with the question of democracy, inner party democracy and the role of the party in relation to other political and mass organizations.

That is extremely important and goes very, very deep. What has happened in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is historic. Questions of democracy cannot anymore be disregarded by revolutionaries. They may choose to be anti-democratic, but the question is now on the agenda of revolutionaries everywhere.

■ It is not the first time you have underlined the importance of the issue of democracy for revolutionaries.

I have said the same things previously, even before the developments in Eastern Europe. The questions themselves are not so new, of course. The NDF has had to confront them many times, since 1986 and the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship especially. But with the changing situation in Eastern Europe, they are raised in an even more serious way than before. If you look at the program of the NDF, you will find that it does not believe in one-party-rule. This is then true for the CPP itself, as it is a member organization of the NDF. In fact, the latest version of the NDF program, of November 1989, explicitly uses the term "political pluralism". Some people will argue that the CPP puts out a program in which it does not really believe. I don't think that it is correct to say so.

What I think is true is that, as the CPP struggles to deal with its position in Philippine society, at whatever point in time, it has to confront its ideological history. This is in fact the case for all

Marxist parties, whether we are talking about so-called pro-Moscow or pro-Beijing ones... Even Marxist parties in your own Trotskyist tradition have to deal with the question of the role of the party after victory. In the case of the Philippines, fortunately these questions are being posed in the course of the struggle itself. This is very important because if you do not deal with the issue now, in a real way — which is in a way that affects how you are acting — then you will never deal with it properly. One has to deal with such issues in practice, and not only in theory.

For example, in 1986 the CPP made a self-criticism, not only for having decided to boycott the 1986 presidential elections, but also, and more importantly, it criticized itself for failing, on this occasion, to implement democracy within the party and in relation to the mass organizations in which it operates.² The CPP Politbureau made criticisms of the process whereby the decision to boycott was made within the party. Moreover, party units within mass organizations used pressure tactics and took organizational steps to get legal organizations to take a boycott position even when that did not reflect the opinion of the mass organization itself.

After that, there was a call for more democracy, inside the party as well as in the mass organizations. However, especially under conditions of clandestinity, the battle for inner party democracy is a long battle. It is not just one single battle, it is really a long war to fight. It is hopefully a situation of two steps forward — one step back and not the other way around. Clearly this has not yet been completely successful. Not decisively anyway. I speak of the 1986 self-criticism as an important step forward, but it went only part of the way.

■ How does the CPP assess what's happening in China, Eastern Europe and the USSR?

On international questions it is very difficult at this point to say where the center of gravity is in the leadership of the CPP. For a long time, the CPP looked to China on international issues. It stopped doing so when it decided not to follow anymore the Chinese Three Worlds Theory according to which the USSR had become the main enemy. The CPP leadership decided to have its own understanding of the world situation. This was eventually made explicit in an interview with the chairman of the Party, in July 1987. This has been a very positive step forward.

On the other hand, if you are an intellectual and you have been in the hills for the last fifteen years, what happened in China and Eastern Europe must be bewildering because you have only got some tiny little pieces of it. On the radio you can only hear the "Voice of America" and the BBC "World Service". I am not even sure that

you can still get Moscow in the Philippines. You can get radio Beijing but their news broadcasts are not heard very much. So, it's understandable that people in the mountains find it difficult to figure out a serious position on these events. What happens then is that the leadership depends on certain people for party formulations on international questions in a greater way than on other issues.

There was an article, in the November 1989 issue of the party paper, *Ang Bayan*, which said some quite favourable things about *perestroika* and *glasnost*. But there is no collective position, yet. Some in the CPP leadership believe with Ligachev that Gorbachev is betraying Communism and Marxism-Leninism. They say the reason why the Communist parties in Eastern Europe have failed is because they introduced capitalist elements in the economy, so they allowed the reactionaries to establish a foothold and now the reactionaries have kicked them out. I disagree with that position. Some others think, and I would agree more with them, that at the root of the problem is that, in those countries, the dictatorship of the proletariat has been identified with the dictatorship of the party, which is a quite different thing.

■ Could you elaborate a bit more on this question?

