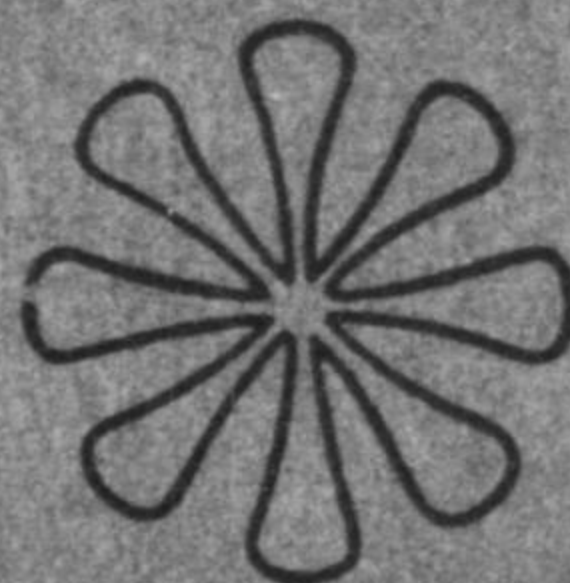


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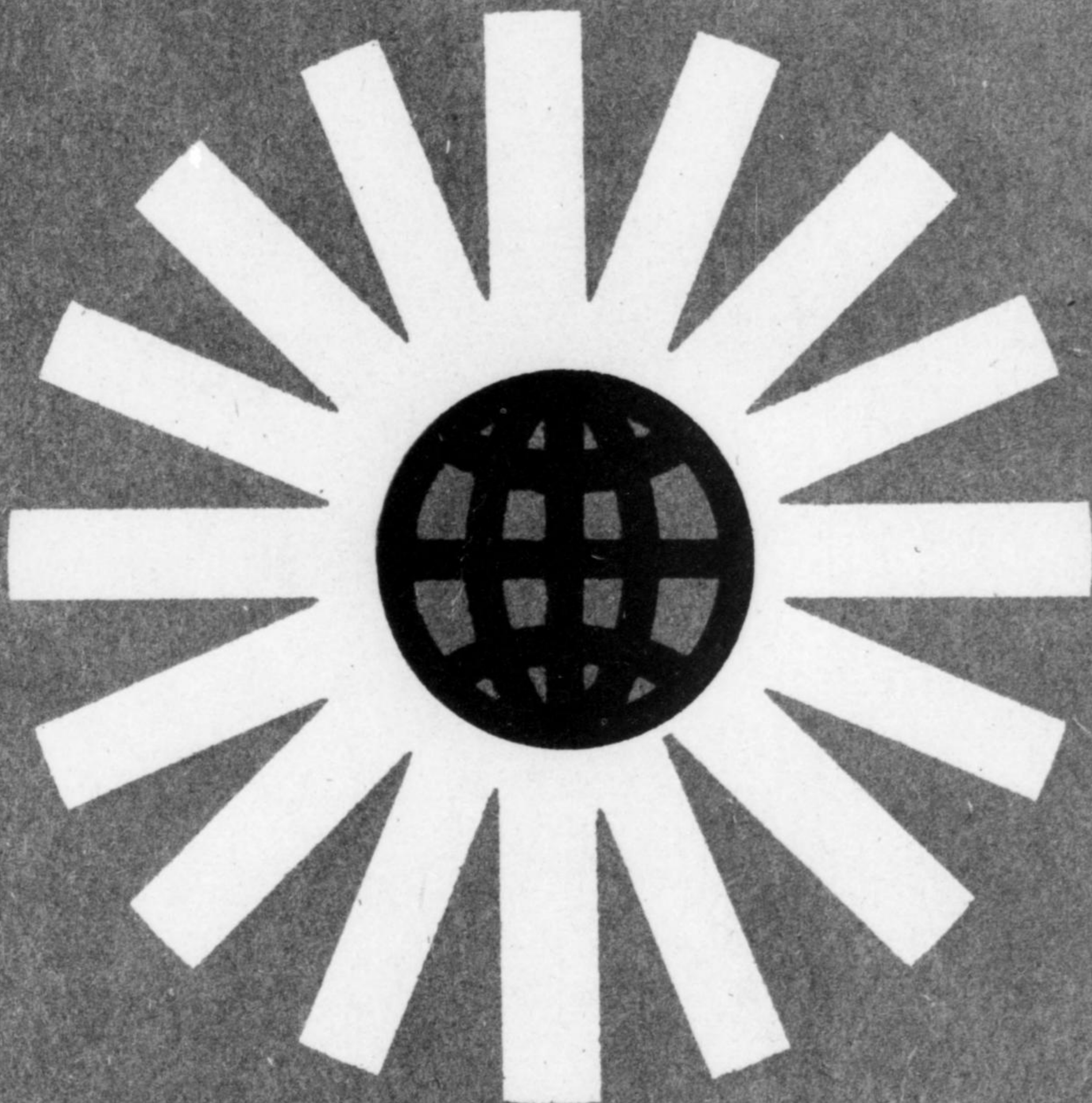
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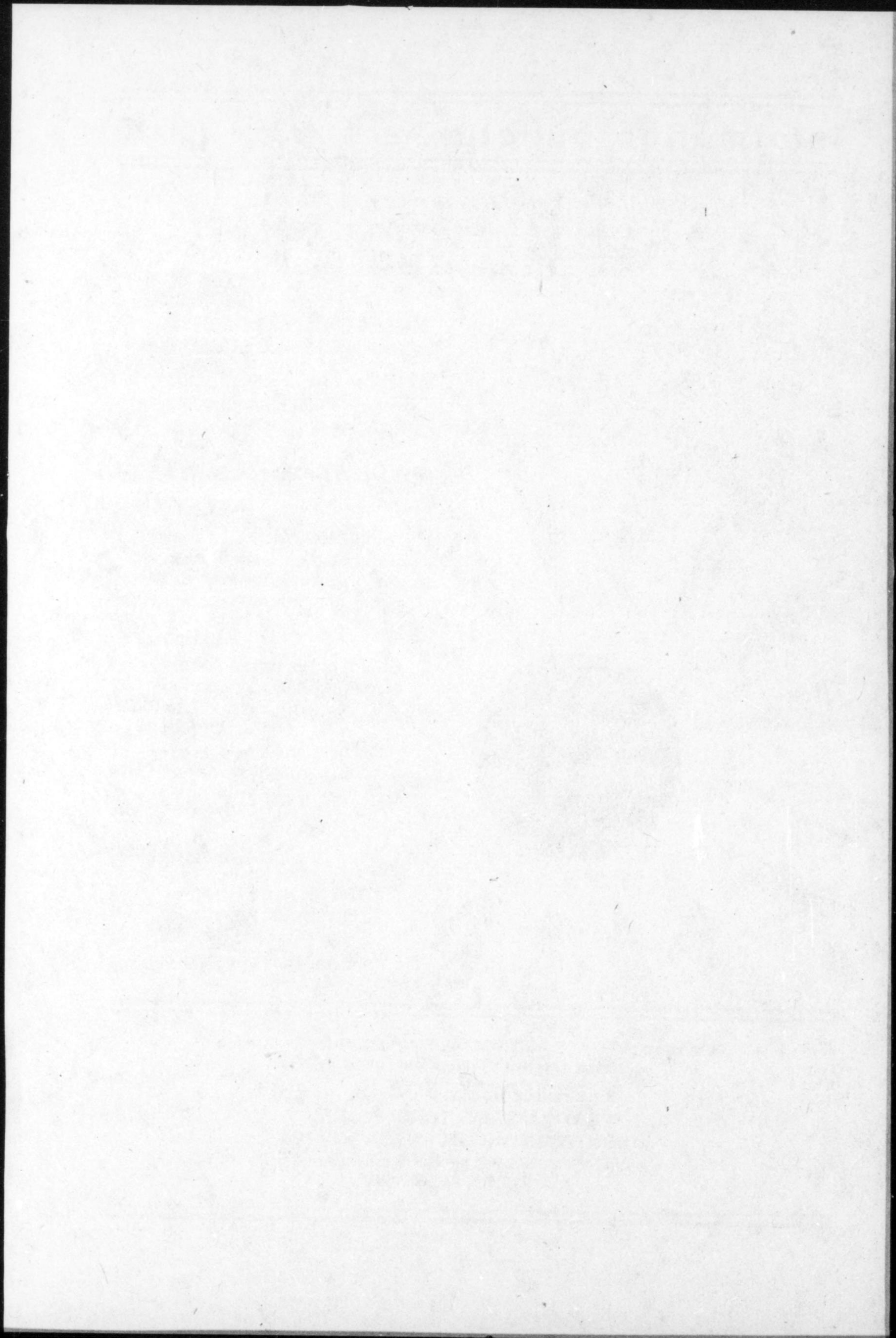
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contents

THE HISTORIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PARTY AND SOCIETY

- Tenth anniversary of the
January (1968) Plenum of the
Communist Party of Czechoslovakia 5

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

Honduras

- Statement of the CC CP of
Honduras Political Commission
in connection with the
attempted coup 19

Panama

- Beginning of the end of the
imperialist occupation 22

Poland

- Edward Gierek's interview
with Polish journalists 29

- Sweden** 33

DOCUMENTS

- Bar the way of the neo-
colonialists, enemies of
the Maghreb peoples 35

(Cont'd next page)

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(Cont'd)

Resolutions adopted by the First MPLA Congress	37
Georges Marchais visits Hungary	40
On the question of restoration of legal status to the African Independence Party of Senegal	42

FROM THE PRESS

A vital weapon J. Woddis	48
Interview by Italian CP Chairman Luigi Longo to <i>Corriere della Sera</i>	52
In brief	56

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THE HISTORIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PARTY AND SOCIETY

*Tenth Anniversary of the January (1968) Central Committee
Plenum of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*

Ten years ago, on January 5, 1968, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia concluded the work of its plenum which went down in the history of our party and socialist society. Basically, the decisions of the January plenum expressed the striving to surmount the crisis in the party and society and to eliminate from the party's activity, particularly from its leadership and management, that which led to serious difficulties and hampered our country's new upsurge. It was essential, first of all, consistently to restore the Leninist principles of leadership of the party and society, implement Leninist norms in party life and in the work of the state organs and public organizations so as to react expediently and in accordance with the interests of the people and socialism to the new phenomena in all spheres of public life. It was in this spirit that the overwhelming majority of the communists and our people perceived the results of the January plenum.

The holding of the January plenum was determined above all by the need for a critical analysis of the complex situation at that period. It was essential for the Central Committee not only to provide an answer to the justified dissatisfaction that was gradually mounting, everywhere, at all levels of party bodies and organizations and among the broad public, but to head the constructive criticism and to draw the corresponding conclusions.

The party expected and demanded of the Central Committee precisely such an active and responsible approach. The growing critical sentiments were as a whole accompanied by the will and resolve to eliminate shortcomings, and to rule out any more mistakes resulting from deviations from Leninism. As evidenced by a broad sampling of opinions and viewpoints in party organizations on urgent political questions — a part of the measures in preparing for the October 1967 Central Committee plenum — the organizations noted that an unfavorable situation was shaping up in the party and that various opposition groups were being formed, including in the Central Com-

mittee. The party organizations noted that the principles of democratic centralism were being violated and inner-party democracy suppressed, and spoke of manifestations of bureaucracy, of inadequate links between the leading organs and primary organizations. It was stressed also that important economic problems were not being solved but were circumvented, and that there was a growing danger of undermining confidence in party policy on the part of broad strata of the population.

The above-mentioned shortcomings were brought up at the October 1967 Central Committee meeting. However, then First Secretary Antonin Novotny could not bear businesslike criticism. He was unimaginative in his work, indiscriminately rejected any critical remarks and was unable to distinguish between constructive criticism and attacks from the right. He frequently adopted a sharper stance against those who sought to improve the situation in the party than against the rightist elements. Instead of heading the Marxist-Leninist trend, he in fact hampered the party's drive for creative fulfillment of the 13th Congress decisions, for the ideological and action unity of the party, and for strengthening its leading role.

Novotny's mistakes were determined by certain traits of his character — conceit, subjectivism, megalomania, suspicion of people and violation of the principles of collective leadership. These faults were undoubtedly aggravated also by an uncritical attitude to his actions on the part of some of his closest associates.