The present problems have to do with the way the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat has been linked to the role of the Leninist party. In theoretical terms, yes it makes sense. If you agree that the state is the expression of class rule then whichever class rules you will have the dictatorship of a class. If the proletariat rules then you have the dictatorship of the proletariat. The assumption is that once you get rid of the bourgeoisie by revolution, then everybody will be the proletariat. Therefore it is not really a dictatorship.

But in many cases, the reality was not dictatorship of the proletariat but dictatorship of the so-called proletarian party. Then, the state and the apparatus of the state merged with the party. All of the other organizations become part of the operation of the state or the party. This is bad not only for the society, but also for the party. If the party controls everything then there are tendencies that develop within these parties that make them flabby and bureaucratic and not accountable to the people. There should be room for organizations to operate independently of the government and of the party.

1. The National Democratic Front (NDF) is an underground organization, led by the CPP. The "national democrats" (or NDs) are those activists, including those acting above ground in legality, who identify themselves with the basic program and goals of the NDF.

2. The CPP boycotted the 1986 snap presidential election which led to the "EDSA revolution", the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship and the formation of the Aquino regime.

Dimming prospects for democracy in the Philippines

REPRESSION is intensifying in the Philippines. We publish below a statement on the latest events issued by the Transnational Institute and signed by many individuals and organizations which participated in a conference on "Sustainable Development in the Philippines" held in Amsterdam May 17-19, 1990.

RECENT developments in the Philippines put in jeopardy the prospects of democratic expression, independent people's initiatives and human rights.

We are alarmed that in the repressive logic of the Philippine government's counter-insurgency policy, which treats everything as a weapon of war and almost every non-government initiative as a suspect and seditious endeavor, these basic features of democracy have become, like a growing number of innocent Filipinos, casualties of total war.

We raise special concern over the following events which highlight the direction government policy and attitude are taking:

1. The arrest last May 10 of Jaime Tadeo, chairperson of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP — Philippine Peasant Movement) and leader of the Coalition for a People's Agrarian Reform (CPAR) and the Peasants' Forum, and the filing of sedition charges against Leony Montemayer (FFF), Benjamin Cruz (Sanduguan), Paang Mariano (KMP), Oscar Castillo (Pakisama) and 195 others.

Coming after renewed farmers' protests, Tadeo's conviction over what the late Senator Jose Dickno calls a ten year criminal "non-case" is a thin and ridiculous excuse to silence him. More than this, it symbolizes the imprisonment of the people's desire for genuine agrarian reform.

2. The violent dispersal of anti-US bases rallies and the arrests of leaders Lidy Nacpil-Alejandro of BAYAN, Nathaniel Santiago of the League of Filipino Students and Al Senturias of the UCCP with several others last May 16.

This happening highlights the government's increasing intolerance towards dissenting opinions and its as yet unofficial option in the current negotiations over the U.S. bases in the Philippines.

3. The summary killing of unarmed tribesfolk Norman and Antonio Akien last April 3 at Tadian, Mountain Province and the continuous harassment of their sister, Georgia Valasco of DATC, a Cordillera non-government organization.

The two brothers were allegedly killed in an encounter between Philippine Constabulary troopers and NPA rebels which residents denied ever occurred. The Armed Forces have since been harassing protesters, including the victims' sister and tribes kin, who are requesting independent investigation and subsequent prosecution of involved soldiers.

This and other similar killings, compounded by government inaction, have made a mockery of the country's system of justice and have elevated the Armed Forces as judge and executioner in the exigencies of war.

As individuals concerned with the realization of democracy in the Philippines, we are calling for the immediate release of Jimmy Tadeo, Lidy Nacpil-Alejandro, Nathaniel Santiago and others. Likewise, we are calling for the prosecution of the guilty in the Tadian killings.

We are calling on the government of President Cory Aquino to redirect its hostilities towards the causes of pervasive poverty and misery. We urge it to work with equal zeal to uplift the people's social and economic conditions. Only through this can it give justice to the popular sacrifice that, in the first place, placed it in power. ★

So, at the core of the issues that Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are facing, you'll find the connection between the party and state institutions. And I think that Marxists and Marxist-Leninist parties have not dealt with these things seriously enough in the past. Even in the case of the Philippines, the CPP still needs to undertake some extremely serious debates on these kinds of questions. Because while the NDF program already says all the right things about democracy, some of the ideas in the heads of some people within the party do not correspond to them. So there are now and there will be struggles within the party as well as between party people and non-party people within the NDF.