It was extremely important to discern between justified criticism of mistakes and shortcomings aimed at their removal, and the activities of those who sought to abuse this criticism in order to smear the socialist social system in an attempt to undermine it. Actually, the leadership of that time displayed tolerance toward the rightist groups. It was equally essential to draw practical conclusions from the criticism, to remove shortcomings and to ensure that serious mistakes would not be repeated.

This could be done only by the plenum of the party's Central Committee, and the first and inevitable step in restoring confidence in party policy and to invigorate its activity were changes in the party leadership. These changes, as is known, were effected at the January plenum. The Central Committee released Antonin Novotny from the post of First Secretary of the CC CPCz. At the same time, the plenum conclusions confirmed that the shortcomings that were subjected to criticism at the plenary session were connected with the crisis in the party and society, which was deeply rooted and gradually increasing.

Their common denominator: weakening of the party's leading role, various deviations from Leninism, lack of a class approach.

The "Lessons of the Crisis Development in the Party and Society after the 13th CPCz Congress" (December 1970) accurately characterize the crisis and its causes. This document draws attention to the rapid and complex development of our society in the course of socialist revolutionary reconstruction. The party and the working class gradually mastered the art of management. However, the process was accompanied by shortcomings and certain tragic mistakes. In overcoming the difficulties ensuing from the novelty and complexity of the objectives, and in rectifying the serious deformations linked with the so-called personality cult it was especially important to take steps to strengthen confidence in the party on the part of the broad strata of the population, so that there would be no contradiction between word and deed. It was essential to draw conclusions from the subjective mistakes, not to lapse into complacency, nor ignore the requirements of development and the interests of society. It was equally essential to consistently implement Leninist principles in the life and work of the party, the principles of democratic centralism and inner-party democracy, develop socialist democracy, show concern for the broad development and fulfillment of the initiatives and activity of the working people, to ensure the rational functioning of the entire mechanism of management. This required principled ideological work, respect for the creative character of Marxist-Leninist theory in the systematic struggle against bourgeois ideologies, petty-bourgeois tendencies and ideological subversion.

The crisis situation began to take shape and gradually deepened as the shortcomings and mistakes ensuing from the violation of Leninist principles began to spread and negatively affected all spheres of party work and the life of society, the economy, and the ideological and political sphere. It would be erroneous not to see that the party — its Marxist-Leninist forces — sought to tackle the growing problems. A number of measures were taken to surmount various shortcomings but their effectiveness was substantially weakened by inconsistency in their practical implementation. This concerned, for instance, a number of decisions on the party's economic policy, on promoting the initiative of the working people, on enhancing the responsibility and leading role of economic and state organs, on developing socialist democracy and deepening socialist legality, on struggle against revisionism and liberalism in the ideological sphere, etc. However, correct decisions often did not lead to effective results, since they

were not accompanied by a general purposeful policy harmoniously combining the revolutionary perspective with the real and urgent problems at that stage of socio-economic development to solve questions that had long been ignored and which little by little led to tensions and disruption of unity in the party and society as a whole. Let us recall, for instance, such an important policy sphere as the national question. As is known, since 1960, the unsuccessful attempt at regulating the situation regarding the prerogatives of the Slovak national organs, which reduced their activity to a mere formality, inevitably further complicated the relations between our nations. To this should be added the tactless attitude to some strata and groups of society, the unjustified subjective reaction to the requirements of the people, which certainly did nothing to deepen the moral and political unity of society, or to strengthen the party's ties with the people. The party leadership's failure to frankly and fairly clear up all instances of violation of socialist legality perpetrated in the initial period of socialist construction, also generated uncertainty.

The vacillation in ideological work was especially harmful throughout the entire crisis in the party and society. On the one hand, it was characterized by lack of principle and by liberalism, on the other — which is usually linked with the lack of ideological principle — by the substitution of administrative methods for ideological work. This was grist to the mill of those who sought to stigmatize the party for dogmatism and to involve in subversive actions creative workers in science, culture, the arts and the students, who traditionally react most intensely to distortions in the ideological sphere.

The January 1968 plenum decisions were necessary and they correctly pointed out the road to the restoration of the party's authority, its action ability, to a new development of its activity, to enhancing its leading role, and thereby to the strengthening of socialism in our country. But owing to the fact that the pre-January leadership headed by Antonin Novotny, by virtue of lack of unity, was unable to cope with the situation prior to the December and January Central Committee meetings, that it did not take the initiative as prompted by the justified criticism of shortcomings, each warning against the indiscriminate censure of the leadership's activity had a defensive ring and was unconvincing. This (along with Novotny's reaction at the December plenum) obviously led to the fact that the speeches of O. Sik, F. Vodslone, J. Smrkovsky, V. Slavik — which contained elements of their right-wing opportunistic and revisionist platform, though not

yet fully developed at the time — were not countered at the January Central Committee plenum.

In this relation it should be recalled that right opportunism and revisionism as it was manifested later — particularly in connection with the anti-socialist elements, to whom they flung open the doors — did not suddenly drop down from the skies after January 1968. They were formed and gradually turned into a dangerous stream in the course of the events of the 60s. Their breeding ground was the above-mentioned underestimation of the importance of ideological work, particularly in the field of Marxist-Leninist theory, of the need for its systematic creative development and principled defense. Their social roots stemmed from the elements of petty-bourgeois extraction or from the defeated bourgeoisie. A decisive factor in their spread and gradual assertion was the fact that these elements infiltrated the party and began gradually to exert influence on a part of its apparatus, particularly in the ideological sphere and the mass media. As the difficulties increased, they were joined by people who had lost confidence in the revolutionary perspective or “lost their heads” and by the out-and-out dogmatists who for the sake of expediency went over to revisionism.

The ideological platform of the right opportunists and revisionists gradually crystallized into a totally negative attitude to the revolutionary road of the working class, to socialist construction to socialist principles, to Marxist-Leninist theory. Though in words the opportunists and revisionists emphasized, as opposed to “dogmatism,” the need for a creative approach, to search for “new ways” and ultimately, even a “new model of socialism,” allegedly corresponding only to our specific features and traditions and the new conditions, to the scientific-technical revolution, they in fact — along with the outright negation of real socialism, the role of the working class and a revolutionary party in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism — arrived merely at the invigoration and glorification of bourgeois democracy, non-class idealization of the pre-Munich republic and the notorious old variant of petty-bourgeois socialism. The spiritual impulse serving as justification of this “newly discovered” and “inspiring model,” as it is still depicted in the West, in fact boiled down to the ideals of “democratic socialism” — the program basis of social democracy, which were touched up to disguise the fact that this opportunist trend had become totally bankrupt in the course of the revolutionary battles of our century. And these outworn ideas of the rightist forces were raised to the level of a universal model for all who

opt for "modern socialism." That this platform was destined to be infused with anti-Sovietism, with hate toward Leninism, with disdain for the revolutionary gains and toward all genuine revolutionary forces in the world, was simply its logical conclusion.

This circumstance, particularly, explains why the onslaught of the internal rightist forces was from the start closely linked with the ideological centers of anti-communism throughout the world and could hardly be expected to remain unnoticed by them. The prolonged activity and methods of ideological subversion, and the various psychological operations of these centers were purposefully aimed at the gradual destruction of all the fundamental values of socialism in the CSSR. These forces were out to use the situation in our country to weaken the entire socialist community. The destruction of socialist Czechoslovakia, which they had long hoped for, was expected to breach the united front of our socialist community.

Shortly after the January plenum it became clear that the new party leadership under Alexander Dubcek was politically heterogeneous, disunited, weak and totally indecisive, that it was incapable of ensuring implementation of the plenum decisions and in general unable to rebuff the frontal attack of the rightist forces. The latter, having seized the key positions in the mass media, began to determine the direction of political development. The "process of regeneration" ever more clearly turned into a process of destruction, chaos and disarray, discrediting everything that the Czechoslovak people had achieved under the party leadership since February 1948. The fact that the attack against the foundations of socialism was perpetrated by people most of whom held party cards and who styled themselves the defenders and carriers of the best and most modern socialism and as "real communists" with a "clean shield," that the mass media sedulously depicted them precisely as such heroes of a noble socialism, could not but lead to a broad and intensified disorientation of the public, to whom the entire process outwardly appeared to be a confrontation between "progressive" and "conservative" communists. Moreover, genuine supporters of socialism were tagged as reactionaries.

To expose this crude mystification and to show the various Kriegls, Mlynars, Hajeks, Smrkovskys, Siks, Goldstuckers, Pachmans and others in their true light as traitors to socialism who purposely distorted the idea of the January plenum and played a counter-revolutionary role, a certain passage of time was needed, and, as it turned out, bitter experiences. Our opponents, who were perfectly well

aware what the "Prague spring" represented politically, which is why they so enthusiastically applauded it and are today shedding tears over its defeat and its bankrupt heroes; are only too ready to allege that the so-called "regeneration process" enjoyed the broad support of the Czechoslovak people. Concerning this, we can say definitely: wherever the post-January policy found wide support, it was a question of expressing our people's will to consistently follow the road to socialism, that is, the road of Leninism, on the basis of the experience drawn from past mistakes. And this is fully understandable and logical, since it responded to the interests of the Czechoslovak working people. That is why they expressed concern over the deviation from this road. But these apprehensions of our people, just as the general dislocation of fronts on the political scene in the course of the growing counter-revolution in the spring and summer of 1968, were not, however, broadly reflected for the simple reason that the rightists who monopolized the information media, silenced these voices.

The rightists' monopoly in the information media played a fateful role in the entire process of the creeping counter-revolution. Only later, when it was fully defeated and when it became possible to objectively compare the experience of the working people and broad public with the real activity of the exponents of the "Prague spring," was it possible to show in all the relevant interconnections and logic the political battles that were launched after January 1968. Not until then did it become possible to expose the true nature of rightist subversion and define it according to the bitter fruit it had borne, correctly describing it as counter-revolutionary activity against the interests of socialist Czechoslovakia and the other countries of the socialist community, as a basically reactionary activity hostile to our people.

Politically, it was not at all a question of carrying forward democracy but of baiting people loyal to socialism, to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. With disintegration in the party and throughout the structure of the National Front going on there spawned various illegal organizations and groups which, however, operated freely and whose common program was to take revenge for February 1948 and do away with the gains made in building socialism. In step with the increasing disintegration of the National Front, preparations went on apace for the restoration of the structure of the earlier bourgeois democratic and clerical-reactionary political basis. To camouflage this evolution, those behind it called it the introduction

of a "pluralist system" but in reality they wanted to dislodge people's power from its main positions.

The rightists contrived in an incredibly short time to disrupt the national economy. Although they had promised to revive the economy and restore its dynamics, they brought it to the brink of catastrophe. The anti-popular nature of their activity was particularly marked in this field. All their efforts were designed to nullify the social gains made by the people in building socialism and to introduce so-called market socialism, a system scorning the working man's interest.

Anarchy, disruption and spontaneity exalted to the rank of the only true attributes of democracy were accompanied by the peculiar ethics of philistine egoism and depreciation of socialist ideals, the sense of civic responsibility and friendship with the Soviet Union, without socialist allies. Much as the new "model of socialism" was made out to be humane, and much as its exponents talked about ethics, it is still a fact that the period of so-called renaissance was accompanied by a complete loosening of socially binding norms valid in every civilized, cultured and organized society, to say nothing of a society that has embraced socialism.

The rightists never got down to solving any one of the problems formulated in the decisions of the January plenum of the CC CPCz. On the contrary, they tried in every possible way to win popularity and create illusions, and not only looked passively on as the state of the economy deteriorated rapidly but contributed to this trend. They did nothing to counter growing inflation and tolerated a situation in which those who wanted to get back the factories and shops and longed for capitalist restoration were winning the upper hand. It was not accidental that J. Smrkovsky, whose demagoguery and unprincipled, "turn-the-way-the-wind-is-blowing" position earned him notoriety as a "double-faced politician," became one of the proponents of this "post-January policy."

In that complicated situation Alexander Dubcek showed himself to be an incapable and irresponsible man who had given in to megalomania, took the flattery about his mission as a saviour at its face value and in the end betrayed the cause of the working class and the socialist state. In January 1968 he was entrusted with great responsibilities. He turned out to be unworthy of them. He became an object of pressure from the right, yielded entirely to it and flouted all that he had worked for earlier. He misled thousands of fair-minded people who trusted him and whose trust he betrayed. He can never

exonerate himself from responsibility for this. His greatest offence is that he allowed the party to be disrupted and to lose its Marxist-Leninist character, and contributed to both by his conduct. The fact that the party gradually lost the ability to perform its function as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class and other working people and to defend the working people's fundamental, vital interests proved decisive in our country's negative evolution.

Disintegration reached its culmination in the summer months of 1968, as we all know. It was symbolized above all by the counter-revolutionary platform known as "2,000 Words," which was a manifestation of an open and coordinated reactionary offensive, a direct injunction to engage in acts of violence and demolish the socialist system. At the same time that counter-revolutionary call went farthest in fomenting hatred for the Soviet Union and, indeed, publicly threatened our allies with an armed conflict.

Preparations for the 14th Extraordinary Party Congress, which the right-wing forces insisted on holding at an early date, went on in an atmosphere marked by the counter-revolutionary lampoon mentioned above. They were characterized by an atmosphere of hysteria, intimidation and terror. Never before had the principles and standards of our party life been violated as grossly and obviously as in those days. At the extraordinary regional party conferences it became perfectly evident that the rightists had moved on to open factional activity. The rightists had created all the prerequisites for seizing power at the congress and legalizing their aims and intentions. What that would have meant from the point of view of the country's evolution, and what new collisions and tensions it would have caused, is not hard to imagine.

The insincerity and hypocrisy of the rightist leaders headed by A. Dubcek fully came out also in negotiations and relations with allies. This became only too obvious after the talks at Cierna and Tisou and Bratislava. A. Dubcek not only ignored the fraternal parties' justified fears for the destiny of socialism in Czechoslovakia and of peace in Europe but concealed them from the CPCz leadership. Together with other right-wingers in the party leadership he prevented the convening of a Central Committee plenum, which was indispensable in so grave and complicated a situation. He showed hypocrisy by betraying a principle which he had solemnly sealed with his own signature along with others at Bratislava, to the effect that "supporting, safeguarding and consolidating the socialist gains made through heroic efforts and

devoted labor by the people of each country are a common internationalist duty of all socialist countries.”

The threat to the Czechoslovak people's fundamental interests, to the interests of our nations, which had linked their destiny with socialism of their own free will, also posed a threat to the interests of the other socialist countries, to the territorial integrity and stability of the world socialist community. This also ran counter to the interests of the entire revolutionary movement, of the anti-imperialist front. The situation in August 1968 necessitated an adequate solution, making indispensable an action that would neutralize the threat and prevent the completion of the plans of domestic and foreign reaction. This was realized by those communists and those honest citizens of our country who remained loyal to socialist ideals and appealed to our allies and friends for help. The Soviet Union and four other socialist countries gave that help. The counter-revolutionaries' plans were stopped by the power of international solidarity as though by a solid, indestructible barrier. As a result, socialism in Czechoslovakia was saved, its world positions were strengthened and peace was preserved.

Looking back ten years later, we are only too well aware of the immense positive significance of those indispensable steps. The consolidation process made it possible to solve all the basic problems whose neglect had caused the crisis. At the 14th CPCz Congress (1971) we were in a position to adopt a far-reaching program of building a developed socialist society, which we are now carrying out according to the guidelines of the 15th Party Congress.

The main lessons of history drawn from the events that occurred ten years ago were summed up by Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CC CPCz, at the 14th Party Congress.

“The Czechoslovak events of 1968,” he said in part, “confirmed the correctness of Lenin's formula that even the biggest revolutionary force, if it lacks a principled and firm leadership adhering unreservedly to Marxism-Leninism, becomes a disunited group incapable of organized action and may be defeated, given definite conditions, by counter-revolutionary forces.

“Objective analysis of the evolution in that period shows that without the timely internationalist aid of our closest socialist allies the power of the working class and the working people in our country would have been defeated. This would have had incalculable consequences, not only for our people, but for peace in Europe; it would

have endangered the positions of socialism and prejudiced the international revolutionary movement as a whole."

In looking back at the tenth anniversary of January and subsequent developments, we are particularly aware of the significance of the April 1969 meeting of the CC CPCz and of the role which Gustav Husak played at the time in ending the crisis in the party and society and in bringing about a new upsurge in both. It is primarily to him that we owe credit for the fact that all Marxist-Leninist forces rallied together and the party was again enabled to fulfill its mission as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, the leading force of socialist society, a force uniting genuine patriots and internationalists who realize their great political responsibility to their people and the entire revolutionary movement.

At that time the primary task was, of course, to solve those problems that arose as soon as we began to rectify the damage caused by the rightists. The party leadership headed by Gustav Husak and firmly supported by the ideologically solid Marxist-Leninist core which had withstood a hard test strove to cope with the situation in such a way as not to lose sight of the future, to cleanse the party, bring about its ideological and political unity and unity of action, make it efficient, consistently apply Leninism in our policy, and resume Leninist working methods. It proceeded in a principled and creative manner, above all with a view to strengthening the positions of socialism. The party leadership steadfastly defended the fundamental interests of the working people and respected the principles of proletarian and socialist internationalism. This was a Leninist approach, one which the party had called for and demanded in January 1968.

Experience furnished convincing proof that the party's approach was correct. It was only through a policy proceeding unfailingly from Leninism that we could mobilize the creative energies of society to overcome a deep, unprecedented crisis, remove its grave consequences, consolidate society, and renew and assure dynamic economic growth and the development of all other spheres.

It was only through such a policy tested by the experience of the Soviet Union and the fraternal parties of the other countries of existing socialism that we could continue all that was positive in the evolution of our socialist society and work out both a realistic and far-reaching program for building a developed socialist society in our country. This program is firmly geared to meeting the fundamental requirements of society and its progress and to steadily raising the

people's material and spiritual standards, and fully guarantees the working people's social security and the continuous reinforcement of the socialist social system. It is a program reflecting the real humanism of our socialist system and demonstrating its absolute superiority over capitalism.

Marking the tenth anniversary of January, we have good reason to proudly put it on record that the policy which the party has been following since April 1969 is inherently a continuation of the revolutionary spirit of February 1948 and meets the present and future requirements of the further development of our socialist society. This policy is one of creatively carrying forward Marxism-Leninism and seeks constructive solutions to every problem. The party has proved its ability in new conditions to foster Leninist working methods; it has found new approaches which are at once principled and differentiated because they take into account the interests of every section of the population. The party has fully carried into practice the slogan "orientation on the masses." The working people of Czechoslovakia, who saw the correctness of the party's policy, have not only put their trust in this policy but support it actively, creatively and devotedly as they work to fulfill exacting tasks. The party is once again a force inspiring, organizing and encouraging the initiative and creative effort of the masses.

We do not have to seek popularity, nor do we need fine-sounding demagoguery, such as we witnessed during the so-called Prague spring. Frankness and a critical approach, which are inseparable from real democracy, are a constructive factor in our policy. We take a critical view of every shortcoming or irregularity whatever its origin, of anything that discredits socialism and our ideals. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia sees the meaning of all its activity in working for the good of the people, for further victories for socialist ideas and in loyal and devoted effort for the promotion of these ideas.

Today's socialist Czechoslovakia is, and has been ever since the schemes of counter-revolution in our country were foiled, a target of gross attacks from the most diverse forces, which regard the defeat of reaction in our country as a setback to themselves. Most of these attacks, which the mass media of our enemies launch time and again, boil down to the accusation that we "violate" democracy. Some are almost ready to swear that they are concerned with the reputation of socialism. They seem to be unhappy about the fact that we, having learned the lessons of the past, refuse to tolerate subversive activity in any form, any action directed against our people's interests.

Indeed, what sort of socialist democracy would it have been if it had put up with attacks on the people's interests or even allowed to organize them more or less officially, as was the case ten years ago? What sort of socialist democracy would it have been if it had made way for anti-socialist elements to the detriment of the working people, of the interests of socialism? Socialism and democracy are inseparable. It is only the socialist system that establishes real democracy, which is only possible on the basis of the real power of working people free from exploitation and from oppression in any form. The process of deepening and perfecting socialist democracy, it was pointed out at the 15th CPCz Congress, is the main line of development of our socialist statehood and the basis for the growing production effort and civic activity of every class or stratum of our society, for the viability and efficiency of the National Front, which is the optimal form of political organization of our society, a form devised in the course of our revolution. It is on this dependable political basis that the life of both our nations and all the ethnic groups living in our state is developing.

Experience has taught us that the decisive condition for the successful all-round development of our country is not talk about democracy and freedom but real guarantees of socialist democracy and the rights and freedoms of the working people. This is possible only through the combined and responsible efforts of the whole people in accordance with its fundamental interests, on the basis of collective coordinated work. The most important condition for this process is proper exercise of the party's leading role, and scientific management of society in line with the principles of democratic centralism and socialist democracy, economy management under an integrated and binding development plan, and a common program.

We realize the importance of steadily perfecting the managing activity of government bodies and economic agencies, of seeing to it that socialist legality is fully respected and that socialist order prevails throughout society. Encouraging the working people's initiative and activity has nothing to do with encouraging spontaneity or irresponsibility. This is why our party puts particular emphasis on political and ideological education, on the moulding of people's socialist awareness, on their Marxist-Leninist, labor and moral education.

Czechoslovakia is an advanced industrial country with a high standard of living, a developed culture and well-educated people. This is because it consistently applies the principles of developing socialist society, because it increases its economic and spiritual potential

through all-round cooperation with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community, and because it makes effective use of the advantages of the international division of labor.

We are approaching the 30th anniversary of Victorious February with good results. Our country is a solid component of the world socialist community and a dependable contingent of the world progressive anti-imperialist front. It has strengthened its international standing and is among the states actively carrying on and championing the policy of peaceful coexistence.

Ours is a free and sovereign state; the time when it was a plaything of imperialist powers has passed never to return. One of the most important aspects of our historical experience is our awareness of who is our real friend, who has always helped and continues to help us disinterestedly, and who is the earnest of our free development and free existence, as well as of all progressive and revolutionary forces in the world. It is the Soviet Union. Friendship with the Soviet Union is one of the greatest assets that we will always uphold and treasure above everything else. Gustav Husak stressed this again in Moscow during the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

"Genuine sincere friendship, alliance and comradely cooperation with the Soviet Union," he said, "have ever since the beginning of the struggle of our party and people for a socialist Czechoslovakia been the best guarantee of the sovereignty and security of our state, the freedom of our nations and the peaceful constructive effort and happy life of our people."

We are advancing to the 30th anniversary of February with bold yet realistic plans, with a clear-cut program charted by the 15th CPCz Congress. The post-congress period has shown that our people regard this program as their very own. By carrying it out, we are realizing the revolutionary legacy of past generations. This legacy comprises a twofold task: one, promoting and multiplying the assets of socialism through creative work, and two, preserving these assets, cherishing the achievements of the socialist revolution and socialist construction as the apple of our eye. Do not let us forget either of these tasks, anything from our past, from the record of the great and difficult battles for our socialist present in which our party and people gained vast experience.

Rude Pravo, January 5, 1978.

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

STATEMENT OF THE CC CP OF HONDURAS POLITICAL COMMISSION IN CONNECTION WITH THE ATTEMPTED COUP

1. In a special statement the armed forces government announced to the Honduran people the existence of a conspiracy involving civilians and non-commissioned officers of the garrison stationed in the capital

Rumors of this plot had spread among the people but were denied by the press at the instructions of the government. Consequently, the above-mentioned statement evoked various interpretations and the incredulity of the public, which has been subjected to numerous attempts at deception through well-orchestrated misinformation campaigns designed to disarm it in the face of a real and permanent threat to the least social gains of our people.

1. Without mentioning any names or particulars of the events, which will be judged on the basis of accumulated proof, we consider it essential to express our opinion on the critical political situation in the life of our country.

3. In all our documents we have pointed to the fact that it is the U.S. monopolies and reactionary landowners who engender in our country a climate of permanent conspiracy against the elements in the armed forces and various social strata who seek change and whose aims have been set forth in a program of reforms limited by the framework of capitalism. This program never sought to extricate Honduras from its economic and political dependence on imperialism. This limitation determined the fundamental weakness of the reformist process, whose positive aspects were supported by the Honduran communists.