Hopefully, I think that there is a worldwide positive trend. On democracy and the practice of proletarian Marxist parties, the more recent experiences are showing improvements. Socialist countries, especially the newer ones, have a contribution to make. Even the Soviet Union... But one has to go back to their past in order to find such a contribution. From the Soviet party to China to Cuba, from Cuba to Nicaragua, there are positive changes. Many of my ideas on the subject are in fact picked up from Latin American revolutionaries.

■ So the traditional bourgeois democratic model is not the only way forward?

I think that the Marxist criticism of the bourgeois state and democracy remains valid — the criticism of the class nature and the limits of democratic institutions in advanced capitalist countries. As long as the means of production are controlled by a small minority of the people, the exercise of democracy in representative institutions is going to be limited. Because economic power plays a very important role in how democratic rights are exercised.

However, that criticism did not give sufficient scope to the way in which certain elements in bourgeois democracy — things like the bills of rights, representative institutions, checks in the power of the state and so on — are things that were fought for not just by the bourgeoisie against the aristocracy, but also by the working classes. I think there is broad agreement now among progressive people, including Marxists, that we have to respect these rights and institutions. That is relatively new. The way the NDF program puts it is that there are certain internationally recognized institutional requirements for democracy, whatever the social system.

An important element is to look at the experiences of direct democracy, not just representative democracy, to see what aspects of them can be useful for various levels of social development — to study all of them, from the workplaces to the neighbourhood institutions, from Cuba or Yugoslavia to the "Soviets" (the word means "Councils") in the USSR itself. These are things that need to be looked at very carefully as forms to place next to parliamentary or representative institutions. Because I would say that the experience of advanced capitalist countries and most certainly the experience of Third World countries have shown that representative institutions by themselves do not necessarily mean real democracy.

There are also questions which have to do with Socialist construction, and the connection between the type of economic strategy that you want to follow and the political institutions that are required by it. If you are going to follow a Stalinist model of forced collectivization, heavy industrialization and so on, then of necessity you are going to have a repressive state.

■ Has the NDF worked out a program on such issues?

More on the economic issues than on the political ones. Among all the currents of the Left, in the Philippines, the National Democratic one has been the most successful in recruiting professional economists. The best progressive professional economists of the country are National Democrats.

■ How do you explain that?

I don't know. It could be as simple as the fact that the cadre assigned to recruit the economists happened to be a very good cadre. Well, I think that it has to do with the National Democratic framework. With the fact that, for example, despite the CPP's influence within the NDF, Bisig³ talks about Socialism a lot more than the National Democrats do. These economists are ideologically linked with the CPP and they have done a lot of very good work, looking at the prospects for a mixed economy in the Philippines and what that would mean. In some senses the Philippine CP and the NDF are much better prepared for Socialist construction and transition than, say for example, the Namibian SWAPO is or even the Nicaraguans when they took power in 1979.

This is brought about by the realities of the struggle itself. Here is the New People's Army (NPA) and the party. They work in a given rural area, where they have won the support of the population. The landlords have been kicked out. New trading and credit networks get constructed. The CPP and the NPA have to deal with very concrete problems, with the economy of areas that are liberated. That's why this question of mixed economy comes in. But, here, there is a gap between the practice and the theory of the movement. The CPP and the NDF mostly use the word "nationalization", somewhat into the way that Catholics say "Hail Mary". But what is the strategy behind such nationalizations? How do they fit in the framework of a mixed economy, where you have state, cooperatives and private enterprises. And what do strategic industries (the ones to be nationalized) mean for a Third World economy?