The rapid process of differentiation of the reformist bourgeoisie and its consequent split into two wings — more consistent with respect to the initial program, on the one hand, and a dependent and conservative wing, on the other — was a factor leading to the defeat of the first

armed forces government. Thus began the rightward process, now endangering the stability of the government itself, the vertical character of the armed forces, and the liberties and rights won by the popular masses, which were no handouts from any regime whatsoever. This circumstance enabled the reactionary forces to launch on a conspiracy designed to end with one blow our people's aspirations for democratization.

The existence of a conspiracy is undeniable and it is developing further. At present it poses a growing threat in view of the actions of the ultra-right elements both in and outside the country which seek to obstruct any attempt to reform the agrarian structures and to establish a repressive or even a fascist-type regime. The Melgar Castro government's concessions to the rightist landowners, reflected above all in the abandonment of the national plan for agrarian reform, did not yield the results expected by their initiators. These concessions did not fully satisfy the landowners' demands, as the peasantry continued to receive limited aid. Far from satisfying the landowners, these concessions prompted them to carry out their conspiratorial plans.

At the same time the *desarrollist* process developed to such an extent that it would have been inexpedient to stop it under a regime respecting elementary democratic freedoms. The ruling *desarrollist* bourgeoisie is tied by its election promises, which it is not prepared to fulfill, but which cannot be evaded. This explains why the crisis has reached such dimensions. This circumstance has engendered the desperation of the ultra-rightist elements which attempted to seize power and with the aid of repressions create conditions to paralyze any actions of a progressive nature and to recapture their lost positions. In these events, a definite role was played by the ambitions of certain elements both inside and outside the government which seek to strengthen their personal positions. There is evidence also of Somoza's hand, a servile lackey of imperialism who represents Central American reaction. Somoza, who is now universally condemned, and regardless of his imperialist masters' obvious distancing from him, is seeking to create in Central America a situation permitting him to survive in the struggle against the heroic Nicaraguan people.

4. A perilous situation has shaped up in our country characterized by the fact that without a new political formula the ruling *desarrollist* bourgeoisie can no longer govern. Such a formula should re-establish unity regarding objectives and enhance the role of the working class. At the same time the crucial aspects of the national development plan

must also be restored. But there can be no room for such figures as the present minister of labor, who heads the employers' attack against the working class with the aim of shifting the burden of the economic crisis on to the working people, or the minister of education, an outspoken enemy of the teachers' and students' movement. Moreover, the confrontation of our people and the government, which rapidly exhausted its possibilities, will grow more acute with every passing day.

5. The only way out of the present crisis is to revert to the norms of constitutional life by holding democratic elections, which presuppose: immediate promulgation of a democratic electoral law, repeal of the repressive laws restricting the sovereign rights of the people, holding elections free of any restrictions or violence and stringent respect of election results.

Any attempt at a conspiracy or maneuvering designed to perpetuate one's power encounters the firm opposition of our people. To resort to such an action would be an irremediable error.

The elections will provide the sole rational way out of the political crisis if the people's will be respected and if the social gains won by them will be formalized in law.

At the same time, the present crisis cannot be surmounted without unity of the democratic, political and social forces of our country whose aims and program coincide to any extent. Therefore the Communist Party of Honduras appeals to the leaders and memberships of all democratic political and public organizations to reach agreement on their positions and efforts so that Honduras can ward off anarchy and the specter of fascist tyranny.

The communists are prepared for a broad dialogue at any level. Such a dialogue will bring about the unity that is indispensable to save our people from the threatening peril.

Political Commission of the Central Committee,
Communist Party of Honduras
November 1977.



BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE IMPERIALIST OCCUPATION

*Speech by Ruben Dario Sousa, General Secretary,
People's Party of Panama*

We have analyzed the important and active role of the People's Party of Panama in forming and expanding the national-liberation movement in the country, and the party's earnest effort to raise the people's political consciousness in anti-imperialist struggle, so that this struggle may no longer be a set of isolated activities and may become conscious revolutionary action of the masses constantly revealing the power of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the correctness of our policy line. This analysis shows that we had to carry on a political and ideological struggle over a long period so as to defeat the conciliatory position of the oligarchy and bourgeois nationalists. Under the cover of an outwardly critical stance, the latter carefully dodged solution of the fundamental political problem giving colonialism a new lease of life; moreover, they adapted themselves to it and showed increased interest in getting economic crumbs. The hypocritical character of these attitudes and the fact that they militated against real national independence became tragically manifested during the events of 1964.*

Nevertheless, the oligarchic bourgeoisie remained in power and, exploiting the results of the anti-imperialist struggle, forced the imperialists to negotiate, which they had refused to do until then. We say "exploiting" because the bourgeoisie only used those elements of the situation that justified negotiations, and ignored its substance, namely, the incompatibility of the colony existing in the Canal Zone with the real national interests of the Panamanian people.

Well knowing this and realizing that if left to the oligarchy, the negotiations would be robbed of their essence as an act of liberation, we supported them none the less. Many backers of our cause, concerned about the support we were giving, asked us whether it was not a dangerous thing to do. They foresaw that the result would be a cruel mockery of the Panamanian people's aspirations. We answered them that we, for our part, also expected such a result, adding, however, that that did not present any danger to us or to the people but to the

*In January 1964 U.S. troops fired on peaceful demonstrators who were demanding the restitution of the Panama Canal. — Ed.

oligarchy itself, for if after January 1964 it produced another pro-U.S. compromise it would have to pay with its own neck. Inasmuch as the developments of 1967 and 1968 are of relatively recent date, I think all who are present here will agree that our forecast came true. The failure of the three treaties led to the political and moral defeat of these ruling circles and paved the way for the military to take over.

Our activity in the circumstances was the best evidence of the ability of our party to make with proper political competence the right decisions in the face of the new treaties. No one can suspect us — unless he wants to slander us — of making an option *as a result of duplicity, opportunism or improvisation*. Our present position is a result of careful research and of political and ideological struggles. It is a result of ideological work and creative application of the universal Marxist-Leninist theory in the specific conditions of Panamanian society to work out theoretical, ideological and programmatic foundations for our national liberation. We are no dreamers. We have gone through a long period of gaining revolutionary experience, a period full of vicissitudes and an experience tested by life itself.

Our anti-imperialist ideas triumphed in the end. This is why we consider it our duty to take a courageous and consistent stand in keeping with the people's legitimate demands and with our line.

Now for the treaties. The starting point for us communists is the answer to the question whether the new treaties meet the imperatives of history and the actual exigencies of our society's development, which are such that to put off their satisfaction is to aggravate the crisis besetting us.

What are these imperatives?

As a result of some progress in the development of our country, the contradiction between national requirements and the existence of the Canal Zone — with its typically colonial structure — in the heart of our state **has** grown. The intolerability of this phenomenon is particularly evident now that, under the impact of the achievements of the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union, as a result of the stepped-up struggle of the international working class against imperialist monopoly, for democracy, the powerful pressure of the national-liberation movement, which has destroyed the colonial world, and outstanding victories of the peace forces, it has become possible, given definite circumstances, to effectively resist the pressure of imperialism and to make it respect the will of peoples, including small ones. We live at a time when imperialism is no longer the decisive force and, indeed, suffers more and more reverses. This is

not to say, however, that imperialism has been defeated and can no longer strike back. Even so, this weakening of imperialism is an important development affording oppressed peoples, such as ours, the prospect of winning freedom in the foreseeable future. However, this will be possible only if our people use correct tactics and launch strong attacks when the circumstances call for it, and if they learn to retreat in time when retreat is necessitated by conditions to preserve forces. This does not at all imply, however, that the change in the international situation we have mentioned will automatically bring our people freedom. It can contribute to their liberation if they use it properly and achieve a favorable solution of the colonial problem in the Canal Zone.

Thus the damage caused to Panama by the existence within its boundaries of the Canal Zone territory administered by colonialists, as well as external factors conducive to the abolition of the Zone *speak of the imperative need immediately to do away with this colonial enclave. This is a historical demand made by our people. Do the new treaties meet this demand?*

Without going into details of the arguments in support of our reply, we answer from the outset: "Yes, they do."

We will not now analyze the 1903 treaty. We merely wish to point out that it legalized the existence of a colonial state in the Canal Zone. Under the treaty, the U.S. government enjoyed real and absolute sovereignty in the Canal Zone, had the territory under its full jurisdiction and turned it into a veritable state, with a government of its own. This is no figment of the imagination. Whatever the Americans are doing in the Zone, in particular militarily, is stipulated by the 1903 treaty. It follows that the treaty in no way meets Panama's interests. It was not concluded to bring the Panamanian people justice but to subjugate them. We have said that the treaty was a product of imperialism. To understand its meaning it is necessary to take account of the situation at the time of the signing; it was characterized by imperialist domination. The legal basis for the treaty was not the ideals of oppressed peoples but the imperialists' morality, or lack of morality to be exact, their actual positions and their decisive world role. The treaty was entirely a reflection of the predatory world of imperialism. That is why it was necessary to begin the solution of Panama's national problems with abrogating the treaty so as to eliminate the legal basis of preserving a colonial state in the Canal Zone.

The new treaties hold an important place among the measures for the abolition of the colonial enclave in the Canal Zone, for they

terminate both the 1903 treaty and all other agreements serving as a supplement to the treaty and legalizing the colonial status of the Canal.

The new treaties restore Panama's sovereign rights and entitle it to exercise its jurisdiction over the Canal Zone. This means that there will be neither a colonial government, nor a colonial territory, which the Canal Zone was until recently. The Zone will become part of national territory. Another aspect of the treaties is the form of their implementation, the type of relations created by them, and their legal basis.

The essential thing is that the treaties are a typical example of decolonization by the imperialist method. As applied to Panama, this method expresses itself in the fact that while imperialism accepts the abolition of the colonial enclave in the Canal Zone, it is trying to do this in a way to ensure its direct presence in Panama for as long as possible and thus to prevent us as far as possible from winning complete freedom. None of this is a result of concessions made by Panama in the negotiations; it is a result of imperialist domination over our country. However, not a single sensible Panamanian who is a real patriot can deny that *the abolition of the colonial enclave in the Canal Zone is a legitimate victory for the people and anti-imperialist forces of Panama, for the progressive and peace-loving forces of the world. General Torrijos made a personal contribution to this victory by proceeding as a staunch patriot, a consistent and fair-minded exponent of his people's legitimate demands.*

To fully appreciate the situation that will be created by the new treaties, let us imagine that the Canal Zone is a major unit of a colonial army. Under the impact of the Panamanian patriotic movement, this unit is breaking up but has yet to be destroyed. However, this break-up is the way to fully defeating the unit. The patriotic forces are advancing, taking over the areas abandoned by the enemy, who leaves us many problems. To achieve complete victory, the patriotic forces must set about removing every obstacle on their road. *Our task is to gradually eliminate every vestige of colonialism until we achieve complete liberation.*

The fact that imperialism had to agree to the abolition of survivals of colonialism which will, however, persist for a further 23 years fully reveals the brutal and dirty role played by the Canal Zone in the past. This fact was exploited by reactionary and ultra-leftist opponents of the new treaties, who claimed that the treaties legalized various abuses on the part of the Americans, as if abuses could be an ex-

tenuating circumstance in this case. Let us return to the revisionists' position. No, gentlemen of the opposition, it is not the new treaties that are putting us back but you are falling back on the 1903 position. *Reverting to it is no advance, it means going back.* All that the imperialists have done in the Canal Zone itself by using it as a platform accords with the logic of behavior of the conquerors, whose power was legalized by the 1903 treaty. That power, which had no justification in terms of the people's moral principles, was legalized by the bourgeois imperialist law embodied in the spirit and substance of the treaty. This legal superstructure of the imperialist system can only disappear as a result of the peoples' sustained and growing struggle and the final defeat of the imperialists. From this point of view, to extol the 1903 treaty is mere nostalgia for the one-time might of imperialism, which imposed on us a colonial enclave in the Canal Zone with all the attributes of a source of aggression and oppression.

The neutrality treaty should be assessed in the same context.