What is happening is a situation where the practice of a revolutionary movement requires certain new understandings, a whole change in a traditional ways of thinking. It is very, very hard to give up such ways of thinking, despite the very obvious contradiction between practice, what I call the middle-level theory that you develop in relation to it, and the basic theories that have been handed down to you through Mao Zedong Thought and Stalin's "Problems of Leninism". There is need for discussions. All of us should look at this contradiction between practice and theory with a completely open mind. The only thing that I am hoping for, is that it does not lead to organizational splits and new forms of sectarianism.

■ Do CPP cadres see dan-



gers in the policy of economic reforms as applied in China or other countries?

A fairly common position, with which I would to some extent agree, is that the Deng leadership has been rather indiscriminate in its attempts to bring in market type economic activities in China. It is particularly dangerous in China because overseas Chinese from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, or Thailand still operate, and their networks are still Chinese networks. They really represent a transnational capital, whether they are naturalized as Filipinos, Indonesians, or something else. They represent a very powerful base for the bourgeoisie in China so that the indiscriminate way in which Chinese capital was allowed to come into the economic zones is very dangerous.

■ Do you imply that the Chinese democratic movement was a product of this capitalist trend?

No, I don't mean that. Clearly, the struggle for democracy in China goes beyond the results of the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping. But I think that in the case of China, these reforms do explain some things. For example, probably the most important issue is corruption. There was already corruption in China before. But the level of corruption, as a result of the reforms, has become massive. Also, one of the measures that Deng implemented was to allow graduate students to find their own jobs. Then, the government rescinded that order and once again required graduated students to join work units in a compulsory way. This played a role in the radicalization of the student's struggles.

But I also think that some CPP leaders tend to project onto the USSR and Eastern Europe elements of analysis which apply only to China and maybe to Poland and Hungary. They certainly do not apply to the Soviet Union because I don't think that there is a bourgeoisie left in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev will have to recreate one! Of course, there is concern among a lot of people, including me, that in the rush to get rid of the nastier aspects of the — state, the Socialist baby might be thrown out with the bureaucratic Communist bathwater — things like guarantees for employment, basic necessities and so on. These are things that workers in these countries fought for.

But the essential point, I think, is to recognize that it is the people who move, there, in Eastern Europe and in a more complex way in the Soviet Union.... the masses. And if you are going to continue to be a Socialist, you've got to affirm what these masses have done. The thrust towards democracy which underlies most of the claims and the demands of the masses in Eastern Europe and the Soviet



Union are things to be affirmed. And their victories are things to be celebrated. In addition, the development of the productive forces in these countries is much higher compared to those in Nicaragua, Zimbabwe and Vietnam, so that the possibility of advancing to Socialism is more favourable, if you see Socialism as not just class struggle but also as developing the productive forces. It offers the possibility for a renewal of Socialism as an ideal.

■ What other implications might the changes in the USSR have for the CPP?

The whole question of proletarian internationalism has to be reexamined. And a related question: what kind of role do Socialist states, especially those under the influence of the Soviet Union, play in the anti-imperialist struggle. The theoretical questions here, I think, are quite profound. It starts from the declaration of the CPSU that the class struggle is not anymore the main determinant of the foreign policy of the Soviet state. Which I never thought it was. But for them to state it theoretically is a very important development.

The way the CPP is confronted by this issue is different than for many other organizations. Because it comes out of the Maoist tradition, it already formulated sharp criticisms, in the past, of the international practice of the Soviet state and party. Also, it has never received any assistance from the CPSU. Since it abandoned the Chinese position that the USSR is social-imperialist, the CPP has been trying to develop party-to-party relations with the CPSU but, as far as I know, it has not succeeded.

I think that the CPP agrees with other Communist parties in different parts of the Third World in being worried about the existing changes in Soviet interna-

tional policy, and about future changes. That is, in very simple terms, that they are worried that there will be less money available from the Soviet Union. I agree with that.

Where I differ with such an approach is that I think that proletarian internationalism is not a one-way street. I don't believe that we should look at proletarian internationalism simply in terms of the flow of ideas and resources coming from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe towards Third World revolutionary movements. I think it is very important for revolutionary movements to look into the situation the Soviet party faces and to say, for example, if it does make sense for them to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. Is there any justification for the Soviet Union or any Socialist country to maintain troops in another country at the level and for the length of time that the Soviets maintained their troops there? I do not think so. The same question can be asked about the military role of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, in the course of the last twenty years or so.