Opponents of the treaty maintain that the declaration of permanent neutrality of the Canal is a form of surrendering ownership of the Canal Zone for all time in the same way as was stipulated by the 1903 treaty. But why speak of this in abstract terms? The 1903 treaty, which formalized the U.S. imperialists' colonial rights in perpetuity, granted them full sovereignty over the Canal Zone. The salient characteristic of the new treaties is the fact that they abolish that colonial principle. The Panamanian state will have no difficulty in declaring permanent neutrality. However, the treaties also assign the United States the role of one of the guarantors of this neutrality while at the same time granting its warships the right to pass rapidly through the Canal. This seeming nonsense looks different in the legal formulas which U.S. imperialism uses in drafting international treaties to defend its interests. In the sphere of international relations, imperialism has never revealed its real intentions. It is a sphere in which facts carry much greater weight than words. And this is what U.S. pragmatism stands for.

For imperialism to be a guarantor of the neutrality of the Canal Zone after completely freeing our territory means solving to a degree the problem of its presence in Panama. This is a neo-colonialist method. In view of the present-day level of military technology, the U.S. hardly needs a direct presence on our soil or treaties providing for the measures to be adopted should the Canal be closed or should their ships be denied passage. The decisive factor for the U.S. is that it needs the Canal. Also it requires sufficient strength to put the Canal

in the service of its interests. That article of the neutrality treaty which speaks of joint guarantees and the right of rapid passage for U.S. warships was imposed by the U.S. government as a concession to U.S. chauvinists. The U.S. government wants by means of this provision to prevent Panama's dissociation from the United States, keep it for ever as a component of the U.S. system and rule out socialist development for Panama. We are perfectly sure that the reactionaries opposing this treaty are not doing so because they are concerned about the obstacles which the treaty raises on the road to socialism but because they dread it. Indeed, the treaty on the neutrality of the Canal is spearheaded against the Panamanian people's right to self-determination. It can even be used against some other Latin American people if the imperialists consider that that people poses a threat to so-called neutrality. If the right-wing opposition in Panama is against the neutrality treaty, the reason is by no means the circumstances we have listed but the fact that the treaty is the most vulnerable point of the signed agreements and makes it easier to attack the government under General Torrijos. It is an opposition prompted by tactical considerations. The treaty provisions guaranteeing the neutrality of the Canal and the right of rapid passage fully reflect the treacherous conduct with regard to weak nations which is typical of imperialist activity on the international scene.

However, the opposition is misrepresenting the situation when it affirms that the new treaties legalize and perpetuate the United States' right of intervention in the Canal Zone and that this right will be used as an excuse for violations of the neutrality of the Canal.

Neutrality as interpreted by U.S. imperialism is the right to interfere at will in the affairs of any country of the American continent. The 1903 treaty contains a reference to the Constantinople Treaty, which in its time set the rules of the game between imperialist powers, in particular with regard to the Suez Canal; it was concluded amid a struggle among them to divide the world. The reference was intended to impart a universal character to the rights of the U.S. as an imperialist country bent on establishing its hegemony primarily in the western hemisphere. This is attested by the Hay-Puncefote treaty of 1901 and its supplement, the Spooner law of 1902, which empowered the U.S. President to purchase part of the Panama Isthmus in perpetuity with a view to building a canal to be owned by the U.S. Needless to say, the U.S. government's decision to build a canal that would be its exclusive property was in no way motivated by altruism or humanism. Imperialism lacks these qualities. (Its inhuman nature

came out when it dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and when it waged a bacteriological war against the Korean people and a chemical war against the people of Vietnam. These are only a few examples from a long list of crimes and acts of violence perpetrated by imperialism on the international scene.) The canal project was aimed at furthering imperialism's expansionist ambitions on a world scale and at making it possible by means of setting up military bases to establish U.S. control over the two oceans. All this was part of a struggle for world supremacy. In this respect, the United States resorted to the principle of neutrality of the Canal as a means of reserving preferential rights in regard to that inter-oceanic waterway, and a form in which it would be guaranteed the right to free and rapid passage through the Canal while other countries using the Canal became dependent on U.S. imperialism. The present neutrality treaty grants imperialism no new rights. At the same time it reveals the real meaning of the neutrality imposed by the U.S. government, which will continue to enjoy privileges in respect of the Canal. But then the U.S. imperialists enjoyed the very same privileges under the colonial provisions of the 1903 treaty, without any restrictions whatever. They established their sovereignty over the Canal Zone and were the sole guarantor of its neutrality.

Unlike the 1903 treaty, however, the principle of neutrality in the new treaties is declared by the Panamanian government while the U.S. government uses it merely as a cover for its continued presence in our country and for protecting its imperialist interests in the Canal Zone.

But this is something different from what we had before. Panama will regain its territory; it will own and defend the Canal. Surely this is not meaningless. And surely it is not worse than what we had under the 1903 treaty, especially now that we have a liberation government, which is the important thing.

The presence of the U.S. government in our country until the year 2000, a presence that will not be physical any longer but potentially, is another survival of imperialism which must be eliminated in the course of the subsequent struggle for complete liberation, against neo-colonialism. It is one of the last obstacles we must remove from our path along with the Panama Canal Commission, legal hurdles that will persist for the next 23 years, and with the U.S. bases which will remain in the Canal Zone to the end of this century.

Achieving complete national liberation will require strict adherence to the decolonization treaty even at the price of tolerating survivals of

imperialism for another 23 years. We are certain, however, that our people will not sit back and await the end of this time limit after which the Canal Zone territory will be completely free. We must not forget the experience of the Egyptian people, whose situation had much in common with ours in this respect. There is no guarantee that we will not follow their example. At first the Egyptian people destroyed a colonial regime and then nationalized the Canal without waiting for permission. To be sure, this cost them another war, which British and French imperialism lost in the end. International solidarity, primarily from the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union, curbed the imperialists.

Time is working for us. This victory of our people over imperialism must therefore make for still broader and stronger unity of the national-liberation forces and for greater vigilance toward imperialist attempts to regain lost positions. The task is to do everything for the early achievement of complete national liberation by strengthening the home front through the most far-reaching social changes so as to take afterwards the decisive offensive against the last seats of colonialism.

Abridged

EDWARD GIEREK'S INTERVIEW WITH POLISH JOURNALISTS

In the second half of December First Secretary of the PUWP CC Edward Gierek held his traditional meeting with leading Polish journalists at the PUWP Central Committee, a report on which we present below.

Replying to questions about whether the decisions of the Ninth Plenary Meeting of the PUWP CC had accelerated the economic maneuver, and when the most tangible results in the change of the structure of production could be expected, Edward Gierek, said, in part: it is impossible to answer this in one sentence, to specify a date, to measure the progress. Positive changes in the economic maneuver depend primarily on more efficient economic activity, on the extent to which we are able to boost labor productivity, make better use of our production potential, use raw and other materials more economically

and working time more rationally, and reduce the cost of production. In other words, progress in the economic maneuver depends on the quality of everyone's work.

The party and the government have taken steps to develop the branches of the national economy which have an immediate influence on meeting the requirements of society, and this has been vividly reflected in the 1978 plan. I think, however, that the coming year will not be an easy one for our economy either.

According to Edward Gierek, this applies especially to Polish exports to the capitalist countries, where there is falling demand for "Made in Poland" goods, and it is also hard to anticipate if the weather will favor agriculture.

Replying to the question of why the 1978 plan calls for a growth in industrial output by only 6.8 per cent, that is, a figure which is lower than the average for the past few years and even that for 1977, Edward Gierek said that the point is to avoid unnecessarily strained plans in terms of material supply, employment, etc. Accelerating the pace of industrial production by reducing labor efficiency would be an unfavorable development. We believe that the planned growth of industrial output can be exceeded in the coming year if the efficiency of economic activity can be improved to a greater extent than we expect.

Industrial growth by 6.8 per cent means that the cost of the product in the coming year will reach 2,922 million zloty, the cost of daily output, about 10 billion zloty (in 1977, 9.3 billion, in 1975, 7.5 billion zloty). Is that a low rate? I think, Edward Gierek emphasized, that with the internal and the external difficulties we have to face this is a relatively high rate.

He said that the whole structure of the 1978 plan is geared to consolidating the market equilibrium and improving supplies for the population. The supply of goods to the market is to go up by 12 per cent and is to run ahead of the population's cash incomes (growth by 6.6 per cent). This is a necessary condition but it is not an adequate one for feeling an improvement in the state of the market. This needs above all a better tying in of the growth of wages and other incomes of the population with the quantity and quality of the work done, reinforcement of financial discipline at each enterprise, and even greater emphasis on cost-conscious accounting and product costs.

Edward Gierek emphasized that the party was acting resolutely to stop unwarranted increases by some enterprises of prices for their

products. We have been doing everything, he added, to stop the unwarranted price increases.

Concerning the price-formation structure, Edward Gierek reiterated that the problem is to be considered by the Second All-Polish Conference of the PUWP. In his opinion, it is now hard to find a model for changing the structure of prices that would meet the existing situation. I agree that some enterprises have been trying to make easy money by turning out goods for a small group of the population, while cutting back on their manufacture of consumer goods in broad demand. That is why in our economic policy we specially emphasize the increase of the goods which are to provide the full satisfaction of massive demand. At the same time we shall limit any excessive growth in the disproportions between the incomes of the low- and high-paid groups of the population. . . . Money should be regarded in the same way as scarce raw materials or industrial plant.

Referring to the problems of agriculture, Edward Gierek said the definite positive trends were already in evidence: the cattle population has already been restored in some *województwo* (regions). It is true that this does not apply to the country as a whole. In the coming year, however, difficulties in supplying meat and meat products will remain. Supply is still unable to catch up with demand. This problem is constantly on the agenda of the Political Bureau of the PUWP CC and the government, and our appropriations for agriculture and the grain and feed imports required by the farmers and cattle breeders have been growing. At the cost of tremendous outlays, we have been developing the industries which cater for the trends of agricultural production.

In the last nine months of 1977, 51,000 hectares of land from the state stock were sold to the peasants. In the similar period of the year before, about 11,000 hectares were sold. By the end of the year the total area of land sold to the peasants is expected to come to about 70,000 hectares, and in 1978 to roughly 90,000 hectares.

Replying to a number of questions on housing construction in People's Poland, Edward Gierek said that plans in this area were highly difficult because of their tremendous scale. Only in the course of two years (1976-1977), more than 550,000 flats are to be commissioned. I agree with you that the housing construction plan for the current five-year period must be fulfilled and, if possible, overfulfilled. Improvement of our society's housing conditions is an especially important task.

Referring to the forthcoming elections to the local people's Councils on February 5, 1978, Edward Gierek declared that these will be the first since the reform of the state administration and the introduction of the new administrative and territorial division of the country. The reform was attended by the idea of strengthening the basic elements of self-administration and state administration. We hope that in the course of the electoral campaign our public will assess the extent to which the idea has been realized.

Replying to another question, Edward Gierek said that Poland did not give up the idea of buying licences for machinery and technology which it would take years to develop.

He also said that geological exploration has estimated deposits of hard coal in Poland at 60 billion tons, and of brown coal at 9 billion tons. Geological exploration in the Suwalki area had out favorable prospects for the mining of iron ore. Quarry deposits of more than 300 million tons of road metal for building purposes have also been discovered.

There were many questions concerning Poland's foreign policy activity and the participation by a Polish party and state delegation in the celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, and also the visits by the First Secretary of the PUWP CC to France, Italy and the Vatican, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's official visit to Poland and President Jimmy Carter's arrival in Warsaw.

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution, Edward Gierek said, was an event of tremendous significance and great ideological and political importance. From the standpoint of ideology, it demonstrated the full triumph of Leninism, and the correctness and viability of Leninist principles and regularities of socialist construction, as will be seen from the tremendous accomplishments of the Land of the Soviets and other socialist countries. Our party and our people fully supported the USSR's new proposals aimed at consolidating international security by putting an end to the nuclear arms race. We fully supported the address "To the Peoples, Parliaments and Governments of All Countries," which was adopted at the jubilee meeting in Moscow to mark the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Our active foreign policy, he continued, creates the best external conditions for Poland's development. Our relations with France are shaping successfully, and this was proved by the results of this year's visit.

As for Helmut Schmidt's visit to Poland, it confirmed the existence of the only possible and consistent platform for further normalizing the relations between Poland and the FRG. Edward Gierek pointed to the pan-European importance of the normalization of relations between the two countries and within the overall process of normalization of relations between the FRG and all the other socialist countries.