■ And what about the presence of a pro-Soviet party in the Philippines?

Within the Philippines itself, the CPP had to grapple with the question of how to relate to another party that says it is a Communist party—the PKP⁴, which as far as I know continues to maintain fraternal ties with the CPSU. There, the theoretical question that needs to be answered is the following one: in any given country, is there room for more than one Communist party? In the case of the Philippines and the CPP, this question has never been confronted.

3. Bisig is an organization of the militant independent socialist Left, founded in 1986.

4. PKP: Partido Komunista ng Pilipina, or the "old" party. The CPP, or the "new" party originated from the PKP in 1967-1968.

The traditional position has always been to assume that there can only be one Communist Party in one country. That question was posed and answered in a fairly decisive way by the experience of Latin America and by the practice of Cuba, where they organized a Party Congress for which they invited seven different organizations from Chile that all claimed to be Communist Parties. Which means that the Cubans don't believe anymore that you can only have one communist party for each country.

■ **How about Cuba itself ?**

That's true, that's a different question for them. But I think that the need for political pluralism cannot be ignored, in the long run. The way that I look at this development is as materialist as possible. This issue is central to the most recently liberated countries, like Nicaragua and Zimbabwe in particular — but also to Namibia. If you are a good Marxist, then you have to say this is not just because people in these countries have read about it, but because there are material bases for it.

Therefore, I think that what the Nicaraguans call revolutionary pluralism is the position that will win in the long run. This idea of doing away with one party states, the more serious introduction of democracy into the revolutionary process is a position that will win out, because there is a social, material basis for it, for demands for democracy to intensify, to increase, not only in Socialist countries but also in the Third World and hopefully in the advanced capitalist countries as well.

■ **So you think that the thrust toward more democracy expresses, even in the Third World, an objective need ?**

Yes, very clearly. Look at those Third World countries, especially in Latin America and parts of Asia, where authoritarian regimes have been replaced by democratic regimes: the process was a real process, it is not fake. The 1986 revolution in the Philippines was real.

The same thing is true of the movement that brought Duarte in El Salvador into power, Cereso in Guatemala, Alfonsín in Argentina, or Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan. There was a real thrust towards democracy. However in these countries, it has been taken over by the bourgeoisie, or the landlords. This is because the political organizations of the lower classes were not developed enough, and, I would insist, because Marxist movements in many places in the Third World have not taken democracy seriously enough.

If Corazon Aquino says she wants democracy that's for real, but in the sense that she rejects the Marcos regime, which was a dictatorship not just against the lower classes but a dictatorship against other fractions of the upper classes, too. So what she has created in the Philippines

is equal rights for all the different fractions of the bourgeoisie.

In all of these countries where you had a transition from authoritarian regimes to so-called democratic regimes, from the point of view of the lower classes, the promise of democracy was betrayed. And everywhere in these countries, the main reason is because the social-economic basis for broad democracy does not exist. The struggle for a popularly rooted democracy is quite difficult, there.

■ **What do you mean ?**

To begin with, if you are not even sure to be able to feed your family then it is very difficult to think about political participation. It is as simple as that. Democracy requires a civil society outside of the state. It is this that Eastern Europeans are always talking about. The state and its institutions have to be balanced by institutions in the civil society, whether you are talking about labour unions or women's organizations or ecological organizations, chess clubs or whatever. A wide range of institutions within which there is participation by the population. But, in the Third World, there is a stronger element of violence, of repression than in Western societies. Organizations of the lower classes are very often violently suppressed and cannot operate freely.

You also have to take into account the nature of imperialism at this point in history and its impact on the societies it dominates — especially on their class structure. There, the urban industrial proletariat is not becoming the majority, as was probably assumed by many Marxists. Instead you have a broad rural semi-proletariat, you have millions of landless labourers and urban poor.

It is even quite hard to think in Marxist terminology, about things like the way in which the informal sector has grown.