The meeting with the head of the Roman Catholic Church, Edward Gierek said, took place more than 30 years after the day Poland took the road of socialist development. One could say that the Church leaders who expected the Pope to reply to the question concerning cooperation with the socialist state heard words of encouragement and recognition of the fact that our state has been doing everything for man, for his living conditions, for strengthening the family and setting high moral standards in society. Those who regarded the Church as an instrument of struggle against socialism did not find anything in the Pope's speech to justify their hopes.

Edward Gierek said that in close cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, Poland has been consistently pursuing a policy of peace and cooperation in the spirit of complete fulfillment of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Trybuna Ludu, December 20, 1977. Abridged.

SWEDEN

The Left Party — Communists of Sweden held its 25th Congress in Stockholm over January 4 to 8. Taking part in the work of the Congress were 272 delegates, and also guests from abroad representing a number of communist and workers's parties and national-liberation movements, including a CPSU delegation led by CC CPSU member P.N. Fedoseyev.

Party Chairman Lars Werner delivered the main report. After the October Revolution first breached the world capitalist system, he said, a process of enormous importance for humanity — the transition to socialism — was initiated. In the present conditions in Sweden, it is essential to launch a struggle for radical changes in the internal policy course, against the onslaught of the monopolies, big capital, and the bourgeois elements on the working people's interests and democratic gains. For success in this struggle, the party Chairman said, cohesion of the working-class movement, of all progressive forces is essential.

The ideas of Lenin's Decree on Peace, the head of the CPSU delegation P.N. Fedoseyev said, are being increasingly implemented in international life. Our party is working persistently to implement the Peace Program adopted by the 24th Congress and developed and carried further by the 25th CPSU Congress. The most important, the priority task now is to stop the arms drive that is sweeping across the world. The public forces, political parties, mass organizations, all who hold dear the cause of peace and progress have a significant role to play in this. In many countries, including Sweden, a campaign has been launched against the production of the neutron bomb.

Our party, the Soviet people, the head of the CPSU delegation went on to say, are doing everything to fulfill their internationalist duty to the world working class and national-liberation movement. We come out for further consolidation of the unity of the communist movement. The experience of the international communist and working-class movement shows that fidelity to the great teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, the ideas of proletarian internationalism are an earnest of the communists' successful activity.

The delegates discussed and adopted documents defining the direction and content of the party's work in the period ahead — the program to extricate Sweden from the crisis, the programs on policy in the sphere of culture, energy, agriculture, on the women's question. Also adopted were decisions relating to the organizational and information activity of the party, on partial amendments to the rules.

On the international plane, Congress came out for the expansion and invigoration of the struggle against the forces of imperialism and the arms race, including nuclear arms, vigorously denounced the plans to produce neutron bombs. Congress expressed support for the national-liberation movements of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The positive changes in the world in favor of the forces of socialism and national independence, the Congress document notes, facilitate our own struggle for democracy and socialism. Speaking in defense of the gains of the Swedish working people, many delegates criticized the statements of some speakers which manifested a misapprehension of socialist democracy.

Speaking of the Swedish communists' participation in the worldwide struggle against the forces of reaction and imperialism, many delegates emphasized the important role played by international solidarity — the tested and powerful weapon of the working class — in this struggle. Congress elected a new Board of the party. Lars Werner was re-elected party Chairman.

BAR THE WAY OF THE NEO-COLONIALISTS, ENEMIES OF THE MAGHREB PEOPLES

On November 1, 1954, Algeria, then a French colony, was swept by an armed uprising led by the National Liberation Front, which brought together the country's patriotic forces. The Algerian people's struggle for independence, which cost it much sacrifice, ended with the signing of the Evian cease-fire agreements and then the proclamation of Algeria's independence on July 5, 1962. Below is the text of a statement issued by the Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria in connection with the 23rd anniversary of these events.

Our people are preparing to mark the 23rd anniversary of the start of their armed liberation struggle, and just at this moment the French neo-colonialists, who seem to have learned nothing from the lessons of history, have issued explicit threats against our country.

On the pretext that the Polisario Front had captured several persons of French extraction who had been working for the Mauritanian government, they launched a broad campaign in the press to prepare French and international public opinion for aggression against our country.

Had the lot of these citizens really been a source of concern for the French government of the monopolies, it would have long since responded to the proposals for mediation which the Algerian government had repeatedly offered to help solve the problem. Had it been interested in restoring peace in the Western Sahara and in the destinies of the Sahraoui people, it would have made a close study of the recent proposals made by the Algerian representative in the United Nations aimed at a peaceful settlement of the problems within the framework of Maghreb's unity and cooperation among the Mediterranean countries, on the basis of the Sahraoui people's inalienable right to self-determination, which is being recognized by ever broader

circles of international public opinion and diplomats. In fact, the French government refuses to recognize this right, as it had done over a long period with respect to Algeria.

In fact, the French government is more concerned with defending the interests of the French capitalist companies operating, in particular, the iron ore mines in Mauritania. What counts with it is defense of its economic, financial and strategic interests in Morocco and in Mauritania. The important thing for it is to rush to the aid of the regimes in Rabat and Nouakchott, which find themselves in growing diplomatic isolation and suffering one defeat after another in the military field. All of this adds to the ever more difficult social situation, which is being exacerbated because of their aggressive policy toward the Sahraoui people and their submission to imperialism.

This is the same policy which led the power of the monopolies in France to intervene in the affairs of the African countries, as in Zaire, in order to defend and prop up puppet and corrupt regimes.

Instead of taking a new historic path of mutually advantageous cooperation, French neo-colonialism is being bogged down in its futile policy of hostility to Algeria. That is the policy by which it is guided in its decisions to expel emigrés as a pseudo-solution of the crisis which has hit French capitalist society.

We should regard these threats of the imperialists all the more seriously because they go hand in hand with various efforts (economic, political, propaganda, etc.) once again to jeopardize our country's anti-imperialist and progressive orientation.

In face of this dangerous situation, which further emphasizes the need for even greater vigilance, and constant and organized mobilization of the masses, of all the anti-imperialist patriotic forces, and of our armed forces so as to meet any eventuality, united action must be intensified at every level as never before. The neo-colonialists will fail if we resolutely effect:

- defense of the motherland and of our revolutionary gains, which are in reality the chief target of the imperialists and their reactionary regional and local allies;

- support of the Sahraoui people's legitimate rights to self-determination and to the struggle, which that people have been carrying on under the leadership of the Polisario Front;

- even greater and even better oriented efforts in the battle for production, tying these in with the development of democracy and the revolutionary initiative of the masses, and also with the solution of the social problems;

— even greater vigilance with respect to the machinations of imperialism which are designed to retard all our efforts in independent construction and paralyze our capacity for long resistance; and readiness to rebuff the imperialist intervention in our affairs. This vigilance is inseparable from efforts to build up solidarity and mutually advantageous cooperation with our natural and most reliable allies in the struggle against imperialism: the socialist countries and other progressive forces in the world, including the French democratic and progressive forces.

In this sense, the Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria calls on all the progressive forces, the working class and the masses of working people to give their firm support to the progressive trends in our country, displaying various initiatives to enhance the efficiency of our enterprises, farms, the services, our public health, education, etc. It urges them vigorously to support the correct guidelines of the National Charter, which have been reaffirmed by the President of the Republic, and to work for their implementation.

Let November 1, 1977, be a new milestone in mustering the country's forces against imperialist and reactionary intrigues and for economic, social and cultural progress, for friendship and fraternal cooperation among the peoples and working people of the Maghreb.

Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria
Algiers, October 30, 1977.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE FIRST MPLA CONGRESS

Transformation of the MPLA into a working-class party

The First Congress of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola firmly followed the thesis on the "transformation of the MPLA into a working-class party."

The Congress analyzed in the historical perspective the relevant aspects of the MPLA's long road from its formation on December 10, 1956, to the convocation of its First Congress. During this period prerequisites were created which led to its transformation into a vanguard party.

From its inception the MPLA set about drawing up a progressive

political line that enabled it to transcend the framework of a strictly anti-colonial movement and to conclusively establish its anti-imperialist character.

In the country, the MPLA established itself as a political organization linked with the working masses and above all with the working class and the peasantry. In the foreign policy sphere, the MPLA — in alliance with all progressive world forces and enjoying the support of the forces of socialism — was inspired by the victories of the peoples' struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism.

Throughout its liberation struggle, at crucial moments the MPLA, inspired by the teaching of scientific socialism, strengthened its party structure, clarified its political and ideological line.

Led by the MPLA, the Angolan revolution was characterized by the people's struggle for national independence developing into a struggle against unjust relations, to build a new social system without the exploitation of man by man.

The historical necessity of creating a vanguard party was particularly felt after the winning of national independence, when in a situation of intensified internal class struggle and a permanent external threat, the Angolan people set about resolving the tasks of national reconstruction. Thus the MPLA — Party of Labor expresses the interests of the working class, peasantry and other working people. It is guided by the ideology of scientific socialism.

The Congress holds that the 21 years of struggle have wrought qualitative changes in the MPLA. At present the MPLA — after the severe trials that fell to its lot, trials linked with hard struggles for national liberation, with factional activity, provocations and the aggressive maneuvers of imperialism — has been politically, ideologically and organizationally primed as a vanguard party, guided by Marxism-Leninism.

The First Congress of the MPLA — Party of Labor adopted its Constitution and Program, which had been drawn up earlier.

Transformation of the MPLA into a Party of Labor requires immense effort by all its members in order to adapt it to the new orientations, new structures and new methods of work.

The Central Committee of the MPLA — Party of Labor will immediately launch an extensive campaign to purge its ranks, strengthen its ideological unity and improve its methods of work.

Long live the MPLA — Party of Labor!

Long live scientific socialism!

The struggle goes on. Victory is certain!

FUNDAMENTAL DIRECTIONS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA FOR 1978-1980

The First MPLA Congress, held in Luanda over December 4 to 10, 1977, closely scrutinized the "Fundamental Directions of Socio-Economic Development of the People's Republic of Angola for 1978-1980."

The delegates' discussion of this document substantially improved its content.

The successes in the social sphere resulting from the introduction of free education and medical services, now the fundamental right of all citizens, as well as the economic transformations owing to the expansion of the public sector, setting up of cooperatives and of bodies to control the activity of private enterprises facilitate the formation of new production relations. These relations are just emerging and will form the basis of economic and social development in the period of transition to socialism.

On this basis, the First MPLA Congress adopted the following decisions:

First. Taking account of the constructive proposals of the delegates, Congress approved the "Fundamental Directions of Socio-Economic Development of the People's Republic of Angola for 1978-1980." Together with another document, "On the Main Line of Economic and Social Development up to 1980," it will serve as the guideline for the entire economic and social activity of the People's Republic of Angola up to 1980.

Second. The new objectives facing the state require its gradual transformation into an effective instrument of leadership in the implementation and control over the entire economic and social policy defined by the party.

Special attention must be paid to planned economic and social development and to creating bodies for effective control over this development.

Third. It is essential to firmly follow the line of developing new production relations by expanding and strengthening the socialist sector of the economy.

Fourth. It is essential to improve and strengthen the public sector and its management, and to help set up production cooperatives, particularly in the rural areas. This will help increase production and productivity, eliminate deficiencies in supplies and strengthen discipline.

Fifth. With a view to cutting expenditures both in the domestic and external sphere and to increase revenues, it is essential to introduce austerity measures at all levels.

Sixth. The goal of socialist construction is to constantly improve the well-being of the popular masses.

Improved living standards will primarily be the result of increased production and labor productivity.

On the other hand, at the present stage higher living standards will be attained above all by improvement in such social spheres as education and health care.

Seventh. It is essential to ensure consistent implementation of the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work." Wages should correspond to the amount and quality of work performed.

The struggle goes on. Victory is certain!

Jornal de Angola, December 11, 1977.

GEORGES MARCHAIS VISITS HUNGARY

Communiqué on the visit

Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the French Communist Party and Political Bureau member Jean Kanapa visited Hungary over November 24 to 27, 1977, at the invitation of Janos Kadar, First Secretary of the Central Committee, Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

In the course of frank, friendly talks Janos Kadar and Georges Marchais informed each other on the situation in and activity of their parties. They exchanged views on a wide range of international issues and on the world communist and working-class movement. The talks were marked by a striving of the participants to respect each other's views and the political line of the other side formulated independently and in accordance with the conditions and national specifics of each country.

Janos Kadar and Georges Marchais emphasized that the far-ranging efforts in favor of a policy of peaceful coexistence and of deepening international détente respond to the interests of all peoples, create

favorable conditions for promoting the struggle of the working class, the working masses, facilitate implementation of the inalienable right of every people to choose the path of development of its country, the most suitable methods and forms of struggle for socialism. The leaders of the HSWP and the FCP stressed the importance of the struggle of the two parties; together with the other democratic, progressive and peaceful forces, to curb the arms drive and to take every measure to advance along the road of general and complete disarmament, develop cooperation and friendly relations between the European peoples and to attain universal peace and security.

Janos Kadar and Georges Marchais declared the intention of their parties to continue promoting good relations between the HSWP and the FCP in the spirit of the repeatedly and collectively proclaimed principles of respect for each other's independence, for a free and constructive exchange of ideas, mutual international solidarity and independent comradely cooperation in the name of the common aims of peace, social progress, democracy and socialism.

"NEPSZABADSAG" COMMENTARY

FCP General Secretary Georges Marchais visited our country recently at the invitation of HSWP First Secretary Janos Kadar. The communiqué on the visit indicates that the leaders of the two parties held talks in a frank and friendly atmosphere on questions of concern to both parties, on topical international issues and the communist and working-class movement.

The public and the communists of Hungary closely follow the struggle of the FCP against the consequences of the capitalist crisis that is hitting hard at the French people. The number of jobless in France has topped the one and a half million mark. In the past three and a half years alone the purchasing power of the franc has fallen by more than 50 per cent, and though partially compensated for by wage increases, they nevertheless fall short of growing prices. The government officially acknowledges that the incomes of 17 million French men and women are below the subsistence level. Our party solidarizes with the struggle of our French comrades for social progress, in defense of the working people's interests, for joint actions with other democratic forces, effective unity of the left forces, to strengthen the influence of the FCP and its organization. The fraternal French party is following with interest the activity of our people in building socialism.

While discussing international issues, the representatives of both

parties noted the enormous importance of the struggle to promote peace and peaceful coexistence, deepen détente, curb the arms race and achieve general and complete disarmament. The French comrades emphasized the special role the socialist countries have to play in this struggle and, above all, the Soviet Union.

In connection with urgent questions of the world communist and working-class movement, the two leaders touched on the independence of fraternal parties and their international solidarity, the principles of which were strengthened by the Berlin Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties. It was stressed that mutual solidarity of equal parties presupposes a regular and responsible exchange of ideas between the fraternal parties in the interests of better acquaintance with each other's struggle, the conditions in which this struggle goes on, of comparison and clarification of points of view, stronger mutual confidence and promotion of relations.

Marchais' visit to Hungary facilitated comradely exchange of experience between our parties and consolidation of relations between them. This common striving will undoubtedly help to further relations between the two peoples for the good of peace, security and progress, in the interests of stronger unity of the world communist movement.

Nepszabadsag, November 29, 1977.

ON THE QUESTION OF RESTORATION OF LEGAL STATUS TO THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY OF SENEGAL

Resolution of the Seventh Plenum, CC AIP Senegal

At its seventh plenum the Central Committee of the African Independence Party (AIP Senegal) examined the political, economic and social situation in the country. It heard and approved the Political Bureau report on preparations for the 20th anniversary of the party's foundation.

Following a broad and profound discussion, the AIP Central Committee adopted a decision to intensify the campaign for the restoration of the party's legality and for the right of legal existence of all political

organizations that request it. For this purpose the Central Committee will mark the party's 20th anniversary under the slogan of restoration of its legal status and expansion of the political rights of the Senegalese people, particularly the right to set up political parties.

The seventh Central Committee plenum mandates the Political Bureau to charge Comrade Amath Dansoko with the function of official representative of the party on the problems of restoration of its legality. Comrade Dansoko is authorized by the Political Bureau to address to the President of the Republic, His Excellency Leopold Sedar Senghor, an official letter on the above-mentioned question.

The seventh plenum strictly limits the functions of the official representative Comrade Amath Dansoko to questions relating to the legalization of the party.

The seventh Central Committee plenum authorizes the Political Bureau to display all the required initiatives to develop both on the national and international plane a campaign for the restoration of the legal status of the party and expansion of the Senegalese people's political rights.

Seventh Plenum of the AIP Central Committee

Letter to His Excellency Leopold Sedar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal, Dakar;

from Amath Dansoko, Political Bureau member, African Independence Party of Senegal (AIP Senegal).

Your Excellency,

As you know, the African Independence Party (AIP Senegal) has the exceptional merit of having worked constantly over a period of 20 years for the national independence of Senegal, for democracy and socialism.

But for 17 years, as you must also know, the African Independence Party has been compelled to conduct its political activities in secret. All responsibility for this clandestine work rests solely with the leading bodies of our party, the Central Committee and the Political Bureau.

In view of this, on the instructions of the seventh session of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau has authorized me to make a formal request to Your Excellency that all requisite measures should be taken for the legalization of our party. I must add that my function is limited strictly to questions relating to the restoration of our party's legality.

Our party has the right to legal existence and the unrestricted exercise of its political activity.

The 20 years of the party's existence, its activity in the service of the manual and intellectual workers of Senegal testify that it is above all a party of struggle for independence, for an alliance of national forces, for patriotic and democratic discipline, a party of the truly socialist future of our society.

Throughout these 20 years not one of the stormy developments in the life of Senegal has shaken the firm class position of our Marxist-Leninist party, its profound and broad understanding of the national interest.

At the fourth session of our Central Committee (November, 1975) the main reasons for the ban imposed on our party in 1960 were thoroughly elucidated; the session also clearly expressed the party's will to regain its legal status and stressed the importance of this measure for the Senegalese nation, for all forces fighting for real changes that would benefit our people.

Despite unrelenting repression, our party has waged a tireless struggle in defense of individual and social freedoms in our country and for their extension.

It is precisely this unfailing dedication to democracy that has won us the honor of being the first political party of Senegal, which five months before the last revision of the Constitution rejected in principle the artificial delimitation of ideological trends and the arbitrary restriction of the number of political parties.

Mr. President,

In requesting the restoration of our party's legal status our Central Committee is fully aware of the constitutional regime that has been imposed on our country. We are well enough informed about the underhand maneuvers of a group of individuals who with the blessing of the authorities have associated the name of our party with actions against all the patriotic and democratic forces of Senegal.

Concerning the Constitution and the law on parties, we will permit ourselves, Your Excellency, three observations:

(a) Our Central Committee regards the Constitution at present in force as a distinct step back from democracy. The three-party system, as experience has confirmed, is indisputably a violation of the political and social life of Senegal. We have every confidence in the political experience and political maturity of the Senegalese people. This is one of the reasons why our Central Committee unreservedly and unhesitatingly believes that the number and influence of parties

are entirely the affair of the citizens of Senegal exercising their full right of choice. Our objection on this score is today shared by other political forces, trends and political personalities of Senegal.

Mr. President, one must draw all the requisite conclusions from the actual state of affairs. This will only benefit the political climate of Senegal.

(b) Your Excellency, even you have made statements that question the Constitution. You yourself have envisaged a revision of the Constitution and the need to bring the number of parties up to four. You have thus, partially, confirmed the justice of the objections to the artificial limitation of parties and trends expressed by our party in November 1975. The refusal to legalize the African Independence Party, the arbitrary obstacles placed in the way of recognition of the National Democratic Revolution in violation of the old Constitution substantially discredit, in Senegal and beyond its borders, the "democratic overture," which your government claims to have pioneered on the continent.

The debate on the Constitution is not yet over. We believe that it is not the exclusive right of the President of the Republic or of any party, or even of the National Assembly to decide this question. This is above all the affair of the Senegalese people. It is a question of the individual and public liberties of all citizens. The outcome of this debate will influence to a great extent the solution of the serious political, economic and socio-cultural problems of Senegal. Our Central Committee regards it as its right and duty to appeal to the Senegalese people to act to ensure the unrestricted democratic deployment of political forces.

(c) In this letter requesting that the African Independence Party be legalized, and reaffirming the need for a democratic revision of the Constitution the Central Committee has done nothing illegal. One cannot legitimately speak of democracy without abusing the word while citizens are unable to present proposals or alternatives concerning the Constitution that differ from those proposed by the authorities particularly if, in addition, citizens cannot submit them to the people's judgment in a democratic way.

As for the party of Majhemout Diop, no serious person in our country believes that it represents the African Independence Party. Its function is sabotage, which is part and parcel of the political actions taken by the authorities against our Communist Party, against the patriotic and democratic forces. The uninterrupted existence for

20 years of the African Independence Party is, in fact, one of the basic realities of Senegalese life.

The repressions and political ostracism that our party has suffered and continues to suffer have rapidly been extended to other political forces and public organizations. This is not at all in the interests of the Senegalese people. On the contrary, these measures have served and will continue to serve the interests of imperialism. The independent progressive development of our country has suffered greatly thereby.

We have no desire, Your Excellency, to hide the depth and gravity of our party's disagreement with the orientation of your regime. This, after all, is our "right to differ" and the Senegalese people can decide these questions only in full freedom.

We express the profound conviction of Senegalese public opinion in stating that the credibility of the "democratic overture" must necessarily depend on restoration of the legality of the African Independence Party and recognition of all the political parties and public organizations that request it.

No matter what happens, our party will remain true to its tradition of anti-imperialist struggle, to its mission of uniting all the patriotic and democratic forces of Senegal without exception in the fight against the forces of neo-colonialism and for progressive changes, for solution of the grave problems experienced by the workers of town and country, manual or intellectual.

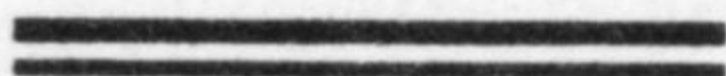
We hope that Your Excellency will understand the precise meaning of our action, the fundamental substance of our request, which is for the triumph of democracy.

On behalf of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the African Independence Party I convey my deepest respects to Your Excellency.

Kedougou (Eastern Senegal)

October 20, 1977.

Momsarev No. 21, October, 1977.



FROM THE PRESS

Many weeks have passed since the 35th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held in London for four days during November 12-15 last year. The main discussion was on the new draft of the program *The British Road to Socialism*, but there were also important resolutions on the immediate mass struggle in Britain, and solidarity with the national-liberation movement in many countries abroad.

The lively discussion at the Congress has ended, and decisions taken for action, but the political debate goes on. In his article below (re-published from the *Morning Star*, 20.12.77), Jack Woddis deals with an important aspect of this debate — the relation between economic and political struggles in Britain.

Many letters on this theme have been published in the *Morning Star*. One letter declared that “an organized and sustained wages offensive must be the motive force of the struggle for democracy and socialism.” Another quotes a well-known communist trade union leader (Ken Gill) who had declared (on November 30, 1977) that “the key to winning the movement for the left’s strategy is a militant wages movement.”

This is quoted in a letter by another well-known communist, and appears on the same page (December 12) as the first letter. It admits that “a wages breakthrough should be a priority for the trade unions and for the Communist Party’s industrial department,” but puts the question, “is it a priority for the Communist Party as a whole?” His answer is “surely our main job is to change ideas.” His letter goes on to point that trade union members “are not a race apart,” for there are also housewives, tenants, Black workers, shoppers, as well as the wage struggle.

Other letters agree there are a variety of issues upon which to carry through the mass struggle, but the fight to maintain and increase wages is the most decisive. The contrary view is also expressed, that this is an expression of the economism trend, which Lenin condemned as long ago as 1902.

Jack Woddis, a member of the National Executive of the Communist Party and its Political Commission, and head of the International Department of the party, takes part in this debate.

A VITAL WEAPON

A welcome discussion is taking place on the left about the significance of trade union actions for higher wages. The social contract¹ has been swept away. But its role is still being pursued by imposing the 12-month limit between wage rises and the government's 10 per cent wages axe, which is now being called a "guideline."

In the debate on the wages fight reference has been made to Lenin's comments in 1902 on what he termed the "basic error" committed by the economists:

"Namely, their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers *from within*, so to speak, from their economic struggle, i.e., by making this struggle the exclusive (or, at least, the main) ... basis. Such a view is radically wrong."²

Lenin was then engaged in combating the theories of the economists *who were opposed to a political party of the working class, argued that politics should be left to the liberal bourgeoisie, and believed that the workers would spontaneously advance their class political consciousness by merely engaging in economic struggles.*

No significant force on the left in Britain today shares the naive beliefs of the economists of Lenin's day.