What do you call somebody who sells single cigarettes? Or chewing-gum by the piece? How do you deal with that? Or how do we understand the term petty bourgeoisie in a Third World context? There, the petty bourgeoisie in the original Marxist meaning, the small bourgeoisie of traders, small artisans and so on, is less important than the schoolteachers, the clerks of the department stores or the government, reporters etc. So the class situation in many Third World countries is quite unexpected. You have to come up with new ideas. If you look at the political programs, you will find that they reflect these changes because they have to deal with them in a day-to-day sense. The problem is that the ideology that has been handed out from 1917 down is very difficult to dislodge. In many ways, there is a contradiction between the reality and the thinking of party people who formulated the theories.

We face specific difficulties in the Third World countries. Your political current have placed most of the emphasis

on overcoming the separation between the state and civil society, on initiating a process of withering away of the state. But the kind of situations that many Third World countries are confronted with is very different, to the point that theoretically, the distinction between the state and civil society remains valid. I would insist that in many Third World countries the concrete situation is such that the state will continue to be strengthened in the near future.

■ **For some organizations, the struggle for democracy in the Third World is only for a remote future...**

Yes, there are people in the left who think that democracy is something you can postpone. First you have to feed the people and then you have to destroy the base of the bourgeoisie and the other ruling classes and then you have to kick out US imperialism and to prevent counter-revolution: and, maybe, 40 years later we can have democracy.

My own feeling is that you can't effectively feed the people unless you have democracy. You can't effectively prevent counterrevolution unless you have democracy. In other words all of these things are interrelated. Unfortunately, if you are trying to run a country you have to deal with all these things at the same time. But the struggle for democracy is not a luxury, it's an illusion to think that you can deal with economics now and with democracy tomorrow only. Or the other way around.

■ **Compared to other Third World countries, how would you assess the conditions, in the Philippines?**

I think the Philippines has greater chances of developing democracy in the future than many other Third World countries. First, because the bourgeois institutions of representative democracy and the bill of rights have been in place in the Philippines since 1916, when the country was still a colony of the United States. There is a practice already of at least bourgeois democracy. And this is important in the culture of a people.

Two, during the twenty years of the Marcos dictatorship, there has been a massive growth of non-political party type of organizations. The infrastructure of workers, peasant, women organizations and so on is tremendous.

Third, I think that the fact that there are struggles within the Left, not just struggles between National Democrats, Social Democrats and Bisig, but struggles within the NDF itself on these questions, is already an advance. This is a process that will take a long time. I hope it will end in a fight for a more authentic Socialism.

■ **Which is?**

Socialism with a more direct type of democracy, a combination of representative democracy and other forms of democracy. ★

AROUND
THE
WORLD

SENEGAL

New moves to far left unity

LIKE many other black African countries, Senegal has experienced a deep social and economic crisis over the past few years. While the state is increasingly paralyzed, and its principal activity has tended to become the repression of strikes and demonstrations, the democratic opposition has been incapable of developing a coherent strategy for the overthrow of the regime. The revolutionary left is conscious of this problem and is seeking to regroup its forces to maximize its weight in the current political situation. Four organizations of the far left, among them the OST (Socialist Workers Organization, Senegalese section of the Fourth International) have recently officially begun a process of reunification. The other organizations involved are And Jéf/Revolutionary Movement for New Democracy, the Union for Popular Democracy, and the Sexuba Readers' Circles.

Senegal is a country dominated by French interests. It is a member of the "Franc Zone". Several hundred French soldiers are stationed there permanently and the French base at Dakar has been vital to a number of France's military operations in Africa. More than 20,000 French nationals live in Senegal of whom the majority work there as enterprise managers. Finally the regime is controlled by the "Socialist Party", a member of the Socialist International, supported by the French Socialist Party. The multiparty system is a mere facade, the party in power enjoying undisputed control over all the institutions and repressing all the mass public activities of the opposition.