ECONOMIST

Nevertheless, there are economist trends in Britain today — in the trade unions, the Labor Party, even in the Communist Party.

They take the form of looking on each economic and industrial battle as an isolated issue, as a question in itself, unrelated to wider political issues or to longer-term perspectives of a fundamental change of society.

While combating economism in its modern form we should not throw out the baby with the bath-water.

It is absolutely true, as the Communist Party has stressed repeatedly, that "militancy is not enough." All economic conflicts, including those fought out over wages, are not sufficient by themselves to enable the working class to develop a political class consciousness spontaneously.

We have had mass movements, including major strikes, for over a century, yet we are still a very long way from having won a majority of the working class to an understanding of the need to struggle for a change of the system, from capitalism to socialism.

Yet it would be wrong to draw from this the conclusion that wage battles are unimportant, even a diversion from, or an obstacle to political advance.

OVERTONES

The 1926 general strike was an economic struggle, a wage struggle, and a defensive one at that, to stop wage cuts. But will anyone seriously argue that this momentous battle, limited though its aims were, did not have major political overtones?

The upheaval in France in May 1968 was primarily an economic struggle, for higher wages, and it ended with wage negotiations. But again, can it be denied that it shook French society and had the most profound political effects?

When Lenin polemized against the economists in 1902, the Russian working-class movement was in a very early stage. Trade unions were rudimentary and allowed little scope. Wage battles were confined mainly to workers versus their immediate employer.

The consequences of wage strikes, in such conditions, were naturally limited — and their scope and number were limited too.

The 1905 revolution changed the whole situation — and Lenin was the first to grasp the significance, in the new circumstances, of the power of the strike weapon, and of the important role of economic struggles (especially among the worst paid and less politically developed, such as the textile workers) as a detonator of political thought and action.

Lecturing in January 1917 on the subject of the 1905 revolution, Lenin declared, in reference to the significance of the strike movement: "The broad masses of the exploited could not have been drawn into the revolutionary movement had they not been given daily examples of how the wage-workers in the various industries were forcing the capitalists to grant immediate, direct improvements in their conditions."³

This theme, which runs like a thread throughout the lecture, represents a corrective to any tendency to take the Lenin of 1902 in an isolated, or one-sided fashion.

But we are concerned not only with what Lenin wrote many years ago. Britain in 1977 is not Russia in 1902, when the trade unions were in their early stages, and modern state-monopoly capitalism was not yet born; nor in 1905, in the midst of a revolutionary upheaval, nor even in 1917 at a time of socialist revolution.

REALITIES

Surely we should look at the realities of Britain and other developed capitalist countries in the 1970s.

Wage struggles in Britain in the 1970s are not so easily confined to purely economic struggles. Since wage questions are matters of government policy and state intervention, any important wage battle soon involves the government, the mass media, Parliament, the political parties, the law, the police (sometimes even the army, as is the case with the firemen).

Such wage battles today are not simply a test of strength between one set of workers and a particular employer.

They involve wider *class* interests, results in forms of *class* confrontation. And so they provide the opportunity — no more and no less — for communists and socialists to help the workers, in the midst of these battles, to draw political conclusions regarding the alternative economic policy needed, the role of the state, the politics of each party, the role of the mass media compared with the *Morning Star*, and so on.

To give any impression (even if not intended) of diminishing the role of wage battles, the most basic form of class struggle, conducted so often at the point of production, and therefore fought frequently around the division of the surplus value created by the workers, is to take away a vital weapon from the workers.

FIGHT ON

The problem is not one of playing down such struggles, or looking for alternative issues to fight on.

It is rather one of the weight of our intervention in these key battles, the way we and other socialist-minded workers help the movement to draw far-reaching political conclusions from its experience, both as regards a total alternative policy to meet the present crisis as well as in relation to more basic socialist aims.

The problem we face is not that of having too many industrial actions for higher wages; it is the failure, so far, of the left, including the Communist Party, to find the most effective ways of assisting the working class *to advance its political understanding in the midst of its struggle for immediate economic aims*.

Certainly, an important step in raising the level of political awareness of the working-class and trade union movement would be much greater involvement in campaigning on other questions that affect them, as well as on issues worrying other sections of the population.

Massive trade union participation and struggle on such matters would greatly extend the horizons of the working class, increase its understanding of the nature of our society, and assist it to emerge as a leader of all forces struggling for a better life.

But the taking up of such issues should not be posed against wage struggles. This is especially important today when holding back wages and lowering living standards is a central feature of government policy.

CHALLENGE

A powerful challenge to the government's imposition of real wage cuts is not only necessary to defeat that particular policy and defend conditions. It is also essential in order to unleash the strength of the movement, to enable it to gain confidence and a sense of its power, and to learn from the experience of united action.

A working class which has felt its strength and capacity in such struggles can more easily be led to battle on other issues than a class which has tamely submitted to seeing its wages suffer a decline. It provides, too, a better possibility for it to learn more profound political lessons.

But this understanding, though greatly helped by the experience of struggle, will not come about spontaneously. This is why it is essential for those who have already been won for socialist aims to so work in the midst of workers' actions that this understanding is gained.

This, in a sense, is the major problem which the left in Britain, including the Communist Party, need to solve.

Building a much larger Communist Party and increasing the circulation of the *Morning Star* are indispensable to success in this process.

Jack Woddis

Morning Star, December 20, 1977.

1 A form of agreement between the trade unions and the employers determining, in particular, the amount of wages. — Ed.

2 *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 421-422.

3 *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 241.

INTERVIEW BY ICP CHAIRMAN LUIGI LONGO TO *CORRIERE DELLA SERA*

Below we print an interview by Luigi Longo, Chairman of the Italian Communist Party to *Corriere della Sera*, which the newspaper published in its December 30 issue under the title "Longo declares: 'Eurocommunism is a term I don't like, and there is no such thing'."

Q. In your recollection, what was the policy of the Communist Party 30 years ago and how do you assess it at present?

A. We had to resolve complex problems of reconstruction, to activate the new political and social regime. We opted then for a policy of national unity, and Togliatti initiated it with the aid of the so-called "Naples turning point." This was a line we had already implemented during the Resistance movement, that is, a line of joint struggle of all political and social forces against the fascists and the German invaders.

Q. In general, a non-revolutionary course?

A. In those years we were not intent on fighting for an immediate social revolution, but for broad democratic renovation. And I believe it will not be immodest of me either personally or as a party member to say that the results achieved evidence the correctness of our actions.

Q. Thirty years ago many accused the Communist Party of duplicity: on the one hand, official statements by the leaders, who endorsed the democratic rules of the game, and on the other, the rank-and-file members who were still imbued with revolutionary enthusiasm. What did this duality of the communists consist in?

A. If in anything, our mistake consisted in virtually identifying tactics with strategy. We were optimistic, thinking only of the immediate future, and such a view of the situation provided grounds for our opponents, primarily the Christian Democratic Party, to attack us, to discredit our position: they accused us of seeking to impose our hegemony. But this accusation of duality was unfounded, it distorted our policy and our real intentions.

Q. How do you assess terrorism?

A. Even during fascism we opposed terroristic acts, which other political exponents abroad, like Carlo Rosselli, for instance, praised

as a legitimate manifestation of the people's hostility toward fascism. We have always held that it is essential to work among the masses. Terrorism runs counter to this policy, and it is illusory to believe it can lead to effective revolutionary actions.

Q. What was the cause of the ousting of representatives of the left parties from the government in May 1947?

A. The international situation, which changed after war's end. During the Resistance cooperation between the capitalist countries and the Soviet Union facilitated our joint actions.

Q. What does the Soviet Union mean to you?

A. I love the country. During the war my two sons studied there: one became a nuclear physicist and is now teaching in the Bologne University. The other is an economist.

Q. There is much talk now about Eurocommunism: do you like the definition?

A. No, I don't, as I have said on several occasions. On the other hand, the ICP does not acknowledge paternity of that term. It was invented by the journalists, it is a generalization and simultaneously a distortion.

Q. Why don't you like it?

A. For one, because it does not exist and never has existed as an organizational phenomenon. And for another, if it did exist, it would restrict the independence of individual parties. It is an inconsistent term. And that is why I don't like it.

Q. The leader of the Spanish communists Carrillo rejects Leninism. The ICP, however, is still a Marxist-Leninist party, though there are those who would reject, that is, eliminate Leninism. What is your opinion? Should the ICP retain its Leninist character?

A. I think it should. The Russian revolution is the greatest creation — not in words but in deed — which represents, irrespective of what may be said about it, the democratic and progressive motive force not only in relation to the Soviet Union, but with respect to the situation in the entire world. Just imagine what the world situation would be like without this immense economic, political, military — yes, also military — and ideological force.

Q. There are those who propose drawing a parallel between social democracy and communism (some ten years ago Amendola also did so) and affirm that both have suffered a defeat.

A. Such a comparison is hazardous, to say the least. Social democracy has suffered a defeat: we are witnessing it in Germany and in the Scandinavian countries, which some had seen as the ideal model of

socialism. What has the social-democratic experience led to? To negative consequences that have nothing in common with socialism, I would say. Whereas communism has extended beyond the borders of the Soviet Union, beyond the so-called Eastern countries, China, and now its shoots have emerged in many developing countries. Recall Vietnam, where a great revolution was carried out, thanks in particular to the material aid of the Soviet Union.

Q. How do you assess the present political situation in Italy? Will the Christian Democratic Party meet the communists' demands on creating a new government of national solidarity?

A. In my view, that goal must be achieved, but I believe it will not be reached in the immediate future — precisely owing to the opposition of the CDP, which seeks to retain monopoly of power. However, the fact that the crisis is intensifying justifies the need — and not only in words — for a forward movement, for implementation of the measures which the CDP and the other five parties agreed to carry out. The most negative aspect of this situation is that the program agreement exists, but the Christian Democratic Party is not fulfilling it.

Q. It is simply a matter of fulfillment?

A. In order to really fulfill the agreement, the contribution of the broadest forces and the support of the broad masses is essential. Therein lie the differences with the CDP, which has signed the commitments of the program, and which now ignores them. The fact that it signed them means that there are no differences with respect to the content. But it does not fulfill them. That is why we demand a change of government.

Q. And if the CDP takes a tougher stand? Couldn't that precipitate the elections?

A. Elections do not frighten us. We don't want them because it would mean a new delay, because they engender paralysis, hamper the discussion of measures in Parliament; they would result in postponement of solutions that we consider urgent. But let no one think they can frighten us with talk of pre-schedule elections.

Q. There was a dispute over the youth question this year . . .

A. During the manifestation of the metalworkers and machine builders on December 2 many young people went along with the workers. This manifestation, judging by the slogans, on the placards or chanted by the participants, reflected the demand for changes, confidence in the future, the conviction that it is essential to urgently implement the agreement.

Q. When Berlinguer proposed the formula of historical compromise, you expressed philological and political objections. You didn't like the word "compromise." Have you changed your mind?

A. It has always been our policy to create a bloc of all forces capable of participating in carrying out a policy of renovation and progress. The expression "compromise" could have led to misunderstanding, to confusing tactics and strategy. That is why I didn't and don't like it.

Q. Is there anything that has not been carried out in Italy over the past 30 years which you regret?

A. The Constitution has not been and is not being implemented. The Constitution pointed out the fundamental direction, the way of life of Italian society, which we communists saw as the point of departure for a consequent democratic evolution of social development. Now, 30 years after its adoption, we still have to fight for its implementation. So: the Constitution was my bride, but later she threw me over.

Q. Is there anything in common between the present crisis and the crisis of 30 years ago?

A. First of all, the CDP bears full responsibility for the present crisis. Thirty years ago it was our task to rehabilitate the country, and now it is essential to fully reconstruct the economy, to advance new ideals. An emergency situation exists; that no one can deny. But no political force can alone carry out a new "reconstruction." In any case, there is a need for the interference, for decisive participation by the working people and their political and trade union organizations in running the country: this is a new fact, the opportunity to capture, if in incredibly complex conditions, the feeble but untorn thread of hope that existed 30 years ago.

Q. So you are optimistic?

A. It may seem superficial to you, but I have always, even at the most difficult moments, been filled with confidence in the working-class movement and in the wisdom of the party: ultimately, everything will come out right.

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