In their declaration of unification, the four organizations say that their decision is a response to "a profound aspiration of the masses, and of the youth in particular, to see the unity of patriots and revolutionaries realized", as well as being a result of "the progress realized in the common engagement of our organizations in the popular struggles of recent years, particularly those which have followed the fraudulent elections of February 1988". They commit themselves to the struggle for "a progressive, multiparty, democratic, secular state in the service of the Senegalese masses, within the framework of a pan-African dynamic of struggle for the emer-

gence of a united, democratic, prosperous and socialist Africa". ★

SOVIET UNION

Workers back Lithuania

THE following resolution was passed at the April 30-May 2 congress of independent workers' movements and organizations held in Novokuznetsk, the centre of the Kuznetsk coal field, where massive strikes occurred last summer. The text is from the May 4 issue of *Russkaya Mysl*, a Russian-language weekly published in Paris.

Some 143 delegates were reportedly present, representing 40 cities. There were also representatives of the new Workers' Union of Lithuania. The leader of the Lithuanian delegation, Kazimieras Uoku, expressed his satisfaction with the

resolution in the following terms.

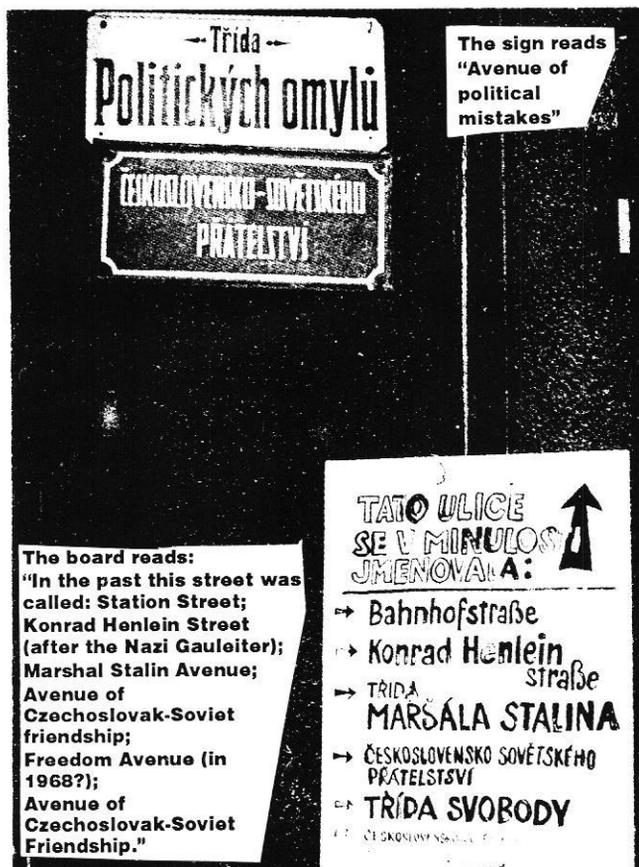
"It is a good document. The most important thing in it is the point about directly agreed economic relations with workers' collectives and regions of Russia. I think that today a practical blow to the totalitarian regime can be dealt not by strikes but, in the case of Lithuania, by direct horizontal ties. The regime cannot tolerate that". The resolution reads as follows:

"We regret that in the context of his own calls for a peaceful solution of conflicts and disputes among peoples and nations, the president of the USSR [Gorbachev] has taken the initiative of applying forceful pressure, including economic sanctions against an expression of national will [of the Lithuanian people].

"In accordance with the principles of workers' solidarity and social justice, the congress calls for the immediate cessation of the economic and political blockade and the beginning of negotiations between the governments of the USSR and Lithuania without any preconditions, and in a manner conducive to maintaining and reinforcing confidence among the peoples of the republics.

"The congress calls on the workers' collectives having economic ties with Lithuania to maintain and strengthen these ties on the base of direct agreements.

"Only our solidarity with the people of Lithuania will make it possible for Lithuania and the other peoples of our country to become free". ★



Street sign from Cheb on the Czechoslovak / West German border (from Reportér)

Abolish the snooper state!

ON MARCH 6, some 60 national councillors (MPs), voted in favour of a motion for the abolition of the political police (with 123 voting against the motion). This new shock to the Swiss system comes after the 35% vote in a referendum in favour of the initiative "For a Switzerland without an army" last December and the verdict in the Kopp corruption trial (See IV 174).

In the background of the initiative on the political police was the presentation of the report of the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the Federal Police and Justice Department. On March 3, more than 35,000 people demonstrated in Bern, while 120,000 requests for access to files have been presented by citizens. In this context, the initiative "for an end to the snooper state" will have a big resonance. While the conclusions of the Committee of Parliamentary Inquiry have opened the doors of the BUPO (*Bundespolizei* — Federal Political Police) only mobilization can prevent them from being sealed again. It is necessary to throw light on all the mysteries and those responsible for them.

The Commission concluded that files were being kept on more than 500,000 of Switzerland's 6.5 million citizens and immigrants. In 1988, we can see the snooper state flourishing. Some 210 new files were opened every day and more than 60,000 in the course of the year. The revelation of these figures came as a shock to the citizens.

Who? About what? How? With whose help? Why? And why did the report find that: "None of the police chiefs we interviewed — neither the Confederal Prosecutor, nor the head of the Federal Police, nor the head of the judicial service of the Federal Public Ministry, nor the head of the internal police service — and not one of the heads of the cantonal information services — felt able to assume responsibility for the contents of the information gathered."

Are we to conclude that the political police has been functioning for more than 40 years in total autonomy and without any control by the higher authorities of the state? The absurdities reached their height when the president of the Confederation and head of federal justice stated that he

THE SWISS political police celebrated its hundredth anniversary on May 1, 1990. In response a popular initiative, "SOS — For a Switzerland without the secret police" was launched¹. The campaign will culminate on the national holiday, August 1, by which time it is hoped that 100,000 signatures will have been gathered.

SOPHIE MASSOURI



knew nothing of the secret ordinance of January 12, 1951, which guided the activities of the snooper state until February 21, 1990. According to article 12 of this henceforth famous ordinance: "Whoever is suspected of having violated one of their duties with regard to the protection of the security of the country, or who has excited by their behaviour the suspicion that they have intended to violate such a duty, can be obliged to report to the police or be put under police surveillance or arrested.

"Specifically, the surveillance of their mail, and telephone and telegraphic connections can be ordered...."

Police chiefs refuse to accept responsibility

The refusal of the BUPO chiefs to accept any responsibility for the content of the files is an admission of their guilt. This shows the extent to which the very existence of these "functionaries" contradicts the avowed principles of a state that claims to be democratic.

The attitude of the ruling class and higher authorities of the state are similar to those of the rulers of East Germany with regard to opening the dossiers of the

Stasi (political police — see IV 184). And, as we know, after the public admission comes the line about "collective responsibility" (or irresponsibility), as well as the search for a judicial compromise. In the case of the GDR the West German rulers have spoken out in favour of an amnesty for former Stasi collaborators. This is not a disinterested gesture. To accept the popular demand in the GDR for the opening of the dossiers of the secret police would have implications in the West.

To put it another way, the Western governments either have to clean up their own act or, as in Switzerland today, admit that, in the heart of our advanced democracies, civil freedom is kept under strict surveillance. The fact is that the West German *Bundesnachrichtendienst*, the Swiss BUPO, the French Département de sécurité du territoire (DST) or the Direction générale de la sécurité de l'Etat (DGSE) are no different in their methods or in the extent of their ultimate control over

the citizens than the police in the Stalinist regimes, even if they are less intrusive on a day-to-day basis.

In France the annulment, after widespread protests, of a decree authorizing the police security branch to build up files on "suspect" citizens has led people to overlook a law of the same type, which is still secret, dating from 1986, which authorizes the DGSE and DST to do the same, and this without any control. What is the "emergency situation" regarding the security of the French state which requires keeping files on 400,000 people, 100,000 of them for terrorism?

As Helmut Hubacher, president of the Swiss Socialist Party, stated to the March 3 demonstration, "the Illustrated Atlas of Switzerland published by the National Tourism Office is not an accurate reflection of the really existing Switzerland." And nor is the Complete Atlas of the Advanced Democracies currently being serialized in the big bourgeois press any more accurate as a guide to really existing bourgeois democracy. ★

1. In Switzerland any group of citizens can launch a popular initiative to modify the Swiss constitution. All that is required is to hand in a copy of the proposed modifications accompanied by 100,000 supporting signatures. After verification by the Federal Council, the Confederation is asked to vote for or against the proposal.